

For Immediate Release

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**The Muscarelle Museum of Art Announces  
Exhibition Devoted to History of the Brafferton Indian School on the  
Historic Campus of William & Mary**

Williamsburg, Va. (June 2016) -- The Muscarelle Museum of Art is pleased to announce an exhibition devoted to the history of the Brafferton Indian School on the campus of William & Mary. ***Building the Brafferton: The Founding, Funding and Legacy of America's Indian School*** will open at the museum on Saturday, Sept. 10, 2016.

Constructed in 1723, southeast of the Wren building, the Brafferton building is the second oldest building on campus. Originally constructed to house the Indian School of the College of William & Mary, the Brafferton remains a strong visual symbol on the campus. This exhibition will be the first to examine the history of the Brafferton building itself, placing it into the broader context of the trade networks and politics, both secular and religious, of Great Britain's colonial enterprise in North America. The objects on display range from historical paintings and engravings to archival documents and even include specially-commissioned contemporary Native American art pieces. These different forms of media all coalesce to tell the story of the founding, funding, and the lasting legacy of the Brafferton, which is a crucial part of one of the oldest institutions of higher learning in the United States.

"This exhibition is much more than an assemblage of art," says Dr. Danielle Moretti-Langholtz, Ph. D., who is the adjunct curator of Native American Art at the Muscarelle and the head curator for this exhibition. She adds that "while our focus is primarily the 18th century, the Brafferton's history is remarkable and it resonates with a number of contemporary elements." Moretti-Langholtz, who is also the Director of the American Indian Resource Center at the College of William & Mary, has drawn from over ten years of research on both sides of the Atlantic in curating this exhibition. Working with Dr. Moretti-Langholtz is Buck Woodard, Ph. D., who is the manager of the American Indian Initiative at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.

**History**

The royal charter of 1693 that established William & Mary stated as one of its goals "that the Christian faith may be propagated amongst the Western Indians, to the glory of Almighty God." The construction of the Brafferton Indian School reaffirmed this mission. The College used funds from the estate of Robert Boyle, the famous English scientist, to purchase Brafferton Manor in Yorkshire, England. Part of its annual income supported the Indian School at William & Mary and gave the school its name.

The Native American boys who attended the school lived initially with families in town until 1723, when the Brafferton building was completed. At the time of the American Revolution, the College of William & Mary lost the income from the Boyle estate and, as a result, the Indian School was discontinued. Since then, the Brafferton has been used for a multitude of purposes, serving at various times as a dining hall, a faculty residence, a dormitory and a classroom building. In the 1950s and '60s, the Brafferton provided office space for the Alumni Society and guest rooms for visitors.

The only one of three colonial buildings of William & Mary to have escaped the ravages of fire, the Brafferton nonetheless suffered an almost complete loss of its interior during the Civil War, when the doors and much of the flooring were removed and used for firewood. Further, the Union army is reputed to have removed the window frames and sash for use in officers' quarters at Fort Magruder. The exterior brick walls of the Brafferton are, however, the most substantially original of the three colonial buildings of William & Mary. The exterior was restored to its colonial appearance in 1932 as part of the Rockefeller Restoration of Williamsburg. The building underwent a second extensive renewal and renovation in 2013. Today, the Brafferton building houses the offices of the president and provost.

#### About the Muscarelle Museum of Art

The Muscarelle Museum of Art is located on the campus of the College of William & Mary at 603 Jamestown Rd in Williamsburg, Va.

For more information, call 757-221-2700 or visit the museum's website at [muscarelle.org](http://muscarelle.org). Additionally, you can follow the museum on Twitter (@Muscarelle), Instagram (@muscarellemuseum) or on Facebook (Muscarelle Museum of Art).