

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VMFA to present *Napoleon: Power and Splendor* June 9 to September 3, 2018

Exhibition examines how Napoleon's Household crafted the Imperial image through visual and decorative arts



Napoleon in His Study Wearing the Uniform of a Grenadier of the Guard, ca. 1813-30, Francesco Belloni (Italian, 1772-1863), after Baron François Gérard (French, 1770-1837), hardstone, pâte-de-verre mosaic. Musée national des châteaux de Malmaison et Bois-Préau, Rueil-Malmaison, France.

Richmond, Virginia – The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts presents *Napoleon: Power and Splendor*, an inside look at the intricacies of Napoleon's Imperial Household and the role it played in shaping the Emperor's image to expand his political and military power and social influence.

Napoleon Bonaparte (1769–1821) was one of the most powerful and historically influential European emperors between the Renaissance and the 20th century. Through an imagined visit to his palaces, exhibition attendees will discover the relationship between Napoleon's politics and the visual and decorative arts. The exhibition reveals how artists helped to craft the Emperor's public image during his reign, from his coronation in 1804 to his second and final exile in 1815.

More than 200 works of art — many of which have never before been shown in the United States — are included in this international loan exhibition that will be on display at VMFA from June 9 to Sept. 3, 2018. The exhibition contains many masterpieces, including paintings by Jacques-Louis David and Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, sculpture by Paul Chaudet, and porcelain made by the Sèvres Imperial Manufactory.

Organized by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, with the participation of the Musée National du Château de Fontainebleau and the exceptional support of Mobilier national de France, *Napoleon: Power and Splendor* includes works from the Château de Fontainebleau, the Louvre, the Musée de l'Armée in Paris and other collections. The exhibition shows how paintings, decorative arts, architectural settings and clothing

were all used to support Napoleon's rise to power and to establish and expand his empire. Projection mapping technology used throughout the exhibition will bring the imagined palace to life, providing a powerful, immersive experience.

The exhibition is organized in eight sections that correspond to the roles of the leading figures employed to attend to the needs of Napoleon and his family. In addition to overseeing nearly every detail of Napoleon's daily life, the Imperial Household — 3,500 employees ranging from the highest dignitary to the most humble servant — organized sacred and secular ceremonies. This staff played an important role in setting artistic and cultural policy during Napoleon's reign, guiding the propaganda machine that helped transform a military general into an epic figure who reimaged France's demised monarchy and reinvented himself as a perceived heir to the Caesars of ancient Rome.

Napoleon: Power and Splendor reveals Napoleon's ambitious and strategic use of the Imperial Household and commissioned works of art to craft his image and exert power.

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Tickets

Tickets for the exhibition are now on sale. The exhibition is free for VMFA members, children ages 6 and under, active-duty military personnel and their immediate families; \$16 for adults, \$12 for seniors 65 and older, and \$10 for youth ages 7-17 and college students with ID. Visitors can reserve tickets [online](#) or by phone at 804.340.1405.

Sponsorship information

Napoleon: Power and Splendor is organized and circulated by the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts with the participation of the Château de Fontainebleau and the exceptional support of Mobilier national de France. Sponsors include The Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans Exhibition Endowment, The Julia Louise Reynolds Fund, Mrs. Frances Massey Dulaney, Mr. and Mrs. Fred T. Tattersall, Mr. and Mrs. Achille Murat Guest, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph T. Knox, Peachtree House Foundation, Mr. and Mrs. James H. Price III. The exhibition program at VMFA is supported by the Julia Louise Reynolds Fund.

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The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts in Richmond, Virginia, is one of the largest comprehensive art museums in the United States. VMFA, which opened in 1936, is a state agency and privately endowed educational institution. Its purpose is to collect, preserve, exhibit, and interpret art, and to encourage the study of the arts. Through the Office of Statewide Partnerships program, the museum offers curated exhibitions, arts-related audiovisual programs, symposia, lectures, conferences, and workshops by visual and performing artists. In addition to presenting a wide array of special exhibitions, the museum provides visitors with the opportunity to experience a global collection of art that spans more than 6,000 years. VMFA's permanent holdings encompass nearly 40,000 artworks, including the largest public collection of Fabergé outside of Russia, the finest collection of Art Nouveau outside of Paris, and one of the nation's finest collections of American art. VMFA is also home to important collections of Chinese art, English silver, and French Impressionist, Post-Impressionist, British sporting, and modern and contemporary art, as well as renowned South Asian, Himalayan, and African art. In May 2010, VMFA opened its doors to the public after a transformative expansion, the largest in its history.

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is the only art museum in the United States open 365 days a year with free general admission. For additional information, telephone 804-340-1400 or visit www.vmfa.museum.