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VMFA Announces Free Admission for Commonwealth of Virginia Employees and Preschool through 12th Grade Educators to the Exhibition *Tsherin Sherpa: Spirits*



Fly High, 2019, Tsherin Sherpa (American, born Nepal, 1968), metal leaf, acrylic and ink on canvas. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Aldine S. Hartman Endowment Fund, 2021.65

Richmond, Virginia — The Virginia Museum of Arts (VMFA) announced today that Commonwealth of Virginia employees and preschool and K–12 teachers (public and private) can receive free admission to the exhibition *Tsherin Sherpa: Spirits* on view at the museum from February 19, 2022 to October 16, 2022. Active-duty military and their immediate families can also receive free admission through VMFA’s year-round extension of the Blue Star Museums program.

“The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts welcomes all state employees and school teachers to see this captivating exhibition of paintings and sculptures by the globally acclaimed artist Tsherin Sherpa,” said Alex Nyerges, VMFA Director and CEO. “Visitors to the exhibition will be moved and inspired by these works of art which explore the quest for individual and collective identity in a rapidly changing world.”

Artist Tsherin Sherpa was born in Kathmandu, Nepal in 1968, and immigrated to the United States 30 years later. From a young age, he studied Tibetan thangka painting under his father and eventually moved away from this form of traditional painting to create his own works that combine Tibetan Buddhist iconography, half-human, half-Tibetan-deities and the imagery of pop culture. Sherpa's works often explore the connections between the sacred and the secular, giving visitors a glimpse into the artist's own cross-cultural experiences.

Tsherin Sherpa: Spirits, the artist's first solo museum exhibition, tells a story of loss, struggle and re-empowerment. "Not only are Sherpa's works in the exhibition visually mesmerizing, but each is layered with meaning. Part autobiography, part social commentary, they contain the artist's contemplation of struggles faced by Tibetans and other displaced peoples while inviting viewers to examine their own experiences with loss and re-empowerment," said exhibition organizer Dr. John Henry Rice, VMFA's E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Curator of South Asian and Islamic Art.

Teachers can register now to participate in the upcoming interactive workshop, *Tsherin Sherpa: Contemporary Art + Buddhist Paintings + Spiderman?* to be held on February 24, 2022, where they can explore the intersection of identity, artistic vision and global cultures. For more information about *Tsherin Sherpa: Spirits* and exhibition-related programs, including gallery talks, meditation workshops, art history and studio classes, lectures and films planned throughout the run of the exhibition, visit www.VMFA.museum.

Ticket Information

[Tickets](#) for the exhibition *Tsherin Sherpa: Spirits* are \$10 for adults and \$8 for seniors 65+, youth 7–17 and college students with ID. The exhibition is free for VMFA members, children ages 6 and under, as well as Commonwealth of Virginia employees and preschool and K–12 teachers (public and private). The exhibition is also free to active-duty military personnel and their immediate families.

Commonwealth employees and educators should call 804.340.1405 to make their reservations and show their employee IDs or badges at the Visitor Services Desk in the museum, when picking up their tickets. One free ticket is available per badge. Reservations for first-available tickets to the exhibition can also be made in person at the Visitor Service Desk. Tickets are scheduled to help limit gallery capacity during the pandemic. For current information about the museum's COVID-19 protocols, visit www.VMFA.museum.

About the Sponsors

Organized by the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, *Tsherin Sherpa: Spirits* is sponsored by Altria Group; Canvas at VMFA; the Fabergé Ball Endowment; The Ellen Bayard Weedon Foundation; Anne Battle and Leonard Slater; Susan L. Buck in memory of Ed Chappell; Mr. and Mrs. Wayne A. Chasen; Heather Daniel, Barrie McDowell, and Susan Russell; Birch Douglass; Mr. Arnel U. Manalo; Teri Craig Miles; Mr. Hubert G. Phipps; Jacquelyn Holley Pogue; Ms. Jennifer L. Schooley and Mr. William Bradley Burch; Nupa Agarwal, Esq.; Michael and Maura Bisceglia; Paula and Charles Collins; Philip and Kay Davidson; Mr. James W. Klaus; Deanna M. Maneker; Amy and Sean McGlynn; John McGurl and Michelle Gluck; Jaclyn Miller, Ph.D.; Mr. and Mrs. Stanley J. Olander, Jr.; Dr. and Mrs. Carl Patow; Reynolds Gallery; Dr. Bibhakar Sunder Shakya; SouthState Bank; Mr. and Mrs. John Stark; Shantaram and Sunita Talegaonkar; Stephen C. Thompson, Jr. and Jon McCue; and Ting Xu and Evergreen Enterprises.

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, 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 has begun its \$190 million expansion and renovation project led by the international architecture firm SmithGroup. Tentatively scheduled for completion in 2026, the project consists of adding a new wing of nearly 170,000 square feet and renovating 45,000 square feet of existing spaces, while maintaining 150,000 square feet of green space in the Sculpture Garden. Visitors will experience a seamless journey through the collections in the new wing, which will house contemporary art, African art, American art, a new suite of galleries for rotating special exhibitions, and a special-events space. The expansion and renovation will enable the museum to display more art, welcome more visitors, and provide more enjoyment.

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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