



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VMFA Director Alex Nyerges Recognized for International Contributions

French Ministry of Culture to Appoint Nyerges as Knight in the Order of Arts and Letters

On November 22, 2014, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Director Alex Nyerges was honored by the French government as Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters (*l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres*), a prestigious international association of leaders recognized for their contributions toward promoting international relations with France. Nyerges is an executive committee member of the French Regional & American Museum Exchange (FRAME), a formal collaboration of museums comprising 13 cities in France and 13 museums in North America. The combined collections of FRAME museums total more than two million works of art.



Alex Nyerges, Director of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Nyerges' accomplishments for the advancement of Franco-American cultural diplomacy are significant.

- In 2011, VMFA brought the renowned international exhibition *Picasso: Masterpieces from the Musee National Picasso, Paris* to Richmond, Va.
- Later that year, VMFA hosted the annual FRAME symposium, welcoming member museums from all over the world to participate in promoting cultural diplomacy.
- In 2012, VMFA hosted the critically acclaimed exhibition *The Mourners: Tomb Sculptures from the Court of Burgundy*, a FRAME traveling exhibition in which eight participating museums shared costs to ensure that exhibition admission was free to the public.
- Last year, VMFA sponsored the exhibition *Joseph Cornell and Surrealism* at partner institution University of Virginia's Fralin Museum of Art. Before traveling to Virginia, the exhibition received over 10,000 visitors in two weeks at Musee des Beaux-Arts Lyon.
- In March of 2015, VMFA will exhibit *Van Gogh, Manet and Matisse: The Art of the Flower*, an exhibition of floral still lifes painted in 19th century France.
- Most recently, Nyerges spearheaded the move of FRAME's headquarters from Dallas, Texas, to Richmond, Va.

"The VMFA board is delighted that Alex will be recognized for both advancing the arts and promoting international relationships," Board of Trustee President William A. Royall, Jr., said. "His many accomplishments enhance VMFA's ability to bring the world to Virginia."

Vincent Berjot, director general of heritage for the French Ministry of Culture, congratulates Nyerges: “It is particularly nice to honor your critical contributions to the outreach of heritage museums and cooperation between our two countries. I send my warmest congratulations.” At the 2014 French Regional & American Museum Exchange Annual Conference in Dijon, France, Nyerges will be presented the rank of Knight by Marie-Christine Labourdette, co-president of FRAME and director of Musées de France, for his contribution to furthering the arts in France and throughout the world. Past years' recipients of the Chevalier award include Will Barnett, George Clooney, Anne d’Harnoncourt, Phillip Glass, and Ian Wardropper. The award is conferred on no more than 20 people per year.

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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