



**Monhegan
Museum of
Art & History**

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Dear Friends of James Fitzgerald,

I hope that this letter finds you and your loved ones safe this holiday season. The watercolor chosen for this year's annual card was selected for two reasons. First, we have not presented a Katahdin work in awhile. And hopefully, with all the struggles faced in 2020 with Covid, the colorful brightness of *Birches, Katahdin* may provide some welcomed relief.

The pandemic has upended plans everywhere, and the museum world is no exception. The Fitzgerald exhibitions planned in Monterey and on Monhegan for 2021 have been postponed until 2022. Also, for the first time since 1974, his Monhegan studio did not open for regularly scheduled hours. While the public interaction was missed, the inability to guarantee safe social distancing in such a small space was of paramount importance.

All however was not lost, and work has continued on other fronts. This summer the website was re-configured and JamesFitzgerald.org has been fully updated and now allows mobile friendly usage. More works have been added to the on-line catalogue raisonné search, existing pages were edited, and new entries about chronology and bibliography were added. I hope you will enjoy spending some time perusing this new and improved site.

At the Monhegan Museum a special exhibition to honor this year's Maine bicentennial titled: "*Wintering Over—Year-Round in Maine*" and featuring artists who lived full-time on Monhegan included two works by Fitzgerald, a watercolor *Light in Winter, Monhegan* and an oil painting *Maple Leaves and Birches*.

The Legacy group has continued to make progress on volume two of *Selections from the Catalogue Raisonné*. Focusing on his watercolors, its release is planned for early 2022, and will include many works from California, Monhegan, Vermont, New Mexico and elsewhere.

Because the studio was not opened to the general public, it was safe to welcome Judith Walsh, nationally renowned expert on paper conservation, who will write about the artist's technique and methodology. She spent five full days on Monhegan studying all of Fitzgerald's papers, materials, and watercolors, primarily in the studio but also on Light House Hill. Judy was the Portland

Museum of Art's 2020 Barnet Scholar, and it was indeed a pleasure to welcome her to the island and we look forward to her contribution to the book.

Susan Strickler, former director of the Currier Museum in Manchester, NH (and who curated with the Monhegan Museum the 2019 exhibition on Maud Briggs Knowlton), has continued her research on Fitzgerald's New England work. Her expertise in watercolors brings to us added depth, and she will endeavor to place Fitzgerald in the spectrum of American watercolorists.

Susan Danly, former curator at the Portland Museum of Art and longtime Monhegan friend, has continued her research on the large body of California work. The fifteen years that Fitzgerald spent in California prior to his move to Monhegan in 1943 were incredibly productive, and she is exploring the breadth and development of that remarkable creative output.

My focus will be primarily on the Monhegan work, along with an exploration of the contemporary critical response, updated biographical notes, and an examination of the New Deal WPA artwork.

Our plan is to complete the writing phase in time to begin the process of editing and designing next summer. In volume one, 250 works (along with 500 preparatory studies) were presented with high resolution color reproductions. Volume two will likely have at least as many images, and we hope that it will be a stunningly beautiful compilation of the watercolors along with scholarly critiques.

Our work would not be possible without the ongoing support of you, our community. The past and future contributions of the *Friends of Fitzgerald* are vital to the Fitzgerald Legacy's health and growth. As we continue to promote the artistry of James Fitzgerald, we thank you for your continued support through this challenging period.

With all our very best wishes for health, happiness, and safety during this holiday season and into the New Year,

Robert L. Stahl, Director, James Fitzgerald Legacy
Dan Broeckelmann, Susan Danly, Ed Deci, Jennifer Marr,
Carol Stahl, and Susan Strickler

Please visit us: JamesFitzgerald.org