



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VMFA Teams Up with Google to Magnify the Visitor Experience

Art Camera enables on-site and online visitors to explore their favorite works in stunning detail

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts recently had 42 works in its collection captured by the Google Art Camera, a robotic camera custom-built to produce ultra-high resolution gigapixel images. *The Abundance of Nature* by Severin Roesen is just one example of how the Art Camera enables visitors to view not just the entire work of art as a painting but to zoom in on the tiny strokes of genius that make it a true masterpiece.

The details are exquisite: tiny white feathers strewn across a bird's nest, a ladybug hidden on the underside of a leaf, a moth resting on a stem, and even the artist's signature cleverly concealed in a twisting grapevine. It's the little touches like these that make Severin Roesen's *The Abundance of Nature* a true masterpiece. The only problem? These features are so small they can be difficult to spot with the naked eye.



[Severin Roesen (American 1816-ca. 1872). *The Abundance of Nature*, ca. 1855. Oil on canvas. VMFA; J. Harwood and Louise B. Cochrane Fund for American Art. 2002.558]

To date, the Art Camera has documented 1,745 objects from some of the world's most acclaimed institutions, including the Met, Musee D'Orsay, MoMA, and now VMFA. The stunning quality of these photographs, each made up of over one billion pixels, grants visitors unprecedented access to some of VMFA's most treasured works by allowing them to zoom in on the details--right down to the cracks in the paint. It is, as Google describes it, "...the closest thing to walking up to the real thing with a magnifying glass."

The partnership between VMFA and Google began in 2015 when the museum joined the Google Art Project as part of **ARTShare**, an ambitious open-access initiative that aims to expand opportunities for digital learning and outreach at the museum. Currently, a total of 234 high-resolution images from VMFA's collection are available on the Art Project site. The museum is also exploring further opportunities for collaboration with the company, including the implementation of Google Gallery View, which would allow visitors to take a virtual tour of the museum.

All of these efforts are aimed at creating a more accessible VMFA, ensuring that the museum's remarkable collection can be enjoyed anywhere, by anyone, at any time. To that end, the Art Camera provides an incredible boost, enabling visitors, both on-site and online, to engage with the collection in dynamic new ways. Art lovers can now explore their favorite works in stunning detail. Artists can study the techniques of their predecessors down to individual brushstrokes. For scholars like Dr.

Mitchell Merling, VMFA's Paul Mellon Curator and Head of the Department of European Art, the Art Camera is a powerful new research tool:

“As a curator, I was totally committed to the accessibility of the Google Art Project, which brought so many different kinds of art to so many people, to everyone,” said Dr. Merling. “Now I am even more excited by the Google Art Camera, which has brought me an entirely new way to see works with which I thought I was completely familiar.”

The Art Camera provides yet another way for VMFA to share its collection with the world while also ensuring the preservation of fragile masterpieces for future generations to enjoy. The museum looks forward to exploring even more open-access opportunities in the coming years.

Complete List of VMFA Gigapixel Images

1. [*Wheel of Life*](#), ca. 1800, Tibetan, opaque watercolor on cloth. Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams Fund, 2001.3
2. [*Shakyamuni Buddha with Two Bodhisattvas, Thirty-Five Buddhas of Confession, and Seventeen Arhats*](#), ca. 1450–1500, Tibetan, opaque watercolor on cloth. Nasli and Alice Heeramaneck Collection, Gift of Paul Mellon, 68.8.119
3. [*Mandala of Hevajra*](#), ca. 1480–1520, Tibetan, opaque watercolor on cloth. Berthe and John Ford Collection, Gift of the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, 91.509
4. [*The Hindu Sage Agastya*](#), mid-15th century, Nepalese, opaque watercolor on cloth. Berthe and John Ford Collection, Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams Fund, 91.551
5. [*Celestial Guardians from the Dogapsa Temple*](#), 1740, Man-hyung (Korean, 18th century), ink, color, and gold on silk mounted on board. Gift of Mrs. Joseph M. Sizoo, 2005.102
6. [*Vishnu's Great Vision of Shiva*](#), ca. 1810–20, Indian, opaque watercolor on paper. Friends of Indian Art and the Robert A. and Ruth W. Fisher Fund, 2003.1
7. [*The Sketchers*](#), 1913, John Singer Sargent (American, born Italy, 1856–1925), oil on canvas. Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Fund, 58.11
8. [*Virgin de Guadalupe*](#), mid-18th century, Luis Berrueco (Mexican active 1700–1750), oil on canvas. Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment, 2015.270
9. [*Seated Woman with Wood Sculpture*](#), 1912, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (German, 1880–1938), oil on canvas. Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams Fund, 84.80
10. [*Frau mit Hund I*](#), 1912, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (German, 1880–1938), oil on canvas. The Ludwig and Rosy Fischer Collection, Gift of the Estate of Anne R. Fischer, 2009.173
11. [*Portrait Gnevecke*](#), 1914, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (German, 1880–1938), oil on canvas. Ludwig and Rosy Fischer Collection, Gift of the Estate of Anne R. Fischer, 2009.176

12. [*Portrait Erna Kirchner*](#), 1917, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner (German, 1880–1938), oil on canvas. The Ludwig and Rosy Fischer Collection, Gift of the Estate of Anne R. Fischer, 2009.200
13. [*Carafe, Glass, and Packet of Tobacco*](#), 1914, Juan Gris (Spanish, 1887–1927), pasted paper, gouache, and charcoal on canvas. T. Catesby Jones Collection, 47.10.28
14. [*Morning Journal*](#), 1895, Louis John Rhead (American, born England, 1857–1926), commercial lithograph poster. Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Fund and Sydney and Frances Lewis Endowment Fund, 90.92
15. [*Rose*](#), 1898, Alphonse Mucha (Czechoslovakian, active in France, 1860–1939), lithograph on silk. Sydney and Frances Lewis Art Nouveau Fund, 73.11.1
16. [*Lys*](#), 1898, Alphonse Mucha (Czechoslovakian, active in France, 1860–1939), lithograph on silk. Sydney and Frances Lewis Art Nouveau Fund, 73.11.2
17. [*Venerable Celestial King Sagara*](#), ca. 1740, Chinese, ink, color, and gold on silk. Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Fund, 2004.70.1
18. [*Venerable Celestial Bodhiruma*](#), ca. 1740, Chinese, ink, color, and gold on silk. Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Fund, 2004.70.2
19. [*Portrait of Zen Master Gudō Toshoku*](#), 1660, Saka Uuinobu (Japanese, 1577–1661), ink and color on silk. Special Oriental Art Purchase Fund, 67.49
20. [*The Abundance of Nature*](#), ca. 1855, Severin Roesen (American, born Germany, 1816–ca. 1872), oil on canvas. J. Harwood and Louise B. Cochrane Fund for American Art, 2002.558
21. [*Quince Blossoms*](#), 1878, Charles Caryl Coleman (American, 1840–1928), oil on canvas. J. Harwood and Louise B. Cochrane Fund for American Art, 90.29
22. [*Alexander Harrison*](#), 1888, Cecilia Beaux (American, 1855–1942), oil on canvas. J. Harwood and Louise B. Cochrane Fund for American Art and partial gift of Juliana Terian Gilbert in memory of Peter G. Terian, 2009.2
23. [*Marian Anderson*](#), 1965, Beauford Delaney (American, 1901–1979) oil on canvas. J. Harwood and Louise B. Cochrane Fund for American Art, 2012.277
24. [*On the Rio Grande*](#), 1927, Walter Ufer (American, 1876–1936), oil on canvas. J. Harwood and Louis B. Cochrane Fund for American Art, 2014.183
25. [*Fayum Portrait of a Woman*](#), Roman (Egypt), late 3rd-4th centry AD, encaustic on wood panel. Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams Fund, 55.4
26. [*Fragment of a Mythological Papyrus Scroll*](#), 975-850 BC, Egyptian, tempera on papyrus. Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams Fund, 54.10

27. [*St. John the Baptist*](#), 13th century, Byzantine, limewood panel with gold leaf ground. Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams Fund, 68.66
28. [*Project for a Tapestry*](#), 1895-96, Georges DeFeure (French, 1868-1943), oil on canvas. Sydney and Frances Lewis Endowment Fund, 2013.173
- 29-32. [*Queen*](#), 1909, Margaret Macdonald Mackintosh (Scottish, 1865-1933), wood, paint, gesso. Gift of Sydney and Frances Lewis, 85.143.1-4
33. [*At the Milliner*](#), ca. 1882-1885, Edgar Degas (French, 1834-1917), oil on canvas. Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, 2001.27
34. [*Tropical Landscape: American Indian Struggling with a Gorilla*](#), 1910, Henri Rousseau (French, 1844-1910), oil on canvas. Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mellon, 84.3
35. [*The Visitation*](#), 1640s, Mattia Preti (Italian, 1613-1699), oil on canvas. Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment, 2014.243
36. [*The Village Holiday*](#), ca. 1650, David Teniers the Younger (Flemish, 1610-1690), oil on canvas. Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams Fund, 56.23
37. [*Achilles on Skyros*](#), 1656, Nicolas Poussin (French, active in Rome, 1594-1665), oil on canvas. Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Fund, 57.2
38. [*Portrait of an Extraordinary Musical Dog*](#), 1805, Philip Reinagle (English, 1749-1833), oil on canvas. Paul Mellon Collection, 85.465
39. [*Tiger*](#), ca. 1769-71, George Stubbs (English, 1724-1806), oil on canvas. Paul Mellon Collection, 99.95
40. [*The Crucifixion with Saints and Donors*](#), ca. 1384-93, Altichiero Altichieri (Italian, ca. 1330-before 1393), tempera on panel. Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Fund, 59.5
41. [*Still Life*](#), ca. 1640-50, Jan Davidsz De Heem (Dutch, 1606-1684), oil on canvas. Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Fund, 61.15
42. [*A Ride for Liberty*](#), 1862, Eastman Johnson (American, 1824-1906), oil on board. Paul Mellon Collection, 85.644

Learn More

VMFA Art Project: <https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/partner/virginia-museum-of-fine-arts>

Introducing the Art Camera: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dOrJesw5ET8>

Official Google Blog: <https://googleblog.blogspot.com/2016/05/art-camera-cultural-institute.html>

About the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

VMFA's permanent collection encompasses more than 35,000 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 world. 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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