

Teen Museum Studies presents

# Yowshien Kuo Western Venom



Yowshien Kuo, *But Victor Denies the Similarities Between Himself and the Monster*, 2019. Acrylic, gouache, chalk, Carrara marble, bone ash, glass and glitter on canvas, 28 1/2 x 30 inches. Courtesy Basil Kincaid.

*Yowshien Kuo: Western Venom* explores identity and culture against expectations of what it means to be American. Kuo's works can be said to more broadly represent the struggles of marginalized peoples in the United States and the struggle to coexist amid images of the American Dream. Beautiful, brutal, and hauntingly familiar, the paintings and narratives are meant to empower individuals and communities that might feel displaced in American history. The main protagonist, a cowboy/hunter persona, is a symbolic representation created to embody this collective struggle. Kuo's paintings depict various scenes set against a Western frontier. Whether entering a dream or fable or encountering a reflection or ghost, we are

led down fantastical landscapes revealing hidden meanings and clues at every turn. The longer we look, the longer we can ruminate on the nature of our beliefs versus our knowledge.



## Audio Tour

Visit [camstl.org/audio](https://camstl.org/audio) on a mobile device to hear an interview with the artist and Teen Museum Studies students.

Teen Museum Studies participants selected *Western Venom* from more than twenty artist proposals. Kuo was chosen for his breathtaking paintings depicting allegorical scenes. They worked directly with Kuo to organize and implement the exhibition as part of the six-week summer program. Teen Museum Studies gives twelve students, grades 9-12, a unique behind-the-scenes look at the museum profession, along with a stipend for completing the program. Through direct engagement with every CAM department, they learn all that goes into the making of an exhibition, and then organize their own.

*Yowshien Kuo: Western Venom* is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Candace Betts, Deja Brewer-Moore, Keteyian Cade, Sara Cao, Saskia Dentman, Samiah Elmore, Christian Evans, Isabelle "Izzi" Jackson-Cameron, Paris Kinsley, Laila Smith, Katherine Welch, and Kelly Woodyard with support from José Garza, Museum Educator, and Sanjeevani Patankar, 2020 Summer Learning and Engagement Intern.

Teen Museum Studies is generously supported by The Strive Fund, Wells Fargo Advisors, and Crawford Taylor Foundation.

**Yowshien Kuo** (b. St. Louis, 1983, lives and works in St. Louis) was educated in both the U.S. and Taiwan and completed his MFA from Fontbonne University in 2014. Kuo is an active exhibiting artist and a co-owner of the artist run space Monaco. He recently exhibited with Superdutchess, New York; LVL3, Chicago; Projects Plus, and Counterpublic with The Luminary, St. Louis; Terrain Exhibitions, Oak Park, Illinois; and Granite City Art and Design District, Granite City, Illinois. Kuo has been an artist-in-residence with Paul ArtSpace in St. Louis and is a recipient of a Regional Arts Commission support grant and a Critical Mass for the Visual Arts award. His work has appeared in publications that include *New American Paintings* and *The Seen Journal Chicago*. He has been interviewed by Yale University Radio and Cool WIP podcast. Kuo currently holds teaching appointments at St. Louis Community College-Meramec, Washington University's University College, and Maryville University in St. Louis.

---

#### Related Program

---

**First Friday: Featured Artist Yowshien Kuo**  
Friday, November 6, 4:00–5:00 pm

---



Yowshien Kuo, *The Myth of Liberty and Its House of Cards*, 2020. Acrylic, gouache, chalk, Carrara marble, bone ash, glass, glitter, plastic, and mixed fibers on canvas, 28 1/2 x 30 inches. Courtesy the artist.



**Contemporary Art  
Museum St. Louis**  
3750 Washington Blvd  
St. Louis, MO 63108  
314.535.4660

#### Connect with CAM

Visit [camstl.org](http://camstl.org)  
Facebook [contemporaryartmuseumstl](https://www.facebook.com/contemporaryartmuseumstl)  
Twitter [@camstl](https://twitter.com/camstl)  
Instagram [camstl](https://www.instagram.com/camstl)