

TIMELINE

AUTUMN/WINTER 2020

Ain't Misbehavin': 1920s Richmond

Learn about our newest costume and textiles exhibition that explores a decade of social change, innovation and conflict.

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the
Valentine



Ain't Misbehavin': 1920s Richmond

In 1929, Richmond-native Luther “Bill Bojangles” Robinson was one of six artists to record the brand-new hit “Ain’t Misbehavin’,” written by Andy Razaf to a score by Thomas “Fats” Waller and Harry Brooks. Robinson added the percussive sounds of his iconic tap dancing rhythms to a recording with Irving Mills & His Hotsy Totsy Gang. The performance was ranked eighth on the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers list for that year. Legend holds that the score for “Ain’t Misbehavin’” was written while “Fats” Waller was serving time in prison for an alimony violation. This ironic twist on the song’s origins echoes Richmond’s own contradictory encounter with the “Roaring Twenties.”

The 1920s are remembered in America as a decade that “roared” with change, including urban expansion, equal suffrage, jazz music, fast dancing and short hemlines. In Richmond, the decade’s seismic social shifts unfolded alongside a backlash of conservative anxiety and discriminatory legislation. The howl of youthful exuberance and the cautioning tones of tradition echoed in ballrooms and dance halls, fraternal clubs and houses of worship, in the pages of Richmond newspapers and in the segregated neighborhoods on both sides of Broad Street.

In terms of fashion, however, the southern city embraced the liberating style of the period wholeheartedly. The Valentine’s Costume and Textiles Collection is replete with examples of the straight-bodied, short-skirted silhouette that has become synonymous with the newly modern American woman. Opulent eveningwear, chic daywear and racy sporting clothes are all on view.

The Valentine’s special exhibitions allow the museum’s curatorial staff to dive deeply into the collection, exploring new aspects of the museum’s holdings. Exhibition research uncovered previously unrecognized holes in the collection that the museum now hopes to fill. We know from photography that Richmond’s fashionable Black women embraced the sporty silhouettes and glittering formal styles of the 1920s. Unfortunately, while having some great representation of Richmond’s Black community from other eras, the museum’s Costume and Textiles Collection contains no known examples of dress worn by Black Richmonders in the 1920s. In the exhibition galleries, visitors are invited to consider the larger impact of the narratives that are missing, to reflect on the value of the material culture in their own closets and, if possible, to help us ensure these stories can be told in the future.



In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Roaring Twenties, the Valentine presents *Ain't Misbehavin': 1920s Richmond*, an exhibition of costume, textiles, art and artifacts in the Nathalie L. Klaus and Reynolds Family Galleries. Objects on view show how fashion in Richmond was affected by the rise of a new consumer economy characterized by affordable luxury and the emergence of a new youth culture. Archival materials bring in the voices of Richmond's cultural leaders, newspaper columnists and concerned citizens who recommended caution amid the rapid pace of change. A frank discussion of the discriminatory Racial Integrity Act shines a light on the lasting consequences of this racist legislation on Richmond's current understanding of its own history. Like the popular 1929 tune of the same name, *Ain't Misbehavin'* presents a nuanced examination of Richmond's reaction to the Roaring Twenties amid an appealing display of 1920s styles worn in the city.

Kristen Stewart
 Nathalie L. Klaus Curator
 of Costume and Textiles

(A) Left: Evening dress worn by Elise Francis Wilmer, ca. 1926, V.35.12, Gift of Miss Elise Wilmer (Yerxa), Middle: Evening dress worn by Susan "Sadie" Spilberg, ca. 1922, V.94.72, Nemy, Gift of Norma Levarie, Right: Bridesmaid dress worn by Elizabeth Bland Brockenbrough, 1927, V.64.03.01, Gift of Elizabeth B. Brockenbrough (B) Left: Ensemble worn by Gordon E. Strause, 1920s, V.74.316.103, .107, Estate of Gordon E. Strause, Middle: Knit blouse likely worn by Sally Eleanor Harbaugh, Late-1920s, V.68.46, Gift of Mrs. Harvie Archer Clopton, Right: Knickers likely worn by Miss Lydia Booth, Sarvay, ca. 1922, V.63.38.03, Gift of Miss Lydia Booth Sarvay (C) [Girls Cheer on Junior Athletes], October 7, 1979, Don Pennell, photographer, V.85.37.755, *Richmond Times-Dispatch* Collection

MEMBERSHIP & ANNUAL GIVING UPDATE

Members and Donors Make Us Jump for Joy!

Admission to the Valentine is free through December, but only members have the added perk of visiting the Valentine on Mondays! This is our way of saying "thank you" for your generous and ongoing support, especially during this challenging moment in our community.

Your memberships and annual fund donations directly support the Valentine's operations, programs, exhibitions and events, making it possible for us to continue to collect, preserve and interpret so many diverse and powerful Richmond Stories.

When you become a member or an annual fund donor, you receive:

- Exclusive ticket reservations to the Valentine on Mondays
- Free admission to the Valentine
- Free parking in our lot during your visit
- Free research appointments in the Valentine Archives
- A 10% discount at the Valentine Museum Store and the Valentine First Freedom Center Store

Your gracious donation makes it possible to continue fulfilling our timeless mission. Use the enclosed envelope to submit a gift by mail, or donate online at thevalentine.org/give.

Have questions? Call Haley McLaren, Director of Advancement, at (804) 649-0711 ext. 325. Thank you!



EXHIBITIONS

New Exhibitions!



DONT TOUCH MY HAIR rva

Through December 31, 2020

Based on footage collected during a Richmond-based documentary directed by Dr. Chaz Antoine Barracks, Ph.D., *DONT TOUCH MY HAIR rva* explores diverse African American identity through stories of Black hair experiences. Featuring images by Sha Rich and Nicholas Taylor, this media-arts project looks at Black identity by both centering and creating spaces that embody Black cultural production—and understanding everyday Black life as fine art. Experience *DTMHrva* at the Valentine as an exterior installation and through new film presented during Afrikaa Independent Film Festival.



Ain't Misbehavin': 1920s Richmond

Through March 21, 2021

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Roaring Twenties, the Valentine presents *Ain't Misbehavin': 1920s Richmond*, an exhibition of costume, textiles, art and artifacts in the Nathalie L. Klaus and Reynolds Family Galleries. The 1920s are remembered in America as a decade that “roared” with change, including urban expansion, equal suffrage, social integration, jazz music, fast dancing and short hemlines. In Richmond, the decade's seismic social shifts unfolded against a backdrop of conservative values.

Currently on View



Voices from Richmond's Hidden Epidemic

Through May 31, 2021

Richmond's rate of HIV infection, currently ranked 19th nationally, is exacerbated by high concentrations of poverty, lack of sex education in public schools and the continuing opioid epidemic. Featuring oral histories collected by Laura Browder and Patricia Herrera with accompanying photographic portraits by Michael Simon, *Voices from Richmond's Hidden Epidemic* offers a nuanced look at the HIV/AIDS crisis through the stories of survivors, caregivers, activists and health care workers on the front lines.



#BallotBattle: Richmond's Social Struggle for Suffrage

Through November 8, 2020

#BallotBattle: Richmond's Social Struggle for Suffrage uses modern social media platforms to profile five Richmond viewpoints and the racial and generational tensions that each exposed. Between 1909 and 1920, both pro-suffrage and anti-suffrage advocates battled tenaciously, using all the platforms available to persuade both the legislature and the general public. While they could not use Twitter or Facebook, they did rely on newspapers, broadsides, pamphlets, postcards, banners and personal accessories to proclaim their viewpoints. Just like our complicated social media battles today, the final political and legal outcome was never a foregone conclusion.

Ongoing Exhibitions



This is Richmond, Virginia

Ongoing in the Main Gallery

Explore Richmond's complex history and diverse stories through five themes: Why the fall line? Where do we live? What do we produce? Who has a voice? What do we value?



Wickham House (Virtual Tour Only)

A National Historic Landmark built in 1812, this historic home allows us to tell the complicated story of the Wickham family, sharing spaces, the realities of urban slavery and more. While the Wickham House is currently closed to the public, you can experience a 360° virtual tour of the house by visiting thevalentine.org.



The Valentine First Freedom Center

S. 14th and E. Cary Streets
Open Tuesday–Sunday
10 a.m.–5 p.m.

The Valentine First Freedom Center is located on the same corner where the General Assembly met in secret during the American Revolution. Drafted by Thomas Jefferson and enacted in 1786, the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom paved the way for the first Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and continues to impact how Virginians and the nation view freedom of conscience today. **Free and open to the public.**

(A) Photo by Sha Rich (B) Shoes, 1927, V.51.91.17a,b, Gift of Mrs. Charles Beatty Moore (C) Rodney Lofton, August 2018, Photographed by Michael Simon for the Voices from Richmond's Hidden Epidemic project (D) Women's Suffrage Rally at the Virginia State Capitol, 1916, X.49.37.43, the Valentine Collection (E) This is Richmond, Virginia, the Valentine (F) The Wickham House, the Valentine (G) Interior of the Valentine First Freedom Center, the Valentine (H) Terez Dean, Nickey McMullen, 2020, The Valentine (I) Valentine Museum Store, 2020, the Valentine

Programs and Events



The Oasis: A High Noon Concert Series

Tuesdays and Thursdays, Noon-1 p.m.,
through October 13

Join us in the Valentine Garden to enjoy free, informal and physically distanced performances from a diverse mix of local musicians. We're excited to provide the opportunity to relax in an historic green space, listen to live music and take a break from the daily grind. Drop by the Valentine Garden every Tuesday and Thursday, BYOB (Bring Your Own Bag-Lunch) and enjoy these free (and safe) performances!

Curated by Nickey McMullen



Controversy/History: 2020 and...

Controversy/History is back this year...virtually! For most of us, 2020 brought unexpected challenges and uncomfortable conversations amidst a global pandemic and massive social change. This year, for the Valentine's tenth season of *Controversy/History*, we invite Richmonders to virtually engage with one another as we unpack this historic moment, the impact of 2020 and the way forward as a community. Save the date for the following free community conversations:

2020 and Voting

October 6, 2020
5:30-6:30 p.m.

2021 and Education

January 5, 2021
5:30-6:30 p.m.

2020 and Mental Health

November 3, 2020
5:30-6:30 p.m.

2021 and Activism

February 2, 2021
5:30-6:30 p.m.

2020 and Business

December 1, 2020
5:30-6:30 p.m.



Holiday Member Shopping Spree

This holiday season, claim your member exclusive shopping spree, where you get 20% off on any one day, November 29–December 31. Our Visitor Services Associates are very knowledgeable about our merchandise and are happy to answer questions and provide gift ideas. We also offer complimentary gift wrapping on all purchases.



Museum Store Sunday: November 29

Shop for the holidays with a special discount while supporting the museum's service to the Richmond community. All shoppers will receive 20% off, while members will receive an extra 5% off! Museum Store Sunday is a global annual event celebrating museum stores and their mission-related products, which play a vital role in helping non-profit attractions educate and thrive. More information about how to participate online.



Visit the Valentine!

The Valentine's Visitor Services staff are thrilled to welcome guests back to the museum with new safety measures and cleaning procedures in place and free admission this summer and fall. Visitors can expect a plexiglass shield at the front desk, increased cleaning protocols in all galleries and the museum lobby, as well as masks worn by all staff and visitors. Additionally, admission is limited to 20 visitors per hour, leaving ample room to explore the museum while physically distancing. Visitors can reserve their free, timed tickets for admission at thevalentine.org. By requiring timed ticketing, attendees can choose the time to suit their schedules. Our touch-free admission process also makes for a quick and easy arrival.

This summer, our Visitor Services Associates were pleased to welcome new and returning visitors to the museum for a safe and engaging way to escape Richmond's summer heat while learning about Richmond's past. At this time, we are not offering tours of the Wickham House and the Valentine Sculpture studio is currently closed to the public. However, visitors can explore the home online at their leisure using our new 360° virtual tour. Additionally, the Valentine Garden is open to welcome visitors for a quiet break in our green oasis.

*Liz Reilly-Brown
E. Claiborne Robins, Jr.
Director of Education & Engagement*

(A) Valentine Lobby, 2020, the Valentine (B) Valentine Education Team, 2020, The Valentine (C,D) Miller & Rhoads Clock, ca. 1924, V.90.91.01, Museum Purchase with support from Richmond Chapter of the Miller and Rhoads Retirees Association (E) Jessica Delbridge, Andrew Coulomb, 2020, the Valentine

Program Update



Navigating the COVID-19 pandemic has allowed the Valentine's Education & Engagement team to develop a number of innovative ways to engage with the community through distanced educational programming. This fall, the Valentine will launch real-time Virtual Museum Visits, allowing students of all ages to explore the museum live, as a Valentine Educator tours them through the galleries and Wickham House. Students will be able to ask questions, share their observations and request close-ups of objects as their guide moves through the museum.

Our Virtual Valentine webpage is a hub for finding many ways to explore Richmond history and the museum's collection from the comfort of your own device. Highlights include lesson plans and activities for students, video tours, the Richmond Stories podcast and more. A new virtual tour of the Wickham House, using high-resolution images from a 360° camera, allows the viewer to navigate the home and learn more about the complicated story of the Wickham family, the home's enslaved occupants, sharing spaces, the realities of urban slavery and more.

Other new projects include Richmond Stories from Richmond Kids, an initiative we launched in March immediately after the Covid-19 pandemic closed schools, with the goal of documenting students' stories of this historic moment in their own words. As of August, we have received more than 100 entries from students across the Richmond region and plan to collect more stories, photographs, illustrations and videos in the future. You can view the online gallery or submit your story at thevalentine.org/studentstoryproject.

This fall, you can expect more virtual programming from the Valentine, including a return of our popular Controversy/ History series, which will explore the challenges and historic significance of this current moment in Richmond. This year, Controversy/ History will take place online on the first Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.

Visit thevalentine.org/events for more information!

*Liz Reilly-Brown
E. Claiborne Robins, Jr.
Director of Education & Engagement*

“Meet Me Under The Clock!”



For more than six decades, this clock was the symbol of Richmond’s retail landscape, installed near the information desk at Miller and Rhoads’ flagship store on Broad Street in downtown Richmond.

Dating to the 1920s, the Art Deco clock with four faces served as a recognizable spot for shoppers to meet, and “Meet me under the clock” needed no explanation for 20th-century Richmonders. After the company went into bankruptcy, the Richmond Chapter of the Miller and Rhoads Retirees Association helped raise \$17,000, which went toward purchasing the clock and other Miller and Rhoads memorabilia for the museum.



Since its relocation to the Valentine in 1990, the clock has had one major overhaul and only had two working faces. While the museum’s doors were closed to the public in June, we constructed scaffolding on the stairs to reach the mounted timepiece and removed all four of its faces. Collections staff gave the metal and wood structure a thorough cleaning while the faces and their components went to The Clock Shop of Richmond for restoration. A week later, all the pieces were reunited just as the

museum opened its doors to visitors. All four of the clock faces are now in working order and provide the accurate time.

While meeting under the clock these days would mean blocking a stairwell, you are more than welcome to meet your close friends near the clock on your next visit to the Valentine!

*Christina Vida
Elise H. Wright Curator of General Collections*

Dispatches from the Desk: Getting to Know Our New Staff Members!

We are excited to welcome Jessica Delbridge and Andrew Coulomb to the Valentine!

Jessica joins the team as Visitor Services & Volunteer Manager. Prior to accepting this new role, Jessica had served as an English Language Arts Teacher in Richmond Public Schools since 2014.

Andrew joined the staff early in the pandemic, taking on the role of Director of Operations & Capital Projects. Before he began working at the Valentine, Andrew had served as the Director of Operations at the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art since 2017.

As we embark on exciting new programs, address the challenges of COVID and seek to tell more inclusive and powerful Richmond Stories, we are happy to have these experienced and passionate professionals on our team.

Join us in welcoming Jessica and Andrew to the Valentine Family!



The Valentine

1015 E. Clay Street, Richmond, VA 23219

thevalentine.org

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2021 Richmond History Makers & Community Update

Over the past year, the Richmond Region has undergone tremendous change, witnessed historic transformation and taken strides to confront our complicated history. From protestors to health care heroes, from community advocates to innovative organizations, trailblazers across Central Virginia have confronted countless challenges with strength and resolve.

As the Valentine and the Community Foundation for a greater Richmond partner for the 16th Richmond History Makers and Community Update, we are calling on YOU to nominate these individuals and organizations!

On March 9, 2021, we will highlight the work of six honorees and provide an update on our region-wide progress. Save the date and take a moment to nominate the history maker in your life at RichmondHistoryMakers.com.



Front Cover: (A) Shibut, 2019, the Valentine (B) Trenton W., 2020, the Valentine (C) Left: Evening dress worn by Mary Ella Darst Eckman, ca. 1923, V. 75.202.01a,b, Estate of Mary Ella D. Eckman: Through Mrs. C.W. Atkinson, Right: Evening dress likely worn by Florence Evelyn Ramage Golsan, ca. 1926, V. 70.697a,b, Gift of Mrs. Robert H. Schneider (Elizabeth Golsan) (D) Valentine Garden, 2020, the Valentine

Back Cover: (A) 2020 Richmond History Makers Honorees, the Valentine

RICHMOND STORIES™

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