



**Noyes**  
Museum of Art  
STOCKTON UNIVERSITY



Education Guide

June 29 – September 1, 2019

## ***The Souls of Black Folk: Lavett Ballard***

### **Free Opening Reception:**

*Second Friday, July 12, 6:00 – 8:00 pm*

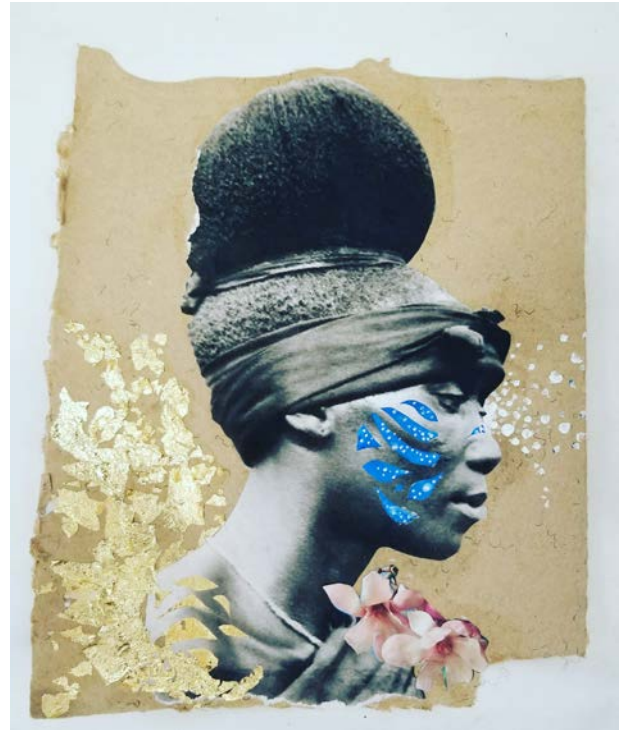
### **Artist Talk:**

*Friday, July 26, 5:00 – 6:00 pm*

Lavett Ballard is an artist, art historian, curator, and author. Growing up surrounded by photographs chronicling her family life, she developed an interest in visual storytelling. Her strong affinity for imagery and history has led to the creation of a visual lexicon of African American female self-identity.

Ballard has spent countless hours compiling a photographic catalog of female images that cover the African diaspora over different geographic areas and historical periods. Her work consists of collages: painted, destroyed and reborn, creating a reimagined visual narrative of the history portrayed. Her use of reclaimed wood fences, large and small, is symbolic of how they keep people in and out, just as racial and gender identities can do the same socially. The fences are arranged as “altars,” icons to honor the strong self-identity of each subject.

Her process for creating the work has evolved over time. At first, she used canvas, but something more textural was needed. Plywood was the next attempted substrate, but it didn't have the history of a repurposed fence. She loves how the wood naturally deteriorates. August Wilson's play “Fences,” where one of the characters brings up the question “Why do fences keep people out and hold them in?”, helped spark her idea to use reclaimed wood.



*Gilded Goddess, mixed media on paper*



*Sittin' Through the Storm*, mixed media on reclaimed wood fence

Ballard works in a variety of mixed media including reclaimed wood, paper, acrylic paint, and soil. She carves into the natural wood grain of birchwood panels for smaller pieces; and makes paper from brown paper bags, natural hair, and cotton. For a six-foot panel, it takes roughly one to two weeks to dry out, clean and treat the wood. While that process is taking place, she researches the images and then sends them to a printing company. Pinning the prints to her chosen substrate, she paints, burns, torches and cuts the images for another week or so. Her first diptych took 2 to 3 months to complete.

Ballard states, “In an effort to reimagine how art on the wall is perceived, I also create work that can be hung alone or as individual altars to the visual stories portrayed on each fence panel. I adorn faces with tribal markings, regal accessories, precious metal tones, and a color palette that is often associated with royalty in different parts of the world, as I let my collages float among shadows and galaxies to regain the power they lost during their past enslavement.”

Ballard holds a dual bachelor’s degree in Studio Art and Art History with a minor in Museum Studies from Rutgers University and an MFA in Studio Arts from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. “[Going to school] was mind blowing most of the time. When I went into my undergrad program, I had already been selling quite a bit of art and I had a lot of experience showing in local galleries and I kind of went in with a big head. And they were like, okay, your art is good, but it can be great.”

**For more information about Lavett Ballard visit:**

<https://www.lavettbeart.com/>

**The Noyes Arts Garage of Stockton University // [www.artsgarageac.com](http://www.artsgarageac.com) // (609) 626-3805**  
**The Noyes Museum of Art of Stockton University // [www.noyesmuseum.org](http://www.noyesmuseum.org) // (609) 626-3420**

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