

# ESSENCE

BECOME  
YOUR OWN  
BOSS!

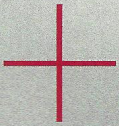
121

WAYS TO  
MAKE THE  
BIG LEAP

OITNB'S

**Uzo  
Aduba**

ON BEING  
UNAPOLOGETICALLY  
BLACK AND  
BEAUTIFUL



**MORE FALL  
SCREEN  
QUEENS:**

AVA DuVERNAY  
THANDIE NEWTON  
ISSA RAE  
TIKA SUMPTER  
RUTINA WESLEY

**AYESHA  
CURRY**  
COOKS UP  
CONTROVERSY  
AND MORE

**IS REALITY TV  
RUINING YOUR  
RELATIONSHIP?**  
p. 121

LOOKS  
WE LOVE!

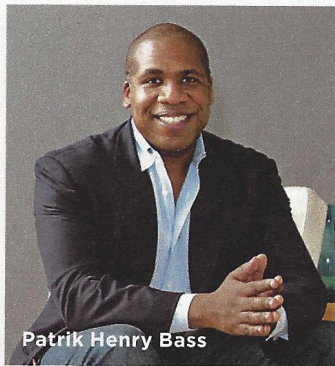
STYLE AND BEAUTY TRENDS RIPPED FROM THE  
RUNWAYS AND INSPIRED BY THE STREETS

\$3.99US \$4.99CAN 09>



VISIT ESSENCE.COM  
SEPTEMBER 2016





Patrik Henry Bass

# FOUR SMART WOMEN AND A BRILLIANT GUY

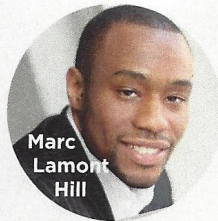
AS WE MOVE FROM THE ESCAPIST DAYS OF SUMMER, OUR BOOKS EDITOR RECOMMENDS FIVE READS FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE SERIOUS ABOUT THEIR FICTION AND NONFICTION

## 1 FAITH WORKS

I'm so glad I read **Bipolar Faith** (Fortress Press, \$26.99), and I think you will feel the same. Given all that we have gone through as a community over multiple generations, is it any surprise that internalized stress could take its toll on our psyches? Kudos to Monica A. Coleman, who

## 2 I AM SOMEBODY

One of the highlights of this wacky election season has been the opportunity to revel in the wisdom of commentators such as Angela Rye, Bakari Sellers,



Marc Lamont Hill

Tara Setmayer and Marc Lamont Hill. The latter, a noteworthy journalist and Morehouse College scholar, moves beyond sound bites and delivers a searing social commentary with his new book, **Nobody** (Atria, \$26). Picking up the baton that James Baldwin left behind, *Nobody* gives urgent voice to the generation of the descendants of the poor, unacknowledged people Baldwin captured so vividly in his 1985 classic, *The Evidence of Things Not Seen*, which says, well, everything.

## 3 SCHOOL DAYS

What I love about educator Nadia Lopez is that she breaks many bureaucratic rules when it comes to schooling children and turns up dozens of success stories. Oh, how I wish that every neighborhood had a school like Brooklyn's Mott Hall Bridges Academy, where Lopez is less principal and more principled leader. In

**The Bridge to Brilliance** (Viking, \$26), Lopez charts her incredible journey of turning a challenged institution, and providing guidance and hope to precious young people many dismiss as hard to teach. As you will learn from this essential reading, the key to academic excellence begins with an open mind.

## 4 AFRICA UNITED

### Behold the Dreamers

(Random House, \$28) by Imbolo Mbue is a revelation. The plot? Jende Jonga, a Cameroonian immigrant, arrives in the United States to provide a better life for himself, his wife, Neni, and their 6-year-old son. Circa 2007, Jende feels as if he's fallen into a pot of jam when he lands a job as a chauffeur for Lehman Brothers hotshot Clark Edwards. Soon Jende and even Neni become a part of Clark's extravagant life. But all that glitters isn't gold, as the Jongas quickly learn when Clark is impacted by the financial crisis of 2008. Mbue has written a clever morality tale that never preaches but instead teaches us the power of integrity.



Imbolo Mbue



Monica Coleman

opens up her soul about several taboo topics, including her experiences with trauma, depression and the real and imagined threat of death. Despite finding success, she still deals with inner turmoil that, at one point, not even her therapists can explain. Then her life unravels. Fortunately a correct diagnosis of bipolar disorder ultimately frees her—and readers as well.

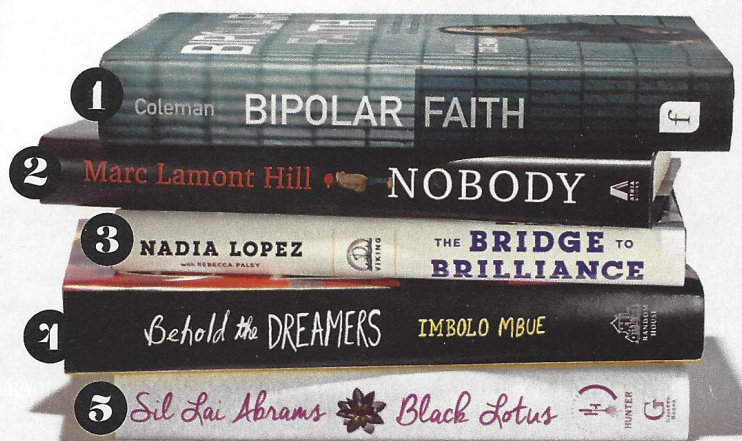
## 5 RACE MATTERS

Sil Lai Abrams knows how to grab our attention. **Black Lotus** (Karen Hunter/Gallery, \$24.99), her new memoir, starts off with a bang. Recalling the moment of her first French kiss, the author is questioned by her suitor if she is Black. "No," she replies. And throughout this fascinating exposé on racial identity, erasure, denial and acceptance, Abrams truly goes there. Where is there? The painful spaces of navigating what it really means to be multiracial. For Abrams,



Sil Lai Abrams

it was grappling with her Caucasian, African-American and Chinese identities. The beauty of this gripping story is walking with Abrams as she finds her voice and hits her stride.



BASS: SEAN BURROWS; CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: CASEY BRODLEY; WHITNEY THOMAS; ANDREW FENNEL; KIRKO SANDO; MATTHEW JORDAN SMITH; BOOK STILL: KEVIN SWEENEY; PROP STYLIST: CHANEL KENNERBREW.



Follow ESSENCE Editorial Projects Director Patrik Henry Bass on Twitter @PATRIKSPICKS.