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VMFA to Present *Contemporary Art from Portugal*
Special exhibition will feature works by six leading Portuguese artists

Richmond, Virginia – The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts will present *Contemporary Art from Portugal*, an exhibition organized in collaboration with the Lisbon-based Fundação Luso-Americana (Luso-American Development Foundation). Featuring 20 works by six contemporary Portuguese artists, the exhibition will be on display in the museum’s works on paper gallery from May 19 through July 22, 2018. Admission is free and not ticketed.

“We are delighted to offer Virginians a rare opportunity to view the work of some of Portugal’s most revered living artists,” said Dr. Michael Taylor, the exhibition’s curator and the museum’s chief curator and deputy director for art and education. “These artworks have been deliberately chosen to reflect the range and vitality of contemporary art in Portugal.”



Tragic Maritime History (História Trágico Marítima), 1983, Álvaro Lapa, (Portuguese 1939-2006) tempera, gouache and pencil on paper, 17 x 24 in. Fundação Luso-Americana

Featured works include Helena Almeida’s *Desenho Habitado* (Inhabited Drawing) — a 1977 photographic series in which the artist is shown making a linear drawing with an ink pen that gradually materializes into a thread of real horsehair — as well as a selection of works spanning multiple decades and mediums by the late Álvaro Lapa, who is considered to be the father of contemporary art in Portugal. Visitors will also discover a variety of paintings, photographs, and works on paper by Fernando Calhau, Ruy Leitão, José Luís Neto, and Jorge Queiroz.

Contemporary Art from Portugal is made possible through the generosity of the Fundação Luso-Americana, a private foundation created in 1986 to strengthen cultural and economic ties between Portugal and the United States. The foundation’s collection comprises nearly 1,000 works spanning the full breadth of Portuguese artistic expression,

including drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, photography, video and art installation. The 20 works to be displayed at VMFA are among some 300 that are currently on loan throughout the world.

The exhibition is part of the **Month of Portugal**, a nationwide initiative developed by the Embassy of Portugal to celebrate the country’s art and culture in June. The occasion coincides with a state visit by Portuguese President Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa. The opportunity to host this exhibition was presented by Nancy Rodrigues, deputy director of the American Evolution, 2019 Commemoration and former Virginia secretary of administration under Gov. Terry McAuliffe.

“We are grateful to Nancy Rodrigues, Ambassador Domingos Fezas Vital and the staff of the Embassy of Portugal for their support in organizing this exhibition,” said Alex Nyerges, VMFA director. “*Contemporary Art from Portugal* furthers VMFA’s ongoing initiative to bring great works of art from around the world to Richmond.”

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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 40,000 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, and 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.