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News from the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media contact: Christian Feuerstein - cfeuerst@mholyoke.edu or (443) 864-0514
Images available on request

SOUTH HADLEY, Mass. — Two new exhibitions are now open at the Mount Holyoke College Art Museum (MHCAM), and will include a public talk on October 23, 2024 about the Museum's distinctive collection of northern European painting.

The Mount Holyoke College Art Museum (MHCAM) presents *Northern Exposure: Painting from the Low Countries in the Permanent Collection*. This intimate exhibition highlights eight exquisite Northern European paintings from the Museum's collection, allowing visitors to study their rich detail, technical virtuosity and engaging subjects.

17th-century Dutch and Flemish painters invested great care in the technical concerns of luminosity, clarity, reflection and shadow, producing paintings where light and its diverse forms take center stage. The Museum holds a rich group of works that demonstrate these interests and the astonishing range of lighting effects that these painters achieved. The variety of paintings in the collection also points to the region's shifting social, religious, and economic conditions during the seventeenth century. What we can — and cannot — see in these paintings evidences many of these changes, prompting conversations about the legacies of the 17th century that are still with us today.

At 5 p.m. on Wednesday, October 23, 2024, Assistant Curator Emily B. Wood, the exhibition curator, will be in conversation with the Museum's first curator, Wendy M. Watson, in Mount Holyoke College's Gamble Auditorium. The lively discussion about collecting and curating art from this period will be followed by a reception.

Northern Exposure is the first exhibition in the newly-named Wendy W. Watson Gallery, made possible by the generosity of long-time Museum supporter Ludmila Schwarzenberg Bidwell '67. The naming of the gallery honors Wendy's incalculable legacy at MHCAM as curator for 41 years. Each of the paintings in *Northern Exposure* was acquired during Wendy's tenure — a testament to her remarkable impact on the Museum's collection and teaching mission.

Northern Exposure is on view in the Wendy M. Watson Gallery through May 25, 2025.

MHCAM also presents *Mariam Ghani: Like Water from a Stone*. This gem-like exhibition features Ghani's 2014 single-channel video *Like Water from a Stone* and two photographs taken by the artist during the filming of the video. Ghani uses performance to illuminate and personify issues around place and culture, tracing millennia of geological and social changes in Norway, including those wrought by the discovery and extraction of oil. The video takes us along a historical journey, from unpopulated areas of rocky terrain along the North Sea to modern spaces like a playground built with used oil rig elements. *Like Water from a Stone* was made in collaboration with choreographer Erin Ellen Kelly and composer Qasim Ali Naqvi, whose haunting soundscape forms the audio backdrop for this arresting 20-minute video.

Mariam Ghani (b. 1978 New York, NY) is an artist, writer and filmmaker who examines spaces and moments where social, political and cultural structures take on visible forms. Working across video, sound, installation, photography, performance, text and dataworks, Ghani plays on the relationship between a place and its history. She is a member of the Visual Arts faculty at Bennington College, Vermont, and in 2023, received the prestigious Guggenheim Fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation.

Like Water from a Stone is on view in the Gump Family Gallery and Harriet L. and Paul M. Weissman Gallery through May 25, 2025; the accompanying photographs will be on view until December 15, 2024.

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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, Nick Cave, Kiki Smith, Lin Tianmiao, Kara Walker, Carrie Mae Weems and others. Through innovative 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.