

the Davis.

DAVIS MUSEUM AT WELLESLEY COLLEGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 1, 2016

THREE YEARS OF RESEARCH AND PLANNING UNVEILED IN DAVIS MUSEUM AT WELLESLEY COLLEGE'S NEW PERMANENT GALLERIES: *THE DAVIS. REDISCOVERED*

WELLESLEY, Mass. –On September 28, 2016, the Davis Museum at Wellesley College unveils *the Davis. ReDiscovered*, a total transformation of the Museum's permanent collections



galleries, reshaped and reconceived to present the breadth and strength of the Museum's encyclopedic holdings. This complete reinstallation project brings renewed attention to geographic and chronological specificity and context, while more than doubling the works of art on view. *the Davis. ReDiscovered* is the most ambitious project of its kind since the Davis Museum building, designed by renowned Spanish architect Rafael Moneo, opened in 1993.

Moneo's Davis Museum is the fourth home to the collection on campus. The Wellesley art collection, initiated by Henry Fowle Durant and Pauline Durant with the founding of the College in 1875, was originally displayed in great College Hall, the primary residential and classroom building. It was later housed in the

Farnsworth Art Building, founded in 1889, and then in Paul Rudolph's 1958 Jewett Arts Center, a masterpiece of mid-century Modern architecture.

“Over three years in the making, the reinstallation demonstrates the pedagogical innovation, the bold approach to curatorial practice, and the aesthetic flair that distinguish today's Davis. This project showcases the many stories, both local and global, that animate the objects in the Davis collections and reveals a collection that supports the legacy of Wellesley's pioneering approach to teaching art history, as well as inspires a long-standing commitment to the value of learning,” said Dr. Lisa Fischman, Ruth Gordon Shapiro '37 Director of the Davis Museum at Wellesley College. “We want to reintroduce our community to the hidden gems in our collections, to honor Wellesley's legacy of teaching through first-hand encounters with art across cultures, and to celebrate the power of giving that has built these extraordinary collections and the building that houses them.”



Over three floors and eleven galleries, the Museum is more than doubling the number of works of art that will be on view from approximately 300 to more than 620 objects. In total, the Davis holdings have grown to include nearly 13,000 objects, with areas of strength in painting, sculpture, works on paper, photography, and decorative objects, from antiquity to the present day.

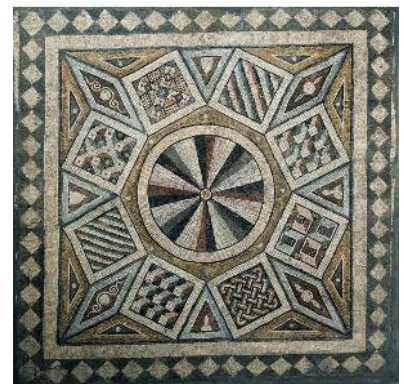
New research conducted by staff with wide-ranging areas of study

This milestone of “rediscovery” has been nearly three years in the making, involving research conducted by Davis curators, in consultation with scholars and specialists at Wellesley College and beyond; conservation treatments to paintings, sculptures, objects, and frames; and an intense summer of installations. The galleries are structured to highlight the Museum’s finest objects from across the globe, spanning more than four millennia of civilization: from recently conserved Mycenaean vessels to new acquisitions of art created in the 21st century.

Organized into “collections,” the galleries, some of them jewel-toned, offer many surprises for even the most familiar visitor. The second level presents art of the Ancient Mediterranean, Ancient Americas, South Asia, East Asia, Oceanic, African, the Study Gallery (devoted to supporting specific research and teaching interests, selected by faculty each semester), and “Wellesley Collects,” which outlines historical highlights and major figures. Among them, beloved objects



like the Roman classical sculpture known as the “Wellesley Athlete,” stand alongside lesser-known works and recent acquisitions—some of which will be shown in the galleries for the first time. Also on this level visitors will encounter the Antioch Mosaic, which was recently moved in a feat of engineering and fortitude, via large cranes from its



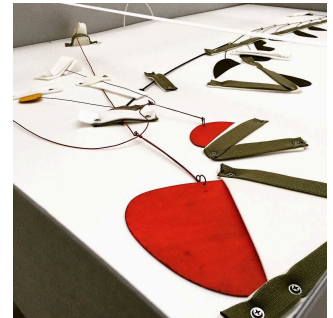
previous 22-plus year wall mount on the fifth level, to the second level where it is displayed in its original orientation as a floor. The move took two years of planning with a team of structural engineers, a rigging company, and conservation specialists. Also on the second level, the Morelle Lasky Levine ’56 Works on Paper Gallery, the Joan Levine Freedman ’57 and Richard I. Freedman Gallery, the Robert and Claire Freedman Lober Viewing Alcove, and the Friends of Art Gallery continue to house temporary exhibitions.

The fourth level presents collections including Medieval, Renaissance, Southern Baroque, Spanish Colonial, Northern Baroque, Continental Rococo, British Portraiture, Colonial American, 19th century American Landscapes, 19th century Native American, 19th century European, and American. In these galleries, visitors will encounter many more of the Museum’s collections highlights. An example is Dutch marine painter Willem van de Velde the Elder’s painting, *Two Boeier Yachts Close in to the Shore with a Flagship Coming in to Anchor*. Perhaps the best example of the artist’s “pen painting” in a U.S. museum, the work was recently

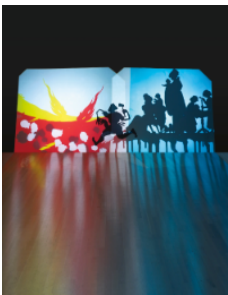


rediscovered, tucked away in storage, and underwent conservation treatment and technical assessment by several specialists to reveal its impeccable condition.

Masterpieces of late modern and contemporary art are grouped together on the fifth level. Visitors will see George Bellows' last painting, as well as exceptional works by Oskar Kokoschka, Sonia Delaunay-Terk, Willem de Kooning, Jules Olitski, Lee Krasner, Jackson Pollock, Agnes Martin, Liliana Porter, Sara Rahbar, Chakaia Booker, Linda Benglis, Radcliffe Bailey, Francis Alys, Eddie Martinez, Louise Nevelson, and Alexander Calder.



The Davis has been very active in collections growth over recent years,



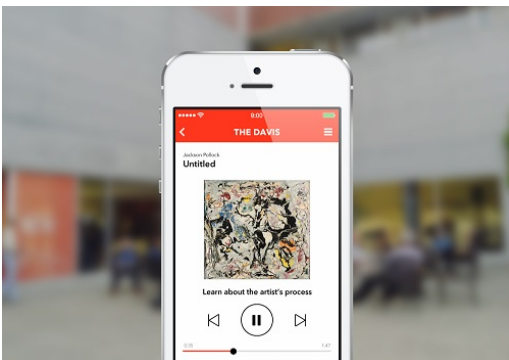
so in addition to highlighting well-known favorites, the new galleries will present recent purchases and gifts for the first time. For example, the recent acquisition of Kara Walker's 2002, *Nat Turner's Revelation*, an installation of projected light, painted glass slides, and a signature hand-cut silhouette, will be on view in the Freedman "Black Box" Gallery. This dramatic narrative installation was inspired by the life of Nat Turner, a self-made preacher born into slavery at the turn of the 19th century.

Newly refurbished and repurposed interstitial spaces at the core of the Davis building's staircase create opportunities for unexpected encounter; designed to surprise and delight, three landings feature portraits of women whose "female gaze" encompasses the galleries in their purview. Other spaces present rotating selections from the Davis's exceptional photography collection.

The lower level will continue to host temporary exhibitions, which in the fall include ***Partners in Design: Alfred H. Barr Jr. and Philip Johnson*** and ***Anni Albers: Connections***.

New mobile app to enhance the visitor experience

Throughout the newly installed galleries, visitors will encounter stories of how objects came to the Davis and learn about the key directors, curators, scholars, educators, donors, and collectors who have shaped the collections and created a home for art at Wellesley College. This information is presented through traditional wall text panels, as well as via a new mobile app from Cuseum that provides online tours, mobile notifications based on a visitor's proximity to an object, and way-finding tools.



History of the Davis Museum

Wellesley's art collection dates back to the opening of the College in 1875, promoted by founders Henry Fowle Durant (1822-81) and Pauline Durant. From the beginning, the Durants led a campaign to acquire original paintings, drawings, prints, and photographs, as well as plaster casts of classical sculpture, in service of a liberal arts education for women. The Durants put art at the very core of liberal arts learning through gallery installations at the center of College Hall, which served as the residential and educational facility until it burned in 1914. In 1889, the Farnsworth Art Building was dedicated to house the Wellesley collections.

In 1993, the Davis Museum opened its doors in a new building designed by Spanish architect Rafael Moneo, who was awarded the Pritzker Architecture Prize soon after. This facility,

Moneo's first North American commission, immediately distinguished the Davis among its academic museum peers, and among the art museums and cultural institutions of the Greater Boston area. The building also rearticulated and revitalized the longstanding commitment to the central role of the visual arts in undergraduate liberal arts education at Wellesley College.

After completing the design of the Davis Museum, Rafael Moneo commented, "The artworks in the collection are like memories of those alumnae who lived here and who thought there could be no better place than Wellesley to which to leave the objects they loved so much. Therefore, I very much wanted the Museum to be understood as a treasury, a treasury that speaks about the lives of those people who received their education here."

RELATED PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Fall Opening Celebration

Wednesday, September 28 | 6–9 p.m. | Davis Lobby and Galleries

The Davis and the Wellesley College community host a festive reception to celebrate the unveiling the new permanent collections galleries—"the Davis. ReDiscovered"—and opening of the fall special exhibitions, *Charlotte Brooks at LOOK 1951 - 1971*, *Partners in Design: Alfred H. Barr Jr. and Philip Johnson*, and *Anni Albers' Connections*. The event takes place in the Davis Museum lobby and on the Davis Museum Plaza, complete with passed hors d'oeuvres, beverages, and a DJ.

Film Series: Museums in Motion

In honor of the Davis' newly installed permanent collections galleries, uncover the secret life of museums through this selection of recent cinematic masterpieces. These contemporary films pull back the curtain on unique, behind-the-scenes views of museum activities and characters, both real and imagined.

All Films start at 6:30 p.m. in the Collins Cinema

October 12: *The Great Museum* (Dir. Johannes Holzhausen, 2014)

The Great Museum reveals the inner workings of Vienna's Kunsthistorisches Museum.

November 2: *Russian Ark* (Dir. Alexandr Sokurov, 2002)

Filmed in the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, this breathtaking film recreates 300 years of history and culture.

November 16: *National Gallery* (Dir. Frederick Wiseman, 2014)

National Gallery takes the audience behind the scenes of a London institution.

November 30: *Museum Hours* (Dir. Jem Cohen, 2014)

Museum Hours is a tale of two strangers who find refuge in Vienna's grand Kunsthistorisches Art Museum. Johann, a museum guard, spends his days silently observing both the art and the visitors. Anne, suddenly called to Vienna from overseas, has been wandering the city in a state of limbo.

Family Day: Around the World in 6,000 Years

Sunday, November 5, 2016 | 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. | Davis galleries, lobby, plaza; Collins Cinema and Cafe

Travel through time and around the globe via this experience designed for visitors of all ages. Discover a world of art through treasure hunts, art making, performances, visiting artist demonstrations, guided tours and more.

The Davis Reimagined

Saturday, November 12, 2016 | 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Explore our extraordinary permanent collections through a new lens as we activate the galleries with a day of performances, talks, art making, and workshops. Create your own program: drop in for one presentation, or stay for more.

The Davis. ReDiscovered and related programs are supported by generous individual gifts from Mildred Cooper Glimcher '61 and Arnold B. Glimcher, Amy Batchelor '88, Kathleen B. Bissinger '57, and Carol Grossman '66; and by the Mellon Endowment for Academic Programs at the Davis Museum, the Mildred Cooper Glimcher '61 Endowed Fund, the Kemper Curator of Academic Programs at the Davis Museum Fund, Wellesley College Friends of Art at the Davis, the Helyn MacLean Endowed Program Fund for Contemporary and South Asian Art, the Alice S. Acheson Fund, the Wellesley College Museum Program Fund NEA Challenge, the James Wilson Rayen Gift, and in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

DAVIS MUSEUM GENERAL INFORMATION

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

***Museum Hours:* Tuesday–Sunday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m. Closed Mondays, holidays, and Wellesley College recesses.**

Admission is free and open to the public.

***Telephone:* 781-283-2051**

***Website:* www.theDavis.org**

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 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 a leader in providing an excellent liberal arts education for women who will make a difference in the world. Its 500-acre campus near Boston is home to some 2,400 undergraduate students from 49 states and 58 countries.

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Image credit lines:

Affixing mounts to objects in new medieval gallery

Relocation of the mosaic

Unknown artist working in the manner of Polykleitos, *Male Nude*, ca. 100 BCE -100 CE, Marble. Davis Museum at Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA, Gift of Miss Hannah Parker Kimball (M. Day Kimball Memorial Fund)

Unknown, Floor from the Villa of Daphne, Yakto Complex, near Antioch, 5th century C.E. Mosaic (stone tesserae set in concrete mortar). Given by the Princeton Expedition for the Excavation of Antioch and Vicinity

Velde, Willem van de, I, *Two Boeier Yachts Close in to the Shore with a Flagship Coming in to Anchor* (ca. 1650). Oil (and ink?) on panel. Gift of Strafford Morss in memory of his wife, Gabrielle Ladd Morss (Class of 1958)

Calder mobile coming out of storage

Kara Walker (B. 1969) *NAT TURNER'S REVELATION (AN IMPORTANT LESSON FROM OUR NEGRO PAST YOU WILL LIKELY FORGET TO REMEMBER)* light projectors, glass slides and silhouette. Executed in 2002. Museum purchase, The Nancy Gray Sherrill, Class of 1954, Collection Acquisition Fund

Screenshot of Cuseum application for Davis Museum.

Media Contact: Mary Agnew

617-512-7489, Magnew@wellesley.edu

High-resolution images and interviews available upon request