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Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Announces Free Admission to *Samurai Armor* Exhibition for Commonwealth Employees and Preschool and K–12 Teachers
Special Exhibition Showcases Rare Works of Samurai Artistry, Culture and Legacy



Commonwealth of Virginia employees and preschool and K–12 teachers (public and private schools) will receive free admission to the exciting exhibition *Samurai Armor from the Collection of Ann & Gabriel Barbier-Mueller*, open now at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. Photo by Sandra Sellars, © 2024 Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Richmond, VA – The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA) announced today that Commonwealth of Virginia employees and preschool and K–12 teachers (public and private schools) will receive free admission to the museum’s exciting new exhibition *Samurai Armor from the Collection of Ann & Gabriel Barbier-Mueller*. Active-duty military personnel and their immediate families will also receive free admission to special exhibitions through the museum’s year-round participation in the Blue Star Museums program. The exhibition is on view at VMFA through August 4, 2024.



Nuinobedo Tosei Gusoku Armor and Military Equipment, late Momoyama period, ca. 1600 (chest armor, helmet bowl, shoulder guards), remounted mid-Edo period, mid-18th century; iron, lacquer, gold, bronze, silver, leather, wood, horsehair, hemp, brocade, steel. © The Ann & Gabriel Barbier-Mueller Museum, Dallas. Photo: Brad Flowers

“The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts welcomes schoolteachers and our colleagues from the commonwealth to take advantage of free admission to see these spellbinding works of samurai artistry and experience this spectacular once-in-a-lifetime exhibition,” said Director and CEO Alex Nyerges. “Visitors will be captivated by these extraordinary suits of Japanese armor and other implements, created during one of the most fascinating periods in world history.”

[*Samurai Armor from the Collection of Ann & Gabriel Barbier-Mueller*](#) offers visitors a rare personal encounter with samurai culture and tradition spanning more than 700 years of Japanese history. More than 140 stunning examples of attire and objects, including 17 full suits of armor, weapons and equestrian equipment, and more than 50 helmets and masks, all made between the 14th and 19th centuries are showcased in the exhibition.

Commonwealth employees and educators should call (804) 340-1405 to make their reservations and show their employee IDs or badges at the Visitor Services Desk in the museum when picking up their tickets. One free ticket is available per badge. Reservations for tickets to the exhibition can also be made in person at the Visitor Services Desk.

Samurai Armor from the Collection of Ann & Gabriel Barbier-Mueller is organized by [The Ann & Gabriel Barbier-Mueller Museum, Dallas](#), where, for more than three decades, collectors Ann and Gabriel Barbier-Mueller have been amassing their astounding collection of exquisitely crafted samurai regalia.

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is open 365 days a year with free general admission. For more information about the exhibition *Samurai Armor from the Collection of Ann & Gabriel Barbier-Mueller*, visit www.VMFA.museum.

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Sponsorship Information

Samurai Armor from the Collection of Ann & Gabriel Barbier-Mueller is sponsored by Lettie Pate Whitehead Evans Exhibition Endowment; William R. Kenan, Jr. Charitable Trust; Julia Louise Reynolds Fund; Fabergé Ball Endowment;

Ellen Bayard Weedon Foundation; Nancy and Wayne Chasen; Francena T. Harrison Foundation; Denise Berthiaume and Jack McKeown; Birch Douglass; Nancy and Peter Huber; Ikebana of Richmond; The Japan-Virginia Society; Troutman Pepper; Mike and Sally Hunnicutt; Junko and Joseph Liesfeld, Jr.; Arnel Manalo; Michelle and John Nestler; Barbara Basl Stokey; White Trivas Family Foundation; and Tom Williamson and Janet Brown.

About Ann and Gabriel Barbier-Mueller

The son and grandson of art collectors, Gabriel Barbier-Mueller has been fascinated by samurai armor since adolescence and acquired his first piece in the early 1990s. During the following three decades, he and his wife, Ann, have continued to expand their collection, which now boasts of more than a thousand works, admiring the sculptural quality of the objects and the compelling feats of imagination that went into their creation. They established The Ann & Gabriel Barbier-Mueller Museum: The Samurai Collection, in Dallas, Texas. Since 2011, objects from their collection have traveled throughout Europe, Canada, Chile and the United States. All works featured in the exhibition are from the Ann and Gabriel Barbier-Mueller collection. This exhibition represents only a fraction of their remarkable holdings and is developed from the collectors’ wish to share these works and the samurai culture from which they emerged.

About The Ann & Gabriel Barbier-Mueller Museum: The Samurai Collection

The Ann & Gabriel Barbier-Mueller Museum: The Samurai Collection has been selectively amassed by Ann and Gabriel Barbier-Mueller and their children over the past 35 years. The museum is located in Dallas' Harwood District at the historic St. Ann's School. Centuries of craftsmanship are represented in the collection, with objects dating from the seventh to 19th centuries. Samurai masterpieces, including suits of armor, helmets, masks, horse armor and weaponry, are on display in the museum, traveling exhibition and the lobbies of Harwood International developments. To date, The Samurai Collection has garnered more than 1.5 million visitors worldwide. The museum in Dallas is free and open to the public, and the current exhibition can be found at www.ironmensamurai.com. Select pieces from the collection have traveled to 15 cities worldwide.

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, and French Impressionist, Postimpressionist, British sporting and modern and contemporary art, as well as renowned South Asian, Himalayan and African art. In May 2010, VMFA opened the James W. and Frances G. McGlothlin Wing I after a transformative expansion, previously the largest in its history. A new expansion, the McGlothlin Wing II, is planned to open in 2028. Comprising more than 170,000 square feet, it will be the largest expansion in the museum's history and will make VMFA the fifth largest art museum in the United States.

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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