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Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CAM Fall/Winter exhibitions feature new works by Ebony G. Patterson
exploring the garden as symbol**



Ebony G. Patterson, *...a possum rises...a black bear falls...a pattoo takes watch...as children whisper through the leaves...*, 2019. Digital print on archival watercolor paper with hand-cut and torn elements, fabric, poster board, acrylic gel medium, feathered butterflies, costume jewelry. 110 x 117 x 7 inches. Courtesy the artist; Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago; and Hales Gallery, New York.

June 10, 2020 (St. Louis, MO) - The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM) presents an exhibition of new works by Ebony G. Patterson, reflecting on her evolving exploration of the garden as metaphor. The exhibition combines an immersive installation in the Front Gallery juxtaposed to a monumental, multilayered paper collage extending from CAM's 60-foot-long Project Wall. The new works represent Patterson's expansion into a new phase of her practice, emerging from the foundation of her past garden-themed constructions. Previously scheduled for CAM's summer exhibition season, *Ebony G. Patterson: ...when the cuts erupt...the garden rings...and the warning is a wailing...* is on view from September 11, 2020 through February 21, 2021.

Gardens provide Patterson with a rich concentration of metaphorical possibilities and inspire complex discourses on beauty. Patterson's landscape-themed installations depict gardens of seductive colors and textures, which draw the eye toward images of fragmented human figures emerging from the shadows of leaves, trees, and shrubs. For Patterson, the garden serves as a postcolonial symbol of a past that is

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never fully buried and barely visible. Gardens grow out of decomposing matter, insistent upon survival in even the harshest circumstances. Within Patterson's schema, gardens are places of internment as well as hiding places.

Patterson blurs lines between painting, photography, sculpture, and collage, emphasizing the artworks' materiality. Lush, sumptuous, and festive, Patterson's immersive gardens emerge out of a complex entanglement of race, gender, class, and violence. "Beauty, for me, is a tool of seduction," the artist has said, "a trap." The coexistence of beauty and horror in Patterson's environments parallel the abundant plant-life she conjures through an excess of embellished materials. The artist titles her new, large-scale Project Wall piece, *...and the dew cracks the earth, in five acts of lamentation...between the cuts...beneath the leaves...below the soil....* To construct the work, Patterson shreds and tears paper by hand, damaging the material in the process of making new forms, parallel to the act of gardening when living things are shred, torn, and cut. A garden is never far from notions of violence, of memorial, of blood and tears.

Ebony G. Patterson (b. 1981 in Kingston, Jamaica; lives and works in Kingston and Chicago, IL) received the prestigious Stone & DeGuire Contemporary Art Award from her alma mater, Washington University in St. Louis, in 2018. Patterson's solo exhibitions and projects have been shown at many U.S. institutions including the Baltimore Museum of Art, The Studio Museum in Harlem, Atlanta Center for Contemporary Art, and SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, GA. Her touring exhibition *...while the dew is still on the roses...* premiered at Pérez Art Museum Miami (2018–19); traveled to Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY (2019); and opened on February 27, 2020 at Nasher Museum of Art, Duke University, Durham, NC. Patterson's work is included in a number of public collections, including The Studio Museum in Harlem; Pérez Art Museum Miami; Museum of Arts and Design, NY; Nasher Museum of Art; Speed Art Museum; Brooklyn Museum; Virginia Museum of Fine Art, Richmond; Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts; Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; and the National Gallery of Jamaica. Patterson received a United States Artists Fellowship in 2018, and was selected as a resident artist at the Joan Mitchell Center in New Orleans for the fall of 2020. Prior to receiving her MFA at the Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts, Washington University in St. Louis (2006), Patterson attended the Edna Manley College, in Kingston, Jamaica, receiving a BFA in painting (2004).

The exhibition is generously supported by Carol and Michael Staenberg.

Ebony G. Patterson: ...when the cuts erupt...the garden rings...and the warning is a wailing... is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Wassan Al-Khudhairi, Chief Curator.

About the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis works to enrich lives and inspire curiosity, creativity, and learning through experiences with contemporary art. Focused on a dynamic array of changing exhibitions, the Museum reflects and contributes to the global cultural landscape while engaging thousands of visitors through a wide array of public programs. CAM nurtures the creative minds of our city's youth through free, in-depth art education, making a long-lasting impact on the community. We are a site for discovery, a welcoming space, free and open to all.

Programs and events will be announced at a later date.

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