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Who is Dinah Minot & why is everyone trying to get to know her?

Creative Portland’s new director could change everything.

SHE WAS LIVE FROM New York. Now she’s live in Maine. Creative Portland’s new executive director Dinah Minot has a big-city resume, having spent much of her time in the entertainment world as a producer of 73 episodes of Saturday Night Live, and before that as a talent coordinator for 18 episodes, working with the likes of Oprah Winfrey, Angelica...
People

Hutson, and Alec Baldwin, as well as producing Wayne’s World 2. The New England native has clearly proven that her business gears churn and turn, but it’s her creative heart that’s beating fast and loud. One of seven Minot siblings who seem to share a unique DNA strand of storytelling, Dinah grew up summiting on North Haven Island, an enclave of luminous entertainers. Is something in the water?

Our first interview seems rushed, even unlucky, so I ask her for another. When we meet again in her office in the State Theatre building, she turns me to bright blue glasses. “Don’t write about this place. It’s just where I am for the time being.” She goes on to describe Creative Portland’s plans on opening a new space in the new year and how everyone will be invited.

“I’m sorry about our first interview,” I say and take a seat.

“Yeah, it felt like a panel discussion.”

“Right. Well, I went home and complained to my boyfriend enough that he said I should email you.”

“Hah! Sounds like my husband (actor Whip Hubley, Val Kilmer’s sidekick in Top Gun).” Propping her feet up, Minot opens a crate of blueberries and pops them in one by one with a smile.

For many years, your family has spent summers on North Haven, and you continue that tradition today. What about the island inspires you creatively? North Haven is an idyllic location. It’s the creaking of the docks, we don’t have TV, we are cooking and eating and singing together. It’s really the whole feeling of sharing and tradition that’s been so deep in my heart. I love it. When I’d land in Boston, it was like a bird coming home. You return to your roots. I’ve discovered deep ancestral roots in Maine. There’s a portrait of my great grandmother hanging in the Portland Museum of Art by John Singer Sargent.

“I’m from a family of artists and writers and musicians and songwriters.”

How did you end up in Portland?

“My husband and I moved here almost a year ago last November. We came cross-country with our English Labrador, sold our house, put our stuff in storage, and drove straight back East to see family and friends in New York, Massachusetts, and Maine. We started talking about where we were going to land. We really wanted to give Portland a try, and we know enough people here. I’m just a Mainer at heart. I love it here.

Did you ever feel “from away?”

I initially thought I’d miss the diversity and culture in my hometown of Santa Monica, but when I got here, I was pleasantly surprised to see there was certainly more diversity than some of my friends had told me about. I’m really excited by the fact that Portland is a destination for refugee settlement and there is a high immigration influx. That’s something that makes me really excited in terms of arts and culture and world scene here. This town is going to change a lot in the next ten years, and I want to be a part of that

immigrant integration. I want to embrace and promote cultural acceptance.

What is Creative Portland’s role in the city?

We’re offering a voice of solidarity, and in that process, we’ll find out if everybody wants to have concerts in the streets. If so, we’ll do that. We’d talk about it. If everybody just wants to play bocce ball on Tuesday morning, then I guess we will be the bocce capital.

What would you do if it were only up to you? What would I do if I were a dictator? (She laughs and turns to look out the window overlooking Congress Square Park.) I’d try to encourage more sharing so that there is a more fluid artistic scene. When I worked at SNL, I remember regrouping on Mondays after the show before the host meeting with all the writers and cast. We’d talk about the water cooler conversations that were morning. You want them talking about First Friday Art Walk with excitement, not just talking about a First Friday Art Walk that’s become such a generic thing.

Everywhere, simultaneously, people in cities across the country are discovering their craft brews and other distinctive things. How will you come up with an exclusive language that only says Portland, Maine?

The seven Minot kids have all pursued careers in the fields of writing and the arts. Perhaps best known is the second oldest daughter, Susan Minot, whose 1986 debut novel—a minimalist semi-autobiographical account of their childhood entitled Monkeys—propelled her into literary circles and won her the Prix Femina Étranger. Minot also wrote Stealing Beauty starring Maine’s Liv Tyler.

The House of Minot

Talk about a creative pedigree. The Minot clan is a Boston Brahmin family of writers and artists tinged by tragedy. Carrie Minot, mother to the seven Minot children, passed away in a car crash in 1979. Father George Minot followed in 1999 from cancer.

The seven Minot kids have all pursued careers in the fields of writing and the arts. Perhaps best known is the second oldest daughter, Susan Minot, whose 1986 debut novel—a minimalist semi-autobiographical account of their childhood entitled Monkeys—propelled her into literary circles and won her the Prix Femina Étranger. Minot also wrote Stealing Beauty starring Maine’s Liv Tyler.
Lady Lamb: From Brunswick basement
to sell-out shows.

Laughing, laughing, that night in Maine I met my best friend, talking ’til 7 a.m., realizing we were both afraid of the notion of having our brains be in the body of a whale in the ocean deep where the light don’t reach…” These lyrics (from the 2015 studio album After) are typical of the unusual musical sensibilities that have made Lady Lamb, real name Aly Spaltro, so well-loved among her avid fan base. The 27-year-old musician plays with a stream-of-consciousness narrative and surreal imagery to create music that Rolling Stone has described as “heavy psychedelic tales that blur the borders between reality, dream, and nightmare.”

“I’m a musician by profession, but first and foremost I’m a writer,” says Spaltro as she wanders through Prospect Park, New York. “[I’m walking away from the traffic and into the woods. The leaves are turning.]”

“I wrote poetry and screenplays throughout high school. It wasn’t until my gap year, when I began working at Bart and Greg’s DVD Explosion in Brunswick, that I started channeling my creativity into music. I’d planned to work abroad on a program in Guatemala, but it fell through at the last minute. All my friends were leaving and I felt stuck, so I resolved to teach myself to play music. I’d work the closing shift at the DVD store and then spend eight or nine hours a night in the basement, experimenting with music. It was a formative experience for me,” she says. Within a couple of years, Spaltro was playing regular shows around Portland, gathering a loyal following of fans. She eventually moved to Brooklyn in 2014, citing the need to escape her comfort zone, but she still claims a fierce loyalty to Maine (she even has its outline tattooed on her right arm). Ironically, Spaltro has spent more time outside of her home state than within it.

“Growing up, my dad was in the Air Force, so we moved around a lot. I lived mostly in the Southwest–Arizona and Nevada–as well as Germany for several years. It was a nomadic childhood. Both my parents were Mainers, so the idea of Maine was something comforting that I clung to during that time. I was fascinated with our family history, our mythology, so it was always a part of my narrative.” The family eventually settled in Brunswick when Spaltro was 14. “Everywhere we lived felt like I was just passing through until I got to Maine.”

Following a six-week tour over the summer with The Tallest Man on Earth that took her across the country, including a packed show at State Theatre, Spaltro has spent the past few months between Europe and New York, creating new material.

“Kristian [The Tallest Man on Earth] lent me the keys to his home in Sweden. It’s miles from anywhere, and it has this tiny studio. I ended up in there for ten hours a day, writing and recording alone.” The solitary process seems reminiscent of the long, lonely hours Spaltro spent practicing in her Brunswick basement.

“I’d intended to write my third studio album, but the songs I was making were all solo acoustic tracks.” Following her creative instinct, Spaltro pursued this new direction, creating an EP entitled The Tender Warriors Club. She plans to release the new material in December before going on tour. “I want to play some smaller shows, like clubs and ticketed house parties,” she says. “The kinds of places I started playing in Portland in the beginning.”

And the EP title? “It just came out one day. I was talking to a friend whose marriage had recently ended. She was going to Paris alone to process it, and I told her, ‘You’re a tender warrior.’ I realized it’s a good way to describe most of the people I love. Powerful yet vulnerable.

–Sarah Moore
Who do you call if you’re a sports star accused of doping? **Paul Greene.**

**Getting a Jump on Rio**

At Monument Square, all kinds of goods and services are for sale: smoothies, books, real estate. But if you happen to be an Olympic athlete wrongfully accused of taking steroids, you can also find a lawyer to represent you before the world Court of Arbitration for Sport. Nestled above Longfellow Books, **Global Sports Advocates** is an international law firm that represents Olympians and other world-class athletes in a range of case types from anti-doping to intellectual property to contract and salary disputes. The firm is founded and run by **Paul Greene**—track athlete turned sportscaster turned lawyer—who has worked with Michael Phelps; NHL player Nicholas Baxter; and more recently, Russian Olympic long jumper **Darya Klishina**.

Originally from Long Island, New York, Greene, 45, did his undergrad at Brandeis University in Waltham, Massachusetts, before studying broadcasting at Syracuse University, where he learned volumes about speaking off the cuff. “The very first day of grad school, they pulled me and some woman from Iowa out of the crowd, and we had to ad lib an entire breakup in front of 2,000 people.”

Greene’s early training in sports broadcasting prepared him for his career in law. “It was such a fun way to learn to use my voice. Truthfully, it helps me today. When you’re in front of a panel of arbitrators, it’s all about your oral presentation—how fast you can think on your feet.”

Sports broadcasting also brought Greene to Portland at age 24, where he found a job with Fox 52 News as a sports director. Greene loved his work, but the station closed after six years. “The parent company was hemorrhaging money. The internet boom was over. I was thirty years old with a wife and kids. I had to figure out what else I was going to do.”

A close friend suggested he go to law school, and so in 2004, Greene enrolled at University of Maine School of Law. Following graduation, he began sowing the seeds of what would later become Global Sports Advocates by taking on sports arbitration cases for little to no money.

By 2013, demand for his skills started to rise. So had his fees. “I hit a breaking point. It was now or never.” Greene founded Global Sports Advocates in 2014.

Unlike a criminal case, sports arbitration cases are not judged by civilian juries but by lawyers and former judges. Another difference: athletes aren’t protected by the Fifth Amendment: “You have to ask [the athlete] if they did it because they have to testify,” says Greene. “If they don’t, the panel will hold it against them.”

Greene’s world is one of sudden deadlines, shifting time zones, and bloodthirsty reporters. This summer, Greene represented Russian long jumper **Darya Klishina**, who was on track to compete in the Rio Olympics. The International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) had banned her and the rest of her track-and-field team after an investigation found that the Russian government had tampered with athletes’ urine samples. Klishina

“**I’m in Brazil in gridlocked traffic. Just before my phone dies, I get an urgent message that says the story [about Darya Klishina] had leaked.**”

After clearing Klishina (above) to compete, Greene (top) catches a soccer game in Rio. Former captain of his college track and cross country team, Greene still runs; his marathon best is two hours and 57 minutes.
sought an exemption from the ban because she’d been living in the United States full time since March 2014 and had participated in anti-doping programs outside of Russia.

Negotiations heated up, with Greene on point. Then, devastatingly, after going back and forth regarding the 25-year-old long jumper’s eligibility, the association ended up reversing the decision to give Klishina exemption from the ban just days before the competition.

“We found out on Thursday morning,” says Greene. “I got in my car and drove to Boston. Three hours later I was on a plane to Atlanta, where I met Darya. We flew down [to Rio de Janeiro] together overnight. Friday morning she went to the Olympic Village, and I went to my hotel. Then it was game on.”

Greene says everything about the case was done, quite literally, on the fly.

“I had this moment. I’m in Brazil, trying to get to the Olympic Village from the hotel. It’s gridlocked traffic. Just before my phone dies, I get an urgent message that says the story has leaked.”

A tumultuous horde of reporters pressed outside of the courtroom during the hearing, some of them tried to sneak nearer to the door to listen in on the case. After making his argument that Klishina had been training and undergoing testing for two years outside of the corrupt Russian system, Greene had nothing else to do save wait for the panel to make its decision.

Greene remembers waking up at 5 a.m. the next morning to the sound of his phone buzzing. “I had five hundred texts and multiple missed calls from reporters. Clearly I’d missed the message. They’d put out a press release that we won.”

One hundred nineteen members of the Russian Olympic team were banned from competing in Rio, including all but one track-and-field athlete, Greene’s client. ‘No pressure.’ Competing absolutely alone for her country in the eye of the world’s cameras, she finished ninth, jumping 21 feet, 8 inches.

How strange is it that a thriving global law firm catering to elite athletes is headquartered right above Longfellow Books rather than the business district of a metropolis like New York or Los Angeles? Greene thinks it’s a sign of the times.

“Geography is kind of an artificial barrier in today’s world when your free communication services can reach anywhere in the world,” he says. As long as you talk the talk.

–Michael Schoch
Light Fantastic

Bowdoin grad Anthony Doerr cuts through the darkness in his breakout novel All the Light We Cannot See.

They say ‘write what you know,’ but Anthony Doerr dared to stray far from his comfort zone…and he’s got a Pulitzer to prove it. Doerr’s fourth book, All the Light We Cannot See, is a spellbinding 544-page novel 10 years in the making, set amid the devastation of Europe during the Second World War. In addition to the Pulitzer, All the Light We Cannot See has won the Andrew Carnegie Medal for Excellence in Fiction in 2015, spent 49 weeks on the New York Times bestseller list, and has sold an estimated two million copies.

A native Clevelander who currently lives in Boise, Idaho, Doerr moved to Maine at 18 to attend Bowdoin College, but recalls more vividly the scenery around its campus rather than within the ivy-covered walls where Nathaniel Hawthorne and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow once studied.

“One of my older brothers went to Bates. I assumed that’s what you do—you get older, you go to college in Maine. I was lucky enough to go to Bowdoin, where I made friends with kids from South Paris and Rumford. I started spending as much time as I could in the state’s mountains and rivers and on the coasts with those guys, fishing for stripers, skiing, climbing, things like that.” This rough-and-tumble college experience sounds fitting of a man who last year told The Guardian, “I grew up where to call yourself a writer would be precocious. Or pretentious.”

However, the writer’s relationship with the state began much earlier.

“As a snail-obsessed 11-year-old—or may-be 12?—I went to oceanography camp on Mount Desert Island: tidal pooling, clambering over rocks, hunting horseshoe crabs and anemones. Was I ever happier? Later that same summer I discovered Stephen King, and Maine was in my blood ever since.”

Which has led to deeper investigations. “I was discovering Maine writers like Lawrence Sargent Hall and Sarah Orne Jewett and Edna St. Vincent Millay, writers who paid attention to birds and fish and the colors of the sky at night, the sound of the snow in winter—these things all spilled into my notebooks, my head, my soul.”

Doerr’s most vividly rendered memory of Maine, however, isn’t so halcyon. After graduating from Bowdoin, he went on a fishing trip to Rapid River between Rangeley and the New Hampshire border. After stumbling and smashing his knee against a rock, Doerr sat down to recover and eat lunch, only to pass out and slump, head first, into the water:

“How long was I gone? A few seconds? A year? At some point I was jerked back into this world. My father’s fist had seized the
front of my waders and he was squinting at me as if to say, ‘Did you just do that?’

After the trip, Doerr reflected on mortality despite his then tender age.

“People die for ideas and countries and each other. I would have died for what? A few brook trout. Some corn chips and a sandwich. I went to the bathroom and looked at myself in the mirror and thought: You aren’t much.”

The jarring experience may have left a lasting impression on the man who went on to so deftly give voice to his young protagonist, Marie-Laure LeBlanc, a blind 14-year-old French girl. He writes in *All the Light We Cannot See*, “To shut your eyes is to guess nothing of blindness. Beneath your world of skies and faces and buildings exists a rawer and older world, a place where surface planes disintegrate and sounds ribbon in shoals through the air.” Perhaps that momentary descent into oblivion and darkness was the key to understanding his central character.

Over the span of a decade of writing, Doerr’s narrative grew organically alongside his research into the period and his developing fascination with radio.

“Along the way it became a book about radio: How did the Reich use radio to hammer a warped nationalism into the minds of Germany’s poor?” And how did brave souls use radio to resist German occupation, not just in Vichy France but throughout Europe? I also wanted to conjure a time when it was a miracle to hear the voice of a distant stranger in our homes, in our ears.”

Following the news that 20th Century Fox has acquired exclusive film rights, Doerr’s star sees no sign of fading.

—Michael Schoch
Sherri Mitchell, 47, makes news as a lawyer, teacher, activist, writer. To the people of the Penobscot Tribe on Indian Island, she is more simply Wena'gamigwaisit or “She who brings the light,” the tribal name given to her by the elders of the community.

Three years ago, she moved back to Indian Island, where she grew up with her parents, fours sisters, and “our one poor brother.” Back then, things were very insular.

“I only figured out fairly late in childhood the differences between my community and that of other Americans. Junior high was my first real experience outside of Indian Island, and the differences between my community and the larger population were startling. I seemed ‘strange’ to my classmates because I’d approach someone at school who seemed distressed, even if I didn’t know them.”

Mitchell graduated from the University of Maine magna cum laude and went on to study law at the University of Arizona on the Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy Program. Her primary focus is the protection of indigenous people and lands. “Day-to-day I work as an attorney, primarily for tribal members. On a broader level, I work as an executive director for the Land Peace Trust, where I consult on broader level, I work as an executive director for the Land Peace Trust, where I consult on spaces, and the rights to freedom of religious issues like land usage, the protection of sacred for the Land Peace Trust, where I consult on spaces, and the rights to freedom of religious issues like land usage, the protection of sacred and the differences between my community and the larger population were startling. I seemed ‘strange’ to my classmates because I’d approach someone at school who seemed distressed, even if I didn’t know them.”

Mitchell’s focus is not confined to Native American cases. She recently returned from consulting with a Maori community in New Zealand. She’s also worked with indigenous groups in Canada, Columbia, and across Central America.

“My aim is to educate and raise awareness on issues that affect indigenous people, such as the Dakota Access Pipeline. I also want to raise awareness of Native American culture, particularly here in Maine. A lot of people don’t even know Maine has an indigenous population!”

Mitchell is an expert at the twisting chains of deception between the Maine state government and the Wabanaki Confederacy.

“When Maine seceded from Massachusetts in 1820, the obligations of the government to tribal people was memorialized in the Maine Constitution to ensure our protection. But in 1876, an amendment was passed to prohibit those laws from being published. So a hundred years later, if you’re a lawyer of indigenous land rights, for example, you can’t even get a copy of those constitutional agreements! It’s a relationship of neglect from the very beginning.”

Mitchell also works closely with the Sunlight Media Collective, a group of tribal members, journalists, and filmmakers campaigning to raise awareness of the ongoing appeal to deny the Penobscot Nation territorial rights to the waters of the Penobscot River.

“In August 2012, then-Attorney General William Schneider released a statement claiming the Penobscot Nation had no claim to the waters along the stem of the Penobscot River, and that our protected space did not extend beyond the shoreline of our some 200 islands. This is our ancestral river, our namesake river. The government’s claim that our territory does not include this water is ridiculous,” Mitchell says.

The conflict reached such a tenor that in 2013, the federal government sought to intervene to lend their support to the Penobscot Nation. While much of the dispute was centered around the tribe’s sustenance fishing rights, Mitchell believes the state government’s interests are more threatening.

“It’s a preemptive attempt to open up those territories to industry. They want to nullify our claim to the area in order to support projects like the East-West industrial corridor, which would run from mid-coast Maine to Montreal. It would have a huge impact, not just on the Wabanaki, but the ecology of the entire area.”

On the one hand, Mitchell is a fiercely driven lawyer, all fact and reason. On the other, she speaks fluently on the topics of spirituality, philosophy, and poetry. This duality is evident in her current book project, Sacred Instruction: “It’s a guide to spiritual activism containing guidance on how to engage change within yourself to effect change in the outside world, alongside actual hard fact and legal advice on activism and protest. The two aspects of my personality are intertwined. Law is what I do, but my life is driven.

“A lot of people don’t even know that Maine has an indigenous population!”

by the Wabanaki principal of Skejinawe-bamousawakonis—the idea that we are all tied to each other and to the earth.

“Wabanaki teaching tells us that our ancestors ‘dream up into the future.’ They’ve sacrificed in order to allow us to exist, so it’s our duty to do the same for our descendants. That entails more than just giving life. We need to take responsibility to preserve the world for the generations to come. That’s my life’s work.”

–Sarah Moore
For Lucas St. Clair, 38, initiation into the family business began early. “I was about six when my mother [Roxanne Quimby] started Burt’s Bees in 1984. I grew up hand-rolling candles and making lotions,” he says. St. Clair continued to help with the burgeoning Burt’s Bees brand throughout his school years until the business began to really take off in the early 2000s. The sudden upturn in the family’s financial fortunes was at odds with the then-high schooler’s upbringing, growing up in a hand-built cabin in Dover-Foxcroft.

“My parents were real back-to-the-land types. They had a combined income of about $4,000 a year. My sister [his twin Hannah] and I became aware of our mother’s growing success, but our own lives didn’t change dramatically. By that point, I was already on my own path.”

St. Clair’s trajectory has included over 10 years in the culinary arts and wine world. “I started working in restaurants in my teens. I moved to London to study at Le Cordon Bleu Cooking School, followed by jobs at Eleven Madison Park in New York and at Wild Ginger in Seattle. While I was out West, I studied and sat for my sommelier exams with the Court of Master Sommeliers in 2009.”

How does one make the leap from master sommelier to executive director of the family land conservation trust, Elliotsville Plantation, Inc.?

“I moved back to Maine in 2011, when the Katahdin Woods project was gaining momentum. At some point, I realized that being a sommelier wasn’t really doing good in the world. The Elliotsville Plantation needed a campaign manager, so I asked my mother if I could take the job. I’m under no illusion that I’d have [landed the job] had she posted the position online. I had no background in campaign management or public land policy. I just felt I could make a positive impact.”

Roxanne Quimby had begun buying up parcels of the land in the Katahdin region from 1998, eventually amassing an estate of over 150,000 acres. The land trust was formed to manage this expanse of forestland east of Baxter State Park and ultimately transform it into a National Park. Over the years, these efforts have sparked a bitter and highly publicized dispute between
the organization and its supporters and an opposition party that feels local life will be compromised by the strict laws that surround National Park territory.

“I knew I was entering into a very public debate,” says St. Clair. “The people in opposition felt threatened by the change to the local area. It was my goal to overcome the perception that we were trying to block the public from that land. It’s about protecting the land for ourselves and future generations.”

St. Clair admits he lacks his mother’s business instincts, but he believes this is exactly what makes him suitable for the position on the Elliotsville Plantation board. “We have a different approach. My mother is extremely forthright and decisive. The opposition to the project frustrated her because she was so assured of its importance, whereas I’m more of a diplomat.”

The Quimby family name is well known in these parts, a connection that often proves burdensome for St. Clair.

“I’m sure a lot of people thought I was just this spoiled kid. I had to work hard to overcome that perception and to make it clear I have no ulterior motives.” At first, “There was this misconception that I have my mother’s resources. A lot of people thought I wanted to use the park for my own financial gain. The best moments were when some [people] from the opposition changed their mind and gave us their support. It felt so good to see that kind of tangible progress.”

The land in question, over 87,000 acres of prime Maine woodland, was officially awarded monument status by President Obama on the 100-year anniversary of the National Park Service this year. For St. Clair and the Elliotsville organization, the result was a culmination of five years of hard work.

“I’ve put around 60,000 miles on my car [a diesel Jeep Grand Cherokee] in the past two years, driving between Portland, Patten, and Washington D.C.,” says St. Clair. “I’m looking forward to spending a little more time with my family in Portland.”

–Sarah Moore
Would it chill you to the bone to discover a bill of sale for 11 human beings at an auction in Northeast Harbor, along with their names and prices? For Ashley Bryan, stumbling onto this horrific single sheet of paper among the collection of 20 documents he acquired was the point of departure for his latest book, *Freedom Over Me*.

How did the documents find their way up here? Were they among the lost ephemera of the summer rusticators of Bar Harbor, many of whose families had earned their fortunes with ties to the slave trade generations before? Maine is a state whose history with slavery often goes unacknowledged.

While the Little Cranberry Island resident has penned numerous award-winning children’s books—he’s the first ever African American to ever write and illustrate a book in that genre, this story is something else again. It is fearlessly poignant, gentle, and evoking deep feeling where that is required, because Bryan feels young readers deserve the chance to understand an imperfect world along with the rest of us. “I want to continue to strive to create worthy work that gives the best to children,” he says during a telephone interview, his voice so strong it sails across the line.

Because of Bryan’s gift for storytelling, there’s a sweetness here, too. In *Freedom Over Me*, Bryan explores the legacy of slavery through the 11 striking voices he developed from the names on the bill of sale he found, all members of a family sold from their estate. The single document that drew him in particular—the Fairchilds Appraisal of the Estate—is a list of “goods” and their prices, including animals, cottons, and, yes, those enslaved. In its searing incompleteness, the nightmare document contains only names and prices. The discovery prompted a ten-year-long “heart and soul project,” during which time Bryan immersed himself in further research into slavery, as well as imagining himself in the shoes of these 11 enslaved individuals. "In doing a book like *Freedom Over Me*,” he says, “I was reading every day deeper and deeper into what I knew [of slavery], but I did not truly know the depth of the segregation and horror, the extremes of cruelty. The details are overwhelming. I spent most of the time crying as I wrote it.”


As parents and children read *Freedom Over Me* together, children can ask their parents about the images, the themes, the history. They can ask their parents, in short, about slavery.

“My first instinct was to set the story in Virginia,” says Bryan, “but my editor pointed out that the document gave no indication of location. Instead we chose to let the reader set the story wherever he or she imagines, because slavery happened all over the country—north to south. Nowhere in this country was innocent of any involvement in slavery. Our entire industry was built on slave labor.

“If those documents had been in New York, Chicago, or San Francisco,” Bryan says, “all the institutions would’ve been after them.” But here in these northern latitudes, “I took that document because it had nothing in it.” His passion and responsibility was, “I could make it up: who [the slaves] are, their work, where they come from.”

From there, Bryan began making portraits of each character, purposely hitting close to home by using the features of his friends and family to create the images. Then he began to ask questions about the people, now fully visualized. “If you were free, what would your dream of life be?” This
gives the book its structure and its magic. We are introduced, on one page, to a name, a face, and a price. Then Bryan, on the subsequent pages, gives us verse about this person, his/her background, his/her dreams. For instance, “Athelia” may only be a name and a price ($175) in the records of history, but through poetry, Bryan imagines her as a plainly dressed laundress who dreams of keeping alive an oral tradition:

Through all my years / enslaved, / I’ve listened to / ancestral voices / echoing through / my weariness, / giving me strength…

The well of ancestry and its richness becomes one of the book’s major themes. “The only time that an art of the people was completely dedicated to the glory of God,” Bryan says, “was with the thousands of songs of black American slaves.” We see what those songs mean, and how they managed to give, as Athelia says, strength.

Bryan understands something of art as a survival mechanism. During World War II, he drew whenever he could on the sketch pad he kept in his gas mask. Back in the States, he put the drawings away and never looked at them for 40 years—not until he participated in a seminar on “war and peace.” He converted them into slides, spoke on his experiences, and tried to move on. But, like the characters he writes about in Freedom Over Me, he cannot escape the pull of the past. His next project will be a memoir about his World War II experiences. These drawings will play an integral part.

“I converted one of the drawings into a painting of black troops in a segregated army playing cards.” It’s a painful memory for him, but now? He pauses. “When you look at that painting, you’d think I was painting in my neighbor’s garden.” But he was there. “[Perspective like this] never could’ve happened in the forties. I wouldn’t have seen it with that sense of release.”

–Benjamin Rybeck

Peggy, 48, $150; John, 16, $100; Jane, 28, $300; Athelia, 42, $175; Betty, 36, $150; Qush, 62, $100; Stephen, 32, $300; Mulvina, 60, $100; Bacus, 34, $250; Charlotte, 30, and Dora, 8, $400.
Recently I’ve been thinking about why I got into rowing. I used to think it was because I did well at it,” says 28-year-old Elle Logan.

In the case of Logan, “doing well” means winning her third consecutive Olympic gold medal in as many games, becoming the first American rower to ever accomplish such a feat. Her most recent victory was in Rio De Janeiro in August.

But her reason for rowing, before she ever dipped a competitive oar into the water, was to glide back to her very outdoorsy past, “where I grew up bird hunting in Jackman and swimming with my dad in Boothbay Harbor.”

She remembers, “I’d drive my little 13-foot Boston Whaler by myself to go to sailing lessons. Then I’d go to my friend’s house after. That boat was like my freedom. I spent all summer outside.”

Though Logan has competed successfully in smaller boats and singles competition, her Olympic victories have all been in the women’s coxed eight. Amid this harmony of motion, she fills the position known as the “engine room”—a fitting spot for someone who never gets winded.

“I have a big heart and huge lung capacity,” Logan says. “Most of the time when people are getting tired, I’m just getting warmed up.”

Logan believes she inherits her endurance from her “barrel-chested” dad, and “my long frame from my mom.” At 6’2”, Logan also has “long arms and legs, even for my height,” which gives her added leverage when rowing. While she acknowledges she has some inherited physical advantages, she points out that those advantages only become so with practice. “If you’re longer and taller, it’s harder to coordinate your movements. It can help you if you get it right, but you have to get it right.”

Lost to some observers is the intellectu-
There's a lot of skill and technique required,” she says. “There's artistry because you have a rhythm behind it.”

She’s spent her entire adult life refining this art. She started rowing during her freshman year at The Brooks School in Andover, Massachusetts.

Logan's mom, Jennifer Kierstead, believes it was a critical moment. "If she hadn't gone to that school, she might never have been an Olympic rower," she says. “Opportunity is so critical in rowing and any sport. You need the facilities, equipment and support.”

After graduating, Logan attended and rowed for Stanford, earning All-American status. She won a spot on the Olympic team and her first gold medal during her junior year. Since then it’s been an unending cycle of training and competing. In 2016, she was honored as the Pac-12s “rower of the century.”

Logan married fellow rower Carlos Dinares last summer. Dinares rowed for the Spanish national team and is now a principal in a company that sells cutting-edge rowing machines in Seattle, where she joined him after swinging through Maine to celebrate post-Rio. What does life after the Olympics hold for the girl who’s been so deeply into the zen of rowing her entire professional life?

“I'm so excited,” Logan says. “I’d love to go into some business and just create something. I'm not sure exactly what that is. I know there's a lot happening in Seattle, and I'm happy to reach out and start exploring.”

Sounds like a brilliant stroke.

–Michael Schoch
Dr. Sarah Parcak strides confidently to the center of the auditorium. It’s familiar ground to her. After all, she’s the 2016 winner of the TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) Project’s vision award for $1M. The crowd drops to a hush as she considers their shapes in the darkness. She begins:

“When I was a child growing up in Maine, one of my favorite things to do was to look for sand dollars on the sea shores of Maine because my parents told me it would bring me luck. But you know these shells—they’re hard to find. They’re covered in sand. They’re difficult to see. However, over time I got used to looking for them. I started seeing shapes and patterns that helped me to collect them. This grew into a passion for finding things, a love for the past and archaeology, and eventually, when I started studying Egyptology, I realized that seeing with my naked eyes alone wasn’t enough because all of a sudden in Egypt my beach had grown from a tiny beach in Maine to one 800 miles long next to the Nile, and my sand dollars had grown to the size of cities. This is really what brought me to using satellite imagery.”

With a degree in Egyptology and Archaeological Studies from Yale University in 2001, and her Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge (and a varsity soccer champ at both schools), the Bangor High School alumna’s academic and professional ascent has been quite literally ionospheric.

Specifically, the Professor of Anthropology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham employs satellite images from 450 miles above Earth and complex algorithms to analyze slight variations in landscape that could indicate human activity. Parcak’s recent discoveries include a 2,150-year-old monument in Petra, Jordan; a potential Norse Settlement in Newfoundland (only the second suggestion of Viking settlers discovered in the New World); and 17 pyramids, 1,000 tombs, and 3,000 ancient settlements along the Nile.

Because of her exceptional achievements, she’s reaching an international audience through appearances on Nova, The Late Show with Stephen Colbert, Egypt’s Lost Cities, and Rome: What Lies Beneath.

Now, she’s trying to get you involved. Parcak recently launched GlobalXplorer, an online platform where users scour satellite images for traces for unknown archaeological sites. Think of it as crowdsourcing for the unknown.

Did you find ways to exercise your passion for archaeology while growing up in the Maine? How?

I spent a lot of time outside, and since my grandfather was a retired forestry professor from UMO, any time outside was a teachable moment. I still remember all my trees. I didn’t practice archaeology growing up, but I loved exploring and learning about the natural world around me.
Will you see all of these sites you’ve discovered fully excavated in your lifetime?
It is never our goal in archaeology to excavate everything—or even a large part of what we discover. That’s for future generations. It would be impossible and unethical.
I am the director of the el Lisht site near Cairo (one of the discovery sites in Egypt) dating back to 1700 BC. That’s enough for a lifetime of work.

What’s the timeline for GlobalXplorer? Will you market it as a game, a scientific tool, or both?
It will launch in early 2017, with the beta version going online in December. We want it to be a tool for everyone to engage with exploration. It’s been carefully designed for anyone aged five to 95—from archaeologists to interested members of the public—to get involved. I can’t wait to see what happens when we do launch. It is literally the coolest thing ever—I can’t wait to play!

You’re a scientist and academic whose achievements have given you access to a much larger audience. Does being an ambassador for the archaeological community create a lot of pressure?
I don’t think of the pressure as much as the responsibility. There aren’t many public-facing archaeologists, and our field needs them—especially now with so many ancient sites threatened. It is a balancing act between writing articles and grants, working on public lectures, and media opportunities. I think you can do both successfully, but you need tenure (which I got in 2011) to be on the safe side. I use my time in front of audiences—whether live or on the small screen—to celebrate the work of my field. So many of my colleagues are doing great work, and I’m thrilled when I can discuss their discoveries.

Do you come back to Maine often?
Sadly, I only manage to come back about once a year. I hope to change that. My parents are in Bangor, and my brother is in Portland. Maine is ‘the way life should be!’ It will always be my home.

—Michael Schoch

Stephen Colbert to Dr. Sarah Parcak on The Late Show: ‘Are you trying to put Indiana Jones out of business?’

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Between 2010 and 2015, Central Maine Power carried out the largest construction project in Maine’s history. Known as the Maine Power Reliability Program (MPRP), the $1.4 billion project saw the installation of more than 400 miles of transmission lines as well as the construction and rehabilitation of more than 40 electrical substations.

But if you ask economist Rich Silkman, it was all a bit of a waste. Silkman, 65, should know. As former director of the Maine State Planning Office and founder of Portland-based energy consulting firms Competitive Energy Services and Grid Solar, he’s been around the grid with Maine’s energy industry more than a few times.

“The need for the program was predicated on two things,” Silkman says. “First, significant predicted load growth in Maine. Second, [there was a requirement] to meet reliability conditions when the load is at its peak level.”

This means that CMP expected Maine’s electricity consumption to rise over time, in turn stressing the grid. Ahead of this, it wanted to build extra high voltage wires as a back up system in case of a power outage. “Summertime in New England is when the [electricity] load peaks—it’s all air-conditioner driven. Summertime is also when the electric grid has the least capacity because electric systems function better in cold weather than in warm weather…That’s your choke point.”

However, back in 2009 when CMP was proposing the massive construction project, Silkman and his colleagues were investigating cheaper, cleaner alternatives. After forming Grid Solar, Silkman and his business partners presented their own plan for meeting Maine’s expected energy demands to the Public Utilities Commission.

Instead of building more transmission lines to increase the supply of electricity flowing into the state, Grid Solar wanted to install a series of smaller, less expensive technologies to conserve energy and prevent the existing electrical grid from getting overloaded.

“This was brand new. Nobody had ever proposed doing something like this before,” Silkman says.

An agreement was reached that CMP would “build the backbone of their system for $1.3 billion, give or take,” in most of the state, but Greater Portland and the Midcoast region would be left aside for Silkman and his colleagues to try alternatives.

They chose Boothbay Harbor as their first test site, calling it the Boothbay Pilot Project. As a small, rural town with a slew of businesses that open exclusively for the summertime, Boothbay is a prime location for this experiment.

Silkman’s Boothbay Pilot Project totaled $6M compared to the $18M CMP would have spent running transmission lines along the Boothbay Peninsula.
for power outages.

Grid Solar installed solar panels, energy-efficient light bulbs, and air-conditioning units that create ice during off-peak hours and then use it to cool buildings when the sun is at its highest point. As a backup to these technologies, they also installed a bank of industrial batteries and a diesel generator.

The combined cost of the alternatives totaled $6 million dollars compared to the $18 million CMP would have spent running transmission lines along the Boothbay Peninsula.

“The project has been performing flawlessly,” Silkman says. “And as an aside, it turns out we were 100 percent correct in our prediction that the cost of solar panels would plummet and that CMP’s load wouldn’t expand. CMP’s load has actually shrunk since 2009.” He adds, “if this forecast had been made back in 2008, [the state] probably would not have built the Maine Power Reliability Project and spent a billion and a half dollars…but that’s water under the bridge.”

Silkman is currently drafting a report for the Public Utilities Commission detailing how well his non-transmission alternatives have worked and arguing to use them more extensively throughout the Midcoast.

But at the same time he’s been working with the PUC, Silkman has been fending off a lawsuit from another energy agency, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

Filed in 2013, the suit claims that Competitive Energy services helped two paper mills commit fraud. In the ongoing case, FERC alleges the paper mills, acting under Silkman’s advice, selectively used their in-house generators to make it seem like they were reducing their electricity consumption in order to receive state-sponsored incentives.

“We are convinced we didn’t do anything wrong,” Silkman says. “Halfway through the project we talked to ISO New England, and they told us to keep doing what we were doing, that that was the appropriate way to operate. At some point we’ll get to go to court and prove it.”

Silkman, who lives in Scarborough with his wife, says the lawsuit doesn’t faze or upset him—it’s all part of the same battle he’s been fighting for most of his career. “We have minor victories, but most of the time it’s an enormous effort to move the ball forward.”

—Michael Schoch