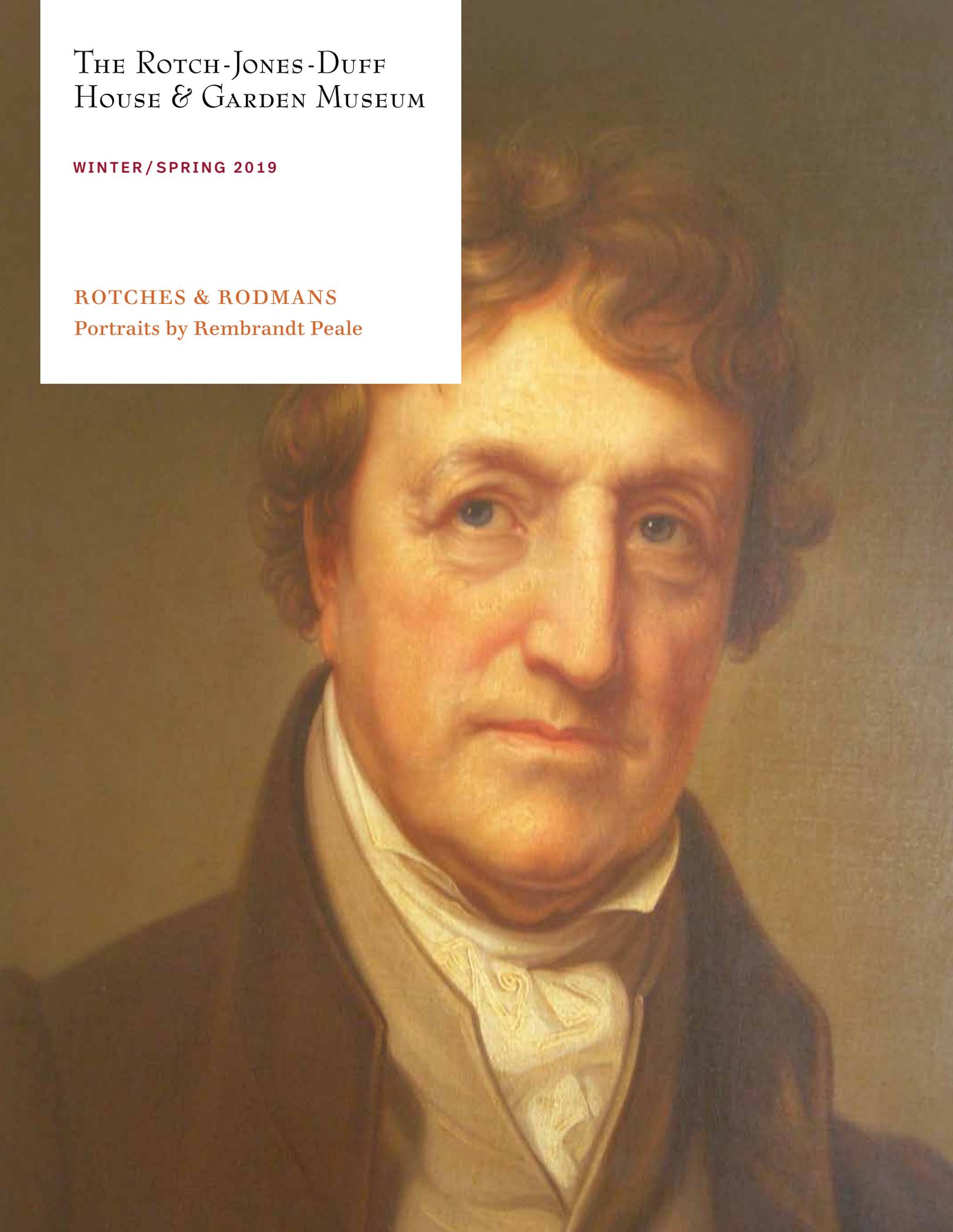


THE ROTCH-JONES-DUFF  
HOUSE & GARDEN MUSEUM

WINTER/SPRING 2019

ROTCHES & RODMANS  
Portraits by Rembrandt Peale





THE ROTCH-JONES-DUFF  
HOUSE & GARDEN MUSEUM

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New Bedford, Massachusetts  
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www.rjdmuseum.org

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## From the Director

# Planting the Seeds of Engagement



Having read through many of the visitors' comments from our summer survey, I can share with you how appreciated the RJD is as a "view into the past." Sure—this historic house has gorgeous architecture and decorative arts. Given my art background, I do appreciate the curve of a cabriole leg. But additionally relevant to the thousands of visitors we see each year is who sat in that chair, and why. The stories inherent in a piece of furniture are about the way people lived. The stories told by our museum relate those lives of the past to our lives now. Much of RJD's winter

programming aims to connect us through the domestic sphere to how the Rotches, Jones and Duffs lived—what kind of music they might have listened to, what type of father-daughter relationships they had. At the same time, our special exhibition of oddities from the closet explores the funkier side of fashion. RJD's curator, Blair Walker, will install an exhibition of costumes that question conventions and challenge practicality.

Behind the scenes of our public programs and exhibitions, I will be working with our new board members and Advancement Committee to take a deep dive into what we offer our members and donors, what it is they value most, and how we can mutually benefit from that relationship. My last several months have been spent meeting more of you, sharing information with colleagues, and attending community activities so that I have a better awareness of our assets and opportunities as well as some of the challenges.

This winter also brings some changes to our small but mighty staff. Kim Rioux has returned to the insurance industry after over three years at the RJD. Those of you acquainted with her know that she brought a new level of professionalism to her position. After restructuring the position, we have hired a Membership & Events Coordinator as well as a part-time bookkeeper. Both should be in place in January. I look forward to introducing you all to new team members.

As I write this, I'm aware that this publication covers six months of activity, spanning winter to spring. Rather than lament the cold and drab, I invite you to take pleasure in the best parts of each season. For the best parts of winter, we invite you to warm up in the RJD parlors, sipping hot tea and attending evening lectures and Sunday concerts. And for the best parts of spring, we hope you'll visit to see the first buds of growth in the RJD gardens. Our work, we hope, is similar to the seasons as we plant the seeds of engagement and nurture their growth into a vibrant level of connection with our community.

**Dawn E. Salerno**

*Executive Director*

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Cover: Rembrandt Peale (1778–1860). *Samuel Rodman, Sr. (1753–1835)*, 1828. Oil on canvas. Gift of Christopher M. Weld, 2008.2.1. See "Rotches and Rodmans Intermingled," page 4.



# Moonlight & Roses

On September 8, over 180 people enjoyed the food, drink, music and good company that was Moonlight & Roses, RJD's annual summer fundraiser.



Photos by Heath Pettini

## People

# Mary Schubert: Volunteer Extraordinaire

Mary Schubert and her husband, Allan, moved to the SouthCoast from Hartford 23 years ago. In Hartford she was involved with the Womens Committee of the Wadsworth Atheneum. She was lured to the RJD by an opportunity to wear a party dress to a “black tie” event: the Whaling Museum/RJD Christmas party.

In 2002, Mary was spending many hours in the RJD greenhouse as a member of the Garden Club of Buzzards Bay (GCBB). Knowing that Mary had run a cooking school in her earlier days, RJD’s former Executive Director, Kate Corkum, invited her to join the catering committee for the Celebrate event. Mary jokes, “It was a twofer, as Allan volunteered to do the scullery duty.”

The RJD Dinner Dance became an annual highlight, as well as the Celebrate Wreath Auction, and the



Mary and Allan Schubert

Annual Garden Symposium. Mary gives credit to Kate for her knack at creating enjoyable events—and she thanks her for the opportunity for Allan to wear his neglected tux.

As President of GCBB, Mary became a member of the RJD Board of Trustees in 2010. She served on the Olmsted Landscape Historical Survey committee, the group that developed initiatives to bring the mansion and

grounds back to their late 1800’s historic appearance.

In 2013, Mary led the formation of a Celebrate the Seasons committee which, over a five year span, raised money in innovative ways and opened the doors of the RJD to hundreds of attendees—many for the first time.

Mary remained on the RJD board after her term as President of GCBB ended and served on several committees.

Mary rotated off the RJD Board this past September 2018. Staff, board and volunteers all hope to see her at future events. For Mary’s part, her departure was made easier because of a group of new Trustees coming aboard. She was encouraged by their willingness to keep the history of the RJD a vibrant part of the community of New Bedford and beyond.

## Exhibitions

# Funky Fashion, An Exhibition of the Eccentric and Odd



This winter’s costume exhibition at the RJD explores funky fashion, including the artistic and modern. “Funky” fashion is unconventional, unexpected, weird, somewhat ugly and yet appealing. Funky fashion demands that the visitor adjust their preconceptions about clothing.

The funky look can be found in the New York City windows of Missioni and the neighboring shops on Madison Avenue. Haute Couture designers explore the funky side by mixing shapes and patterns and

utilizing surprising colors. Dolce and Gabbana created extremely elaborate gowns using corsets on the outside. A recent exhibition at the Met by Rei Kawakubo, designer for Comme des Garçons, included questionably shaped garments whose wearer could only be imagined.

The RJD will be joining its national museum peers in taking a look at clothing and style, but with our own twist.

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Left: T-Shirt Dress. Cotton. Private loan.

# Rotches and Rodmans Intermingled

BY BLAIR WALKER

William Rotch, Jr.'s wife, Elizabeth Rodman Rotch, died in 1828. Her death prompted Benjamin Rodman to write his parents, Samuel Rodman, Sr. (1753–1835) and Elizabeth Rotch Rodman (1757–1856), asking their permission to have Rembrandt Peale paint their portraits. He referred to the death of his aunt, Elizabeth Rotch, and wrote in his letter of “the sudden & unexpected departure of Aunt Rotch” and how “all her relatives [were sorry] that they have not had it in their power to retain among them the living resemblance of one they so much loved.”

He went on to say, “I therefore hope you will allow me to carry into effect the object I have earnestly desired, and give me an opportunity of preserving among the many testimonies of your affection bestowed upon me a representation of those countenances whose light has so long beamed upon me...and has so much contributed to the happiness of your children.”

Rembrandt Peale (1787–1860), originally from Philadelphia, had painted George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. He and other members of his family were well respected and well known for their realistic style of painting in America and abroad. Benjamin Rodman must have heard that Peale was working in Boston and contacted him. They made an arrangement for Peale to come to New Bedford.

On April 18th, Rembrandt Peale wrote Benjamin: “The raw and piercing airs which have lately prevailed have given me so bad a cold as to render me unfit both for the risk of a journey & the duties you require of me—as it particularly affects my head and eyes.



I shall therefore be obliged to nurse myself for a few days—and as I am all ready to start, I shall be with you as early in the ensuing week as I possibly can, when I can employ my pencil more agreeably than I now do my handkerchief.”

In 2008, the Rotch-Jones-Duff House and Garden Museum received the two portraits from Christopher

Weld, a Rodman descendant. This past September, Susanna Weld, Christopher’s widow, and their daughter Linzee, gave the RJD the original letters quoted above.

Samuel Rodman, Sr. and William Rotch, Jr. were brothers-in-law as well as business partners in the whaling industry. William Rotch, Jr. married Samuel Rodman, Sr.’s younger sister, Elizabeth, and Samuel Rodman, Sr. married William’s older sister Elizabeth. William Rotch, Jr.’s brother Thomas married Charity Rodman, another sister of Samuel. John Bullard in his book about the Rotches demonstrated the closeness of the families stating that, “Three Rotches married three Rodmans!”

The portraits of the Rodman couple hang on exhibit in the back hall at the RJD across from a portrait of William Rotch, Jr. Stop in to see the portraits of the Rodmans and the copies of the letters there.

Above: Rembrandt Peale (1778–1860). *Samuel Rodman, Sr. (1753–1835), 1828*. Oil on canvas. Gift of Christopher M. Weld, 2008.2.1.

## Exhibition Calendar

### **FUNKY FASHION: AN EXHIBITION OF THE ECCENTRIC AND ODD**

January 12 – May 5

### **TO HAVE AND TO HOLD:**

#### **THE COSTUME AND ELABORATE ACCESSORIES CREATED FOR WEDDINGS**

May 25 – November 17

### **THE PERMANENT EXHIBITIONS OF THE ROTCH, JONES AND DUFF FAMILIES**

Ongoing

# Calendar

## JANUARY

### **BUILDING A LEGACY: ROTCH FAMILY HOUSES IN NEW BEDFORD**

**BRUCE BARNES**

Tuesday, January 22, 5:30pm

In the years preceding the American Revolution when the Rotch Family moved its commercial whaling enterprise to Bedford Village, modern New Bedford was born. Their arrival transformed the small, farming community into a thriving seaport town. Over time, they built a series of stately homes that remain hallmarks of the city's distinguished cultural and architectural history. This illustrated program will highlight those buildings.

\$10 RJD Members / \$12 Public

## FEBRUARY



### **SUPER SUNDAY VIOLIN RECITAL**

**JESSE HOLSTEIN AND JEFF LOUIE**

Sunday, February 3, 2pm

(We promise it will be done long before kickoff!) In partnership with NBSO Sunday. New Bedford Symphony concertmaster Jesse Holstein and pianist Jeff Louie (above) will present a recital of violin/keyboard music from the 18th, 19th, 20th centuries. Works will include Mozart's charming two-movement sonata in G-major, K. 301, Beethoven's mighty "Kreutzer Sonata," Maurice Ravel's Magyar showpiece, "Tzigane." What better tailgating party than an early afternoon recital of great music?

\$20 RJD Members / \$25 Public



### **SWEETHEARTS AT SEA: LOVE AND MARRIAGE IN THE AGE OF SAIL**

**AMANDA GOODHEART PARKS, PH.D.**

Wednesday, February 13, 5:30pm

During the nineteenth century, when Yankee whale oil lit the world, men from New England communities sailed the seven seas in the pursuit of whales, leaving their families behind for up to five years at a time. That is until the 1840s, when a small group of married couples defied social and industrial tradition by going to sea together aboard whale ships. This lecture will focus on one of these remarkable couples—Captain John and Elizabeth Marble of Fall River, Massachusetts—using the letters and journals they left behind to tell a story of love, life, and loss at sea. Amanda Goodheart Parks, Ph.D. has been studying gender and marriage in the New England whaling industry for more than a decade. Admission: \$10 RJD Members / \$12 Public Romance Package (with chocolates & bubbles): \$25/person, \$40/couple

### **AHA NIGHT AT THE RJD: SUSTAINABLE SOUTHCOAST BRISTOL COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS**

Thursday, February 14, 5:30pm

Bristol students will share their individual research projects on a variety of topics related to Downtown New Bedford. Predicated on the pedagogy of "city as text," students embrace the city as a distinctive learning environment. Free.

## MARCH

### **OPEN HOUSE AT THE RJD AND JAMI**

Sunday, March 3, 2pm

The two mansions connected by marriage (James Arnold married Sarah Rotch, daughter of William Rotch, Jr.) offer guided tours of their interiors. Visit the James Arnold Mansion for a tour at 1pm. RJD's tour starts at 2pm. Free.

### **AHA NIGHT AT THE RJD: FUNKY FASHION EXHIBITION TOUR**

**BLAIR WALKER, RJD CURATOR**

Thursday, March 14, 5:30pm

Fashions change every season, and every year. Outdated style stands out in a crowd, but so does that fashion oddity, leaving the viewer with that question: "what were they thinking?" RJD Curator Blair Walker will talk about her latest exhibition. Free.



### **THE ART OF APPRAISING: FROM CONNOISSEUR TO SCIENTIST**

**ALLYSON LEE**

Tuesday, March 19, 5:30pm

Every object tells a story that can be revealed through research and examination. Join fine art expert and appraiser Allyson Lee (above) as she walks through the appraisal examination process: a balance of connoisseurship and scientific method. Lee will share several interesting stories from the field of art appraising. Topics will also include what to look for and questions to ask before buying a work of art, the difference between buying and selling in the auction versus the retail market, and when it is necessary to engage an appraiser. \$10 RJD Members / \$12 Public

## MUSIC OF THE PERIOD

### SEAGLASS THEATER

Sunday, March 31, 2pm

The house and residents at 396 County span decades: 1834 to 1981. This concert explores music across the periods, in the way it might have been experienced: the parlors of someone's home. Musicians will provide additional context to each work performed in this intimate setting. Seaglass Theater is a New Bedford non-profit organization with a mission to bring the finest classics to the Southcoast, inspiring community engagement and conversation. They perform in the New Bedford area, and have collaborated with the RJD for the past four years to provide intimate indoor and larger outdoor concerts at the museum. \$20 RJD Members / \$25 Public

## APRIL

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### AHA NIGHT AT THE RJD: SUSTAINABLE SOUTHCOAST BRISTOL COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS

Thursday, April 11, 5:30pm

Students from Bristol will present their research and recent projects on the sustainability of our region. Free.

### DISCOVERING ECJ PEGGI MEDEIROS

Tuesday, April 16, 5:30pm

Of the three men who have owned 396 County Street, Captain Edward Coffin Jones is the least known. New research into letters, logs and ledgers make it possible to discover this truly extraordinary man. Peggí Medeiros is a research historian focused on New Bedford's artists, families and homes. She currently writes a column for the New Bedford Standard Times and blogs for the paper. She is a frequent guest lecturer at the New Bedford Whaling Museum, the Rotch Jones Duff House & Garden Museum and the Dartmouth Heritage Preservation Trust. \$10 RJD Members / \$12 Public



### AN AFTERNOON OF CHAMBER MUSIC AT THE RJD JESSE HOLSTEIN AND PETER ZAY

Sunday, April 28, 2pm

In partnership with NBSO. Join New Bedford Symphony concertmaster and cellist Jesse Holstein and Peter Zay (above) for an early afternoon concert of music for violin and cello. The program opens with the Mozart Sonata for Violin and Viola, K. 423 (arranged for violin and cello) followed by the Duo by the 20th century Hungarian composer, educator, and ethnomusicologist Zoltan Kodaly. The "Meditation" from the opera "Thais" by French composer Jules Massenet and the Passacaglia by Handel, arranged by the Norwegian violinist/conductor/composer Johan Halvorsen, will round out the program.

\$20 RJD Members / \$25 Public

## MAY

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### READING WITH HORIZON GLASS POETRY GROUP RICK FINNERAN

Friday, May 3, 6pm

Enjoy a night of original works written and read by local poets. The RJD's own Rick Finneran will emcee as the group celebrates their second publication, "Journeys and Destinations". Free.

PLEASE CALL THE MUSEUM IN  
ADVANCE TO REGISTER FOR  
PROGRAMS WITH A FEE: 508-997-1401

### AHA NIGHT AT THE RJD: HISTORIC HOUSES OF EASTERN MASSACHUSETTS

#### BETH LUEY

Thursday, May 9, 5:30pm

The Rotch-Jones-Duff House is but one example of a house that tells several stories over time. The three generations of the Adams family that lived in their homes in Quincy had very different experiences, as did the six generations who lived in the Fairbanks House in Dedham. The Harrison Gray Otis House in Boston reflects the history of a whole neighborhood. These stories all come from Luey's new book, *At Home: Historic Houses of Eastern Massachusetts*. Free.

### ANNUAL STUDENT JAZZ CONCERT NEW BEDFORD HIGH SCHOOL WHALER JAZZ BAND AND JAZZ COMBO

Tuesday, May 21, 7pm

Now an annual event, the museum hosts the area's premier high school and middle school jazz bands. Enjoy a broad range of musical styles, from big band swing, to upbeat Latin jazz. This concert is held under the tent, rain or shine. Free.

## JUNE

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### AHA NIGHT AT THE RJD: TALES FROM THE TRAILS RICK FINNERAN, CHRIS STOCKDALE

Thursday, June 13, 5:30pm

Two aficionados discuss long-distance hiking from both personal and technical perspectives. Rick Finneran and Chris Stockdale are both avid hikers who met at Rick's previous talk about hiking at the RJD. Rick is Manager of Facilities at the RJD. Free.

### ANNUAL PARTY IN THE GARDEN Saturday June 15, 6pm



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## RJD's Annual Party in the Garden

SAVE THE DATE:  
SATURDAY, JUNE 15

