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Revolutionary Spaces Announces New Public Programs and Exhibits to Commemorate the 250th Anniversary of the Boston Tea Party

*Old South Meeting House and Old State House to host an inclusive and
contemporary slate of city-wide events exploring the power of place*

Boston, MA - [Revolutionary Spaces](#) announced today its plans to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party with new, thought-provoking exhibits and a wide range of compelling public programs that explore the struggle to create and sustain a free society and imagine possibilities for the future. As one of the nation's most important Revolutionary sites and the starting point of the Boston Tea Party on December 16, 1773, much of next year's activities will center around the [Old South Meeting House](#).

In making the announcement, Revolutionary Spaces President & CEO Nat Sheidley said, "We are excited to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party next year with a robust offering of engaging programs and exhibits that appeal to both local and national audiences. Revolutionary Spaces will examine the events in 1773 through a contemporary, multi-dimensional lens while honoring the founding narrative in which we all have a stake. As the city emerges post pandemic, these diverse community-centric programs will help reinvigorate Boston as a cultural and educational hub. We look forward to the Old South Meeting House taking center stage as a gathering place for people from all walks of life, with Revolutionary Spaces leading the conversation on how our country continues to be shaped by the ideals of the Boston Tea Party."

In early 2023, Revolutionary Spaces will mount two new exhibits. Focusing on women, Black, and Indigenous communities, the Power of Petitions will write the next chapter in the unfinished struggle that began in 1773. The second exhibit, slated for April, will explore the role of property destruction in American protest. "With the 250th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party this coming year, we think it is important to explore the various ways people act in attempts to make their voices heard," said Director of Visitor Experience & Content Development Matthew Wilding. "By digging into the use of petitions and violent uprisings, we are hoping to delve deeper into the options that Americans had at their disposal—both legal and extralegal—and what those actions mean for people today."

Marty Blatt, Professor of the Practice Emeritus of Public History at Northeastern University, added, "Revolutionary Spaces questions the meaning of 'We, the People' in many ways—such as through wonderfully innovative theater pieces and by presenting the story of Crispus Attucks in a creative, complex exhibition. Revolutionary Spaces is doing some of the best work in the country in challenging the traditional narratives associated with the

American Revolution.”

Public programs will kick off with Follow the Cod on January 11, marking the 225th anniversary of the procession of the Sacred Cod from the Old State House to the New State House. In April, poetry will come alive with a youth poetry workshop. Hosted in partnership with renowned Boston poets, this program will celebrate the legacy of Phillis Wheatley Peters and the importance of sharing your story and making your voice heard.

“This is a thrilling opportunity to engage non-traditional partners in elevating themes such as the tradition of protest, raising voices, and considering Boston as a nexus for change,” said Director of Public Programs Gina Marie Jamieson. “We look forward to creating work that represents the diverse and relevant city Boston is today while exploring how the events in 1773 still affect us all. Boston has some of the greatest thinkers, cultural leaders, and changemakers. Revolutionary Spaces is honored to partner with our local luminaries to produce this unexpected and transformational yearlong commemoration.”

Award-winning educator, writer, and community leader Cynthia Yee echoed Revolutionary Spaces’ inclusive narrative. “To be invited into the space where the American Revolution began and where the poet Phillis Wheatley worshiped, publishing her poetic voice while enslaved, I—the first American-born daughter of a Boston Chinatown immigrant—am gratified. It is what truly makes this historic hallowed space, the Old South Meeting House, a modern revolutionary space. Revolutionary Spaces enthusiastically created a space for our narrative, welcoming me into the work of telling the true story of a diverse Boston and broadening our understanding of what its true history encompasses. Chinese Americans have historically been excluded, silenced, and discriminated against. Revolutionary Spaces—in its openness, enthusiasm, and creativity—is doing something profoundly brave, innovative, and true to our founding fathers’ principles of advocating for justice, truth, and freedom for all.”

One of Revolutionary Spaces’ largest undertakings in 2023 will be the presentation of the world premiere of a new dramatic work written by award-winning playwright Daniella Shoshan. Set at Old South Meeting House, this new play will reimagine the Tea Party debates in 1773 through an inventive and immersive theatrical experience and will link the activities of 1773 to the conflicts and tensions Americans still face today. The play will premiere in the summer and will be remounted again in the winter.

In Fall 2023, Revolutionary Spaces will celebrate the songs that changed the world with “Raising Voices,” a festival that will feature protest music and performance. Local artists and musical icons will take the stage for this free community event. In October, the Day of Play will bring Greater Boston together through interactive experiences for all ages. Developed by Revolutionary Spaces and best-in-practice leader in the field, FableVision, Day of Play will use engaging history-themed games as modes to learning and community building throughout public spaces in Downtown Boston, creating new ways for children and families to experience Boston and its history.

Throughout 2023, Revolutionary Spaces will also host a variety of in-person and virtual panel discussions with civic leaders, community champions, and American icons. Celebrating Boston’s place in the colonial and contemporary world, an inspiring group of Boston community leaders and nationally recognized movers and shakers will lead gripping conversations that explore liberty and tyranny and give voice to the tradition of American protest.

Andrew Leong, Associate Professor of Philosophy at UMASS who specializes in law, justice, and equality pertaining to disenfranchised communities, added, “At a time in the United States when debates are waged about not teaching contentious subjects for the fear that it would besmirch the glorious patriotic history of our country, Revolutionary Spaces allows for the time and place to have that discussion to learn not dogma, but to seek understanding. How truly refreshing for a place so very steeped in American history.”

Revolutionary Spaces will also launch its first-ever Community Catalysts program. “We remember the Tea Party because it is a story about the power of people to make change in their communities,” said Martha McNamara, Chair of the Board of Revolutionary Spaces. “We are proud to honor those visionaries who, in our own time, are working so hard to build a better Boston.” A selection committee comprised of various community leaders will solicit nominations for individuals from the Greater Boston area who have achieved measurable change within their communities. At the Civic Ceremony on December 16, the committee will award a space grant to five local Community Catalysts to support the continuation of their meaningful work.

President and CEO Nat Sheidley will be available at select times on Thursday, December 15 and Friday, December 16 for media interviews at Old South Meeting House. To schedule a press interview or for more information regarding Revolutionary Spaces’ plans to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party, please contact ABertone@RevolutionarySpaces.org.

ABOUT REVOLUTIONARY SPACES

Revolutionary Spaces brings people together to explore the American struggle to create and sustain a free society, singularly evoked by Boston’s Old South Meeting House and Old State House. We steward these buildings as gathering spaces for the open exchange of ideas and the continuing practice of democracy, inspiring all who believe in the power of people to govern themselves.

About the Old State House: The 1713 Old State House served as the seat of government for the province of Massachusetts during the Revolutionary era. Today, it is a museum and historic site offering tours, exhibits, and public programs exploring Boston’s Revolutionary-era history.

About the Old South Meeting House: The 1729 Old South Meeting House was a Congregational church and the largest gathering place for popular politics in Revolutionary Boston. Today it is a busy museum, treasured landmark, and active center for civic dialogue and free expression.

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