

Special Activities



Samurai Armor with Ando Family Crest, 18th Century
伊予礼色糸素隠威胸取一枚胴具足安藤家伝

Lacquered and gilded iron alloy, silk thread, brocade, leather, papier-mâché, metal fittings

Special Edition Newsletter

Dear Ikebana Friends,

We are proud to announce the sponsorship of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts (VMFA) Samurai Armor Exhibit and a partnership between VMFA and IOR. This special opportunity was extended to IOR in November, 2023 and presented to the membership in December at the Holiday Coffee. By January 20th, informal financial pledges by IOR members enabled IOR to commit to this VMFA sponsorship without accessing the current budget. This wonderful opportunity will be a springboard for expanding IOR's prestige and visibility in the community and throughout Virginia as well as growing the membership in the future.

How will IOR Be Involved In The Exhibition?

Possible ways IOR will be involved with the exhibit, include participation in:

- The VMFA's Education Department's "How To" program held in Reynolds Lecture Hall which would afford us the opportunity to show what we do.
- The lecture/luncheon on May 6 sponsored by the Council — perhaps putting arrangements on the tables that would be sold by the Council after the event. The opportunity may also avail itself to have a large arrangement on the stage.
- Floris, VMFA's newest dining experience, has expressed interest in having IOR Ikebana arrangements on display. Nestled in the beautiful surroundings of the Robins Sculpture Garden, Floris is a community gathering space located in VMFA's Pauley Center.



The Samurai Armor Exhibition

One of the largest and most refined collections of Japanese samurai armor will be presented by VMFA from April 20 to August 4, 2024. Amassed over 30 years, the Ann and Gabriel Barbier-Mueller collection on display features over 130 works including:

- 17 full suits of armor
- 50 plus helmets and masks
- War coats
- Weapons
- War horse equipment

These examples were produced for high-ranking samurai for use either on battlefields or in ceremonies from the 14th through the 19th centuries. The exhibition illuminates the exceptionally high level of design and craftsmanship dedicated to these elaborate instruments of ceremony and combat.

Who Were The Samurai?

The term samurai, meaning "those who serve," is associated with military elites who rose to power in Japan in the 12th Century. Tumultuous wars followed for centuries and samurai warriors demonstrated masterful skills in archery as well as excelling as swordsmen and equestrians. Their honor was won not only through bravery and loyalty but also through power and prestige. The Samurai class continued to dominate politically, socially and culturally through the peaceful Edo period until the late 19th century.

Tracing the evolution of armor styles from medieval through early modern Japan, the exhibition explores the artistic legacy of the samurai's reign over seven centuries.

How Does The Exhibit Tie Into IOR?

The very beginnings of Ikebana reach back over 500 years in Japan where Buddhist monks placed floral offerings to Buddha in the temples. Over time, noblemen and samurai warriors also took up Ikebana which was practiced as a meditative process aligning the practitioner's spirit with the natural world.

For the Samurai, Ikebana offered a welcome release from battle because they could focus on nature, simplicity and balance. While known for their military prowess, they also excelled in this art form blending their strength with delicacy.

How Can IOR Members Get Involved?

As the partnership moves forward, opportunities for members to participate will be announced in meetings as well as in the newsletter. IOR is proud to be a sponsor of this exhibit and is looking forward to partnering with VMFA at events which will showcase our members' creativity and passion for Ikebana.

In Friendship through Flowers -- Evelyn Klumb



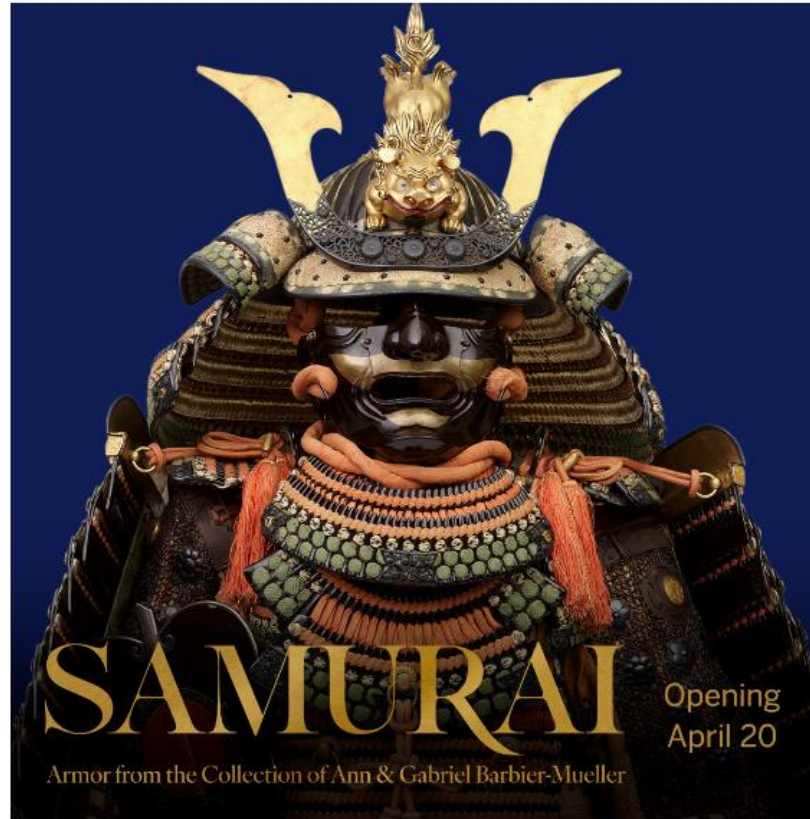
Arrangement & Photo by Kumiko

The chrysanthemum is featured in the family crest displayed on the large samurai armor photo on page 1

Website Announcement

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Samurai Armor Exhibit Sponsorship

4/15/2024



Ikebana of Richmond is proud to be a sponsor of the Samurai Armor Exhibit from the collection of Ann and Gabriel Barbier-Mueller at VMFA. Activities to support the opening of the exhibit began on Sunday, April 14th, when seventeen IOR members

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Arrangements for Special Events

