

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts: Nina J. Berger

781-283-2034, nberger@wellesley.edu

Sofiya Cabalquinto

781-283-3321, scabalqu@wellesley.edu

High-resolution images and interviews upon request

**FIRST U.S. MUSEUM SOLO EXHIBITION OF SCULPTOR TONY MATELLI
OPENS FEBRUARY 5 at THE DAVIS MUSEUM AT WELLESLEY COLLEGE**

WELLESLEY, Mass. – *Tony Matelli: New Gravity*, the artist’s first solo exhibition at a U.S. museum, opens at the Davis Museum on February 5, 2014. Comprised of recent works from the past five years as well as new works created specifically for the Davis, the exhibition focuses on the artist’s discursive use of time, ambivalence, banality and wonder. In Matelli’s work the physical laws of objects are often reversed, upended or atomized, and with these deft manipulations of matter and gravity come profound reorientations in perspective and ways of seeing. Matelli creates a distortion field of sorts, a lens through which to question one reality and create another.

Installed in two parts at the Davis, the exhibition also sites two sculptures (*Sleep Walker* and *Stray Dog*) outdoors on campus. *Tony Matelli: New Gravity* will be on view February 5 - May 11, in the Bronfman & Chandler Galleries; and February 5 - July 20 in the Jobson & Tanner Galleries. The exhibition is free and open to the general public. An opening reception, preceded by an artist talk by Matelli at 5:30 p.m., will be held on Wednesday, February 5 from 6:30-8 p.m.

“Tony Matelli is a trader in combinatory illusions, a skilled manipulator of the restless mediation between metaphor, meaning and truth,” said **Lisa Fischman**, Ruth Gordon Shapiro ’37 Director of the Davis and curator of the exhibition. “His works are persistently surprising, inventive, powerful and playful – evoking complex sensations and inviting multiple viewings. We are delighted to present his first U.S. museum exhibition at the Davis and to introduce New England audiences to his work.”

Often employing a hyper-realistic idiom, Matelli’s work challenges our perceptions of reality. His sculptures create a disconcerting tension between uneasiness and humor, frequently suspending time and belief. Matelli imbues his art with layers of familiarity and discomfort, employing remarkable skill and technique to create works that ask us to take a critical look at ourselves and at the culture around us.

“There is a romantic impulse in my work, that strives to give form to my emotions and thoughts and the way I see the world,” commented Matelli. “I’m fascinated with that moment when you become aware of a perceptual shift in your environment, so what was a seemingly real-life experience becomes a complicated art experience. That approach to art is really powerful. It makes everything else seem like a prop that only pointed to an idea. The precision of praxis has a great impact on me, and my work operates in that spirit.”

Tony Matelli’s work is in numerous private and public collections including the Cranbrook Art Museum; FLAG Art Foundation; ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum; the National Centre of Contemporary Art, Moscow; Fundacion La Caixa, Madrid; Museum Ludwig, Cologne; and the Uppsala Konstmuseum, Sweden. Recent solo exhibitions have been presented at the Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin and the Palais de Tokyo, Paris. A mid-career survey, *Tony Matelli: A Human Echo*, premiered at the ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Denmark in 2012 and traveled to the Bergen Kunstmuseum, Norway in 2013. The artist lives and works in Brooklyn, and is represented by Marlborough Chelsea, New York and Andréhn-Schiptjenko, Stockholm.

Curated by Lisa Fischman, Ruth Gordon Shapiro ’37 Director of the Davis, *Tony Matelli: New Gravity* and the accompanying catalogue, designed by the artist with Conny Purtill, are generously supported by Wellesley College Friends of Art and the Anonymous ’70 Endowed Davis Museum Program Fund.

EXHIBITION EVENTS

Artist Talk and Opening Celebration!

Wednesday, February 5 | Tony Matelli Artist Lecture in Collins Cinema: 5:30 | Reception: 6:30–8:00 p.m. | Davis Galleries and Lobby | Free

Join us in celebrating the openings of our spring exhibitions! Tony Matelli kicks off the evening with a special artist’s talk in Collins Cinema. A reception follows in the Davis Lobby, honoring *Tony Matelli: New Gravity* and *Figment of the Past: Venetian Works on Paper* from the Davis.

Film Screenings

TONY MATELLI: ARTIST’S PICK

Wednesdays - February 12, March 12, April 2, April 30 | 6:00 p.m. | Collins Cinema | Free

To coincide with his exhibition *New Gravity*, artist Tony Matelli has selected four of his favorite films for a series of screenings. Following each, Cinema and Media Studies faculty will discuss the artist’s selections—and the intriguing notes he has provided on his choices (below)! Matelli will join the conversations on February 12 and April 30.

2001: A Space Odyssey I (1968, Dir. Stanley Kubrick) I February 12

The promise and potential of us evolving beyond our own biology gives me great pleasure. From the dawn of man, base and physical, toward the abstract and pure essence of ourselves. Terrifying. Inspiring.

The Passenger I (1975, Dir. Michelangelo Antonioni) I March 12

The weight of my obligations is overwhelming. The inertia of my character has become unbearable. Everything feels like a dead end. I want out. New friends, new family, new morals. I want to become someone else.

Inception I (2010, Dir. Christopher Nolan) I April 2

Ontological magical realism, I think about this a lot.

Dillinger Is Dead I (1969, Dir. Marco Ferreri) I April 30

The girlfriend is a bore. Every day is like the last. My general privilege has me sleepwalking toward a shallower and shallower horizon. I could really use a clean break.

Co-sponsored by the Davis and the Wellesley College Cinema and Media Studies Program, this series is generously supported by the Davis Museum Film Program Gift.

Family Day at the Davis: The Art of Illusion

Saturday, April 12 I 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. I Davis Galleries and Lobby; Collins Cinema I Free

Inspired by the topsy-turvy work of Tony Matelli, families and our youngest visitors are invited to explore illusion and tricks of the eye in works of art at the Davis. Join us for lots of fun activities including a scavenger hunt, art making, magic tricks, light refreshments, and more!

Family Day is generously supported by The Palley Endowment Fund for Davis Museum Outreach Programs.

DAVIS MUSEUM GENERAL INFORMATION

Location: Wellesley College, 106 Central St., Wellesley, Mass.

Museum Hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 11:00 am–5:00 pm, Wednesday until 8:00 pm, and Sunday, noon–4:00 pm. Closed Mondays, holidays, and Wellesley College recesses.

Admission is free and open to the public.

Telephone: 781-283-2051

Website: www.davismuseum.wellesley.edu

Parking: Free and available in the lot behind the museum. Additional parking is available in the Davis Parking Facility.

Tours: Led by student tour guides and curators. Free. Call 781-283-3382

Accessible: The Davis, Collins Café and Collins Cinema are wheelchair accessible and

wheelchairs are available for use in the Museum without charge. Special needs may be accommodated by contacting Director of Disability Services Jim Wice at 781-283-2434 or jwice@wellesley.edu.

ABOUT THE DAVIS MUSEUM

One of the oldest and most acclaimed academic fine arts museums in the United States, the Davis Museum is a vital force in the intellectual, pedagogical and social life of Wellesley College. It seeks to create an environment that encourages visual literacy, inspires new ideas, and fosters involvement with the arts both within the College and the larger community.

ABOUT WELLESLEY COLLEGE & THE ARTS

The Wellesley College arts curriculum and the highly acclaimed Davis Museum are integral components of the College's liberal arts education. Departments and programs from across the campus enliven the community with world-class programming— classical and popular music, visual arts, theatre, dance, author readings, symposia, and lectures by some of today's leading artists and creative thinkers—most of which are free and open to the public.

Since 1875, Wellesley College has been the preeminent liberal arts college for women. Known for its intellectual rigor and its remarkable track record for the cultivation of women leaders in every arena, Wellesley—only 12 miles from Boston—is home to some 2300 undergraduates from every state and 75 countries.



Massachusetts Cultural Council