

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**THE DAVIS MUSEUM DISPLAYS NEW CONTEMPORARY PRINT
ACQUISITION WITH *YINKA SHONIBARE MBE: GUNS DRAWN***

WELLESLEY, Mass. – The Davis Museum at Wellesley College presents ***Yinka Shonibare MBE: Guns Drawn***, an exhibition that highlights a recent acquisition of a series of five new woodblock prints with fabric collage, *Cowboy Angels* (2017), by renowned artist Yinka Shonibare. This portfolio is accompanied by Shonibare’s 2006 sculptural double portrait, *How to Blow Up Two Heads at Once (Ladies)*, already in the Davis Museum collections. Together, these works exemplify the artist’s theatrical depictions of beauty and violence. The exhibition, on view in the Friends of Art Gallery, runs from February 7 through June 19, 2019.

“Among the most significant contemporary artists in the world today, Shonibare challenges our assumptions about how we experience time and how we see history,” said Amanda Gilvin, assistant curator at the Davis Museum of Wellesley College, and curator of the exhibition. “Much like Paul J. McAuley’s 2007 science fiction novel *Cowboy Angels*, Shonibare’s new series by the same name invites us to time travel even as it cautions against such an adventure.”

In *Cowboy Angels*, Shonibare combines Christian imagery of angels, representations of African masks, cowboy tropes of the American West, and a windswept treatment of wax print fabrics. Each print contains a cowboy—recognizable by his posture and dress—with angel wings and a face substituted by a canonical type of African mask. On each print, the artist has written “Angel.” Shonibare has also added swatches of wax print fabric and printed paper to create an abstracted background on the polychrome woodcut prints. This portfolio reflects the breadth of Shonibare’s oeuvre in medium and themes, particularly addressing his current theme of immigration and xenophobia in Europe and North America.

The sculpture, *How to Blow Up Two Heads at Once (Ladies)*, combines eighteenth century dueling pistols, late nineteenth century dress patterns, and twenty-first century Dutch fabric produced for African and African Diasporic markets. The artist has explained that the tense standoff between two headless women examines “the pointlessness of conflict in general.”

About the artist

Yinka Shonibare MBE was born in 1962 in London and moved to Lagos, Nigeria, at the age of three. He is a multimedia artist and Member of the “Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.” Shonibare explores the inheritances of colonialism in our contemporary, globalized world. Best known for using wax print cloth to represent historic cultural and economic interdependence, Shonibare also has long plumbed a rich palette of other media and symbols. The artist explores issues of race and class through painting, sculpture, photography and film.

Shonibare’s works are included in prominent collections internationally, including the Tate Collection, London; Victoria and Albert Museum, London; National Museum of African Art, Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C; Museum of Modern Art, New York; National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; National Gallery of Modern Art in Rome and VandenBroek Foundation, The Netherlands.

Yinka Shonibare MBE: Guns Drawn is accompanied by the Davis mobile app, which includes a tour of the exhibition that incorporates historical research completed by Gilvin and student intern Veronica Mora '18 (Art History). The Davis app is available for download at the iTunes store or online at: <http://app.thedavis.org>.

The exhibition is generously supported by the Constance Rhind Robey '81 Fund for Museum Exhibitions.

EXHIBITION-RELATED EVENTS AND PROGRAMMING

Spring Opening Celebration

Thursday, February 7

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

Opening Reception

6:45 p.m., Davis Lobby and Galleries

Welcome Remarks

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.

Curatorial Gallery Talk: Amanda Gilvin: Yinka Shonibare MBE: Guns Drawn

Tuesday, March 5

4 p.m.

Join Assistant Curator Amanda Gilvin for a discussion of Yinka Shonibare MBE’s deadly serious—but playful—investigations into history in sculpture and on paper.

Three Films by Yinka Shonibare MBE

Thursday, April 11

5 - 7 p.m., Collins Cinema

The Davis will present a rare opportunity to view three of Yinka Shonibare MBE’s films. After an hour-long screening of the three short films, MIT Assistant Professor of African Studies Amah Edoh will join Davis Museum Assistant Curator Amanda Gilvin in conversation.

Odile and Odette, 2005 | *Un Ballo in Maschera (A Masked Ball)*, 2004 | *Addio del Passato*, 2011

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.

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High-resolution images and interviews available upon request.