

the Davis.

DAVIS MUSEUM AT WELLESLEY COLLEGE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Groundbreaking & moving exhibition, *Sovereign Memory: Photography, Remembrance, and Displaced Histories*, opens at the Davis Museum

On view - free and open to the public - from February 7 to June 1, 2025



Mildred Howard, I've been a Witness to this Game XXII, 2016, Monoprint/digital with collage and gold leaf, Museum purchase, The Nancy Gray Sherrill, Class of 1954, Collection Acquisition Fund 2016.127

WELLESLEY, MASS. (January 2025) – [*Sovereign Memory: Photography, Remembrance, and Displaced Histories*](#), a new exhibition opening at [the Davis Museum](#), explores photography as a strategy for healing. The artists each employ the photograph as a connective tissue, stitching together individuals, families, and communities to severed histories and identities.

About 40 works will be on view from February 7 to June 1, 2025, along with two other new exhibitions at the Davis Museum, all highlighting new acquisitions. An [opening night party](#) will be held Thursday, Feb. 6 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. and is open to the public.

“*Sovereign Memory* reflects on how artists employ the medium of photography to reimagine the stories we tell ourselves about our past and present,” said Jessica Orzulak, Associate Curator and Curatorial Affairs Manager at the Asheville Art Museum and former Linda Wyatt Gruber ‘66 Curatorial Fellow in Photography at the Davis Museum who curated *Sovereign Memory*.

“Photographs can capture intimate moments of our individual lived experiences, but they also have the capacity to share a more complicated portrait of collective life and histories from a myriad of perspectives.”

All of the artists in *Sovereign Memory* share a concern with how images profoundly shape the stories of where we come from—and who we are. Orzulak believes photography has revolutionized how we represent our histories, solidifying architectures of personal and collective memory through archives born of visual technologies. Photography also has a darker history as a colonial machine producing images in support of empires.



Sky Hopinka, *This is a mnemonic for Truman Lowe*, 2019, Museum purchase, Nancy Gray Sherrill, Class of 1954, Collection Acquisitions Fund 2019.1206, Image appears courtesy of the artist and The Green Gallery, Milwaukee

For communities who endured generations of colonialism and continue to navigate legacies of its violence, histories told through the lens of photography can re-implement a colonial gaze, enacting a series of erasures. The multiplicity of personal and collective experiences becomes distilled into a single, simplified story told from an exterior perspective.

Featuring a transnational selection of photographic works from the Davis’s collections, this exhibition expands that single, false story into many sovereign memories. These artworks have become emblems for reconnecting to known and unknown histories, enacting memory as an emancipatory strategy.

Curated by Orzulak, this exhibition is supported with funds given through the generosity of Linda Wyatt Gruber (Class of 1966).

The Davis Museum is free and open to the public Tuesdays to Sundays, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, please call 781-283-2051 or visit

<https://www1.wellesley.edu/davismuseum/visit/directions>.

ABOUT THE DAVIS MUSEUM

A vital resource for communities on the Wellesley College campus and beyond, the Davis Museum is one of the oldest and most acclaimed academic fine art museums in the United States. Its signature Rafael Moneo building houses collections that span the history of art worldwide, from antiquity to the present. Guided by commitments to diversity and inclusion, excellence and innovation, and access for all, the Davis is at the core of Wellesley's liberal arts mission of educating women to make a difference in the world. With exceptional encyclopedic holdings, rotating special exhibitions, and enriching public programs, the Davis warmly welcomes all visitors, including scholars and students of all ages. For visitor information: <https://www.wellesley.edu/davismuseum/visit/directions>.

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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