

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VMFA Awarded \$345,815 Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities Award Supports Museum's New Three-Year Preservation Conservation and Archives Training Initiative

Richmond, Virginia — The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) has awarded nearly \$346,000 in grant funds to the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA) to support its new three-year Preservation Training Initiative focusing on conservation and archives. This is one of 11 projects NEH selected to receive a Preservation Education and Training Grant as part of their funding category totaling \$3.3 million.

“The National Endowment for the Humanities’ support for this initiative enables the museum to extend valuable, practical learning opportunities to more students,” said Alex Nyerges, VMFA’s Director and CEO. “The stewardship of the Commonwealth’s museum collections will ultimately benefit from professionals who have access to opportunities like this to develop their knowledge and skills.”

VMFA’s Preservation Training Initiative in conservation and archives is a three-year program that offers paid internships and fellowships to students and emerging professionals. Funding from the NEH grant will support ten-week summer internships for nine undergraduate students in the museum’s conservation labs; one part-time, nine-month internship in the museum’s archives for a master’s program student in library sciences; and three postgraduate fellowships specializing in the conservation of paintings, objects and works on paper.

In partnership with the Virginia Association of Museums (VAM), the Preservation Training Initiative will also develop two educational workshops for museum professionals from Virginia focusing on collections care and archival management in documents and archives as well as in the conservation and care of museum and material culture objects. The two workshops will each be presented twice to reach a greater number of participants.

“VMFA is serving as a resource for museums across the Commonwealth, advancing the development of the next generation of art conservators, archivists and collections care professionals,” said Debbie Linn, VMFA’s Assistant Chief Conservator. “The museum also recognizes the importance of diversifying the industry. Through this initiative we are actively working to attract candidates from underrepresented groups wishing to start careers in the cultural preservation field.”

“There are important touchpoints in museum careers,” said Stephen Bonadies, VMFA’s Senior Deputy Director for Conservation and Collections. “VMFA recognizes how essential it is for students specializing in conservation and archives to have opportunities to advance their studies, have real-world professional experiences and gain practical knowledge.”

The recruitment process for post-graduate fellows will begin in March 2021. Internship recruitment will be held during the summer of 2022.

For more information about the National Endowment for the Humanities, visit www.NEH.gov and learn more about VMFA at www.VMFA.museum.

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 50,000 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, 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.

About the National Endowment for the Humanities

Created in 1965 as an independent federal agency, the National Endowment for the Humanities supports research and learning in history, literature, philosophy, and other areas of the humanities by funding selected, peer-reviewed proposals from around the nation. Additional information about the National Endowment for the Humanities and its grant programs is available at: www.neh.gov.

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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