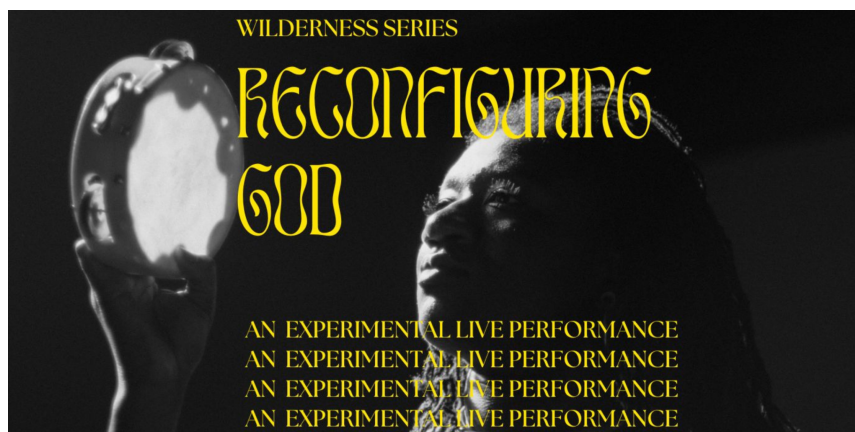


May 8, 2023

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Old North Church to Host Folklore Performing Artist Dzidzor for an Experimental Multimedia Performance Exploring Faith, Black Women, and Social Justice
Saturday, June 3



WHAT: On Saturday, June 3, Old North Church & Historic Site will host the innovative artist Dzidzor for a 60-minute sonic experimental live performance installation funded in part by the Mass Cultural Council. Entitled [Wilderness Series: Reconfiguring God](#), the performance will examine the connection between faith and the continued struggle for justice and civil rights.

“Historically, the voices of African American women have often been ignored and excluded in religious and social justice spaces,” said Dzidzor. “In this piece, we will explore African American women’s voices and reconsider how we conceive of God by centering Black women’s religious experiences and reflections.”

In *Wilderness Series*, Dzidzor and other performers will direct their voices to the balcony of Old North’s sanctuary, where free and enslaved people of African descent once sat segregated from the white congregants below. Using images, videos, live sampling of sound, and speeches within a sound collage, the performance will take the audience on a journey through the voices of African American women across history. With call-and-response speaking, chanting, singing, and yelling, the interactive and immersive performance will ask the question, “What does it look like to reconfigure God to love myself?”

“*Wilderness Series* explores many of the same themes that we examine with our historic interpretation at Old North Church,” said Nikki Stewart, Executive Director of Old North Illuminated, the nonprofit organization that stewards Old North Church & Historic Site. “Our programs and interpretation contribute to a cultural landscape in which everyone can see their stories, struggles, and hopes reflected in places of prominence and our shared American history. As new research sheds light on the lives of early Black and Indigenous congregants at Old North Church, it is exciting for Dzidzor to elevate often overlooked voices in a truly unique artistic performance.”

[Dzidzor](#) (pronounced Jee-Joh) is an African folklore performing artist, author, and poet based in Boston. Born in Italy to Ghanaian parents and raised in North Carolina, Dzidzor’s art merges the cultures of the American South and Ghana. Her style of call and response performance art reimagines poetry and storytelling as a way to include the audience in an experience that challenges, inspires, and breaks traditional forms. She is the Community Liaison for Northeastern University’s The Reckonings Project, a community-archivist platform that supports BIPOC people in curating their histories. Dzidzor has been nominated twice for Boston Music Awards.

WHEN: Saturday, June 3, from 7:30 - 8:30 p.m. A pre-performance outdoor reception will be held from 6:45 - 7:15 p.m.

WHO: **Dzidzor**, the performing artist, will be on site for interviews before and after the performance.

Nikki Stewart, Executive Director of Old North Illuminated, will be on site for interviews and can speak to Old North Church's place in American history and how *Wilderness Series* aligns with new interpretative work at the church.

Dr. Jaimie Crumley, Research Fellow at Old North Illuminated, will be on site for interviews and can speak to new research being conducted about the lives of people of African descent in the Old North Church's early history.

Dzidzor, Nikki Stewart, and Dr. Jaimie Crumley are also available for advance interviews in person, on Zoom, or by phone.

WHY: Known for "One if by land, and two if by sea" and the midnight ride of Paul Revere, the Old North Church & Historic Site is maintained and operated by Old North Illuminated.

To mark the 300th anniversary of the church's founding in 2023 and connect Old North's legacy to contemporary issues, Old North Illuminated is developing new programming that explores the complexity of the church's identity as a beacon of liberty and independence alongside its deep and complex connections to colonialism and enslavement. Old North Illuminated believes that by presenting, questioning, and learning from the full and complicated span of Old North's 300-year history, we can engage audiences in contemporary questions of equity and representation, courage for the common good, and what it means to be an informed and compassionate active citizen. For more information, visit: www.oldnorth.com.

WHERE: Old North Church & Historic Site, 193 Salem St, Boston, MA 02113

SOCIAL: Old North Illuminated on social media: Facebook ([@oldnorth1723](https://www.facebook.com/oldnorth1723)); Twitter ([@OldNorth1723](https://twitter.com/OldNorth1723)); Instagram ([@oldnorth1723](https://www.instagram.com/oldnorth1723)); and YouTube ([Old North Church & Historic Site](https://www.youtube.com/OldNorthChurch&HistoricSite)).

Dzidzor on social media: [@dzidzorazaglo](https://www.instagram.com/dzidzorazaglo)

Wilderness Series on social media: [@wilderness.artexhibit](https://www.instagram.com/wilderness.artexhibit)

HOW: For advance interview, photo, and filming opportunities, call Jason Fishman at 617-901-3032 or email jfishman@oldnorth.com. **ONSITE MEDIA CONTACT: Nikki Stewart, 617-510-4417.**

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