

Walk it Off: A Pageant for Providence celebrates artists and offers opportunity for reflection

Providence is the star, stage and celebrated guest at the upcoming *A Pageant for Providence*, a COVID-safe performance-art walking tour taking place downtown. Taibi Magar, an acclaimed director, together with her life and professional partner, Tyler Dobrowsky, who served as associate artistic director at Trinity Repertory Company, created this project to celebrate the Providence community. The project provides space for people to reflect on the past year and offers an opportunity for healing as we move toward discovering what the new normal will be.

Pageant is a direct response to the pandemic. "It's been a devastating year," says Magar. "Our industry almost entirely collapsed. But out of this wreckage, we started doing work together, which has been pretty incredible."

She describes the event. "It's part ritual, it's part performance. It's more like a space for reflection and catharsis, and asking questions about how to be in space with each other again."

"We have all gone through something," adds Dobrowsky. "Let's just have a moment to reflect on what we've gone through, to dream about what the future could hold. [*Pageant* is] very much built for this moment."

The project, made possible by arts funds and a grant from the New England Foundation for the Arts, celebrates the creative vision of various artists, including writers, dancers and musicians. The event starts as a series of audio tours, each of which leads participants on a unique walking tour through the city. Participants may choose one of six possible tours, each with its own distinct audio experience that includes songs, stories and historical testimony. All six tours will convene at the Providence Rink in Kennedy Plaza where a short communal ceremony concludes the tour.

A Pageant for Providence takes place August 12-14 in Providence and is free to the public. For more info, visit PageantforProvidence.com.