



## Virginia Department of Human Resource Management

November 9, 2018

Dear State Employees:

The Virginia Museum of Fine Arts is pleased to announce that state employees, preschool and K-12 teachers (public and private) and active duty military members in Virginia can receive free admission to Congo Masks: Masterpieces from Central Africa, a special exhibition at the VMFA on display from November 10, 2018, to February 24, 2019. Admission to VMFA's permanent collection is free 365 days of the year, but some special exhibitions, such as Congo Masks, are ticketed.

This world-class collection of Congolese art features more than 130 rare and unique masks dating from the 17th to 20th centuries, with more than a dozen masks showcased in their complete ceremonial ensembles. The spectacular works of art in the exhibition represent not only the artisans and performers who created these masks and brought them to life, but also the various communities, belief systems and natural resources involved in their creation.

The exhibition is curated by Marc Leo Felix, founder and director of the Congo Basin Art History Research Center in Brussels, Belgium. With Congo Masks, many renowned objects from his and other important collections will be on display for the first time in the United States. Featured alongside the masks are original field photographs and film footage of the masks being worn and performed in ceremonies or rituals, as well as audio recordings and a selection of Congolese musical instruments. The vast majority of masks are used to dance to music that is performed by visible and invisible instruments, and represent the creative expression of more than 40 different Congolese cultural groups.

To claim your free ticket, please present your military, state, or teacher identification card at VMFA's Visitor Services desk. You can also purchase an individual membership to the museum for \$50. Regular ticket prices for Congo Masks: Masterpieces from Central Africa are \$16 for adults, \$12 for seniors 65 and older, and \$10 for college students and children ages 7–17. You can reserve tickets by phone at 804.340.1405.

Whether you are near or far from Richmond, we hope you will visit the VMFA soon. The museum is open 365 days a year and is a wonderful place to visit on your own, with friends or family.

Sincerely,

Virginia Department of Human Resource Management

