

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**THE DAVIS MUSEUM PRESENTS AN EXPLORATION OF A 16<sup>th</sup> CENTURY WORK OF ART IN *HIDDEN HISTORIES: REVEALING THE LIFE OF A PAINTING***



WELLESLEY, Mass. – The Davis Museum at Wellesley College presents *Hidden Histories: Revealing the Life of a Painting*, an exhibition that examines a mysterious 16th century Venetian *Sacra Conversazione*, recently donated to the Davis Museum. The painting is explored through technical analysis and an art historical lens to uncover a wealth of new information and highlight the unknown. The exhibition, on view in the Robert and

Claire Freedman Lober Viewing Alcove, runs from September 12 through December 15, 2019.

“With the help of a conservation team at the MFA Boston, the Davis has examined the painting via ultraviolet (UV) light, infrared reflectography, x-radiography, and cross sections of the paint layers, and has conducted significant historical research on *Holy Family with Saint Catherine, Saint Sebastian, and a Donor*,” says Alicia LaTores, Friends of Art Curatorial Research Assistant and co-curator of the exhibition. “It has been a fascinating process and one that we are excited to share in the exhibition, and to explore further through the fall “Davis Discoveries” afternoon symposium.”

The painting, *Holy Family with Saint Catherine, Saint Sebastian, and a Donor*, was previously attributed to Giorgione, and exists in multiple versions, including one at the Musée du Louvre, Paris. Several important details in the Davis’s painting, such as the donor figure and the background landscape, differ from among the other nearly identical works. Restorations, like the head of Saint Joseph, are clearly visible on the canvas. The history of visual change evident in this painting spans centuries, and now raises many questions: Who made it? How many artists or conservators worked on the painting? Why are there multiple copies, and why is this work different from the others?

**Hidden Histories** is co-curated by Alicia LaTores, Friends of Art Curatorial Research Assistant, and Katherine Davies, Class of 2019, the Summer 2019 Eleanor P. DeLorme Museum Intern. The exhibition is generously supported by Peter H. and Joan Macy Kaskell (Class of 1953).

## **EXHIBITION-RELATED EVENTS AND PROGRAMMING**

### **Fall Opening Celebration**

Thursday, September 12

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

The Davis Museum celebrates the opening of the fall 2019 exhibitions, including five special installations that bring spectacular energy and creative artistic innovation to the Wellesley College campus. The major exhibition, *Fatimah Tuggar: Home's Horizons*, along with *Kanishka Raja: I and I*, *Recent Acquisitions: New Photographs* (Haley Morris-Cafiero and Habiba Nowrose), *Hidden Histories: Revealing the Life of a Painting* and *Alexandria Smith: Seed to Harvest*, the third "Windows Invitational" commission will be on view, along with rotations that renew the presentations in the Permanent Collections Galleries.

### **Symposium**

#### **Davis Discoveries: A Sacra Conversazione**

#### **Friday, November 15**

2-4:30 p.m.

Collins Cinema

Organized in conjunction with the recent gift of a sixteenth-century Venetian painting, *Holy Family with St. Catherine, St. Sebastian, and a Patron*, this symposium brings together a conservator, a curator, and a recent Wellesley graduate to offer new insights on the painting. A complement to the exhibition *Hidden Histories: Revealing the Life of a Painting*, presentations will be given by Lydia Vagts, conservator at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, who performed technical analysis on the painting; Frederick Ilchman, Chair, Art of Europe, and Mrs. Russell W. Baker Curator of Paintings at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, renowned expert on sixteenth-century Venetian painting; and Katherine Davies (Class of 2019), the Eleanor P. DeLorme Museum Intern for the Summer of 2019 and co-curator of the exhibition. The afternoon is generously sponsored by Peter H. and Joan Macy Kaskell (Class of 1953). Free and open to the public.

## **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.

**Image credit:**

Venetian, *Holy Family with St. Catherine, St. Sebastian, and a Donor*, 16th century, Oil on cradled panel, 49 3/8 in. x 65 3/4 in. (125.4 cm x 167 cm), Gift of Peter H. and Joan Macy Kaskell (Class of 1953) 2017.184

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Media Contact: Mary Agnew  
617-512-7489, [Magnew@wellesley.edu](mailto:Magnew@wellesley.edu)  
*High-resolution images and interviews available upon request.*