

**Fine Arts & Flowers to Bloom Oct. 20-24**  
Biennial Exhibition will Benefit VMFA Initiatives



*Rooster*, 1980, Chen Dayu (Chinese, 1910–2001). Floral interpretation by Betty Ann Galway of Thoroughgood Garden Club from Fine Arts & Flowers 2018. Photo by Travis Fullerton © Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Richmond, Virginia USA — The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA) announces the return of *Fine Arts & Flowers*, a biennial museum-wide exhibit that pairs original interpretive floral arrangements with works from the museum's permanent collection, Oct. 20–24, 2021. Admission to *Fine Arts & Flowers* is free. Lectures and other special events will accompany the exhibition, with tickets available beginning May 1.

Organized and sponsored by The Council of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, VMFA's oldest volunteer group, *Fine Arts & Flowers* will feature more than 80 arrangements created by members of the Garden Club of Virginia, Virginia Federation of Garden Clubs, Ikebana of Richmond and Garden Clubs of Virginia. Patricia R. St. Clair is honorary chair, and Mary Ann Peppiatt and Tina Stoneburner serve as co-chairs of the 2021 exhibition. Strange's Florists, Greenhouses and Garden Centers LLC is the official supplier of flowers and plant materials, as they have been since 1987. The presenting sponsors are the Francena T. Harrison Foundation and Stauer.

*Fine Arts & Flowers* will kick off with a dazzling gala to celebrate the reinstallation of the acclaimed Mellon Collections and to preview the floral installations on Wednesday, Oct. 20 from 7 to 10 p.m. A wide range of special events will be held throughout the exhibition, from lectures and luncheons to guided tours, curator talks and family activities. Internationally recognized floral designers Susan McCleary and Kiana Underwood will be featured speakers.

Underwood is the celebrated founder of Tulipina, an internationally renowned floral design studio specializing in customized floral experiences for luxury weddings and events worldwide. Her unique color combinations and floral varieties draw admirers and floral designers from all over the globe to her sold-out workshops in exotic locations including Chile, China, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Russia and Singapore. She has been named one of the top wedding floral designers in the United States by *Harper's Bazaar*. Underwood is better known by many as @tulipinadesign, making her the most followed floral designer on Instagram with over 370,000 followers. Publications such as *Brides*, *Country Living*, *Elle Decor*, *Flower* magazine, the *New York Times* and *Town & Country* have featured her signature designs. Her debut book, *Color Me Floral*, is a work of love, covering the secrets to designing show-stopping monochromatic arrangements for each season. Underwood will speak on Thursday, Oct. 21, at 10 a.m. with a book signing to follow at 2 p.m.

McLeary of Passionflower Sue is a floral designer, artist and instructor who creates imaginative arrangements of exciting dimension and with an artist's awareness of color and texture. Her unexpected, boundary-pushing floral art includes elaborate headpieces, signature floral jewelry and wearables. *Flower* magazine states that she "thinks out of the vase" and brings fashion accessories to life through fabulous florals. Her expressive, seasonally inspired creations have been described as exquisite living artwork. She studied with numerous internationally recognized instructors, collaborated with artists around the world and is passionate about teaching others how to evoke wonder and curiosity through the fine art of floral design. McLeary's new book, *The Art of Wearable Flowers*, provides how-to instructions for a stunning collection of flowers. McCleary will speak at 10 a.m. on Friday, Oct. 22, followed by a book signing at 2 p.m.

Proceeds from *Fine Arts & Flowers* will provide critical resources that support the ongoing research, development and installation of exceptional exhibitions at VMFA. For details and to purchase tickets to *Fine Arts & Flowers* events, visit [www.VMFA.museum/FAF](http://www.VMFA.museum/FAF).

#### **About The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Council**

The Council of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is a group of dedicated VMFA members who volunteer throughout the museum and work on behalf of VMFA to enhance community outreach and participation. The Council has served VMFA since 1955 and was instrumental in establishing the VMFA Shop, and the docent program, organizing museum travel and providing seed money for the Margaret R. and Robert M. Freeman Library at VMFA. The Council organized the first *Fine Arts & Flowers* exhibition, which has since become a biennial event, in 1987.

#### **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, 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, call 804.340.1400 or visit [www.VMFA.museum](http://www.VMFA.museum).**

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