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News from the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum  
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Images available on request

## **New exhibition at Mount Holyoke College Art Museum examines three fires that impacted College's history**

SOUTH HADLEY, Mass. — The [Mount Holyoke College Art Museum](#) (MHCAM) presents "Mount Holyoke Afire." This [exhibition](#) considers three significant fires that took place at Mount Holyoke College, destroying Seminary Hall in 1896, Williston Hall in 1917, and Rockefeller Hall in 1922. Featuring photographs and objects from the original buildings, the show evokes aspects of daily life before, during, and after the fires. Opening February 5, "Mount Holyoke Afire" will be on view through April 14, 2019 in the Hinchcliff Reception Hall, located on the first floor of the Art Building.

The exhibition includes a selection of original and digitally enlarged archival photographs that capture the different structures ablaze as well as the communities that worked to save each building. Along with letters and historical relics, such as an early twentieth-century fire helmet, the show also features selected teaching materials that might have been used in these buildings, such as laboratory specimens and plaster casts.

For this exhibition, Mount Holyoke students wrote labels about specific objects and photographs and created a digital reconstruction of the three buildings that is presented on a video monitor. "This exhibition truly highlights the Museum's commitment to being a place on campus that enables meaningful collaborations across the College. This is the first show of its kind that can boast this level of involvement from Archives and Special Collections, individual Departments, faculty, and student contributors," said Aaron Miller, Associate Curator of Visual and Material Culture.



"Mount Holyoke Afire" is curated by Robert Herbert, Professor Emeritus of Fine Arts, James Gehrt, Digital Project Lead, Digital Assets and Preservation Services, and Aaron F. Miller, Associate Curator of Visual and Material Culture, and is sponsored by the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, Archives and Special Collections, and the Departments of History, Art History, English, Geology, and the Dean of Faculty's Office.

**MHCAM will host an [opening reception](#) in conjunction with the exhibition**

Mount Holyoke dance students will perform a new work choreographed by Visiting Professor Barbie Diewald, and student contributors to the exhibition will speak about their individual projects on Friday, February 8 at 4:30 p.m. in the Museum Lobby.

**About the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum**

The Mount Holyoke College Art Museum (MHCAM) aims to spark intellectual curiosity and creativity through direct engagement with works of art and material culture. Founded in 1876, the Museum's collection comprises more than 24,000 objects, including exemplary Greek, Roman and Egyptian antiquities; art and artifacts from the indigenous Americas; paintings, sculpture and decorative art from Europe and the United States; photography, prints, ceramics and numismatics; and works by women artists. In recent years, the Museum has made significant acquisitions of global contemporary art, including works by Afruz Amighi, Ambreen Butt, Zanele Muholi, Kiki Smith, Alec Soth, Lin Tianmiao, Kara Walker, Carrie Mae Weems and others. Through thought-provoking exhibitions and educational programs, MHCAM serves as a nexus for experiential learning across academic disciplines and as a resource for the broader community.

MHCAM is free, open to the public, and fully accessible. Hours are Tuesday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, 1 to 5 p.m. For additional information, please visit [artmuseum.mtholyoke.edu](http://artmuseum.mtholyoke.edu).

Image: *Rockefeller Hall*, 1922, silver gelatin print, Mount Holyoke College Archives and Special Collections.