

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 29, 2020

VMFA Celebrates Black History Month



Rumors of War, 2019, Kehinde Wiley. Photo by Travis Fullerton © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, December 2019.

Richmond, VA - The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts will celebrate Black History Month throughout February with special events as part of its longstanding commitment to inclusivity and diversity outlined in its 2015-2020 strategic plan. The programs honor African American artists and highlight the museum's growing African American art collection.

During an artist talk on Feb. 21 in Leslie Cheek Theater, Paul Rucker will discuss his multidisciplinary art and practice as a visual artist, composer and musician. RVA Community Makers is back to honor six local leaders who have been selected for their impact on the RVA community. The Feb. 27 unveiling of the completed artwork will be led by Richmond-based artist Hamilton Glass.

"The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts encourages the Richmond community to join us in celebrating Black History Month by experiencing an exciting range of talks, activities, readings and performances," says VMFA Director and CEO Alex Nyerges. "VMFA has an extensive collection featuring African American artists whose works are on display not just during Black History Month, but year-round. We are committed to celebrating talented artists by growing our collections."

Additional programs include African American Read-In on Feb. 27, following the unveiling of RVA Community Makers. Dominion Jazz Cafe: Jazz Around the Museum will feature live music by Klaxton Brown Band on Feb. 13. VMFA After Hours: VMFA Is for Lovers, on Feb. 15, will feature DJ Lonnie B and live music by Legacy Band, hosted by Kelli Lemon. A full list of VMFA Black History Month programming is outlined below.

VMFA Black History Month Programs

TALK Working Together: Louis Draper and the Kamoinge Workshop

Dr. Sarah Eckhardt, Associate Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, VMFA, in conversation with Nell Draper-Winston

Thu, Jan 30 | 6:30–7:30 pm

\$8 (VMFA members \$5)

Leslie Cheek Theater

VMFA's Dr. Sarah Eckhardt, curator of *Working Together: Louis Draper and the Kamoinge Workshop*, will provide an overview of the exhibition.

RVA Community Makers Art Activity

Sun, Feb 2 | 1–4 pm

Free

Art Education Center

Take your digital family portraits onsite at VMFA to become part of a mixed-media public art collaboration.

OPEN STUDIO PLUS Grandma's Hands

Sun, Feb 2 | 2 pm & 3 pm

Free

Atrium

Two sisters share remarkable stories from the perspective of the African American South.

FIRST FRIDAY Spirituals

Fri, Feb 7 | 6–8 pm

Free

Atrium

Sopranos Lisa Edwards Burrs and Olletta Cheatham perform spirituals.

GALLERY PROGRAM 3 in 30: African American Art and the Power of the Written Word with Dr. Christopher Oliver, Assistant Curator of American Art

Tue, Feb 11 | 11–11:30 am

Thu, Feb 13 | 6:30–7 pm

Free

Meet at Visitor Services

Explore three objects on view in VMFA's American Art galleries with Dr. Oliver and discover their connection to the power of poetry and prose.

DOMINION ENERGY JAZZ CAFÉ Jazz Around the Museum

Klaxton Brown Band

Thu, Feb 13 | 6–9 pm

Free

Marble Hall

Led by saxophonist Robert "Bo" Bohannon, Klaxton Brown Band combines the old with the new and will rock you steady all night long. Prepare to get Klaxtonized!

VMFA AFTER HOURS VMFA Is for Lovers

Enjoy art, dancing, food and more!

Sat, Feb 15 | 7–11:30 pm

\$45/person (VMFA members \$35)

Museum wide

Hosted by Kelli Lemon, with DJ Lonnie B on the spin and Legacy Band performing live.

ARTIST TALK Paul Rucker

Fri, Feb 21 | 6:30–7:30 pm

\$8 (VMFA members \$5)

Leslie Cheek Theater

Multidisciplinary artist Paul Rucker discusses his art and practice as a visual artist, composer and musician.

DANCE AFTER WORK Hip-Hop Line Dancing

Fri, Feb 21 | 6–8 pm

Free

Atrium

RVA Community Makers Unveiling

Thu, Feb 27 | 5:30 pm

Free

Atrium

Come see RVA Community Makers—a mixed-media public art mural in VMFA’s Atrium. The completed project will feature portraits of six local leaders who have been selected for their impact on the RVA community

GALLERY PROGRAM African American Read-In

Thu, Feb 27 | 5:30-7:30 pm

Free

Meet at Visitor Services

See and hear notable figures from the greater Richmond community as they lend their voices in prose and poetry readings through the galleries.

COMMUNITY EVENT | Celebrate Wiley!

Sat, Feb 29 | 10 am-11 am

Free

Atrium

Join VMFA for a community celebration of Kehinde Wiley’s *Rumors of War*.

GALLERY PROGRAM Family African American Read-In

Sat, Feb 29 | 11 am–noon

Free

Meet at Visitor Services

Intended audience: children ages 2–8 years with their guardian; everyone is welcome.

Bring your family to VMFA to experience African and African American children’s literature read by members of the community in front of engaging works of art.

About the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, Virginia, is one of the largest comprehensive art museums in the United States. VMFA, which opened in 1936, is a state agency and privately endowed educational institution. Its purpose is to collect, preserve, exhibit, and interpret art, and to encourage the study of the arts. Through the Office of Statewide Partnerships program, the museum offers curated exhibitions, arts-related audiovisual programs, symposia, lectures, conferences, and workshops by visual and performing artists. In addition to presenting a wide array of special

exhibitions, the museum provides visitors with the opportunity to experience a global collection of art that spans more than 6,000 years. VMFA's permanent holdings encompass nearly 50,000 artworks, including the largest public collection of Fabergé outside of Russia, the finest collection of Art Nouveau outside of Paris, and one of the nation's finest collections of American art. VMFA is also home to important collections of Chinese art, English silver, French Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, British sporting and modern and contemporary art, as well as renowned South Asian, Himalayan, and African art. In May 2010, VMFA opened its doors to the public after a transformative expansion, the largest in its history.

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is the only art museum in the United States open 365 days a year with free general admission. For additional information, telephone 804.340.1400 or visit www.VMFA.museum.

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