

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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THE DAVIS MUSEUM PRESENTS *TABITHA SOREN: SURFACE TENSION*
Your Intense Relationship with Technology is Actually a Work of Art



WELLESLEY, Mass. – The Davis Museum at Wellesley College explores human engagement with digital devices in ***Tabitha Soren: Surface Tension***, an exhibition of photography by former television journalist Tabitha Soren. The exhibition of 20 photographs from Soren’s *Surface Tension* series invites the viewers to look beyond the picture and see how it was consumed by its intended audience. ***Surface Tension***, on view in the Morelle Lasky Levine '56 Works on

Paper Gallery, runs from February 7 through June 9, 2019.

Tabitha Soren’s *Surface Tension* intervenes into the cool, disembodied, transactional relationships we conduct with our digital devices—and meddles with the “neutrality” of the information we receive through them. Soren pulls images from social media, web searches, images shared by friends and family, and screengrabs from news videos. Her subjects are united by a focus on touch, reinstating the haptic as an essential aspect of our human experience, and the images carry a charge that is at once familiar and uncanny.

Soren shoots iPad screens with an 8 x 10 view camera under raking light to reveal the grime we leave behind—the fingerprints and greasy smears of our embodied selves, so seemingly at odds with the chilly detachment and objectivity of the information that flows towards us, unrelentingly. The photographs are titled simply as urls, bringing viewers back to the “original” of the image while signaling both instantaneity and mediation. It not only considers “how people consume, manipulate, dismiss, cherish, interact with image-driven content online—and the relentless layering that accompanies this experience,” but insists that we pause to reconsider too.

“Tabitha Soren’s work in *Surface Tension* is conceptually elegant, timely, and deeply resonant,” says Lisa Fischman, curator of the exhibition and Ruth Gordon Shapiro ’37 Director of the Davis Museum. “Soren’s pictures are rendered with painterly detail, luscious and beautiful, by virtue of the surface mess posed in contrast to the discernible subjects that emerge below. The project is simple, suggestive, and transformational.”

The exhibition at the Davis Museum includes photographs of various sizes—from large-scale photographs to smaller images stacked in a tower. Fourteen of the twenty works in the Davis exhibition are being displayed for the first time, and all of the photographs are connected with a focus on the element of touch. For example, personal touch, such as a picture of a daughter blowing a kiss to her mother, as well as images of the damaging human touch on environment in places such as the Great Barrier Reef or Greenland.

In conjunction with ***Surface Tension***, the limited-edition volume *Trace*, featuring Tabitha Soren, Kota Ezawa, and Penelope Umbrico, recently published by Yoffy Press in Atlanta, Georgia, will be available for purchase in the Davis Museum shop and online.

The Artist

Tabitha Soren (b.1967, San Antonio) is a former Peabody Award-winning journalist for MTV and NBC news. Her work is held in many private and public collections, including the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the New Orleans Museum of Art, the George Eastman Museum of Photography, the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, the Cleveland Museum of Art, the Oakland Museum of California, and San Francisco’s Pier 24. Her first monograph, *FANTASY LIFE*, was published in the spring of 2017. Soren lives and works in the Bay Area. More information about the artist can be found at: <http://www.tabithasoren.com/>

Surface Tension is generously supported by Wellesley College Friends of Art at the Davis, the Alice Gertrude Spink Art Fund (1963), and the Anonymous '70 Endowed Davis Museum Program Fund.

EXHIBITION-RELATED EVENTS AND PROGRAMMING

Spring Opening Celebration

Thursday, February 7

6:30 - 9 p.m., Davis Lobby

Opening Reception

The Davis Museum hosts an opening for the Spring 2019 exhibitions—including six special installations that bring spectacular energy and creative artistic innovation to the Wellesley College campus. Visitors can see the major exhibition, *Art_Latin_America: Against the Survey*, which takes a fresh look at a hotspot of Davis collecting, along with *Disappearances: Three Video Artists from Latin America*; *Yinka Shonibare MBE: Guns Drawn*; *Tabitha Soren: Surface Tension*; *Bread and Roses: The Social Documentary of Milton and Anne Rogovin*; the ongoing presentation of *Daniela Rivera: Fragmentos para una historia del olvido/Fragments for a history of displacement*; and rotations that renew the presentations in its Permanent Collections Galleries.

Artist's Talk: Tabitha Soren

Collins Cinema, Reception to follow in Davis Museum Lobby

Artist Tabitha Soren and a guest to be announced will host a conversation sparked by the Davis Museum's presentation of Soren's exhibition *Surface Tension*. Please refer to the Davis [website](#) for date and details.

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.



Generous Support for the Davis Museum is provided by Massachusetts Cultural Council.

ABOUT WELLESLEY COLLEGE AND 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 2,400 undergraduates from 49 states and 58 countries.

Image:

Emailed_JPG_Goodnight_Kiss, 2014

Archival print, 30 x 40 in.

Courtesy of the artist.

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