

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**THE DAVIS MUSEUM AT WELLESLEY COLLEGE DEBUTS THIRD WINDOW
INVITATIONAL COMMISSION WITH *SEEDS TO HARVEST***



WELLESLEY, Mass. – The Davis Museum at Wellesley College has unveiled its third Windows Invitational with a commission designed by Alexandria Smith, called *Seed to Harvest*. The installation foregrounds portraits of Wellesley’s first African American graduates and borrows its title from the “Patternist” series of novels by Octavia Butler, stories that explore themes of science fiction, humanity, and the ethical and

unethical uses of power.

Rendered with hand-drawn and computer techniques, Smith embellishes original photographic portraits of five alumnae—Dr. Harriett Alleyne Rice (Class of 1887), Ethel M. Caution-Davis (Class of 1912), Katherine Naomi Robinson (Class of 1922), Clarissa Scott Delany (Class of 1923), and Jane Bolin (Class of 1928). She adds symbolic elements derived from her own visual vocabulary and from quilt patterns used to convey messages along the Underground Railroad (there were two stops in the town of Wellesley) to create the unique crests that adorn each with an honorific flourish.

“As I researched College archives and newspaper articles, it was so inspiring to see what these women accomplished. They were pioneers in their fields from medicine to poetry, and are an important piece of Wellesley College and world history,” said Smith. “In this installation and in their portraits, I wanted to celebrate these phenomenal women and their contributions to the world.”

[Alexandria Smith](#) is a mixed media visual artist and the Head of Painting at the Royal College of Art in London and was formerly Assistant Professor of Painting at Wellesley College in Massachusetts. She earned her BFA in Illustration from Syracuse University, MA in Art Education from New York University, and MFA in Painting and Drawing from Parsons The New School for Design. Alexandria lives and works in London and New York City.

The Windows Invitational at the Davis Museum engages artists in transforming the dramatic expanse of floor-to-ceiling ground-level windows that articulate the lobby and courtyard plaza of the Museum's signature Rafael Moneo building. The first iteration of the Windows Invitational launched in September 2017 with an installation by Dave Olsen, [*Smoked My Head on Yes Waters*](#). The second commission in the series, [*Fragmentos para una historia del olvido / Fragments for a history of displacement*](#), was designed by Daniela Rivera, and debuted in September 2018.

Curated by Lisa Fischman, Ruth Gordon Shapiro '37 Director, the Windows Invitational is generously supported by Wellesley's Friends of Art at the Davis.

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 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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Image credit: Excerpt of Alexandria Smith, *Seed to Harvest*, 2019 (sketch detail), Vinyl, Artwork
Credit: Courtesy of the artist

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High-resolution images and interviews available upon request