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Cultural Exchange Builds Deeper Insights between VMFA and China
The Palace Museum and VMFA engage in a 7-year relationship

A wide variety of educational programs and innovative technology applications, as well as staff and international exhibition exchanges, are some of the ways the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and the Palace Museum seek to learn about and share one another's respective cultures.



Forbidden City offers inspiring content for educators.

This August, VMFA will host a teacher open house dedicated to exploring the multitude of educational opportunities around *Forbidden City*. The *Beyond the Walls Teaching Gallery* will be open for a preview and teachers will gather resources about the upcoming exhibition, as well as learn about the museum's Educational Resources website. This educational preview follows the June week-long Summer Institute for Educators when more than 60 statewide educators spent five days exploring ways to inspire students about Chinese art through SOL-based teaching across all curricula. The immersive programs include scholarly presentations on topics ranging from literature, tomb art, calligraphy, history, and art-making experiences.

“This is Virginia’s year to celebrate China,” Director Alex Nyerges said. “We have been graciously welcomed by the Palace Museum. In 2011, we signed an historic agreement enabling a mutually beneficial partnership and an exciting opportunity to showcase each other’s collections and culture. Museum staff representing curatorial, exhibition design, education, conservation and security have traveled to China to develop the combined vision for this cultural exchange. Because of our statewide education initiatives, schoolchildren from throughout the Commonwealth will learn about this historic culture.”

In November 2013, Senator John Kerry and Chinese Vice Premier Liu Yandong co-chaired the fourth annual U.S. - China Consultation on People to People, further encouraging and strengthening our ties in culture, education, science, technology and sports.

In March 2014, museum staff welcomed Wang Yanjing to Richmond for a 2-month residency. Wang Yanjing has worked in the Painting Conservation Lab at the Palace Museum since 1979. During her stay in Richmond, Wang Yanjing conducted a condition survey of works of Chinese painting and calligraphy in VMFA’s collection, and worked with VMFA staff in the Painting Conservation Lab and the Frank Raysor Center for the Study of Works on Paper. She completely remounted one scroll and performed various treatments on 10 additional paintings. Wang Yanjing also

had the opportunity to meet with paper conservators at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City and at the Freer and Sackler Galleries of Art in Washington, D.C. This conservation project was funded by a grant provided by the Ellen Bayard Weedon Foundation.

The Palace Museum will share treasures from the Ming and Qing dynasties in the exhibition *Forbidden City: Imperial Treasures from the Palace Museum, Beijing*. Presented by Altria Group and the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, *Forbidden City* will include 200 artworks, many of which have never been seen outside of China. In summer of 2016, VMFA will reciprocate with an exhibition of its renowned Fabergé collection, which will be the first U.S. art museum collection to be exhibited at the Palace Museum in Beijing.

VMFA educational programs, designed to inspire and inform audiences of all ages, will tell the story of the rarely seen objects from the Imperial collection as well as VMFA's permanent collection. In November, VMFA will host a reception for participants in the statewide Virginia Art Education Association Annual Conference.

Beyond the Walls, a multiplatform interactive digital technology tool related to the permanent collection, and online resources for the exhibition will launch on September 7, 2014 along with the teaching gallery, which will serve as a pre-visit tool for educators and families. VMFA's educational programming will bring to life the rich history of China through curriculum-based docent-guided tours for students in grades K-12. For children and families, the museum will offer studio classes, activities, and a Chinese New Year celebration at *ChinaFest*, a free public family event on Saturday, January 3, 2015.

VMFA will also offer distinctive lectures, talks, and films throughout the exhibition for adult audiences that will include nationally recognized speakers. These programs will support the exhibition with cogent scholarly insights into the objects from the Palace Museum while making ties to VMFA's permanent collection. *Forbidden City* is presented by Altria Group and the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation. Educational programming for the exhibition is sponsored by the MeadWestvaco Foundation. The Banner Exhibition Program at VMFA is supported by the Julia Louise Reynolds Fund.

Additional institutional sponsors include: the National Endowment for the Arts, The Richard S. Reynolds Foundation, The Anne Carter and Walter R. Robins, Jr. Foundation, the Ellen Bayard Weedon Foundation, The Community Foundation *Serving Richmond & Central Virginia*, Evergreen Enterprises, Leapfrog 3D Printers, the Memorial Foundation for Children, Norfolk Southern Corporation, and The Jeanann Gray Dunlap Foundation.

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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