

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 18, 2014

VMFA Celebrates Black History Month

In recognition of Black History Month, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is offering several programs and upcoming exhibitions that bring attention to African-American artists, civil rights and social justice.

VMFA continually commits to building, interpreting and programming a diverse, global permanent collection. Special exhibitions correlate to the collection and create ongoing conversations. Currently on view is *Signs of Protest*, a photography exhibition that represents the culture of resistance during the turbulent 1960s with an emphasis on civil rights leaders Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and Stokely Carmichael. The photographs also follow the evolution of protest from civil rights and black power to Vietnam War demonstrations and, in subsequent decades, rallies fighting South African apartheid.



Beauford Delaney (American, 1901-1979), *Marian Anderson*, 1965, oil on canvas, 63 x 51½", © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, J. Harwood and Louise B. Cochrane Fund for

Programs

Conversations: The Voice and Vision of Marian Anderson

Wednesday, February 19, 11 a.m.

Free, no registration required, Claiborne Robertson Room

Honor the birthday month of iconic singer and cultural hero Marian Anderson. Join acclaimed soprano Dr. Lisa Edwards-Burrs and VMFA's Chief Curator and Louise B. and J. Harwood Cochrane Curator of American Art, Dr. Sylvia Yount, as they explore Anderson's musical talent and celebrated legacy. The program begins in the Claiborne Robertson Room and will be followed by a live performance in the museum's American art galleries.

African American Read-In

Thursday, February 20, 5 – 6:30 p.m.

Free, no registration required

As part of the 24th annual African American Read-In, a national event, VMFA staff and members of the community share African American literature through readings, poetry, and speeches related to *Signs of Protest* and works in the permanent collection.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute with Film

Friday, February 21

6 pm: Virginia Union University Concert Choir perform a moving tribute to Dr. King.

6:30 - 10 p.m.: *King: A Filmed Record . . . Montgomery to Memphis* (1970; 3 hours; B&W)

Spanning 13 years – from 1955 to 1968 – this monumental documentary tells the story of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s rise from regional activist to world-respected leader of the Civil Rights movement. Created from archival footage, the film features heartfelt tributes by some of the greatest stars of the era: Harry Belafonte, Ruby Dee, Ben Gazzara, Charlton Heston, James Earl Jones, Burt Lancaster, Paul Newman, Clarence Williams III, and Joanne Woodward. \$8 (VMFA members \$5)

Upcoming Exhibitions

Posing Beauty in African American Culture opens in April and is sponsored by Dominion. This exhibition examines the contested ways in which African and African American beauty has been represented in historical and contemporary contexts through a diverse range of media, including photography, film, video, fashion, advertising, and other forms of popular culture such as music and the Internet. Drawn from both public and private collections, *Posing Beauty* features approximately 85 works by artists such as Carrie Mae Weems, Charles "Teenie" Harris, Eve Arnold, Gary Winogrand, Sheila Pree Bright, Leonard Freed, Renee Cox, Anthony Barboza, Bruce Davidson, Mickalene Thomas, and Jeanne Moutoussamy-Ashe.

In conjunction with *Posing Beauty*, *Identity Shifts: Works from VMFA* also will open in April. This collection-based exhibition features works by African American artists who use representations of the human figure or some aspect of the body (including hair) to explore how we construct and perceive personal and cultural identity. The selection of paintings and sculptures, from the 1970s to the present, features an array of perspectives and styles that underscore the complex factors informing conceptions of race and gender, and includes works by such artists as Trenton Doyle Hancock, Robert Pruitt and Iona Rozeal Brown. Many of these pieces will be on view at VMFA for the first time.

About the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

VMFA's permanent collection encompasses more than 33,000 works of art spanning 5,000 years of world history. Its collections of Art Nouveau and Art Deco, English silver, Fabergé, and the art of South Asia are among the finest in the nation. With acclaimed holdings in American, British Sporting, Impressionist and Post-Impressionist, and Modern and Contemporary art – and additional strengths in African, Ancient, East Asian, and European – VMFA ranks as one of the top comprehensive art museums in the United States. Programs include educational activities and studio classes for all ages, plus lively after-hours events. VMFA's Statewide Partnership program includes traveling exhibitions, artist and teacher workshops, and lectures across the Commonwealth. VMFA, a certified Virginia Green attraction, is open 365 days a year and general admission is always free. For additional information, telephone 804-340-1400 or visit www.vmfa.museum.

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