



Sunflower+ Project: CAM

In collaboration with Don Koster and Richard Reilly of *Sunflower+ Project: StL*, CAM presents *Sunflower+ Project: CAM*, an installation comprising twenty oil drums planted with sunflowers that will grow from seedlings to mature plants. Addressing nationwide issues of urban greening (increasing the number of plants within cities), neighborhood beautification, and soil condition improvement, *Sunflower+ Project: CAM* is presented as a point of dialogue with the exhibition *Mel Chin: Rematch*, opening September 5, 2014. This major retrospective explores the work of conceptual artist Mel Chin, who pioneered the use of plants as remediation technology—particularly the possibilities and limitations of metal-accumulating plants—through an installation of art.

Sunflower+ Project: StL was founded by Don Koster, architect and Senior Lecturer at Washington University in St. Louis, and Richard Reilly, Energy Programs Manager of the Missouri Botanical Garden's EarthWays Center. A winner of the 2012 Sustainable Land Lab design competition developed by Washington University in partnership with the City of St. Louis, *Sunflower+ Project: StL* has planted sunflowers in empty lots in Old North St. Louis and the Central West End in order to address one of the region's greatest challenges: vacant land. The team is also testing the feasibility of using sunflowers—which are able to grow in soil with high concentrations of metals—to remove contaminants from the soil.



Sunflower+ Project: CAM rendering courtesy Don Koster and Richard Reilly

Sunflower+ Project: CAM is scheduled to bloom at approximately the same time as the opening of *Mel Chin: Rematch* on September 5. Since 1990, when he began the work *Revival Field*, Mel Chin has been a forerunner in bringing an artist's viewpoint to the scientific process of soil remediation. Organized in partnership with agronomist Rufus L. Chaney of the US Department of Agriculture, *Revival Field* was the first field test of the use of hyperaccumulator plants—or plants that can absorb metals through their roots and remove them from the soil—in the United States. Chin conceived of it as a sculpture, with the final work of art being represented by a revived ecology.

Throughout the fall, the Museum will collaborate with a variety of community partners to host a number of related programs, including discussions on socially engaged art practices and workshops and demonstrations on soil testing and remediation, gardening, and sustainability.



Audio Tour

Download the CAM app at camstl.org/app or ask for an iPod at the front desk to hear directly from the artist and curator on the audio tour.



Detail, *Sunflower+ Project: CAM* rendering
courtesy Don Koster and Richard Reilly

Donald N. Koster III, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP, is an architect and educator committed to the design and research of contemporary sustainable environments. He is a Senior Lecturer at the Sam Fox School of Design Visual & Arts at Washington University in St. Louis and is the principal of an award-winning design practice. Koster's practice and research are concerned with the development of place-based, site, and environmentally responsive design solutions with a focus on sustainable community redevelopment and contemporary housing design.

Richard Reilly, LEED AP, BPI BA & EP, is the Energy Programs Manager of the EarthWays Center at the Missouri Botanical Garden. With more than thirty years experience in construction, design, and the arts, his practice revolves around environmental and sustainability issues with an emphasis on material re-use and certified green construction. He is on the Board of Directors of Habitat for Humanity Saint Louis and the Advisory Board for St. Louis University's Center for Sustainability.

Sunflower+ Project: CAM is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Alex Elmhurst, Manager of Public Programs and Interpretation.

The project is generously supported by the Pulitzer Arts Foundation in conjunction with Marfa Dialogues / St. Louis.

Related Program

Panel Discussion: Sustainable Design

Wednesday, September 24, 7:00 pm

In partnership with STL Design Week, Brett Emo, professor at Saint Louis University; Courtney Jones, Health Services Manager for the City of St. Louis; and Don Koster and Richard Reilly of Sunflower+ Project: StL will discuss how art, science, and government can work together to create innovative programs to keep communities safe and healthy.



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