



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 22, 2019

Contact: Sophie Bentham-Wood  
Director of Marketing and Communications  
(772) 231- 0707 ext. 121  
[sbwood@vbmuseum.org](mailto:sbwood@vbmuseum.org)

**VERO BEACH MUSEUM OF ART PRESENTS**  
***VICTORIAN RADICALS: FROM THE PRE-RAPHAELITES***  
***TO THE ARTS & CRAFTS MOVEMENT***

On View February 9 - May 5, 2019

**Vero Beach, FL (January 20, 2019)** – The Vero Beach Museum of Art is pleased to present *Victorian Radicals: From the Pre-Raphaelites to the Arts & Crafts Movement*, an exhibition organized by the American Federation of Arts and Birmingham Museums Trust, on view February 9 – May 5, 2019.

In the second half of the nineteenth-century, three generations of artists and designers revolutionized the visual arts in Britain by engaging with and challenging the new industrial world around them. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood and the champions of the Arts & Crafts Movement offered a radical artistic and social vision that found inspiration in the pre-industrial past and came to deeply influence visual culture in Britain and beyond. Drawn from the outstanding collection of the city of Birmingham, United Kingdom, *Victorian Radicals: From the Pre-Raphaelites to the Arts & Crafts Movement* will bring together an extensive array of works—many of which have never been exhibited outside the UK—to illuminate this dynamic period of British art.

Featuring 140 works by pioneering artists including Ford Madox Brown, Edward Burne-Jones, William Holman Hunt, John Everett Millais, William Morris, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and Elizabeth Siddall, *Victorian Radicals* will represent the spectrum of avant-garde practices of the Victorian era, emphasizing the response of Britain's first modern art movement to the unfettered industrialization of the period. These artists' attention to detail, use of vibrant colors, and engagement with both literary themes and contemporary life will be illustrated through a selection of paintings, drawings, and watercolors presented alongside outstanding examples of decorative art.

Led by Rossetti, Millais, and Holman Hunt, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was founded in 1848 with the intent to return modern art to the simplicity, clarity, and honesty of European painting before the time of the Renaissance artist Raphael (1483–1520). The Brotherhood and its circle drew inspiration from literature, the Bible, and modern life. The exhibition includes one of the most famous Pre-Raphaelite paintings, *Pretty Baa-Lambs* (1851–59), which

marks the artist Brown's pioneering attempt to paint a landscape from nature in direct sunlight. Other highlights include commentaries on the harsh working conditions and social stratification of Britain at the time, such as Henry Wallis's painting *The Stonebreaker* (1857) and Rossetti's powerful study (1853) for the unfinished painting *Found*. In the decorative arts, a return to medieval simplicity inspired designers to match form more closely to function and material. The exhibition includes stained glass panels, glass vessels, ceramics, and metalwork created as a critique of industrial mass production by reform-minded designers and architects such as William Butterfield, A.W. N. Pugin, and Philip Webb. Two day dresses in vivid green and purple silk illustrate the impact of the invention of aniline dyes from 1856 on, and provide a fascinating parallel with the jewel-like, synthetic pigments employed in the contemporaneous paintings on view.

By the latter half of the 1850s, a younger generation of artists, including Morris and the Burne-Jones, had launched a second wave of Pre-Raphaelitism inspired heavily by the rich colors, beauty, and romance of medieval art. This portion of the exhibition features paintings and works on paper by Burne-Jones, Frederick Sandys, and Simeon Solomon and also foregrounds the role of women as artists and models. Siddall is represented in the exhibition both as a fiercely original artist of the Pre-Raphaelite circle and as Rossetti's model (and wife). Works by other significant women artists of the period, including paintings by Kate Elizabeth Bunce, enamels by Fanny Bunn and Mary Bunting, stained glass and textiles by Mary Jane Newill, and a dress design by Sarah Fullerton Monteith Young are also included the exhibition.

In 1861, Morris formed the progressive company, Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. (later named Morris & Co). The company's collaborative working methods and return to pre-industrial techniques resulted in objects that stood out from the factory-produced merchandise of the period. Some remarkable examples include stained glass by Morris, Rossetti, and Burne-Jones, tiles designed by Morris and Burne-Jones and painted by Kate and Lucy Faulkner, and a group of textiles and wallpaper designs by Morris. *Victorian Radicals* also includes an extraordinary gilded chest, *The Hesperides Cassone* (1888), designed by Burne-Jones with decoration executed by Kate Faulkner, unseen outside Birmingham since it was first displayed at the 1893 Arts & Crafts Exhibition in London.

The collaborative spirit and success of Morris & Co. inspired The Arts & Crafts Movement. Soon, new societies and educational centers emerged in Britain's leading industrial cities of the late nineteenth century that emphasized the practical teaching of crafts and the union of art and design. Among the pieces in the exhibition are outstanding works by key proponents of this movement, including metalwork created by architect-craftsmen Henry Wilson and John Paul Cooper, exceptional pottery by the Martin Brothers, and jewelry by Charles Robert Ashbee and the Guild of Handicraft.

*Victorian Radicals* explores the ideas that preoccupied artists and critics at the time—the relationship between art and nature, questions of class and gender identity, the value of the handmade versus machine production, and the search for beauty in an age of industry—issues that remain relevant and actively debated today. The Vero Beach Museum of Art is pleased to be the only museum in the Southeastern United States to present this traveling exhibition of exceptional historical and visual richness.

*Victorian Radicals: From the Pre-Raphaelites to the Arts and Crafts Movement* is organized by the American Federation of Arts and Birmingham Museums Trust. This exhibition is supported by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional funding provided by Clare McKeon and the Dr. Lee MacCormick Edwards Charitable Foundation.

The exhibition is accompanied by a new catalogue of the same title published by the American Federation of Arts and DelMonico Books•Prestel. This generously illustrated and exciting new study of the Victorian era features rarely seen works, provocative essays, and a striking, period-inspired design. The catalogue is available for purchase in the Museum Store.

**Directions:** The Vero Beach Museum of Art is located at 3001 Riverside Park Drive, in Riverside Park, Vero Beach. From I-95 (Exit 147) or U.S. 1, take State Road 60 east towards the beach, cross over the Merrill Barber bridge and turn right at the first traffic light into Riverside Park. For further information visit the Museum's web site at [www.verobeachmuseum.org](http://www.verobeachmuseum.org) or call (772) 231-0707.

#####

*Museum programs are sponsored, in part, by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs, and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. The Vero Beach Museum of Art is accredited by the American Association of Museums.*

### **About the American Federation of Arts**

The American Federation of Arts is the leader in traveling exhibitions internationally. A nonprofit organization founded in 1909, the AFA is dedicated to enriching the public's experience and understanding of the visual arts through organizing and touring art exhibitions for presentation in museums around the world, publishing exhibition catalogues featuring important scholarly research, and developing educational programs.

### **About Birmingham Museum Trust**

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery is operated by Birmingham Museums Trust, an independent charity that manages the city's museum collection and venues on behalf of Birmingham City Council. It uses the collection of around 1,000,000 objects to provide a wide range of arts, cultural and historical experiences, events and activities that deliver accessible learning, creativity and enjoyment for citizens and visitors to the city.

The collection is one of the three great civic collections of the UK, reflecting the city's historic and continuing position as a major international centre for manufacturing, commerce, education and culture. Most areas of the collection are designated as being of national importance, including the finest public collection of Pre-Raphaelite art in the world.

Attracting over one million visits a year, the Trust's venues include Aston Hall, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, Blakesley Hall, Museum Collections Centre, Museum of the Jewellery Quarter, Sarehole Mill, Soho House, Thinktank and Weoley [Castle. birminghammuseums.org.uk](http://www.birminghammuseums.org.uk)