

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**The Montclair State University Galleries Announces
Inaugural *Case Studies* Exhibition Series with Damien Davis
On View September 1 – December 9, 2022**

New and recent works by Damien Davis explore Blackness through shapes and symbols



Oversight, 2022. CNC milled birch, laser-cut acrylic, and stainless steel hardware. 17.75 in. x 18.75 in. x 2 in.
Courtesy of Uprise Art @Uprisenyc

Montclair, NJ — The Montclair State University Galleries announces *Case Studies*, a new series of exhibitions in the Alexander Kasser Theater Cases initiated by Director Megan C. Austin and Curator Jesse Bandler Firestone.

Case Studies 1: Damien Davis - OLD CURRENCIES brings together never before seen and recent works by Damien Davis on loan from Uprise Art that explore Blackness through symbols, shapes, colors, and digital technology.

Cowrie shells, tobacco leaves, and anatomical shapes appear throughout the exhibition to explore themes of currency, sex, and cultural traditions that connect a wide range of experiences within the African diaspora. In the *Blackamoors* print series, made exclusively using Adobe Illustrator’s “Ancient” preset color palette, Davis looks at how classifications and nomenclature within digital softwares relate to perceptions of identity and culture.

The exhibition is curated by Jesse Bandler Firestone, curator and exhibition coordinator.

“Our exhibition programming focuses on new and emerging artists whose artistic practice is positioned at the intersection of disciplines. The *Case Studies* series will offer an extension of our space beyond the walls of our primary gallery and into our neighboring exhibition space in the Alexander Kasser Theater,” says University Galleries Director Megan Austin. “We are excited to launch this series with work by Damien Davis and facilitate dialogues with on and off-campus communities catalyzed by his art.”

“By repeating and collaging a matrix of forms that relate to various contexts within the African Diaspora, Davis invites us to rethink how Blackness is coded and transmitted across cultures,” says Firestone. “Intentionally avoiding figuration, these works defy the current trend of representation and instead rely on associations, comparisons, and cross cultural analysis to connect a diverse landscape of Black identities.”

Among the highlights of the exhibition are:

- New sculptural works on view for the first time.
- *Blackamoors*, 2022, depicts a range of shapes, colors, and forms in various configurations that speak to nuance relationships within and perceptions of Blackness.

On view

Please visit the Kasser Theater website for up to date information regarding hours.
<https://www.peakperfs.org/box-office/>

Opening Events

Thursday, September 22

Case Studies: Damien Davis - OLD CURRENCIES Opening Reception

4 – 5:30 p.m. at the Alexander Kasser Theater

Nothing Under Heaven by Joseph Liatela Opening Reception

Live performance of *To Move Is To Remember*

4 – 7 p.m. at the George Segal Gallery

About The Montclair State University Galleries

The Montclair State University Galleries brings together ideas, perspectives and dialogues to foster curiosity and shared understandings through art. The University Galleries presents diverse and inclusive exhibitions and programs creating connections that unite the campus experience with local and global communities. www.montclair.edu/galleries

All exhibitions and programs are free and open to the public.

Social Media

Join the conversation on social media by tagging @montclairstategalleries @uprisenyc @damiendavis and using the hashtags #CaseStudiesDamienDavis and #MontclairStateGalleries when posting.

Support

This exhibition is made possible, in part, by funds from the McMullen Family Foundation, the College of the Arts and private contributions.

Media Contact

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