

The

# IMPROPER BOSTONIAN

July 9-August 5, 2014

## BOSTON'S BEST!

OUR ANNUAL  
GUIDE *to the*  
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# KING DAVID *Big Papi* Rules the City

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THE IMPROPER BOSTONIAN VOL. 23, NO. 14 THE BOSTON'S BEST ISSUE JULY 9-AUGUST 5, 2014



*Imperatives*

# DREAM WEAVER

AN ARTIST'S WORK HITS HOME.

IT'S BEEN A BIG YEAR FOR Janet Echelman. At the 30th anniversary TED Conference in March, the Brookline-based artist gave her second main-stage talk and unveiled her largest sculpture yet: *Skies Painted with Unnumbered Sparks*, a woven wonder stretching 745 feet between Vancouver skyscrapers. But she's already starting work on another milestone project—a major Boston commission, a first for an artist whose work has wowed crowds in Sydney and Singapore, Phoenix and Philadelphia, but not on her own home turf. “I’ve never had a chance to create a monumental work for my own community,” Echelman says, “so it’s very exciting to create a piece for the Boston Greenway.” )))

HOLLY RIKE



## WORLDWIDE WEBS:

Echelman's work has been featured in many cities, including Vancouver, which hosted *Skies Painted with Unnumbered Sparks* this spring.



## Looking Skyward

(continued from page 25) "I'm interested in knitting together the fabric of the city," says Echelman, whose proposal was recently selected by the Greenway Conservancy from an international pool of nearly 100 submissions. "Part of the impulse of the Big Dig and the creation of the Greenway was to offer the potential to bring the city back together. And my work will be a physical reconnection through ropes and twine."

Echelmann first turned to such materials in 1997 during a Fulbright lectureship in India, where her painting supplies fatefully failed to arrive. She wound up drawing inspiration from the nets of village fishermen, who helped her construct her first fibrous sculptures; now she collaborates with engineers, fabricators, architects and lighting designers on massive works like the one that will grace the center of the Greenway from spring to fall of 2015. Suspended between buildings, it will cast shadows by day, illuminate the park by night and shift with the changing winds—which her sculptures, ethereal though they may appear, are built to withstand. "These are monumental forms that are immensely strong, that can stand up to 110 mph winds. The break strength is beyond 100,000 pounds, yet they're incredibly light and delicate,

so soft they can fluidly move with changing wind and weather," Echelman explains. "It's strength through softness, and the ability to adapt and change, rather than brute force."

That strength was tested at Vancouver's windy waterfront, the setting for a project that's broadened options for Boston. "I didn't know if it was possible to create a structure that attached exclusively to existing buildings, yet spans more than 700 feet in an area of high wind. So it creates a lot of openness and possibilities for me to create a work in Boston," says Echelman, who aims to catalyze social spaces through her art. That approach is right at home at the 6-year-old Greenway, host to a public art program that's included everything from a giant hammock to an installation whose colored lights changed in response to viewers' text messages. And as an emphatically urban oasis, the park seems suited to Echelman's ethos. "I remain interested in this idea of looking at the city that we have built and seeing the untapped potential of these physical resources," she says. "All of the buildings have excess lateral load capacity, and we can harness that to create a space for art, for the public to look up at the sky and have a shared experience in the city." / *Jacqueline Houton*

Dish / Carolyn Faye Fox

## CHILL OUT

SWEET TREATS ON STATE STREET



COOL CUSTOMERS:  
Crush Pizza offers 18  
flavors of gelato.

**I**N THE HEAT OF SUMMER, NOTHING CAPS OFF a meal of pizza quite like a scoop or two of ice cream. If the pizza is an authentic Neapolitan, you might want to switch up the ice cream for gelato... especially if it's homemade, as it is at **Crush Pizza** on State Street. Owner Tony Naser is whipping up 18 flavors of the cool treat, ranging from blackberry lemon basil to avocado to lemon Grisbi (flavored with the Italian cookie of the same name). Quality is top-notch and prices are reasonable, topping out at \$5.25 for four scoops, enough for two to share. That cold, sweet creaminess is the perfect balance to a hot, spicy pizza.

### TRES COMPANY

**EL CENTRO TRES** RECENTLY OPENED IN Belmont, completing the Mexican threesome started by El Centro in the South End and continued by El Centro Dos in Brookline. It's the biggest restaurant to date for chef/owner Allan Rodriguez, seating 60-70 in the dining room and 12 at the bar. The bar is a big deal, as El Centro Tres is only the second restaurant in Belmont to be awarded a full liquor license. While you're there, be sure to sample the many sangria flavors.

### TRAFFIC TIMEOUT

**IF YOU'RE DRIVING DOWN ROUTE 3 WHILE HEADING** to the Cape, and the traffic's got you down, here's a suggestion: Take a timeout at **Orta** in Pembroke, only a few miles off the highway. Unimpressively set in a strip mall, this Italian eatery features some delicious pizzas (including the "drunken mushroom," with arugula, Madeira and truffle essence), beautifully balanced cocktails (try the blue basil gimlet or the aviation) and a sumptuous, flavorful lobster bisque that's a deal at \$12. "There's a ton of Scituate lobster in each bowl, so we don't make a profit on it," says chef/owner Brett Williams. You'll arrive at the Cape well fed, the first step to a relaxing getaway.