



Above: Sonya Clark, *Blackened and Bleached*, 2015. Dyed and bleached cotton Confederate Battle flags. Douglas Tracy Smith and Dorothy Potter Smith Fund, 2020.14.1.



Upcoming Styling Identities Programs

Second Saturdays for Families: Hair Tales

Saturday, April 13, 12-2pm, Free

Demonstration: Hair Texture with Carmen Veal Conway

Saturday, April 13, 2-3pm, Free

Demonstration: Hair Cutting with Miguel DelValle

Saturday, May 11, 2-3pm, Free

Artist Talk: *The Dauntless Bureau* with Rachel Portesi

Saturday, June 1, 1pm, Free with museum admission

Demonstration: Turban Tying with Gurmeet Kaur Singh and Prabhjit Singh Mutneja

Sunday, June 2, 1-2pm, Free with museum admission

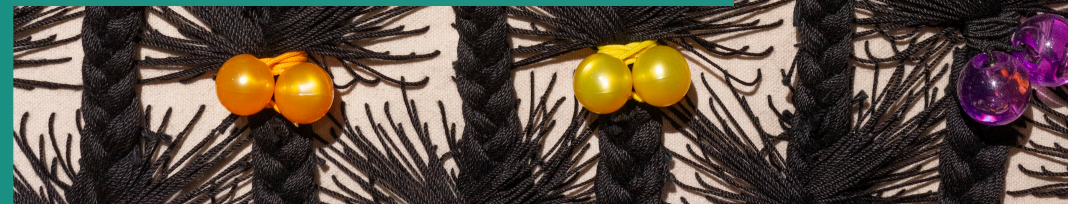
Front Cover: Detail, Sonya Clark, *Bubble Gum and Double Dutch*, 2022. Unprimed canvas, cotton thread, hair baubles. The Kriebler Family Fund for American Art, 2023.37.1.

Public Lecture: *Hair to There* with Sonya Clark

Thursday, April 11, 2024 • 6pm



**WADSWORTH ATHENEUM
MUSEUM OF ART**



Public Lecture: *Hair to There* with Sonya Clark

April 11, 2024 • 6pm • Avery Theater, Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art

Sonya Clark is a multidisciplinary artist and educator whose work has been exhibited extensively at galleries and museums around the world. Her creative practice encompasses sculpture, photography, performance, and installation, often incorporating human hair, depictions of hair, and hair-styling tools in discussing race, identity, and visibility. Clark notes,

"I was born in Washington, DC to a psychiatrist from Trinidad and a nurse from Jamaica. I gained an appreciation for craft and the value of the handmade primarily from my maternal grandmother who was a professional tailor. Many of my family members taught me the value of a well-told story and so it is that I value the stories held in objects."

In 2020, Clark's work was presented at the Wadsworth Atheneum in the exhibition, *Sonya Clark / MATRIX 184*. Less than a week before the museum closed in response to the pandemic, Clark gave the Emily Hall Tremaine Lecture in Contemporary Art at the Wadsworth in conjunction with her MATRIX exhibition. Today, Clark returns to the Wadsworth in conjunction with the exhibition, *Styling Identities: Hair's Tangled Histories*, to reflect on her career as an artist, to discuss her multi-decade exploration of hair as a material and subject matter, and to examine her work *Bubble Gum and Double Dutch* (2022), recently acquired by the Wadsworth and now on view in *Styling Identities*.



Styling Identities: Hair's Tangled Histories

On View March 21–August 11, 2024

Hair is an integral part of us. It is personal and intimate, and also one of the most visible ways we express our identity to the world. The Wadsworth Atheneum's exhibition *Styling Identities: Hair's Tangled Histories* aims to tell a story about what hair means to us—to our individual staff, to our museum, and to our Hartford communities.

Left: Sonya Clark, *Bubble Gum and Double Dutch*, 2022. Unprimed canvas, cotton thread, hair baubles. The Kriebler Family Fund for American Art, 2023.37.1.

Opposite: Sonya Clark in the exhibition, *Sonya Clark / MATRIX 184*, at the Wadsworth Atheneum, February 6–March 13, 2020.

About the Artist



Sonya Clark is Professor of Art and Winifred Arms Professor of Arts and Humanities at Amherst College. Previously, she held the title of Commonwealth Professor and was a Distinguished Research Fellow in the School of the Arts at Virginia Commonwealth University where she served as a chair for twelve years. Prior to moving to Virginia, she was a Baldwin Basom Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She earned her MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art and was honored with their Distinguished Alumni Award. She holds a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and was bestowed an honorary doctorate in 2023. Her first college degree is a BA from Amherst College where she received an honorary doctorate in 2015. In 2021, she was awarded additional honorary degrees from Franklin and Marshall College and Maine College of Art. Clark honors her Jamaican grandmother, Chummy, a tailor who taught her to sew when she was a child, as her first art teacher. Throughout Clark's travels to over 25 nations, she commits to learning from experts in nonacademic settings including studying netting with fisherman Souleyman Diop in Senegal. Her work has been exhibited in over 500 museums and galleries worldwide. In 2021 the National Museum of Women in the Arts presented her first major museum survey, *Tatter, Bristle, and Mend*. Her second museum survey, *We Are Each Other*, focuses on her collaborative and community engaged projects and was presented at Cranbrook Art Museum, the High Museum of Art, and the Museum of Arts and Design from 2023–2024. Clark's work has been spotlighted in the media on *BBC World News*, *PBS*, *NPR*, the *New York Times*, *Sculpture*, *Art in America*, *American Craft*, and *Nka*. She is the recipient of a Rappaport Prize, a United States Artist Fellowship, a Pollock-Krasner Foundation Grant, an Art Prize Grand Jurors Award, and an Anonymous Was a Woman Award. Clark has been a resident at the Smithsonian Artist Research Fellowship, Knight Foundation, Yaddo, Indigo Arts Alliance, Red Gate, Civitella Ranieri, Camargo, the American Academy in Rome, the Rockefeller Bellagio Residency, Black Rock Senegal, and the Bogliasco Foundation Residency, among others.

Styling Identities: Hair's Tangled Histories is made possible through the generous support of the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, an Anonymous Sponsor, The Edward C. & Ann T. Roberts Foundation, the Henkel Corporation, and the Travelers Companies, Inc. General exhibition support provided through The Wadsworth Exhibition Fund supported by the Estates of James Lyon, Karen Kelleher, and Susannah Schickman.