

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dec. 13, 2018

VMFA Acquires 250 Works for Permanent Collection
Works range in age from circa 2040-1786 BC to the present

Richmond, VA—The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is pleased to announce a number of new significant acquisitions to its collections, including works by Nick Cave, Frederic Edwin Church and Hale Woodruff. In addition to several other notable acquisitions this quarter, the purchase of Frederic Edwin Church's *View on the Magdalena River* allows VMFA to greatly enhance the museum's holdings of one of the most important American landscape painters of the nineteenth century. The gift of Nick Cave's *Untitled (Soundsuit)* and the purchase of *The Banjo Player*, an early canvas by Harlem Renaissance painter Hale Woodruff, reflect VMFA's strategic plan goal to bolster significantly its collection of works by African-American artists.

"We are thrilled to add these wonderful works of art to VMFA's collection," says VMFA Director Alex Nyerges. "The Church and Woodruff represent transformative additions to the American art collection, while Bill and Pam Royall's gift of Nick Cave's *Untitled (Soundsuit)* is the latest in a series of landmark donations that they have made to the museum's collection of Modern and Contemporary Art. Their commitment to living African-American artists dovetails perfectly with our strategic plan and we are immensely indebted to their extraordinary vision and generosity."

Nick Cave, *Untitled (Soundsuit)*



Untitled (Soundsuit), 2011, Nick Cave (American, born 1959). Fabric, sequins, embroidery, mannequin, 102 × 36 × 36 in. (259.08 × 91.44 × 91.44 cm). Gift of Pamela K. and William A. Royall, Jr.

Born in Fulton, Mississippi, Nick Cave studied art at the Kansas City Art Institute concentrating in fiber and design. Since emerging on the contemporary art scene, he has had numerous exhibitions in the United States and abroad. Cave's iconic *Soundsuit* has been generously donated by Richmond-based collectors Pam and Bill Royall and is the first work by Cave to enter VMFA's permanent collection.

"Nick Cave is one of the most iconic artists of his generation," says Valerie Cassel Oliver, VMFA's Sydney and Frances Lewis Family Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art. "His *Soundsuits* have reshaped how art and movement are inextricably linked. We are grateful to the Royalls for this stunning work which enables the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts to remain on the forefront of the contemporary art landscape."

Soundsuits are elaborate and wearable sculptures that the artist began making in 1992. Comprised of a variety of materials that include fabric, sisal, human hair, buttons, sequins, feathers, wire and accumulated objects, these suits are made to be worn and their title relates to the noise made when they move. As a former dancer and choreographer, Cave has historically activated these objects through live and filmed performances. Whether static or in motion, the *Soundsuits* bear some resemblance to African ceremonial costumes and masks.

Although the *Soundsuits* appear vibrant and joyful, they began as a response to the police beating of Rodney King in Los Angeles in 1992. As an African-American man, Cave felt particularly vulnerable after this incident of police brutality and the first *Soundsuits* can be understood as a form of protective body armor. By 2011, when Cave made the *Soundsuit* that has been given to VMFA, these full-body outfits had become increasingly elaborate and exuberant. VMFA plans to acquire more *Soundsuits* in the future, along with Cave's videos of these human shaped assemblages in motion, so that this example can be placed in context and fully understood as both a sculpture and performative piece.

Frederic Edwin Church, *View on the Magdalena River*

VMFA's Board of Trustees unanimously voted to acquire an important landscape painting by Frederic Edwin Church, a leading member of the Hudson River School. This important painting relates to the artist's 1853 journey through present-day Colombia and Ecuador. Replete with the exotic flora and fauna that Church viewed firsthand, *View on the Magdalena River* is an exquisitely composed landscape that depicts no one specific site, but rather is a pastiche of rivers, grasslands, and the mountainous terrain of South America. While the painting echoes the viewpoint of a traveler in an exotic land, it also includes themes as wide ranging as natural history, the presence of the divine, and the "civilizing" hand of colonial settlements. The painting balances the artist's interest in depicting observable, exotic locales with the unifying sense of a divine ecological order represented in the various vignettes within the painting. When Church debuted the painting in 1857 at the Annual Exhibition of the National Academy, one critic remarked, "*View on the Magdalena* ... is one of the freshest, and sweetest, and most seducing pictures of the exhibition."



View on the Magdalena River, 1857, Frederic Edwin Church (American, 1826–1900). Oil on canvas, 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ \times 36 in. (60.33 \times 91.44 cm). The J. Harwood and Louise B. Cochrane Fund for American Art; The Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams Fund by exchange; and The Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Fund by exchange.

Hale Woodruff, *The Banjo Player*



The Banjo Player, 1929, Hale Woodruff (American, 1900–1980). Oil on canvas, 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ \times 28 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (60.33 \times 73.03 cm). The J. Harwood and Louise B. Cochrane Fund for American Art.

Hale Woodruff, the celebrated African-American painter, printmaker, and educator, studied at the John Herron Institute in Indianapolis and the Fogg Art Museum at Harvard University, before completing his education at the Académie Scandinave and the Académie Moderne in Paris in the late 1920s. He painted *The Banjo Player* at the end of this formative period in Paris.

Woodruff's painting may evoke for some viewers the vexed history of minstrelsy (in which banjo music figured prominently), but the canvas actually takes many significant steps in elevating the instrument's symbolism from its previous negative connotations. Indeed, the subject matter of Woodruff's painting harkens to the example set by Henry Ossawa Tanner's already canonical painting, *The Banjo Lesson*, which ennobles the instrument as an agent of education and familial bonding.

The acquisition of Woodruff's richly painted *The Banjo Player* provides a culturally illuminating context for the many American Impressionist paintings at VMFA featuring players of stringed instruments—including

Thomas Wilmer Dewings's *The Lute* from the James W. and Frances Gibson McGlothlin Collection, and Romare Bearden's *Three Folk Musicians*, a monumental collage painting that the museum acquired in 2017.

Additional December acquisitions can be found in the appendix below.

About VMFA Acquisitions

These works of art were approved by the VMFA Board of Trustees on Dec. 12, 2018. All art is purchased with private funds from dedicated endowments. VMFA is a state agency and a public/private partnership. After trustee approval, the art becomes the property of the Commonwealth of Virginia to protect, preserve, and interpret.

About the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

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.

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Appendix VMFA December Art Acquisitions

1. Charles Méryon (French, 1821-1868), San Francisco, 1855-1856, Etching, 9 3/16 × 39 7/8 in. (23.34 × 101.28 cm) (along with 40 other etchings)
Credit Line: Gift of Frank Raysor
2. Salvador Dalí (Spanish, 1904-1989), Les Chants de Maldoror, 1934, 44 etchings with drypoint in black ink on Vélin d'Arches paper with full margins and remarques. Each sheet: 13 1/8 × 9 7/8 in. (33 × 25 cm)
Source: Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment
3. Charles Alston (American, 1907-1977), Portrait of a Man, 1929, Pastel and graphite on paper, 21 1/2 × 16 3/4 in. (54.61 × 52.55 cm)
Credit Line: Gift of Michael Rosenfeld and halley k Harrisburg
4. Hale Woodruff (American, 1900-1980), The Banjo Player, 1929, Oil on canvas, 23 3/4 × 28 3/4 in. (60.33 × 73.03 cm)
Source: The J. Harwood and Louise B. Cochrane Fund for American Arts
5. Frederic Edwin Church (American, 1826-1900), A View on the Magdalena River, 1857, Oil on canvas, 23 3/4 × 36 in. (60.33 × 91.44 cm)
Source: The J. Harwood and Louise B. Cochrane Fund for American Art; The Adolph D. and Wilkins C. Williams Fund by exchange; and The Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Fund by exchange
6. Asher B. Durand (American, 1796-1886), Progress (The Advance of Civilization), 1853, Oil on canvas, 48 × 72 in. (121.9 × 182.9 cm)
Credit Line: Gift of an Anonymous Donor

7. Candida Alvarez (American, born 1955), Chill, 2011, Acrylic, pencil, oil, and enamel on canvas, 84 × 72 × 1 ¾ in. (213.36 × 182.88 × 4.45 cm)
Source: Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment
8. Nick Cave (American, born 1959), Untitled (Soundsuit), 2011, Fabric, sequins, embroidery, mannequin, 102 × 36 × 36 in. (259.08 × 91.44 × 91.44 cm)
Credit Line: Gift of Pamela K. and William A. Royall, Jr.
9. Samuel Levi Jones (American, born 1978), Deeper, 2017, Color aquatint and flatbite on Rives BFK paper, 67 × 51 in. (170.18 × 129.54 cm)
Source: Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment
10. Samuel Levi Jones (American, born 1978), Psychosocial, 2018, Deconstructed medical books on canvas, 60 × 55 in. (152.4 × 139.7 cm)
Source: Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment
11. Richard Carlyon (American, 1930-2006), Passage to India, 1975, Liquitex and acrylic polymer emulsion on canvas, 90 × 83 in. (228.6 × 210.82 cm)
Source: National Endowment for the Arts American Art Fund
12. Paul Rucker (American, born 1968), Storm in a Time of Shelter, 2018, 52 mannequins, cloth, historical ephemera and artifacts, various dimensions
Source: Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment
13. Guy Goodwin (American, born 1940), C-Swing, 1974, Oil on canvas, 87 ½ × 102 in. (222.25 × 259.08 cm)
Credit Line: Gift of Pamela K. and William A. Royall, Jr.
14. Guy Goodwin (American, born 1940), 2 2 3 3 INTERIOR, 2011, Acrylic and tempera on laminated cardboard, 77 × 87 × 7 in. (195.58 × 220.98 × 17.78 cm)
Credit Line: Gift of Pamela K. and William A. Royall, Jr.
15. Matthew Day Jackson (American, born 1974), Aerial Crop Painting, 2011, Synthetic carpet, wood, stainless steel frame, 72 × 102 in. (182.88 × 259.08 cm)
Credit Line: Gift of Pamela K. and William A. Royall, Jr.
16. Jeff Elrod (American, born 1966), Untitled, 2000, Acrylic on canvas, 90 ¼ × 94 in. (229.24 × 238.76 cm)
Credit Line: Gift of Drs. Paul and Sara Monroe
17. Unknown Artist (Egyptian, Ptolemaic), Ptolemaic Head, 50-25 BC, Marble, height: 11 ¾ in. (29.9 cm)
Credit Line: Gift of Sue McGovern-Huffman and Mark Huffman
18. Egyptian (New Kingdom, Dynasty 18), Swivel Ring with cartouche of Thutmose III, circa 1482-1425 BC, Gold, faience, US ring size 7 ¾; Egyptian (Late Period, Dynasty 26), Amulet Bead Necklace, circa 664-525 BC, Faience, gold, length: 17in. (43 cm); Egyptian (Middle Kingdom, Dynasty 11-12), Amulet and Scarab Bead Necklace, 2040-1786 BC, Carnelian, length: 15 ¾ in. (40 cm); Egyptian (Middle Kingdom, Dynasty 11-12), Scarab with tear-drop bead necklace, circa 2040-1786 BC, Carnelian, gold, amethyst, length: 18 in. (46 cm)
Source: Jack and Mary Anne Frable Fund and Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment
19. Amze Emmons (American, born 1974), Levity, 2018, Ten color screen print with laser cut elements on Coventry rag paper, 15 × 20 in. (38.1 × 50.8 cm)
Credit Line: Gift of Frank Raysor

20. Nicolino Calyo (American, born Italy, 1799-1884), General View of Niagara Falls, circa 1840, Gouache on paper, 6 ¼ × 8 ¾ in. (15.88 × 22.23 cm)
Source: Gabe Burton Fund
21. Larry Silver (American, born 1934), Headstand, 1954, printed 1999, Gelatin silver print, 19 7/8 × 15 13/16 in. (50.48 × 40.16 cm) (along with Larry Silver (American, born 1934), Contestants, 1954, printed 1998, Gelatin silver print, 19 15/16 × 15 7/8 in. (50.64 × 40.32 cm); Larry Silver (American, born 1934), Man Being Balanced, 1954, printed 2011, Gelatin silver print, 19 7/8 × 15 7/8 in. (50.48 × 40.32 cm); Larry Silver (American, born 1934), Spectators Watching Body Building Competition, 1954, printed 1984, Gelatin silver print, 11 1/8 × 16 5/8 in. (28.26 × 42.23 cm); Larry Silver (American, born 1934), Woman being Balanced, 1954, printed 1980, Gelatin silver print, 16 1/8 × 13 1/16 in. (40.96 × 33.18 cm); Larry Silver (American, born 1934), Boardwalk Beach Spectators, 1954, printed 1999, 15 15/16 × 19 7/8 in. (40.48 × 50.48 cm)
Credit Line: Gift of Bruce Silverstein
22. André Kertész (American, born Hungary, 1894-1985), 38 Photographs, Gelatin silver prints, various dimensions
Credit Line: Gift of Judy Haselton
23. George Rodger (English, 1908-1995), Victor of Korongo, Nuba Wrestling Match, Kordofan, Southern Sudan, 1949, printed 1950, Gelatin silver print, 9 3/8 × 7 ¼ in. (23.81 × 18.42 cm)
Source: Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment
24. Tshimbumba Kanda-Matulu (Congolese, 1947-circa 1982), 15 paintings, circa 1970-1973, Acrylic on flour sack, various dimensions
Credit Line: Gift of Pamela K. and William A. Royall, Jr.
25. Hashimoto Gaho (Japanese, 1835-1908), Sei-shonagon Lifting up a Bamboo Blind, 19th century, Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk, height: 70 in. (180.02 cm)
Source: Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment
26. Tahara Tohbe (Japanese, 1925-1991), Tea Bowl, Showa Period (1926-1989), Hagi ware; stoneware with glaze, 3 ½ × 5 3/8 in. (8.89 × 13.65 cm); Kato Juemon (Japanese, 1894-1974), Tea Bowl, Showa Period (1926-1989), Mino ware, Shino type; stoneware with design in brown over white glaze, 4 3/16 × 5 1/8 in. (10.64 × 13.02 cm); Tōshū Yamamoto (Japanese, 1906-1994), Tea Bowl, Showa period (1926-1989), Bizen ware; stoneware with natural glaze, 3 ½ × 5 1/8 in. (8.89 × 13.02 cm); Hamada Shoji (Japanese, 1894-1978), Tea Bowl, circa 1963, Mashiko ware; stoneware with brown glaze, 3 7/8 × 4 9/16 in. (9.84 × 11.59 cm); Ogawa Choraku (Japanese, 1912-1991), Tea Bowl, Showa period (1926-1989), Raku ware; stoneware with red glaze, 3 7/16 × 4 9/16 in. (8.73 × 11.59 cm); Yabunouch (Japanese, 1840-1917), Incense Box, Meiji period (1868-1912), Mino ware, Oribe type; stoneware with green and brown enamels over white glaze, 2 × 1 15/16 in. (5.08 × 4.92 cm); Ohi Chozaemon (Japanese, born 1927), Plum-Shaped Incense Box, Showa period (1926-1989), Ohi ware; stoneware with red glaze, 1 ½ × 2 ½ in. (3.81 × 6.35 cm); Unknown Artist (Chinese), Incense Box with Figures in Landscape, Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), Red lacquer on wood, 1 3/16 × 13 7/16 in. (3.02 × 34.13 cm); Unknown Artist (Japanese, Edo Period), Incense Pillow with Cherry Blossoms, 17th–18th centuries, Lacquer and maki-e on wood, 5 1/8 × 4 11/16 × 8 35/64 in. (13 × 11.9 × 21.7 cm); Unknown Artist (Korean, Joseon Dynasty), Bowl with Chrysanthemum Design, 15th century
Buncheong ware; stoneware with white slip, glaze, and carved design, 3 3/16 × 7 ¼ in. (8.1 × 18.42 cm); Unknown Artist (Korean, Goryeo Dynasty), Celadon Bowl, 12th century, Porcelain with green glaze, 2 13/16 × 6 13/16 in. (7.14 × 17.3 cm)(along with 11 other works of East Asian art)
Source: Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment

27. Umemura Keizan (Japanese, 1866-1934), Geese and Reeds, 19th century, Pair of six-panel folding screens; ink on paper, 66 × 144 in. (167.64 × 365.76 cm)
Credit Line: Gift of Charles L. Vincent
28. Unknown Artist (Japanese (Edo Period, 1603-1868)), Whose Sleeves?, 17th century, Pair of six-panel folding screens; ink and color on gold paper, 59 × 130 in. (150 × 330 cm)
Source: Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment
29. Tanaka Raishō (Japanese, 1875-1940), Mountain Moon in Four Seasons, 1916, Set of four hanging scrolls; ink and color on silk, height: 119 11/16 in. (304 cm)
Source: Arthur and Margaret Glasgow Endowment