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Contemporary Art  
Museum St. Louis

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**William Downs creates *Sometimes it hurts*, a site-specific ink-wash drawing, on CAM's 60 foot-long Project Wall.**



William Downs, *Just too tired to cry*, 2018. Ink wash and spray paint on paper, 40 x 52 inches. Courtesy the artist.

**June 19, 2018 (St. Louis, MO)** - The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis presents William Downs's *Sometimes it hurts*, a large-scale ink-wash drawing by the artist on the 60 foot-long Project Wall, on view September 7 through December 30, 2018. Downs's drawings are often described as surreal or hallucinatory, evoking fluidity of form and ambiguity of content, or as one critic observes, "the transmission of mind to paper." Stories, dreams, memories, and personal experiences enter into his compositions, or what the artist calls "a never-ending maze of random elements." The Atlanta-based artist often speaks of his practice in relationship to music—works have varying "tempos," and his drawings are "songs that evoke or respond to feeling."

Although his early work exhibited an expressionistic style and intense coloration, he has since pared down to black charcoal, watercolor, pencil, and Japanese ink. Whatever his medium or subject matter, Downs is concerned with basic elements of composition, line, and surface. "My drawings are all about composition," he has said. "Surface holds every line that I layer." For *Sometimes it hurts*, the artist addresses the anthropological relationship of the body to its environment, dramatically manipulating those surroundings to conform or clash with the figure within the space, which includes mental and emotional space. *Sometimes it hurts* is made to awaken human feelings as they are embodied and literally drawn into two-dimensional form.

Downs will be working on his installation with students from the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts at the Washington University in St. Louis.

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**Hours**  
10–5 Wed  
10–8 Thu & Fri  
10–5 Sat & Sun

CAM is free. Visit often!

**William Downs** (b. 1974, Greenville, South Carolina, lives and works in Atlanta) works in a range of mediums, but focuses primarily on drawing. His work was part of the exhibitions *On Paper* at Field Work Gallery in Pittsburgh (2013), and *Art AIDS America* at the Zuckerman Museum of Art in Kennesaw, Georgia (2016). Recent solo exhibitions include “*aimless reverie*,” Fuel and Lumber Company, Birmingham, Alabama, and Slag Gallery, New York; *atease*, Parker Jones Gallery, Los Angeles; *a world never made*, Slag Gallery; and *fly away fly away*, Artspace, New Haven, Connecticut. His exhibition with the artist Brooke Pickett, *Crossing Lines*, has been shown at {Poem 88} in Atlanta and The Front in New Orleans. Downs received a multidisciplinary MFA from the Maryland Institute, College of Art, Baltimore, and a BFA in painting and printmaking from the Atlanta College of Art and Design. Downs is currently a Drawing and Painting Lecturer at Georgia State University.



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*William Downs: Sometimes it hurts* is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Wassan Al-Khudhairi, Chief Curator.

## Related Events

### Work in Progress: William Downs

Tuesday–Wednesday,  
September 4–5, 10:00 am–1:00 pm

### Press & Patron Preview

Friday, September 7, 10:00–11:00 am  
Join artists and curators for an  
exclusive introduction to the  
exhibitions. *RSVP to Eddie Silva*  
at 314.535.0770 x313  
or [esilva@camstl.org](mailto:esilva@camstl.org).

### Opening Night

Friday, September 7  
Member Preview           6:00–7:00 pm  
Public Reception           7:00–9:00 pm

**All programs, dates, and times are subject to change.**

### 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 the Grand Center Arts District.

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