

Press contact: Eddie Silva
314.535.0770 x311
esilva@camstl.org



Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis

3750 Washington Blvd
St. Louis, MO 63108
314.535.4660 camstl.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Creative Stimulus Awards Exhibition features three local artists selected for the annual prize, sponsored by Critical Mass for the Visual Arts
On view May 5–August 13, 2017

March 21, 2017 (St. Louis, MO) – The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM) presents the 8th Annual Creative Stimulus Awards Exhibition in the museum’s Front Room gallery. Sponsored by Critical Mass for the Visual Arts, the award recognizes artists for their outstanding work and commitment to their career development. The 2016 recipients are Ellie Balk, Addoley Dzegede, and Amy Reidel. The exhibition will be on view May 5 through August 13, 2017.



Ellie Balk, *Visualize Pi Perspective*, 2015. Exterior latex on brick, 14 x 70 feet. Courtesy the artist.

Ellie Balk situates her longtime artistic inquiry into the number pi within the cultural and geographical context of Saint-Louis, Senegal, having spent a five-week residency there. During her time in Senegal, Balk gathered physical artifacts from her immediate environment—pieces of broken tile, stones, shards of wood, and bits of pottery. Considering the aggregate of these remnants a reflection of Saint-Louis, Balk assembled a color palette of the place, then integrated this color

scheme into a visual and auditory exploration of pi. Experienced as both a wall mural and a musical score set to drums, Balk utilizes systems of translation to share the particular atmosphere of Saint-Louis, Senegal with her audience. Balk received her MFA from the Pratt Institute and BFA from Bowling Green State University in Ohio. Her murals can be found throughout New York, and recently at St. Alexis Hospital in St. Louis.



Addoley Dzegede, *Northern Dock*, 2016. Found rope dyed with Northern Dock plant and indigo, 63 x 9 x 2 inches. Courtesy the artist.

Addoley Dzegede, a Ghanaian-American interdisciplinary artist living in St Louis, works with mixed media, combining words and images to explore ideas of belonging, home, location, and identity. Her work for the exhibition includes an exploration of black fabric dyes and the nuanced text-based characterizations of various hues of black, noting the discomfiture of the text descriptions as they relate to black identity. Dzegede also employs traditional Ghanaian techniques of starch-resistant fabric dyeing to create an *adire oloba*, “commemorative cloth,” to depict her memory of President Barack Obama’s 2009 inauguration. This distinct personal memory simultaneously provokes fear and elation in the artist, referencing her complex relationship to the politics of race and ethnicity as a woman of color in the United States. Dzegede received a BFA from Maryland Institute College of Art, and was awarded a Chancellor’s Graduate

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CAM is free. Visit often!

Fellowship at Washington University in St Louis, where she completed an MFA degree in Visual Art in 2015.



Amy Reidel, *Tumor Storm*, (detail), 2016. Loose glitter and colored sand on printed vinyl, 8 inches diameter. Courtesy the artist.

Amy Reidel draws on experiences of intimacy, loss, trauma, and longing in small sculptures assembled from glittering detritus, feathers, and fake hair. At once enchanting and repulsive, the objects suggest the simultaneity of love and loathing elicited by the experience of cancer diagnosis and treatment. Reidel creates a floor piece that expands on these themes, intermingling imagery of MRIs and weather radar as visual

metaphors for personal and physical storms and emotions. Recalling the time-intensive work of assembling a Buddhist sand mandala, the work is evidence of a slow, meditative process of deliberate care and reconciliation. Reidel received her MFA in Painting and Drawing from the University of Tennessee and her BFA from the University of Missouri, St. Louis.

Previous Creative Stimulus award-winner, **Meghan Grubb**, organized the exhibition for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis. A sculptor and installation artist, Grubb has received numerous awards and grants, including the American Scandinavian Foundation Fellowship (2012-13), Regional Arts Commission Artists Fellowship (2015), Creative Stimulus Award (2015), Alice Cole Award (2015), and recent nominations for the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant (2014) and Joan Mitchell Foundation Emerging Artist Grant (2015 and 2016).

Creative Stimulus awards unrestricted funding to support artists to pursue special projects, experiment with new techniques, and deepen their understanding of their working processes. Each artist receives \$1,500 for use as creative operating capital along with the opportunity to present work in the annual exhibition. The 2016 artists were selected by a jury from nearly 40 St. Louis-area visual artists' applications. The jurors for the 8th annual Creative Stimulus award were Bridget Melloy, Senior Director at projects+ gallery; Mallory Nezam, artist, writer, and Founding Director of STL Improve Anywhere; Gretchen Wagner, independent curator and Andrew W. Mellon Fellow in Prints, Drawings, and Photographs at the Saint Louis Art Museum; and Brett Williams, artist and previous Creative Stimulus Award recipient.

Past award-winners have included Martin Brief, Cameron Fuller, Robert Goetz, Asma Kazmi, Emily Hemeyer, Sarah Paulsen, Alex Petrowsky, Lyndsey Scott, Elysia Mann, Sarrita Hunn, B.J. Vogt, Travis Russell, Amy Thompson, Gina Alvarez, Jessica Baran, Angela Malchionno, Ilene Berman, Carlie Trosclair and Christine Ilewski, Mel Watkin, Tate Foley, David Johnson, William Morris, and Brett Williams.

The Creative Stimulus Award is supported by the St. Louis Regional Arts Commission and individuals who believe that supporting and promoting local artists makes St. Louis a better place to live. Critical Mass for the Visual Arts is a nonprofit, self-formed visual arts collaborative dedicated to promoting, enhancing, and initiating contemporary visual art in the St. Louis region. To learn more visit criticalmassart.org.



Contemporary Art
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Related Events

Press & Patron Preview

Summer Exhibitions

Friday, May 5, 10:00 am

Join exhibiting artists and curators for an exclusive introduction to the exhibitions. RSVP to Eddie Silva at 314.535.0770 x311 or esilva@camstl.org.

Opening Night:

Summer Exhibitions

Friday, May 5

Member Preview: 6:00 pm

Public Reception: 7:00–9:00 pm

Artists Talk:

Ellie Balk, Addoley Dzegede, & Amy Reidel

Thursday, May 18, 6:00 pm



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About the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM) presents, supports, and celebrates the art of our time. It is the premier museum in St. Louis dedicated to contemporary art. Focused on a dynamic array of changing exhibitions, CAM provides a thought-provoking program that reflects and contributes to the global cultural landscape. Through the diverse perspectives offered in its exhibitions, public programs, and educational initiatives, CAM actively engages a range of audiences to challenge their perceptions. It is a site for discovery, a gathering place in which to experience and enjoy contemporary visual culture. CAM is located in Grand Center, a world-class arts and entertainment district in the heart of St. Louis.

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