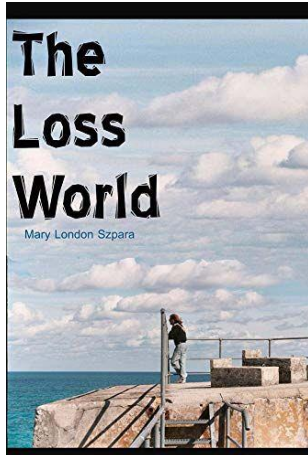


## Widow's letters to husband led to book, stage and short film about grief

By Elisabeth Thornton Cabarrus Arts Council

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Cabarrus County resident Mary London Szpara's letters to her husband after he died became a book called "The Loss World." The book is now being made into a short film, supported through an Artist Support Grant. Read more about Artist Support Grants on the Cabarrus Arts Council's website at [Grants – Cabarrus Arts Council](#).  
From Amazon

When Mary London Szpara lost her husband, she began writing letters to him every night to cope with the immense pain. When the letters grew into a thick journal, her friends suggested she publish them as a book.

When the book, called *The Loss World*, began generating a therapeutic response from others who had experienced loss, too, she was encouraged to take the book into the theatre, with nine female actresses reading the letters in a stage production called *The Loss World Monologues*.

Now, the letters have evolved once more. This time in the form of a short film called "*The Loss World Monologues – Snapshots of Grief & Grace*," and Szpara feels the timing couldn't be more appropriate for a discussion about grief.

"With COVID, people were a lot more subjected to the sadness of death, and it became a reality in many more homes than we ever expected," she said. "So there's opportunity to be able to reach out to those people and hopefully help in their healing."



Mary London Szpara turned her grief as a widow into a book, stage production and film about coping with loss. They're not only lessons in healing, but homages to her husband. "We had an incredible marriage. He was my soulmate, and I still feel his presence with me, and I think that's a celebration of our relationship."

From Cabarrus Arts Council

The 20-minute film was made possible through an Artist Support Grants Szpara received. Artist Support Grants are awarded by the North Carolina Arts Council to artists for assistance with their arts projects. Applicants are judged by a multicounty panel of established artists, arts professionals, arts educators and administrators. The Cabarrus Arts Council assists in selecting panelists.

"I wouldn't be able to do this without a grant," said Szpara, who plans to submit the film to the Sundance Short Film Festival once production raps up this month. "I feel blessed."

For more information about the book, stage production or short film, visit [www.thelossworld.com](http://www.thelossworld.com).