

News Release / For immediate release

## SMITH COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART WILL LAUNCH A NEW ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM THIS JUNE; AMANDA WILLIAMS WILL BE THE INAUGURAL ARTIST



Amanda Williams, a distinguished visual artist who is the recent co-recipient of a major new commission for a Brooklyn monument commemorating Shirley Chisholm, will launch the Smith College Museum of Art Artist-in-Residence Program this June, the college and museum announced today.

"Amanda stood out as the ideal artist to inaugurate this program. Not only is she at a pivotal point in her career, but her practice, which is generous and collaborative, interdisciplinary and research-based, evidences a deep commitment to engaging the world around her. We're thrilled and excited to welcome her to campus next month," stated Jessica Nicoll, Director and Louise Ines Doyle '34 Chief Curator of SCMA.

Providing studio space as well as housing for the artist and her family, the residency will enable Williams to return to her painting practice for the first time in several years. As part of her month-long stay in Northampton (June 10–July 7, 2019), Amanda Williams will be assisted by Isabel Cordova, Smith class of 2019, and will have the opportunity to engage with many campus resources, including [Smith's Library collections](#) and [Botanic Garden](#).

On Thursday, June 27, from 4 to 6 p.m., SCMA will host an Open Studio with Amanda Williams, offering the campus and broader communities a glimpse into the artist's work process and her time at SCMA. For details visit [smith.edu/artmuseum](http://smith.edu/artmuseum).

"I am honored to be the inaugural artist in SCMA's new artist residency," says Amanda Williams. "Having the rare opportunity to be deeply immersed in creating a new body of work, with my family close to me on campus, speaks volumes about Smith College's commitment in supporting all women to lead lives of distinction and purpose."

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### Smith College Museum of Art Artist-in-Residence Program

Co-conceived and managed by Emma Chubb, Charlotte Feng Ford '83 Curator of Contemporary Art, the Smith College Museum of Art Artist-in-Residence Program expands the presence and scope of contemporary artists and art at Smith, inviting an emerging or mid-career artist to campus for a period of creative exploration and experimentation rooted in sustained contact with students, faculty, staff and greater Northampton.

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“The residency is tailored to each artist. This approach allows the museum to provide the artist with access to Smith’s unique artistic, intellectual and institutional resources in ways that specifically relate to the conception and development of a new project or body of work while on campus. In addition to providing studio space, housing and an honorarium, the residency is designed to be inclusive of all family situations,” Emma Chubb commented.

As an integral part of Smith College—one of the largest women’s colleges in the United States—SCMA recognizes that family obligations, particularly childcare, all too often prevent artists who are also caregivers from participating in artist residencies in ways that disproportionately affect women. As an incubator and supporter of artistic talent from across the globe, this program deepens Smith’s longstanding commitment to both catalyzing and nurturing the creation of significant works of art, literature and architecture.

The Smith College Museum of Art Artist-in-Residence Program is made possible by a foundational gift from Robin Bracken Villa ’65 and the bequest of Jane Herb Rinden in honor of Thor Rinden.

#### About the Artist (reprinted in part with the artist’s permission)

Amanda Williams’ creative practice employs color as a way to draw attention to the political complexities of race, place and value in cities. The landscapes in which she operates are the visual residue of the invisible policies and forces that have misshapen most inner cities. Williams’ installations, paintings and works on paper seek to inspire new ways of looking at the familiar and in the process, raise questions about the state of urban space and citizenship in America.

As co-creators of “Our Destiny, Our Democracy”—a contemporary steel sculpture honoring Shirley Chisholm (1924–2005)—Amanda Williams and Olalekan Jeyifous were awarded the inaugural commission for [She Built NYC](#) in April of this year. Williams’ and Jeyifous’ large-scale, three-dimensional portrait of the late politician and activist will rise in Prospect Park, Brooklyn, New York next year.

Amanda Williams has exhibited widely, including the Venice Architecture Biennale 2018, a solo exhibition at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, and a public project with the Pulitzer Arts Foundation in St. Louis, Missouri. She was a 2018 United States Artists (USA) Ford Fellow, a Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors grantee, an Efroymsen Family Contemporary Arts Fellow, and a Leadership Greater Chicago Fellow. She is a member of the multidisciplinary Museum Design Team for the Obama Presidential Center. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York and the Art Institute of Chicago. She was recently the Bill and Stephanie Sick Distinguished Visiting Professor at the School of the Art Institute Chicago and has previously served as a Visiting Assistant Professor of Architecture at Cornell University and Washington University in St. Louis. She lives and works on Chicago’s South Side. Visit the [artist’s website](#) for more information.

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**ABOUT SCMA:** The Smith College Museum of Art (SCMA) is recognized as one of the leading academic museums in the United States, contributing meaningfully to the mission of Smith College: to educate women of promise for lives of distinction and purpose. Housed in state-of-the-art facilities within the Brown Fine Arts Center, SCMA’s collection of more than 27,000 artworks spans from antiquity to the present and supports teaching and learning across the curriculum of the college. SCMA is a valued resource for the broader community as well, attracting an average of 35,000 visitors each year including some 4,000 students from regional schools. To learn about the museum and its current exhibitions, programs and more, visit [smith.edu/artmuseum](http://smith.edu/artmuseum) and follow the museum on social media.

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Artist’s photo: Anne Ryan Photo