

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 1, 2019

**MEDIA ALERT**

**VMFA Kicks off Meditation Month with Citywide Events to Promote Mindfulness  
and Celebrate *Awaken: A Tibetan Buddhist Journey Toward Enlightenment***



*L: Visitors participate in Project Yoga's weekly classes in the E. Claiborne and Lora Robins Sculpture Garden at VMFA; R: Tibetan Buddhist monks from Drepung Loseling Monastery construct a sand mandala*

**WHAT**

To celebrate meditation month in May and the opening of *Awaken: A Tibetan Buddhist Journey Toward Enlightenment*, the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is inviting Richmond residents to participate in citywide events to promote mindfulness and generosity. From now through Aug., Virginians will have the opportunity to participate in events such as yoga and meditation at the museum, scavenger hunts in Richmond's parks and gardens and a mandala sand painting ceremony with *The Mystical Arts of Tibet*, featuring Tibetan Monks from Drepung Loseling Monastery. These activities will encourage participants to power down and unplug before joining a voyage into the visionary art of Tibetan Buddhism featured in *Awaken*, on view through Aug. 18.

In addition to scheduled programs, VMFA will host surprise events around the city as a way to promote random acts of kindness. If you see VMFA in the community, tag #AwakenVMFA for a chance to win tickets to the exhibition. Additionally, if VMFA staff sees you practicing mindfulness or good deeds, you might be rewarded with free tickets to the exhibition. Keep up the good work, Richmond! We can't wait to see you around town!

**SCHEDULE**

*New events will be added regularly and dates and times are subject to change. For a full list of events and updates, please visit [vmfa.museum/awaken](http://vmfa.museum/awaken). To suggest an event, email [ellie.mcnevin@vmfa.museum](mailto:ellie.mcnevin@vmfa.museum).*

**"Awaken" Juice at North End Juice Co.**

Saturday, Apr. 27– Sunday, Aug. 18  
718 N. Cleveland St., Richmond, VA

Try a fresh-pressed juice to "Awaken" your senses! Flavors such as orange, grapefruit, pineapple, turmeric and cayenne are combined to create a delicious treat to start your day.

### **Mandala Sand Painting**

Thursday, May 2–Sunday, May 5

Free, entrance to *Awaken: A Tibetan Buddhist Journey Toward Enlightenment* at VMFA  
200 N. Arthur Ashe Boulevard, Richmond, VA

*The Mystical Arts of Tibet*, featuring Tibetan Monks from the Drepung Loseling Monastery in southern India, will construct a sand mandala and perform chanting and music ceremonies to celebrate the opening of *Awaken*. The opening ceremony will take place 12:00–1:00 pm on May 2. Visitors are free to watch the monks work during the opening ceremony and also 1:00–6:00 pm on May 2 and 10:00 am–5:00 pm, May 3–5. The mandala will be swept away in a closing ceremony on Aug. 3.

### **Peace Love RVA**

Saturday, May 4, 10:00 am–4:00 pm

\$15, Maymont

1000 Spottswood Rd., Richmond, VA

Peace Love RVA is a festival for yoga enthusiasts and newcomers, whether local or visiting from out of town. The festival includes a full day of yoga, vegetarian and vegan food and offerings from local artisans while surrounded by Maymont's scenic Japanese and Italian Gardens. Visit the VMFA tent for a free portrait by Richmond-based artist Jennifer Paxton Parker.

### **Artist Demonstrations with Tsherin Sherpa**

Tuesday, May 14, 11:00 am–1:00 pm & 2:00–4:00 pm

Thursday, May 16, 2:00–4:00 pm & 5:00–7:00 pm

Friday, May 17, 11:00 am–1:00 pm & 2:00–4:00 pm

Free, entrance to *Awaken: A Tibetan Buddhist Journey Toward Enlightenment* at VMFA  
200 N. Arthur Ashe Blvd., Richmond, VA

Contemporary Nepalese-American artist Tsherin Sherpa, whose work is featured in *Awaken*, will demonstrate and discuss the process of traditional Tibetan thangka painting at the entrance of the exhibition. Please note, tickets are required to enter the exhibition.

### **Outdoor Scavenger Hunt**

Saturday, May 18, 10:00 am–4:00 pm

Virginia Capital Trail, Dorey Park, Bryan Park, Forest Hill Park, Buttermilk Trail, North Bank Trail, Deep Run Park, Three Lakes Park, Maymont and Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

To honor the Buddha's enlightenment while sitting under a tree, VMFA will have prizes hidden along popular trails and parks in and around the Richmond area to encourage everyone to enjoy the amazing natural environments that the Greater Richmond area offers. Prizes include VMFA memberships, gift cards, exhibition tickets and more. Visitors are responsible for entrance fees to parks and trails when required.

### **Meditation and Mindfulness Series**

May 22, June 5, June 19, June 29\*, July 10 and July 20, 11:00 am–12:00 pm (advance tickets required)

Free, Reynolds Lecture Hall

200 N. Arthur Ashe Blvd., Richmond, VA

Starting May 22, take a mid-week break or start your weekend with a meditation session at VMFA. Hour-long classes are guided by guest teachers from the local community. All are welcome, from beginner to advanced practitioners. Sessions are free and open to the public, tickets are required. Seats are available. Please note, to prevent disruption, no one will be permitted to enter ten minutes after the session begins.

*\*This session is designed for youth ages 8–10 years old. All children must be accompanied by an adult.*

**Mindful Mornings at VMFA**

Friday, June 7, 8:15–9:00 am (advance tickets required)

Free, VMFA Cochrane Atrium

200 N. Arthur Ashe Blvd., Richmond, VA

Mindful Mornings is a monthly interactive speaker series for do-gooders who want to create a “more well” world. For one hour on the first Friday of every month, Mindful Mornings chapter founders across the country connect the people with the hearts and souls to change the world with the content and community they need to make it happen. Visit [facebook.com/mindfulmorningsrva](https://facebook.com/mindfulmorningsrva) for more details and ticket information.

**Gentle Movement and Awakening with Project Yoga Richmond in *Awaken* Exhibition**

Friday, June 21, 9:00–10:00 am (advance tickets required)

Pay what you can, meet at entrance to *Awaken: A Tibetan Buddhist Journey Toward Enlightenment* at VMFA

200 N. Arthur Ashe Blvd., Richmond, VA

Project Yoga Richmond will teach a gentle chair yoga class within the *Awaken* exhibition using special instruments and music to inspire deeper meditation. Tickets must be reserved at [projectyogarichmond.org](http://projectyogarichmond.org). In addition to this class, Project Yoga Richmond hosts yoga classes, Saturday Salutations, in the VMFA E. Claiborne and Lora Robins Sculpture Garden on Saturdays at 9:00 am.

**Chanting Ceremony with Kagyu Shenpen Tharchin**

Saturday, July 6, 11:30 am–12:30 pm

Free, VMFA Cochrane Atrium

200 N. Arthur Ashe Blvd., Richmond, VA

Join Lama Chodron Linda Jordan and members of Richmond’s Kagyu Shenpen Tharchin Tibetan Buddhist sangha for the chanting practice of Chenrezig on the Dalai Lama’s birthday. The bodhisattva Chenrezig is one of the “three protectors of Tibet,” and the purpose of this chanting practice is to cultivate compassion.

**Silent Reading Party in *Awaken* Exhibition**

Saturday, July 20, 5:30–7:00 pm (advance tickets required)

Meet at entrance to *Awaken: A Tibetan Buddhist Journey Toward Enlightenment* at VMFA

200 N. Arthur Ashe Blvd., Richmond, VA

BYOBook for an after-hours reading opportunity inside the *Awaken* exhibition. Unwind, unplug and read for an hour in silence, while still in company of others. Tickets are released the week before the event. Follow [@silentreadingpartyva](https://instagram.com/silentreadingpartyva) on Instagram to sign up. No tickets will be available at the door on the day of the event.

**Mandala Sand Painting Closing Ceremony**

Saturday, Aug. 3, 11:00 am at VMFA; 11:45 at Maymont Japanese Garden

Entrance to *Awaken* at VMFA, 200 N. Arthur Ashe Blvd., Richmond, VA

Maymont Japanese Garden, 1700 Hampton St., Richmond, VA 23220

*The Mystical Arts of Tibet*, featuring Tibetan Monks from Drepung Loseling Monastery will dismantle the sand mandala they constructed at VMFA in May. During this closing ceremony, the monks sweep up the colored sands to symbolize the impermanence of all that exists. Following the ceremony, the monks will go to Maymont to distribute the sand in the flowing water of the Japanese Garden. Attendees will be offered a bag of sand to take home.

### **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](http://www.VMFA.museum).**

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