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Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Art in the Neighborhood and Vashon High School students participate in For Freedoms



Courtesy For Freedoms

October 8, 2018 (St. Louis, MO) - The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM) announces the participation of students from two of its education programs in For Freedoms: The 50 State Initiative. For Freedoms was co-founded by artists Hank Willis Thomas and Eric Gottesman to engage artists and arts institutions more fully in public life. Now active across the nation, For Freedoms, the largest public art initiative in US history, includes exhibitions, installations, billboard campaigns, and public programs that advocate for participatory democracy on a nonpartisan basis.

New Art in the Neighborhood (NAN), CAM's longest running education program, will take part in a For Freedoms workshop on Saturday, October 13. The workshop will include a discussion of political participation through the arts, as well as hands-on sign-making activities. The following week, Saturday October 20, from noon to 2:00 pm, NAN students will serve as facilitators for a public sign-making workshop, free and open to the public. The sign-making will take place in the CAM courtyard or performance space, depending upon the weather. The lawn signs will be designed with the open phrases "Freedom of _____," "Freedom to _____," and "Freedom for _____," with participants encouraged to complete the phrases as they choose. In addition, For Freedoms lawn signs are available to visitors at the front desk during all museum hours.

As part of CAM's ArtReach program, bringing contemporary art and ideas beyond the museum walls, Vashon High School will also be involved in sign-making activities relating to For Freedoms. In the second year of the Vashon + CAM partnership, some fifty sophomores are involved in introductory art classes. CAM implemented a project-based art curriculum at the school during the 2017-18 school year, reintroducing the first consistent art program at the school in five years. An additional art elective course was added this year.

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Signs by NAN and Vashon students will be on view as part of the *Cry of Victory and Short Walks to Freedom* exhibition, curated by Modou Dieng in conjunction with For Freedoms, October 18 through November 24, 2018, at projects+gallery.

CAM will host a For Freedoms Town Hall on Thursday, November 1, at 6:30 pm. The Town Hall will bring together For Freedoms co-founder and Brooklyn-based artist Hank Willis Thomas; Bruce Franks Jr., who represents St. Louis's House District 78 in the Missouri Legislature; Nicole Hudson, Assistant Vice Chancellor for the Academy for Diversity and Inclusion at Washington University in St. Louis; Rachel Lippmann, criminal justice and city politics reporter at St. Louis Public Radio; and Tef Poe, a rapper and activist based in St. Louis. The speakers will present their unique insights on the freedom of speech as artists, activists, journalists, and public officials, with the goal to initiate a meaningful conversation about participatory democracy.



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WHAT: For Freedoms Sign-making with New Art in the Neighborhood

WHERE: Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

WHEN: Saturday, October 20, noon–2:00 pm

TICKETS: Free

WHAT: For Freedoms Town Hall

WHERE: Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

WHEN: Thursday, November 1, 6:30 pm

TICKETS: Free. Register at camstl.org/forfreedoms

The Town Hall is generously supported by BlackPuffin Art Consulting and St. Louis Public Radio

About For Freedoms

For Freedoms started in 2016 as a platform for civic engagement, discourse, and direct action for artists in the United States. Inspired by Norman Rockwell's 1943 paintings of the four universal freedoms articulated by Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1941—freedom of speech, freedom of worship, freedom from want, and freedom from fear—For Freedoms seeks to use art to deepen public discussions of civic issues and core values, and to clarify that citizenship in American society is deepened by participation, not by ideology. For Freedoms is part of a rich history of artists employing means of mass communication to provoke political discourse. For Freedoms believes art, and artists, play an important role in galvanizing our society towards a more representative and transparent government.

About the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis 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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