Onward
Votes for Women

A Documentary Play to Honor the Fight for Women's Suffrage

Created by Lisa Rafferty

Music arranged and composed by Adam McDonald

Commissioned by the Associates of the Boston Public Library Pierce Performance Series
**The Associates of the Boston Public Library** is an independent nonprofit dedicated to preserving the Boston Public Library’s Special Collections of rare books, manuscripts, prints, photographs, musical scores and other items of literary, historic and cultural importance. The Associates makes grants to ensure continued public access to these irreplaceable treasures by underwriting their conservation, cataloging, digitization, and exhibition. Through these efforts, the Associates aims to help the BPL fulfill its most essential mission of providing top quality, free educational resources to the public, as well as preserving knowledge, culture, and history for the benefit of all.

**Birch Tree Productions** creates theater from the heart, from the *MOMologues* series of comedies which have appeared around the world, to documentary plays about heroic and resilient women and men. These include an unforgettable First Lady in *SHE DID ALL THAT* – Betty Ford: *Speaking Out, Saving Lives*, a 9/11 hero in *The Legacy of Welles Remy Crowther*, survivors of domestic violence in *No More Secrets*, and the staff and clients of Boston’s Women’s Lunch Place in *Feeding Sisters*.

**Birch Tree Productions**
www.birchtreeproductions.company

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The Associates of the Boston Public Library

presents

ONWARD - Votes for Women
A Documentary Play to Honor the Fight for Women's Suffrage

Created by Lisa Rafferty
Music arranged and composed by Adam McDonald

Costume Design Zoë Sundra
Lighting Design Joe Cabrera
Stage Manager Michael Eckenreiter

With
Stefanie Cloutier  Chris Everett  Alyssa Germaine
Elaine Hom  Lily Kaufman  Joyce Kulhawik  Kat Lawrence
Amie Lytle  Karimah Williams  Regine Vital

Director
Lisa Rafferty*

Music Director and Conductor
Adam McDonald

Choreographer
Ilyse Robbins*

Assistant Stage Manager
Kelsey Whipple

Scenic Artist Consultant
Kristin Loeffler

Researcher
Jody McDonough

*Member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society

Boston Public Library
Rabb Hall
November 16 and 17, 2021

Virtual Premiere
November 22, 2021

The video and/or audio recording of this performance is strictly prohibited.
A Note from Lisa Rafferty

It has been a privilege to research and explore the stories and voices of the strong and inspiring women of the suffrage movement. This production offers a portion of the hundreds of stories from over seventy years of commitment and activism.

We are honoring those who fought through dark times, and overcame so much in the face of insurmountable odds. It feels right and good to be telling these stories, now more than ever.

It is exhilarating for us to be living in the world of these amazing women - and men - who fought with determination, grit and grace to put the 19th Amendment into law.

My deepest gratitude to the leadership of the Associates of the Boston Public Library for their support and commitment to bring this production to life. It is our hope that this piece will live on in future productions, at schools and universities, and around the country where the story of these incredible leaders can be shared again. ONWARD.

Special Thanks to
Ami Bennett of the Greater Boston Women's Vote Centennial
The City of Boston
Massachusetts Historical Society
Patricia Altomare
Wendy Ballinger
Scituate Historical Society for Inez Haynes Irwin’s poem & photo

The Staff of the Boston Public Library, including

Collaborator

Since 1989, the BOSTON WOMEN'S HERITAGE TRAIL (BWHT) has worked to restore women to their rightful place in the history of Boston and in the school curriculum by uncovering, chronicling, and disseminating information about the women who have made lasting contributions to the City of Boston.

All in-person ONWARD guests will receive a copy of the BWHT's Road to the Vote: the Boston Women's Suffrage Trail map. BWHT created this tour as a testament to those in our historic city who played a part in the decades-long quest for equality at the ballot box.
CAST

Stefanie Cloutier  Joyce Kulhawik
Chris Everett  Kat Lawrence
Alyssa Germaine  Amie Lytle
Elaine Hom  Karimah Williams
Lily Kaufman  Regine Vital

CHARACTERS

Alice Paul  Ayanna Pressley
Carrie Chapman Catt  Betty Ford
Elizabeth Cady Stanton  Brenda Lawrence
Francis Jackson  Elaine Weiss
Dr. Harriot K. Hunt  Emma Watson
Henry Blackwell  Gloria Steinem
Inez Haynes Irwin  Joyce Kulhawik
Louisa May Alcott  Ruth Bader Ginsberg
Lucy Stone  Shirley Chisholm
Dr. Mabel Ping-Hua Lee
Mary Church Terell
Sojourner Truth
Susan B. Anthony
William Lloyd Garrison

Every Woman #1-9

Time: 1848 – 1920, 1943 – 2020

Every Woman refers to the universality of the women who came together to fight for suffrage, and a tip of the hat to the song by the great Chaka Khan.

“If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies, we are determined to foment a rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any laws in which we have no voice, or representation. “

- Abigail Adams
CAST

STEFANIE CLOUTIER (Louisa May Alcott, Carrie Chapman Catt, Gloria Steinem) is a mother, writer, actress and playwright. She co-wrote and performed in The MOMologues play trilogy; has acted in improv, musicals and straight plays; is a longtime supporter of the arts and education; and currently leads local history tours.

She dedicates this performance to her daughter Isabella who was raised to be a feminist, and her two grandmothers, Nadia and Nellie, who showed her what strong, independent women look like.

CHRIS EVERETT (Sojourner Truth, Brenda Lawrence) is thrilled to represent Sojourner Truth in this production. Theater: American Celebration (Revels); Romeo & Juliet (Commonwealth Shakespeare Company); The House that will not Stand (Front Porch Collaborative); How Long Must We Wait? (History At Play). Movies: Don’t Look Up, About Fate, I Care A Lot and Godmothered.

I am inspired by Ida B. Wells, who fought to end lynching in the south, through death threats from racist rioters, never giving up the fight and writing about the incidents in her own publications.

ALYSSA GERMAINE (Emma Watson) is excited to return to the stage for ONWARD, a project she has been a part of since 2019. Alyssa studied Theatre Arts at Bridgewater State University. Some of her favorite roles include Polly in The Threepenny Opera and Inga in Young Frankenstein.

Alyssa would like to dedicate this performance to her mother, Kelly, and her beautiful sisters, Lauren and Kate – the strongest, funniest, and most important women in her life.

ELAINE HOM (Lucretia Mott, Dr. Mabel Ping-Hua Lee, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Movement Captain) is thrilled to be back onstage! Most recently appeared at Lyric Stage (Pacific Overtures) and Speakeasy (Allegiance). Recent roles include Rosie in Bye Bye Birdie, Marcy in ...Spelling Bee, Mayzie in Seussical, and DeLee in Smokey Joe’s Cafe. Love to Matt and the rest of the village.

Dedicated to the amazing women who lead Jane Doe Inc., a nonprofit that works tirelessly to advocate for policy that aids the marginalized and oppressed.

LILY KAUFMAN (Susan B. Anthony, Dr. Harriot K. Hunt, Elaine Weiss) is a graduate of Umass Amherst Theater and Shakespeare & Company’s Conservatory program. Pre-Covid, she appeared as Lina in Apollinaire Theatre Company’s production of Cry it Out where she was nominated for a Norton Award for her performance. She is a current Resident Artist at Chelsea Theatre Works.

Lily dedicates this performance to all the suffrage sisters!
JOYCE KULHAWIK (Joyce Kulhawik), best known as CBS-Boston’s Emmy award-winning A & E anchor, is president of the Boston Theater Critics Association. A 3x cancer survivor Joyce addressed Congress on the 20th anniversary of the National Cancer Act. She’s reported live from the Oscars, Emmys, And Tonys. See her movie/theater reviews at joyceschoices.com.

I remain inspired by my mother and grandmother, outspoken working women who pioneered careers before it was the norm!

KAT LAWRENCE (William Lloyd Garrison, Alice Paul) is a senior at Brandeis University majoring in Theater Arts and Music. Past Brandeis credits include Macbeth, Love and Information, Hamlet, and The Bacchae. She is so blessed to be a part of this production and would like to thank her friends and family for their support.

She dedicates her performance to her amazing hardworking mother, Paula Lawrence, for going above and beyond to support her in life and her artistic endeavors.

AMIE LYTLE (Lucy Stone, Betty Ford) has performed with the Hanover Theatre, Apollinaire Theatre Company, Harbor Stage Company, WHAT, Bridge Rep, Hub, and at the Boch Center in Boston. BA: Muhlenberg College. MFA: The Actors Studio. She is thrilled to (finally!) perform this play, her fifth show with Lisa Rafferty, much to her delight. www.amielytle.com

Amie dedicates this performance to her dance teacher Barbara Gallager (Albany, NY) who was an advocate for the arts, animals, children with disabilities, and women and she had a profound effect on Amie’s life as a performer and person.

REGINE VITAL (Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Francis Jackson, Shirley Chisholm) is a theatre artist, administrator, educator, scholar, and storyteller. She has worked with Commonwealth Shakespeare Company, ArtsEmerson, Company One, Central Square Theatre, HUB Theatre Company, and Fresh Ink Theatre. Regine holds degrees from Boston University, UMass Boston, and studied Shakespeare at King’s College, London and Shakespeare’s Globe.

Dedicated to the most stubborn, determined, formidable women I know: Mummy, Jennie, and Stacey.

KARIMAH WILLIAMS (Henry Blackwell, Mary Church Terrell, Inez Haynes Irwin, Ayanna Pressley) is honored to celebrate this rich history and stories on the stage! Her most recent theater productions were with Praxis Theater’s For Colored Girls... and Coriolanus. She is featured in the upcoming premiere of the award-winning Web Series “Love Undone.” Karimah is a teacher in the Boston Public Schools.

Karimah dedicates her performance to every young woman of color that continues to RISE UP in the faces of adversity!
JOE CABRERA (Lighting Designer) is a NYC and Vermont based designer working in theatre, dance, opera, and events. Projects include The Last Wide Open, Ass Plays, West Side Story, Brecht on Brecht, Nike – React Launch. Joe is an instructor with Technical Artisans Collective and the Design Mentor at Dwight School, NYC. - - www.joecabrera.nyc

MICHAEL ECKENREITER (Stage Manager/Transcriber) is an actor, director, musician, and sound designer based out of Massachusetts. He graduated from Bridgewater State University with a BA in Theatre Arts and a minor in Musical Theatre Performance.

My mom has inspired me through her strength and perseverance in being a single mother and her ability to navigate through life’s most difficult moments seemingly with ease.


"Jane Austen inspires me to find the hilarity in the mundane.

ADAM MCDONALD (Music Director, Composer and Piano) has music directed the national tours of Wicked and Dr. Seuss’ How the Grinch Stole Christmas. He is thrilled to be back in Boston having received his Master’s degree in piano performance from The Boston Conservatory, and is thankful for the opportunity to create and tell the story of these past and present heroines.

Adam dedicates this production to his mom, sister, aunts, and grandma – all the great women who help me every step of the way.

LISA RAFFERTY (Playwright, Director, Producer) creates documentary plays which celebrate heroic women and men and writes comedies about motherhood seen around the world. She is the producing director of the Elliot Norton Awards and loves teaching at Bridgewater State University. Proud member of the Dramatists Guild and the Stage Directors and Choreographers.

She dedicates this production to three extraordinary women: her daughters Megan and Molly, and her late mom, Patricia Gusler Daud.

ILYSE ROBBINS (Choreographer) is an award-winning choreographer, director, actor, educator, coach, and writer. Recent credits include The 39 Steps at Greater Boston Stage Company and Beehive at Peterborough Players. Ilyse choreographed/staged the world premiere of Swan Lake in Blue: A Jazz Ballet. She is currently directing All is Calm at GBSC.

Ilyse dedicates this choreography to her first dance teacher and inspiration Charlotte Klein.
ZOË SUNDRA (Costume Designer) design credits include Keyp-ing and A Very Herrera Holiday at New Repertory Theatre, Bright Half Life at Actors’ Shakespeare Project, Ragtime and Stuart Little at Wheelock Family Theater, Poppea at New England Conservatory. Sundra is a fiber artist with a degree in Fibers from Massachusetts College of Art and Design.

Shout out to Ani Difranco for showing me how to be a hard-working punk artist, and how to create beauty from life.

KELSEY WHIPPLE (Assistant Stage Manager) is a stage manager who graduated from Suffolk University and works with various companies such as Actors’ Shakespeare Project and Hub Theatre Company. She also works as TA at Perkins School for the Blind, choreographer for Suffolk’s show choir, Rampage, and stream operator for virtual live events.

Kelsey dedicates this show to nontraditionally presenting women who inspire me – who explore what being a woman really means and who work against the misogyny and gender roles which persist.

MUSICIANS

Adam McDonald        Conductor and Piano
Elena Rubin          English Horn and Oboe
Mary O'Keefe         Flute, Alto Flute and Piccolo
Kenji Kikuchi        Clarinet
Carrol Lee           Viola
Tom Holdener         Cello
Holly Alper          Double Bass
Dylan Barber         Drums and Percussion
Daniel Gittler       Music Copyist

SPEAKERS

FREDIE KAY will introduce ONWARD on November 17th. She is an attorney, women’s rights and political advocate, and the President of the Women’s Suffrage Celebration Coalition of Massachusetts.

KATHERINE A. SHERBROOKE will introduce the matinee performance of ONWARD, on November 16th. She is the author of Living Coy’s Hill, a historical fiction novel about suffragist Lucy Stone.

ELAINE WEISS will introduce the evening premiere of ONWARD, on November 16th. She is a Baltimore-based journalist and author of the critically acclaimed book Woman’s Hour: The Great Fight to Win the Vote.
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The women’s suffrage movement was a decades-long fight to win the right to vote for women in the United States. The 19th Amendment, which guarantees women the right to vote, was finally passed by Congress on June 4, 1919, and ratified on August 18, 1920. To mark the 100th anniversary of this historic event, the Associates of the Boston Public Library commissioned ONWARD – Votes for Women to celebrate many of the advocates who brought about this radical change.

Some websites where you can learn more about women’s suffrage include

- Massachusetts Historical Society
  www.masshist.org/features/suffrage

- Greater Boston Women’s Vote Centennial
  www.boston.gov/departments/womens-advancement/greater-boston-womens-vote-centennial

- Women’s Suffrage Celebration Coalition
  suffrage100ma.org

- National Women’s History Museum
  www.womenshistory.org

- National Archives – Woman Suffrage and the 19th Amendment
  www.archives.gov/education/lessons/woman-suffrage

- Library of Congress – Shall Not Be Denied: Women Fight for the Vote
  www.loc.gov/exhibitions/women-fight-for-the-vote/about-this-exhibition

- "The Vote," a 4-hour documentary film in July
  www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/1900-suffrage