

Graham Foundation



For Immediate Release

Torkwase Dyson and the Wynter-Wells School

May 3–July 28, 2018

Chicago, (March 30, 2018)—The Graham Foundation is pleased to present *Torkwase Dyson and the Wynter-Wells School*, one of the inaugural projects to be developed through the new Graham Foundation Fellowship program. In residence throughout the run of the exhibition, Dyson will use the Madlener House as both a site for installation and as an incubator for discussion. By convening a series of conversations, classes, and lectures with artists, writers, designers, poets, environmentalists, and social theorists in close proximity to Dyson’s work, the project actively considers the creation and production of form in today’s material and political climate.

Now in its third iteration, following presentations at The Drawing Center in New York and Texas Tech University College of Architecture, Dyson’s Wynter-Wells School offers an experimental curriculum that employs techniques culled from the visual arts, as well as design theories from geography, infrastructure, engineering, and architecture to initiate dialogue about geography and spatiality in an era of global crisis. In an open studio-style format, Dyson hosts classes on topics such as global warming and new geographies; architecture, extraction, and liquidity; and nomadcity, movement, and improvisation. The School and installation are punctuated by a series of lectures, performances, readings, and panel discussions by practitioners from the fields of art, design, architecture, and dance. Participants and presenters at the Graham Foundation include Dionne Brand, Jamal Cyrus, Zack Febri, Andres Hernandez, Samuel Levi Jones, Tony Lewis, Christina Sharpe, Xaviera Simmons, Amanda Williams, and Nate Young, among others.

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Activating all three floors of the Graham's historic Madlener House—including the use of the third-floor ballroom as a studio—the installation presents a selection of Dyson's works on paper, material studies, and paintings. Additionally, Dyson will install an ambitious, new, site-specific work engaging and connecting the spatial conditions of the first and second levels of the house. Works created by participants during formal class exercises will also be installed and shown alongside a non-circulating library of publications borrowed from Dyson's own collection.

The Wynter-Wells School at the Graham continues Dyson's project that investigates the current conditions of the production of form, our shared cultural landscape, and the ways in which the creation of new work can yield greater impact for the future of spatial justice. Held in direct relationship to the installation these conversations consider Dyson's work, and that of other makers, against the art historical backdrop of the canon of Minimalism. This proximity creates an opportunity to understand and then disrupt who owns shapes and how they operate. Addressing the creation of more equitable spaces and the division of resources with respect to the environment, this project is an open proposition toward systems that regard logic and sensoria as an impetus of form.

Torkwase Dyson, born in Chicago, is an artist based in New York whose practice draws on her interest in abstraction, social architecture, and environmental justice. She began engaging social architecture through her project Studio South Zero (2014–ongoing), a mobile studio that relies on solar power and supports multidisciplinary artmaking. Recent solo exhibitions of Dyson's work have been presented at the Drawing Center, New York City; Landmark Gallery, Texas Tech University, Lubbock; Eyebeam, Brooklyn; and the Meat Market Gallery, Washington, DC. Her work has also been included in exhibitions in New York at the Whitney Museum of American Art; the Studio Museum in Harlem; Martos Gallery; Postmasters Gallery; and We Buy Gold, Brooklyn as well as at the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education, Philadelphia, and the National Museum of African Art, Washington DC. Dyson's work has been supported by the Joan Mitchell Foundation; Nancy Graves Foundation; Nicholas School of the Environment, Duke University; and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Center. She is on the board of the Architectural League of New York and is a visiting critic at the Yale University School of Art. She is represented by Davidson Contemporary, New York; and Rhona Hoffman Gallery, Chicago.

Torkwase Dyson and the Wynter-Wells School is organized by Graham Foundation director Sarah Herda, and Ellen Alderman, deputy director, exhibitions and public programs.

PUBLICATION

The exhibition will culminate with the production of an artist's book summarizing the products of Dyson's research conducted over the course of the summer term.

ABOUT THE GRAHAM FOUNDATION

Founded in 1956, the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts fosters the development and exchange of diverse and challenging ideas about architecture and its role in the arts, culture, and society. The Graham realizes this vision through making project-based grants to individuals and organizations and by producing exhibitions, events, and publications.

THE MADLENER HOUSE

Since 1963, the Graham Foundation has been located in the Madlener House, a turn-of-the century Prairie-style mansion designed by Richard E. Schmidt and Hugh M. G. Garden. Built 1901–02, it was later renovated by prominent modern architect Daniel Brenner. The 9,000 square-foot historic home now hosts galleries, a bookstore, an outdoor collection of architectural fragments, an extensive non-lending library of grantee publications, and a ballroom where the foundation hosts a robust schedule of public programs.

BOOKSHOP

The Graham Foundation’s bookshop, designed by Ania Jaworska, offers a selection of new, historically significant, and hard-to-find publications on architecture, art and design, many of which have been supported by grants from the Graham Foundation.

GALLERY HOURS AND VISITOR INFORMATION

The galleries and bookshop are open to the public Wednesday through Saturday, 11 a.m.–6 p.m. Admission is free. Group tours are available by request.

ACCESSIBILITY

The second-floor galleries and the third-floor ballroom, where events are held, are only accessible by stairs. The first-floor galleries and bookshop are accessible via outdoor lift. Please call ahead to make arrangements.

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High-resolution digital images are available on the press section of our website; email Ellen Alderman for the press login or additional information. Press tours welcome by appointment.



Images: (top) Torkwase Dyson, "I'm Walking Outside Myself (Water Table Ocular #1)," 2017. Polymer gravure on Hahnmuhle Copperplate White paper. Published by Brodsky Center. Collaborating Master Printer Randy Hemminghaus. Photograph courtesy of Brodsky Center. Copyright Torkwase Dyson and Brodsky Center. Photo by Peter Jacobs (bottom) Torkwase Dyson, "South (Water Table Ocular #2)," 2017. Polymer gravure on Hahnmuhle Copperplate White paper. Published by Brodsky Center. Collaborating Master Printer Randy Hemminghaus. Photograph courtesy of Brodsky Center. Copyright Torkwase Dyson and Brodsky Center. Photo by Peter Jacobs



Images: (top) Torkwase Dyson, "Looking for the People (Water Table Ocular #3)," 2017. Polymer gravure on Hahnmuhle Copperplate White paper. Published by Brodsky Center. Collaborating Master Printer Randy Hemminghaus. Photograph courtesy of Brodsky Center. Copyright Torkwase Dyson and Brodsky Center. Photo by Peter Jacobs Torkwase Dyson; (bottom) "Liquidity and Architecture (Study #1)," ink and gouache on paper, 14 x 11 inches, 2017. Copyright Torkwase Dyson