

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 18, 2015

***Félix Bracquemond: Impressionist Innovator***

Champion of the etching revival in France is celebrated

French printmaker and designer Félix Bracquemond (1833–1914) produced more than 800 etchings during a prolific career that spanned the late 19th century. Though celebrated from the outset of his career as a skilled etcher, Bracquemond enthusiastically championed the etching revival in France, prominently leading the charge toward redefining etching as a highly original art form. Despite his status while living as a luminary within the Paris Salon and avant-garde artistic circles associated with *Impressionisme* and *Japonisme* Bracquemond’s work is little known today. The exhibition is on view through October 4, 2015.

*Félix Bracquemond: Impressionist Innovator* re-introduces Bracquemond as an independently-minded, industrious artist through a selection of more than 80 works on paper and tableware objects, among them his most imaginative and groundbreaking reinterpretations of the traditions of French art and decorative arts. The exhibition features expansive displays of Bracquemond’s distinctive images of birds—namely ducks and other domestic fowl—revealing his deep appreciation of nature and his interest in Japanese visual tradition. Displays of commercial dinner services designed by Bracquemond punctuate the exhibition, revealing the unexpected but vital role of his printmaking in ceramics production and how his aesthetic experimentations promoted a taste for Japanese art and culture in France. Collectively, these selections capture Bracquemond’s vast and richly varied contributions to printmaking in a period that witnessed dynamic technical innovations in the medium in tandem with renewed popularity of etchings among the public and art collectors alike.



Félix Bracquemond (French, 1833–1914),  
Lapwings and Teals (Vanneaux et Sarcelles),  
1862, etching, plate: 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ "H × 9 $\frac{1}{8}$ "W; image: 10  
5/16"H × 7 11/16"W. Gift of Frank Raysor  
Photo: David Stover © Virginia Museum of Fine  
Arts

Selections for this exhibition are drawn entirely from the Frank Raysor Collection, a transformative gift to VMFA which preserves nearly the complete oeuvre of Félix Bracquemond, including many unique and rare impressions, among thousands of works by other leading Etching Revival artists.

**About the exhibition**

TITLE: *Félix Bracquemond: Impressionist Innovator: Selections from the Frank Raysor Collection*

DATES: February 13 – October 4, 2015

CURATORS: Co-curated by Dr. Mitchell Merling, Paul Mellon Curator and Head of the Department of European Art and Kristie Couser, Curatorial Assistant for the Mellon Collections

NUMBER OF WORKS: More than 80

ADMISSION: Free

**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](http://www.vmfa.museum).

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