

# Boston

MAGAZINE

PARTY PICS

## Partying Amid Tomfoolery and Shenanigans of Falstaffian Proportions

Our intrepid society columnist reports from Boston's swankiest affairs including Shakespeare Under the Stars at the Newbury Boston and the Catwalk for Cancer Care.

by **JONATHAN SOROFF** • 6/17/2024, 6:15 p.m.



Michael Kelley, Ricardo Rodriguez, Mayor Michelle Wu, David Friedman, and Steven Maler. / Photo by Nicole Chan Photography

**The ballroom** of the **Newbury Boston** hotel was transformed into an elegant facsimile of a summer evening on Boston Common for **Commonwealth Shakespeare Company's** annual gala, **Shakespeare Under the Stars**.

Front and center were the lead actors from last year's production of *Macbeth*, **Joanne Kelly** and **Faran Tahir**; Mayor **Michelle Wu**; cochairs **Ricardo Rodriguez** and **Michael Kelley**; stalwart supporters **Susan** and **Bill Poduska**; investment whizzes **Paul** and **Wesley Karger** with their better halves, **Melissa** and **Ashley**; design avatar **Elizabeth Lowrey**; former Boston Ballet principal dancer **John Lam** and his husband, **John Ruggieri**; Broadway in Boston bigwig **Tivon Marcus**; piped piper of parties **Bryan Rafanelli**; celebrity chef **Tiffani Faison**; and one person who said, "I hope we're at the same table," to which her friend responded, "I don't think their insurance would cover that."

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Faran Tahir and Joanne Kelly. / Photo by Nicole Chan Photography

Real estate wheeler-dealer **Ken Tutunjian** won the \$13,000 raffle prize of a week for four people at Hidden Pond in Kennebunkport, and the event raised a record sum to help mount this summer's free production of *The Winter's Tale*. The after-party, meanwhile, featured tomfoolery and shenanigans of Falstaffian proportions.

Overheard at the bar:

"That's quite a necklace."

"Well, when you hang out with this crowd, you gotta get out the big rocks."

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The room was festooned with flowers and greenery, and dinner was peppered with performances of scenes from past and future productions before CSC founding artistic director **Steven Maler** took the stage. Among his remarks: “When we first started in 1996, we had to contend with rats scurrying around backstage and drunk college students...and we’re still dealing with that.”



John Ruggieri, John Lam, and Wendy Lane. / Photo by Nicole Chan Photography



Emcee Janet Wu and designer Candice Wu. / Nicole Chan Photography