

IT BEGAN seven years ago as a labor of love. Musician Matt Gould (left) and actor Griffin Matthews, whose lives had taken them separately to Africa, created *Witness Uganda*, a soulful “musical documentary” about the trials and triumphs of an earnest, small-scale effort to educate impoverished teenagers in Uganda. The show debuted as a one-night, 25-minute benefit to fulfill Matthews’ promise to the teens, but Gould (CFA’01) and Matthews, partners in life as well as work, developed the show into a full musical production that would find its way to its Cambridge, Mass., debut.

Witness Uganda earned critical praise in a winter 2014 run at the American Repertory Theater (ART) under the direction of Tony Award-winner Diane Paulus. After a string of scaled-down road productions that doubled as fundraisers, the show, renamed *Invisible Thread*, opened in New York City in October at Second Stage Theatre, an off-Broadway company.

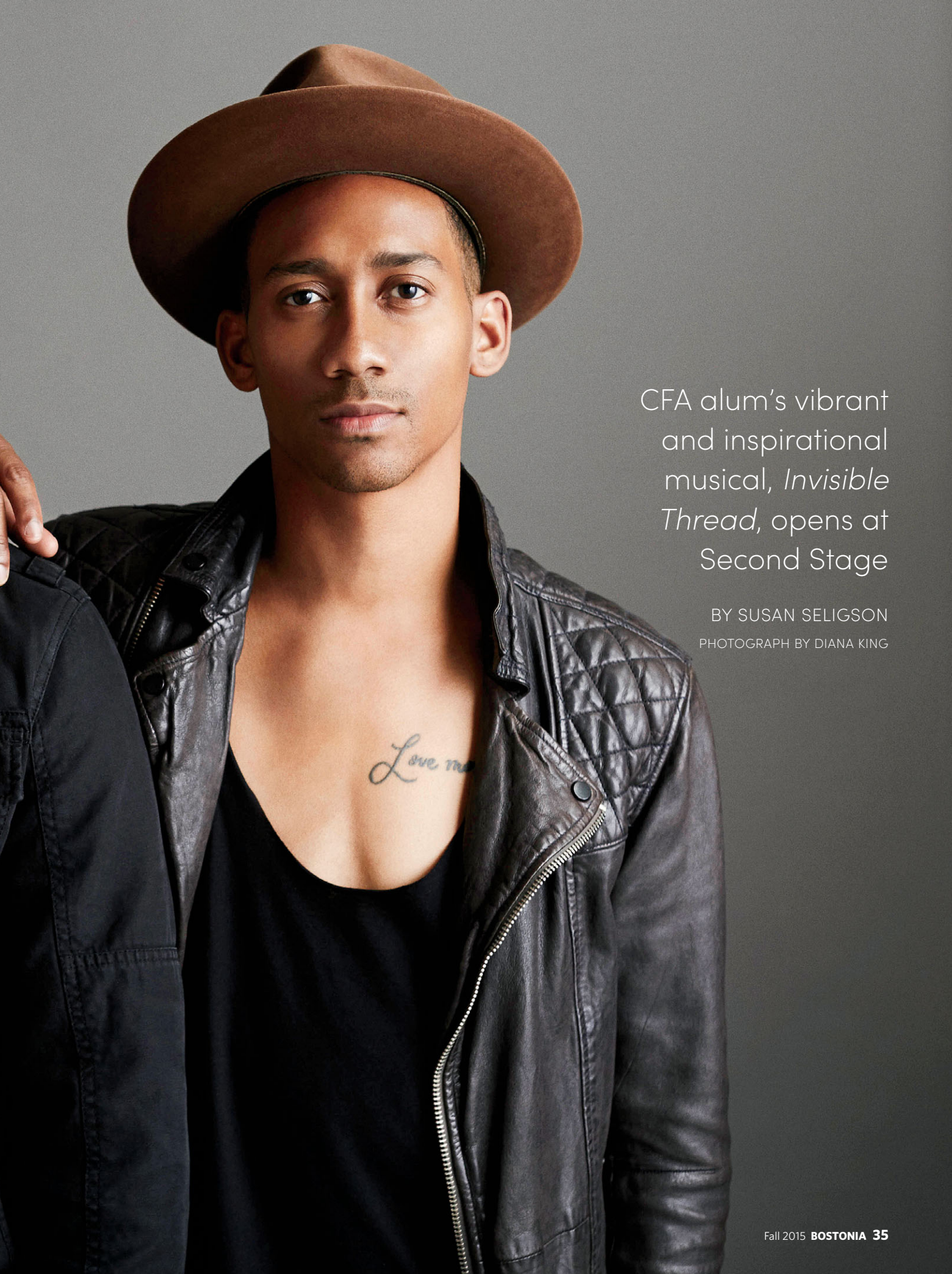
The production’s name change—“Our show is about connection and the ways that small, seemingly infinitesimal actions can reshape the world,” says Gould—is one of several ways *Witness Uganda* has been revamped. At ART, the character of struggling entertainer Ryan was a young white woman who was the best friend of lead character Griffin, played by Matthews. Now, Ryan is a white man and Griffin’s boyfriend. “It was a way for us to turn up the heat and the drama in the piece overall,” says Gould.

On the Uganda front, Gould reports that 3 of the 10 sponsored Ugandan students are graduating from university. And a fundraiser allowed Gould, Matthews, and 17 cast members and musicians to visit the country. In August, they spent a week volunteering in service projects and taking part in dance and language classes. ■

WEB EXTRA Watch a video of Matt Gould (CFA’01) and Griffin Matthews perform the opening number from *Witness Uganda* at Invisible Children’s 2013 Fourth Estate Summit at bu.edu/bostonia.

Song of Uganda





CFA alum's vibrant
and inspirational
musical, *Invisible
Thread*, opens at
Second Stage

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