

# Mesh



Contemporary Art  
Museum St. Louis  
Magazine 2020–21



Front and inside cover  
Derek Fordjour: *SHELTER*,  
installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis,  
January 17–August 23, 2020. Photo: Dusty Kessler.

# About CAM

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. Exhibitions, programs, and general operations are funded through contributions from generous individuals, foundations, corporations, and public funders.

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The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM) works to enrich lives through experiences with contemporary art. Focused on a dynamic array of changing exhibitions, CAM contributes to the global and local cultural landscape. CAM is a site for discovery, free and open to all.

Generous loans of artwork to CAM exhibitions are provided by Alexander and Bonin, New York; bitforms gallery, New York; Brooklyn Museum; Valerie Carberry and Richard Wright; Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco; The David and Alfred Smart Museum of Art, The University of Chicago; Vicki and Robert Frazer; Denise and Gary Gardner; Tiffany Hott; Jody Howard; The Joyner Giuffrida Collection, San Francisco; Stefan Kirkeby; Jeffrey Lee; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Gift of Andy Song; Joel Lubin; Nion McEvoy; Lisa Opoku; Ruth E. Pachman and Donald T. Fallati; PATRON GALLERY, Chicago; RYAN LEE Gallery, New York; Salon 94, New York; Robert Taylor; Laura and Barry Townsley; Stephanie and Leon Vahn; and Ric Whitney and Tina Perry.

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# Letter from the Director

Dear Friends,

In January 2020, artist Derek Fordjour and an extraordinarily talented group of technicians, builders, and riggers joined CAM’s stellar installation team in the making of *SHELTER*. A remarkably ambitious project, the site-specific immersive installation drew curious audiences, who left the space profoundly moved. In Fordjour’s seemingly ramshackle structure, they had found a space for intellect, emotion, and soul.

By March, “shelter in place” became a phrase we now know all too well, and Fordjour’s *SHELTER* gained new meaning in the context of the multiple crises we’ve all been living. CAM found ways to offer shelter beyond the museum walls. On our website and through social media, we offered CAM at Home, featuring art, artists, and art-making activities a click away. We stayed connected to local youth in our education programs through virtual learning initiatives. Teen Museum Studies participants received hands-on museum experiences via video conferencing over four weeks this past summer, and the results are seen in the exhibition they organized, *Yowshien Kuo: Western Venom*, on view through February 2021.

With the summer under our belts, we’re prepared for working with our partners in the St. Louis Public Schools. Whatever the individual classroom protocols, we’re ready with the finest contemporary art education we can bring, on-site or online. We continue our partnership with Vashon High School and other ArtReach schools, confident that with a combination of in-class engagement, internet connections, and CAM-produced video instruction,

# Board of Directors 2020–21



Lisa Melandri. Photo: Joel Conner.

we can make a difference in young people’s lives, providing them the high-level art education they deserve.

The pandemic served as a catalyst to innovation and made us re-imagine ourselves. The Black Lives Matter movement’s calls for social justice make us think how CAM may be more than a community center, but a center of community—where our resources may help us work together toward a more equitable society. We know the art of our time offers the tools and inspiration to create a better world.

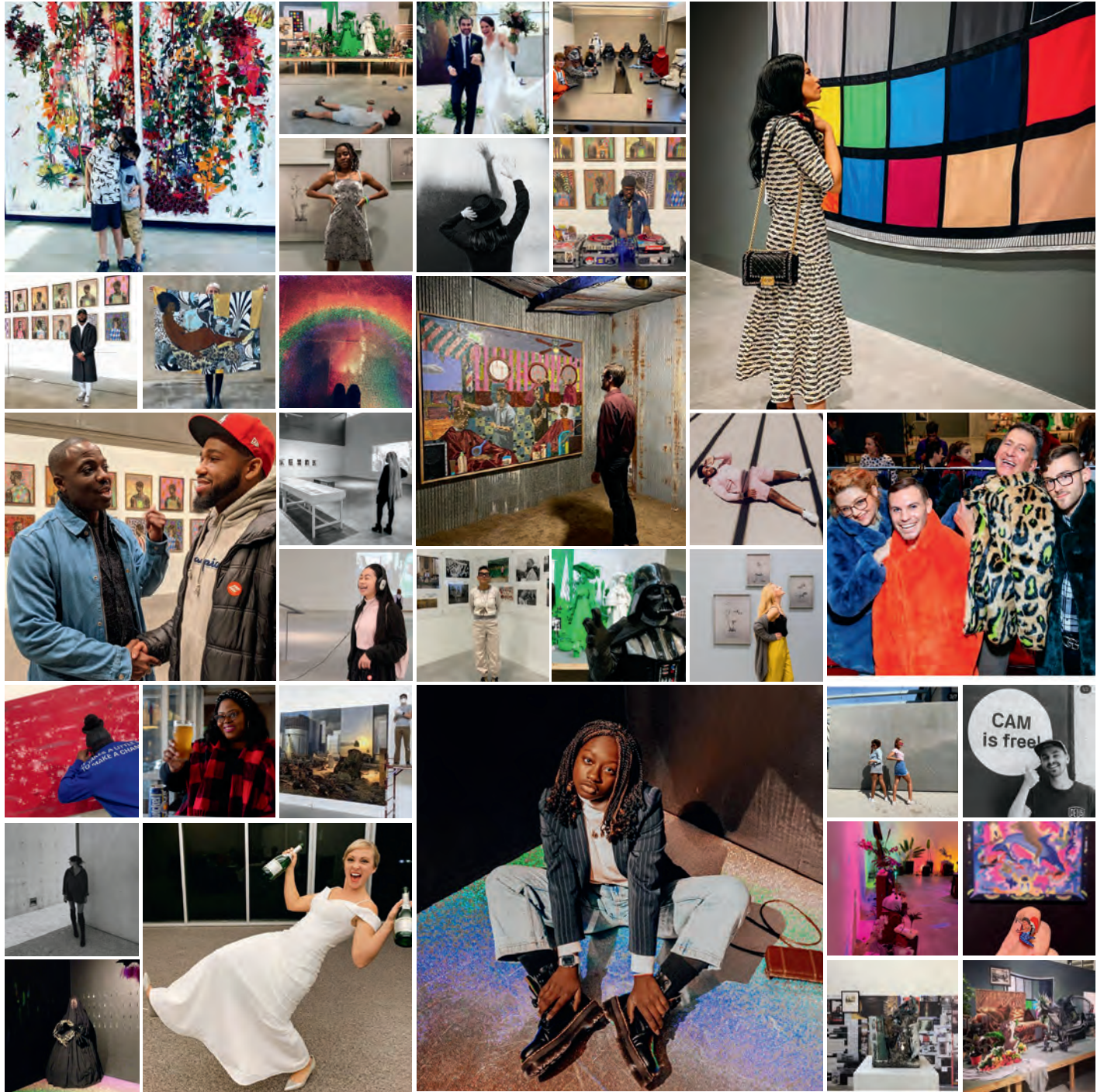
We are redefining what “accessibility” means. Fewer people may be able to come through our doors, but our audiences may actually expand across the globe. I was moved by words Calvin Wilson wrote about CAM for the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, after he visited the museum in mid-August. The new, socially-distanced CAM did not feel dissimilar to him: “In short, a tranquil refuge from an increasingly stressful world.” Whatever that world may bring us in the seasons ahead, I know we may remain a shelter where inspiration may grow, individually and collectively.

*Lisa Melandri*

Lisa Melandri  
Executive Director

# Visitor Grams

Audiences capture CAM on Instagram.  
Follow and tag us at @camstl.





# CAM at Home

In response to the pandemic, CAM closed its doors in March 2020. Nearly as soon as the museum closed, we began developing online content. CAM at Home offered art-making projects, interviews with artists, moments of beauty, and much more.



Nomad Studio: *Green Varnish*, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, May 23–September 27, 2015. Photo: David Johnson.

## #MuseumMomentofZen

In tandem with museums across the country, CAM shared images from past exhibitions that instilled a sense of tranquility and hope toward healing. CAM also took requests from CAM fans for favorite archival images shared across social media platforms.



Embroidery tutorial by Janie Stamm.

## Art at Home

Teaching artists offered tutorials for beginner-friendly art projects including fiber weaving, paper sculpture, and flip-book animation. Visitors were offered instruction on how to make portraits in the style of Amy Sherald, personal collages in the spirit of Mickalene Thomas, and automatic drawing as practiced by Nicola Tyson. Local artists such as Janie Stamm and Cecily Fergeson provided video tutorials on embroidery and colored pencil blending.



Video stills from 18 Questions. Left to right from top: Rachel Youn, Cayce Zavaglia, Kevin Harris, Sarah Paulsen, Janie Stamm, Tim Portlock, Kahlil Robert Irving, Esther Neff.

## Artist Notes from a Pandemic

Exhibiting artists past, present, and future discussed life in isolation and artmaking in crisis mode. Among the ten interviews conducted, Stephanie Syjuco commented on the insignificance of artmaking during the pandemic; Christine Corday spoke to the “nonsense of isolationism and nationalism”; Paul Mpagi Sepuya reflected on his Los Angeles gallery exhibition closing on the day of its opening; and Rachel Youn went fishing. The series showed artists coping with the upheavals of the moment in ways that were as distinctive as their artwork and their personalities.

## 18 Questions

Local artists answered questions from CAM staff on Zoom about their quarantine routine, reading lists, TV and podcast favorites, best take-out, and with which three artists, living or dead, they’d want to share a studio. Viewers learned who loved Provel and who didn’t, the virtues of walking to relieve stress, and the first things people do when they wake up (look at their phone, mostly).



Courtesy Stephanie Syjuco.

## Tim Youd: The Tunnel Retyped

Throughout the month of May, artist Tim Youd retyped renowned St. Louis author William Gass’s magnum opus, *The Tunnel*, over a live video stream from the garage of his Los Angeles home and on view on the CAM at Home webpage. Typing the 640-page epic novel on two sheets of paper, Youd took time each week for an interview with such notables as CAM’s Lisa Melandri and Misa Jeffereis, and gallerist Cristin Tierney.



Courtesy Tim Youd.



# Safety First

Even in the early stages of the pandemic, CAM began planning for a reopening. A task force was put together consisting of museum staff, with the responsibility of learning and recommending adequate safety protocols. Task force members became intimately acquainted with guidelines shared by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization, and St. Louis City and County health departments. Occupancy limits were determined in relation to the number of individuals who could be within the museum spaces at a safe social distance (six feet) at any one time. On-site programs had to be moved online. A timed-ticketing system was designed and implemented. Most importantly, staff and visitors would be required to wear masks to limit the possibility of contact with the airborne virus. Hand sanitizers were acquired and cleaning regimens intensified. CAM reopened in early July, free, safe, and open to all.

Learn more about safety guidelines at [camstl.org/safety](https://camstl.org/safety).



Photo: Wil Driscoll.

# Shop Local

CAM's shop is a showcase of local and visiting artists and makers. The phenomenal designer Nova Vita displays her unique earrings and other accessories. The dynamic duo Work/Play designs clothes that make a statement. Stay safe and stay fashionable with Michael Drummond face masks. As long as we're in COVID-19 protocol mode, you have our intimate shopping space to yourself. The shop is always open online, which is a great way to pick up CAM publications featuring past exhibitions: *Paul Mpagi Sepuya*, *Christine Corday: RELATIVE POINTS*, *Sanford Biggers*, *Hurvin Anderson: Backdrop*, and *Amy Sberald* among them. Pick out art supplies for kids and grownups, toys for all ages, and for the ultra fashionable—turbands made in St. Louis by Victoria Cates of Potion 23 and the A Little Taste Outside of Love scarf by Mickalene Thomas. Every purchase benefits the Museum, and CAM members receive a 10% discount.

Visit the shop during museum hours or shop online at [camstl.org/shop](https://camstl.org/shop).

Follow us [@camstlshop](https://twitter.com/camstlshop).



Earrings by Nova Vita Co. Photo: CAM Staff.

# Just Vote!

Not long after the Fall/Winter exhibition opening, CAM partnered with PLAN YOUR VOTE, a national initiative of Vote.org to promote and empower citizens in the exercise of their voting rights. CAM staff and volunteers were available to register eligible Missouri voters and offer free notarization of absentee ballots at the museum in September and October. We joined a number of institutional partners in this get-out-the-vote campaign including Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Institute of Contemporary Art Boston; Walker Art Center; Brooklyn Museum; and the Wexner Center for the Arts. Participating artists who designed artwork to promote the initiative included Katherine Bernhardt, Sanford Biggers, Christine Sun Kim, Julie Mehretu, Marilyn Minter, and Patti Smith. In so doing, CAM engaged civically with Missouri communities to make democracy work.

View artwork and get involved at [planyourvote.org](https://planyourvote.org).



Photo: Macon Reed for PlanYourVote.org.

# After Shelter

The microprogram After Shelter sought to document a moment in history. Derek Fordjour's immersive installation, *SHELTER*, became a setting for recording visitors' interactions with the exhibition and their pandemic reflections. Visitors were asked questions relating to their experience of the artwork in the moment; their past months of quarantine; and hopes for the future. The answers were recorded and saved on the StoryCorps website—the national nonprofit whose mission is to preserve and share humanity's stories. These recordings will become part of the StoryCorps archive at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. Many found their return to Fordjour's installation to be deeply moving. "The first time I came in I cried," one said. As to the past four months, "It broke us down and put a fire under us," one couple affirmed. Hope for the future? A woman elder spoke, "I hope I live to see it: we have racial equality, social justice, and people respect each other for who they are."

Listen to the interviews at [camstl.org/storycorps](https://camstl.org/storycorps).



CAM visitor Tyrell Manning participating in After Shelter. Photo: CAM Staff.



# Staying Connected

The Learning and Engagement department’s programs keep CAM involved with St. Louis’s many communities. With a new director, the team continues to strive to better those communities through contemporary art education, whether on-site or online.



Teen Museum Studies 2020.

## Socially Distanced Together

CAM’s Teen Museum Studies program went online during summer 2020 due to COVID-19. CAM Museum Educator José Garza shared presentations, held group meetings, and introduced other CAM staff to the students via web-conferencing tools. The traditional hands-on class structure was changed to a lecture format, along with group activities that were computer friendly. In the beginning, the class was hesitant to speak with twelve strangers in an online setting, but slowly they began to work as a group and gain trust with each other. In curating the Teen Museum Studies fall exhibition, the students viewed work by twenty-one local artists. Yowshien Kuo was selected for his works that depict and subtly critique Asian representation in American media. By the conclusion of the four-week workshop, the students had learned how to work as a group to achieve a goal, developed online communication skills, and gained experience in creating a museum exhibition of their own. I hope you get a chance to see it! —*Sanjeevani Pantakar, Learning and Engagement Intern, summer 2020*

## Credit Earned

In fall 2020 Deja Brewer-Moore begins her freshman year at Webster University. She’s already got three credit hours under her belt thanks to her participation in New Art in the Neighborhood. By completing two consecutive semesters in CAM’s 25-year-long studio art intensive for teens and submitting her art portfolio, Brewer-Moore became eligible for the CAM-University Credit Program. Webster, the Kansas City Art Institute, and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago also offer credit for NAN students. A graduate of the Gateway Science Academy, Brewer-Moore especially enjoyed the community of peers NAN gave her. “I meet people who care about art and want to talk about it.” She selected Webster because she was drawn to its animation program. “Ever since I was little I loved cartoons,” she says. “Now I would really like to go out there and write my own stories. I love Pixar and DreamWorks—I’d love to work with those people.”



Courtesy Deja Brewer-Moore.

## Teachable Moments

In September 2019, the Institute of Museum and Library Services awarded a \$193,753 grant for CAM’s ArtReach program. One of the Museum’s longest-running art education programs, ArtReach engages with schoolchildren K–12, with an emphasis on St. Louis Public Schools at the middle and high school levels. The grant allows CAM to increase and improve its work in public schools in multiple ways, and one of those is the hiring of CJ Mitchell, Community Access Coordinator. Mitchell runs the Museum’s drop-in program in classrooms of all shapes and sizes. The restrictions of COVID have in fact opened up opportunities for Mitchell to present virtual lessons at camps, senior centers, and other venues, including CAM’s partner school, Vashon High School. She’s taught in schools in New York City, London, and St. Louis for sixteen years. She’s always liked being connected to museums and museum education. “Interaction with students is the fun part,” she says. “You can always learn from students. They can enlighten you in so many ways.” Mitchell refers to Vashon students as “uncut gems. A lot of the job is for them to see themselves, and to help them to feel confident about what they’re doing. CAM allows us to reach people in communities that don’t necessarily have the time to visit with us, so we bring the experience to them.”



CJ Mitchell leading a virtual art activity during First Friday via Zoom.

## Living St. Louis at Vashon

The popular Nine Network program *Living St. Louis* focused on the Vashon-CAM partnership in March 2020. The little-more-than six-minute segment included a visit to the school in December and a stop at the museum in early February. Local PBS viewers met students, Vashon art teacher Tim Jennings, CAM visiting teaching artist Esther Neff, CAM School and Community Programs Manager Miriam Ruiz, and Dalonte Chatman, Vashon Class of '22. Chatman, who has also participated in CAM’s New Art in the Neighborhood and Teen Museum Studies programs, was the central subject of the piece. He’s known as a quiet young man, but he spoke up for the partnership, CAM, and art itself. “If you’re interested in art,” he says at the finale of the segment, “please do it, because it’s a huge way for you to express yourself!” The exhibition, *ArtReach: Vashon High School*, remained on view in the Education Galleries following CAM’s July reopening, through August 2020.



Derek Fordjour visiting Dalonte Chatman’s class at Vashon High School. Photo: Chris Bauer.



# A Museum of the Community

CAM's new Learning and Engagement Director Michelle Dezember arrives at a critical time and place.

“Where I grew up, in Bakersfield, California, it was not normal to go to a museum,” Michelle Dezember recalls. “I don’t remember having art classes. I didn’t even want to go to college. My world wasn’t very big.” Dezember reflects on that former self as she begins her new position as CAM’s Learning and Engagement director. Her world has gotten bigger since that time, including museum work in New York City; Barcelona; Doha, Qatar; Aspen; and California.

Dezember’s journey gives a vivid understanding of her devotion to her work. Finding meaning and personal connections to art gave her a new life. During her reluctant first year in college, she took a standard Western Art survey class and sat disengaged through the endless slide presentations. In need of another elective, she gave another art history class a try, one on African Americans and photography.

She remembers the first day of class as “life changing.” Another slide on a screen, but this time there was a call for participation. As Dezember recalls, “The professor projected a James VanDerZee photograph from the Harlem Renaissance of a couple dressed in raccoon fur coats



Photo: Graham Eng-Wilmot.

posed in front of a Rolls Royce. She asked us to connect our observations with a Langston Hughes’s poem, and I was blown away. I could make these connections just by paying attention! It was the first time I truly felt a sense of belonging with something larger. I realized that art is a way we can understand the world and find our place in it. Our dialogue with it opens up possibilities to see beyond what we know and cross boundaries of time and space.”

Her professor, Dr. Bridget Cooks, who is now an associate professor at the University of California, Irvine, and author of *Exhibiting Blackness: African Americans and the American Art Museum*, took on Dezember as a research assistant and exposed her to the world of museum education. Beyond a career calling, Dezember received a sense of liberation from this mentorship. “Until that point, I was trained about sameness, about falling into line. I discovered I could bear witness to anything by paying attention. I could change myself by changing my perspective.”

In the years that followed, Dezember found herself at the Brooklyn Museum as it was in the midst of a radical restructuring. Staff had begun to work interdepartmentally toward “a community-centered museum.” “This was post 9/11,” she described. “The goal of the museum was to become a community space where people could figure out the world together.” As she went on to create new education and programming strategies for museums in Barcelona, Doha, and Aspen, Dezember always kept this kind of collective meaning-making at the center of her practice. “I learned quickly that, in the words of adrienne maree brown, ‘change happens at the speed of trust.’ Museums are defined by the kinds of relationships we cultivate and the ways we listen.”

Dezember arrives at CAM with an understanding that there is a natural selection process occurring. “Museums survive because people want them,” she explains, “and people need to push them in the directions they need to go. If museums can’t hold space, people will move elsewhere.” She defines the urgency of this moment as “the blessing and the curse of COVID.” Amid the constrictions of social distancing, museums must think more qualitatively than quantitatively. “Art is a fundamental right, not a privilege,” she says. “Our direction must be toward being a museum of the community, not for the community.”

## Focus: Teens

ArtReach, New Art in the Neighborhood, LEAP Middle School Initiative, and Teen Museum Studies

489  
Participants

428  
Classroom hours

122  
Educators Served

100%  
High School Graduation Rate

New Art in the Neighborhood participants

85%  
Alumni that report strong impact on school performance

\$0  
Cost to participate

## Schools and Communities

Reached through CAM's Learning and Engagement programs

### Schools (K–12)

Bayless High School  
Belleville East and West High School  
Carr Lane Middle School  
Clyde C. Miller Career Academy  
Forsyth School  
George Washington Carver Elementary Academy  
Grand Center Arts Academy  
Granneman Elementary School  
Hazelwood School District  
Home School Network  
Illini Bluffs School District  
Incarnate Word Academy  
La Salle Middle School  
New City School  
North Side Community School  
Northwest Academy of Law  
Saint Louis Public Schools  
Snider High School  
St. Charles West High School  
Vashon High School  
Washington Montessori School  
Whitfield School

### Colleges and Universities

Eastern Illinois University  
Gustavus Adolphus College  
Harris-Stowe State University  
Illinois College  
Iowa State University  
Kansas City Art Institute  
Murray State University  
Saint Louis University  
Southeast Missouri State  
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville  
St. Louis Community College  
University of Kansas  
University of Missouri–St. Louis  
Washington University in St. Louis  
Washington University Architecture Discovery Program  
Webster University  
Webster University Hands-on Training Program

### Community Groups

African Community Health Fair  
Behavior Intervention Services  
Belleville Cemetery  
Beta Collective  
Black Speculative Arts Movement  
Cote Brilliance Presbyterian Church  
Fiestas Patrias  
Fine Line Studios  
Focus St. Louis  
Grand Center Arts District  
Hispanic Festival  
Kinder Care St. Charles  
Latinx Arts Network STL  
Missouri Immigrant and Refugee Advocates  
Northside Youth and Senior Service Center  
Oasis  
Samaritan United Methodist Church  
St. Louis Art Fair  
Stonebridge Townhomes  
The Gatesworth  
The Links – Archway Chapter  
Third Baptist Church  
Tillie's Corner Neighborhood Health Care Block Party  
Transition Center of St. Louis  
Veterans Affairs  
Wyman

New Art in the Neighborhood with Stephanie Syjuco. Photo: Michael Thomas.



# CREATE

# The CAMpaign

Come in.  
See art.  
For free!

Photo: Izaiah Johnson.

In October 2019, the Museum publicly launched Create: The CAMpaign, a \$12 million campaign to ensure the continued growth and vitality of the institution’s exhibitions and programs, and increase CAM’s cultural impact on St. Louis and the region through its education initiatives.

Prior to the announcement, CAM had already raised \$9.7 million toward an initial \$10 million goal. The commitment of longtime CAM supporters emboldened the organization to reach out to the wider community to achieve that initial goal and go beyond it. “We feel the ambitious goal of \$12 million is within reach,” said Lisa Melandri, CAM’s executive director.

CAM was on its way to a total endowment of \$15 million. The museum had already met major milestones: a \$5 million lead gift from Emily Rauh Pulitzer; Alison and John Ferring pledged \$1 million and agreed to serve as CAMpaign co-chairs. CAM received generous support through the Centene Charitable Foundation and Neidorff Challenge, a \$1 million matching grant predicated on CAM’s ability to achieve a dollar-for-dollar match in one year. The match was accomplished in just six months.

Crawford Taylor Foundation joined these early donors with a substantial gift. “With this positive momentum,” Melandri said, “CAM is positioned to be as great as our ambitions. The CAMpaign enables us to reach broad and diverse audiences in St. Louis and beyond, bolster our city as a vital cultural destination, and offer a source of meaning in a complex and complicated world.”



Amy Sherald with New Art in the Neighborhood students. Photo: Jon Gitchoff.

No one, in the fall of 2019, could imagine how complex and complicated the world would become in 2020. CAM closed its doors in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Create, CAM’s 2020 Gala, which was to honor the Ferrings, was canceled.

But with its doors closed, CAM experienced a fresh realization of the importance of contemporary art’s connection to community. The museum made itself more available online with contemporary art and ideas, art-making tutorials, interviews with artists, and a durational performance art piece throughout the month of May. Surprisingly, CAM was reaching audiences who had never been to the museum.

Art finds a way to give hope, provide solace, and offer meaning. As the popularity of Derek Fordjour’s installation *SHELTER* suggests, art creates spaces in which even in the most dire circumstances, we may thrive. In the microprogram After Shelter, individuals and groups used Fordjour’s immersive environment to record their thoughts about art, the future, and hope. Within a few square feet of dirt floor and corrugated metal walls, a public forum came into being.

There could be no more opportune time to join and give to Create: The CAMpaign. In a spirit of renewal, join us to create a secure and vital future for CAM and for the community.



Salvatore Scarpitta: *Racing Cars*, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, January 19–April 22, 2018. Photo: Virginia Harold.



Nomad Studio: *Green Air*, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, May 21–August 21, 2016. Photo: Jarred Gastreich.

Create: The CAMpaign raises funds for three essential institutional needs:

**/ Endowment** **\$10 million**  
CAM elected to become free in 2013, making full access to all audiences an institutional priority. In keeping with this initiative, all CAM education programs are free, all tours are free, and the vast majority of public programs are free. As a free museum, however, the institution receives little earned income revenue and very modest tax support. A robust endowment not only provides CAM a stable, reliable, and perpetual funding source, it elevates the museum to the top-tier of mid-size contemporary art institutions and ensures free access for all far into the future.

**/ Innovation Fund** **\$1 million**  
With a major funding source directed toward innovation, CAM expands education programs, engages and provides more employment opportunities to local artists, and develops new models for strengthening relationships between the museum and its community. At present, CAM lacks the resources to respond to all of the requests it receives for art education, teacher training, and professional development from St. Louis Public Schools, colleges and universities, and community and senior centers. The Innovation Fund allows the Museum to be even more responsive to diverse communities, including the growing demographic of lifelong learners. CAM also strives to be a platform for new scholarship in contemporary art through publications and exhibitions with a global reach. The fund helps to keep CAM relevant, proactive, and a source for new ideas in the museum field. Innovation is especially important as we consider the future of the museum in a post-COVID environment.

**/ Capital Improvements** **\$1 million**  
To preserve and restore CAM’s home, much-needed improvements are essential. For CAM to secure art loans from major national and international institutions, galleries, and collectors, the lenders must be assured that their work will be in a space with state-of-the-art climate control and security systems. In addition, CAM is committed to using more efficient technologies than were available when the building was constructed. CAM is destined to be greener, energy efficient, and eco-responsible—a symbol of excellence, beauty, and function, an ideal space in which visitors may engage with the art of our time.

Learn more and give at [camstl.org/create](https://camstl.org/create).



# Making a Difference

St. Louisans share a few words in tribute to local philanthropists Alison and John Ferring.

When you ask people to talk about Alison and John Ferring, they often talk about love. “I love John and Alison,” says Gene Dobbs Bradford of Jazz St. Louis. “Alison and John breathe love and life into some of the most beautiful treasures of St. Louis,” says Penny Pennington of Edward Jones. Kelly Pollock, of the Center of Creative Arts (COCA), adds to the chorus, “I love that they take risks.” “Alison and John are visionary leaders and visionary supporters of so many great organizations, and they love having the ability to bring that to the people of St. Louis,” says Lesley Hoffarth of Forest Park Forever.

Co-Artistic Director of Dance at COCA, Antonio Douthit-Boyd, gives a contemporary take on love: “They are not only the dopest and the chilliest people to hang around with, they’re some of the coolest philanthropists that I have ever broken bread with.”

“Dope,” “chill,” “cool,” and most especially “love,” are not generally the first words that come to mind when speaking of major philanthropists, but those are the words and feelings that represent the Ferrings’s uniqueness. They have chosen to put their resources to use in the community, but there is more to them than that, as both their fellow benefactors and the recipients of their giving express.



Photo: Diane Anderson.

“Love” is a verb when St. Louisans speak of the Ferrings. “It’s more than giving money,” Kenneth Kranzberg explains, “it’s the amount of time and effort that they put into all of the institutions they support.” “The Ferrings are a good example of what I call the Triple A,” says Gregory Glore. “If they believe in your mission, they will become ambassadors; they will become your advocates; and they will become your askers.” Dr. Donald Suggs, publisher of the *St. Louis American*, gives the Ferrings credit for “talking the talk and walking the walk,” and for “crossing the Delmar divide regularly,” meaning Delmar Boulevard, the visible demarcation between white and Black St. Louis.

The Ferrings have been involved with the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis since long before it moved into its permanent home and became CAM. From its beginnings as a downtown gallery space, the Ferrings have been vested in the institution. When the museum chose to take the critical step of establishing a major endowment campaign, the Ferrings were the obvious choice to lead it. “We know the only way institutions like this survive is with a healthy endowment,” Alison affirms.

With the Ferrings as co-chairs, Create: The CAMpaign raised nearly 10-million dollars before going public in October 2019. “Our role in the CAMpaign,” John says, “is giving them the tools, giving them the budget in order for them to pursue their dreams.”

“The future” is often referred to when people talk about the Ferrings, too—a future of hope, not of fear; a future of abundance, not decline. “They have been the architects of how we can think about not just next year, not just the next six years, but the next sixty to a hundred years,” says Lisa Melandri, CAM Executive Director. Their vision inspires Melandri to “think how CAM might go on, and on, and on into the future to serve ever more people in ever more ways.”

“When we look out at what we’re investing in in St. Louis philanthropically,” John observes, “it all seems to be led by some extraordinary younger people. And that is where the future lies. CAM is a centerpiece of their universe.”

A universe that has expanded because of the dope, chill, forward-thinking, visionary, and loving, Alison and John Ferring.

# Year Ahead

Ebony G. Patterson. ...between the stems sits a red cap above and below crown imperials... (detail), 2019. Photo: Dusty Kessler.





# Great Rivers Biennial

## 2020

Kahlil Robert Irving  
Tim Portlock  
Rachel Youn

Fall/Winter 2020–21  
Sep 11–Feb 21

A collaborative exhibition program presented by CAM and the Gateway Foundation, the Great Rivers Biennial selects emerging and mid-career artists in the St. Louis area, providing them with financial assistance and a major exhibition at the museum. Three nationally regarded jurors make the selections through each phase of the process—from the first round of more than eighty applicants, to studio visits with ten finalists in St. Louis, to the naming of the three award-winners. Great Rivers Biennial 2020 jurors are José Carlos Diaz, Chief Curator at The Andy Warhol Museum and a 2018 fellow at the Center for Curatorial Leadership; Christopher Y. Lew, the Nancy and Fred Poses Curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art and co-curator of the 2017 Whitney Biennial; and Amanda Ross-Ho, multidisciplinary artist and an associate professor at the University of California, Irvine.

The Great Rivers Biennial is made possible by  
**GATEWAY FOUNDATION**



From left: Misa Jefferies, Rachel Youn, Kahlil Robert Irving, Tim Portlock, Wassan Al-Khudhairi.

## From Vision to Reality

Since everything changed in 2020, we decided to ask the Great Rivers Biennial artists to talk about how their exhibitions evolved from conception to installation. Perhaps the most eloquent response came from Tim Portlock, when asked “Did your work change?” responded: “HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!” It’s been that kind of year, but the artists proved resilient, adaptable, and imaginative as they transformed their exhibitions in the midst of upheaval.

See what each artist had to say about their process on the following pages.



Kahlil Robert Irving: *At Dusk*, Great Rivers Biennial 2020, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 11, 2020–February 21, 2021. Photo: Dusty Kessler.

## Kahlil Robert Irving At Dusk

Kahlil Robert Irving addresses cultural rules set by colonialism, challenging those constructs through material and form. The artist conflates history and the contemporary through a gathering of multiple images and sources derived from his own physical and social media explorations, his personal biography, and the context of Black life in the Midwest. Tabletop and floor sculptures contain what look like objects discarded on the side of the road, but are here set in ceramic. Irving parallels accumulated trash with societal denial of longtime systemic racism. For a large-scale vinyl wallpaper, the artist uses multiple screenshots like so much garbage left behind, but here is gathered for viewers to slow down and consider what is perpetually neglected: social inequality, violence, and the ongoing impact of colonialism. The wallpaper consists of hundreds of online images, which Irving culled over the past three years. The images refer to various forms of institutionalized racism in this country through historical events, representation, social media, music, museums, and public monuments—at CAM, in St. Louis, and beyond. Irving prompts us to reckon with our violent histories.

“I realized I had the opportunity to show a lot of new gestures, four to five sculptures from several groups of work, a large collage of sixty-six feet, new and old flags. What people will experience is deeper and more nuanced. Here is realized my research and investigations into colonialism in the U.S. and Midwest through multiple materials, media, objects, and forms.”



Kahlil Robert Irving: *At Dusk*, Great Rivers Biennial 2020, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 11, 2020–February 21, 2021. Photo: Dusty Kessler.





Tim Portlock: *Nickels from Heaven*, Great Rivers Biennial 2020, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 11, 2020–February 21, 2021. Photo: Dusty Kessler.

“With the exhibition postponed, I was able to think about how our present day circumstances affected the work and became incorporated within the work. For instance, the image of a statue is one I’ve used in the past, then statues became really important this summer. Who are these statues here for? What narrative are they trying to communicate or deflect? So they appear again in this show.”

## Tim Portlock Nickels from Heaven

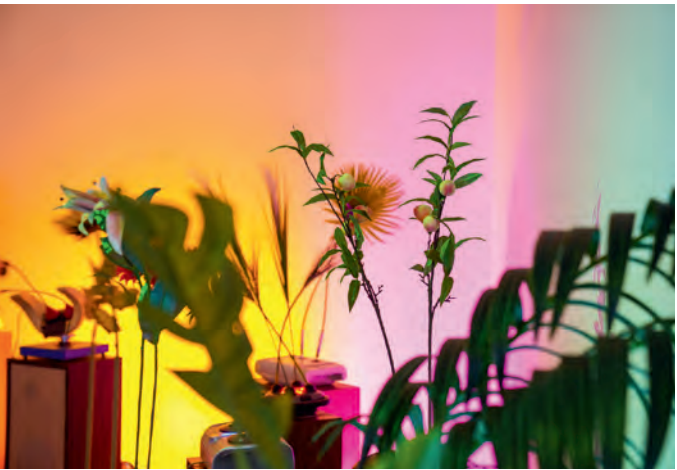
Tim Portlock’s large-scale prints depict construction and demolition sites in various American cities. Using compositional conventions derived from 19th-century American landscape painting, Portlock constructs realistic landscapes that embody idyllic notions of American identity—a feral, bountiful land to be tamed by rugged, virtuous people. Through this imagery, Portlock explores ideas of optimism, displacement, and social visibility, with a particular interest in drawing a contrast between what is being constructed and what is being replaced. Portlock trained as a painter and muralist, but rather than using paint as his medium, he employs video gaming software in combination with photogrammetry—or drone aerial scanning—to create his large-scale, cityscape prints. For the work on display, Portlock 3-D modeled buildings that he came across in St. Louis, Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Little Rock, and Camden, NJ. Each print is a constructed landscape containing buildings from multiple cities. The artist asks: “How is progress defined? What makes the future better? What version of America is the better version?”



Tim Portlock: *Nickels from Heaven*, Great Rivers Biennial 2020, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 11, 2020–February 21, 2021. Photo: Dusty Kessler.

## Rachel Youn Gather

In Rachel Youn’s installation *Gather*, the artist liberates inanimate, previously owned materials—electric massagers, artificial plants, and speaker cabinets—so they may engage in a dance of resistance against obsolescence. Personal narratives lie at the heart of Youn’s sculptural practice. Raised in a conservative Christian household, they felt at odds within the open prayer and song of church, but also alienated within safe spaces made for queer dance parties. *Gather* stems from the artist’s desire to reconcile a queer body in space. For the audio component of this work, they commissioned the St. Louis-based band GodsBod to make the dance music, which competes with recordings from multiple evangelical Korean church services, where the congregation feverishly prays together. The installation gyrates between a lively church gathering and a disco floor. Youn conflates these two spaces, trying to find an intersection between opposing worlds, a commonality found in the need for people to gather together in a spirit of liberation—whether in church, a disco, or a house party.



Rachel Youn: *Gather*, Great Rivers Biennial 2020, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 11, 2020–February 21, 2021. Photo: Dusty Kessler.

“I totally shifted directions. I began adding components gradually, letting the kinetic pieces run in my studio. I realized I needed music, a disco feel. Letting the show speak for itself made me nervous, but I’m really excited for what it is now. If I had made exactly what I had in my mind, I’d probably be disappointed. When there were twists and turns, I became more excited.”



Rachel Youn: *Gather*, Great Rivers Biennial 2020, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 11, 2020–February 21, 2021. Photo: Dusty Kessler.





Ebony G. Patterson, *...and the dew cracks the earth, in five acts of lamentation...between the cuts...beneath the leaves...below the soil...* (detail), 2020. Photo: Dusty Kessler.

The exhibition is generously supported by Clayco, Beth Rudin DeWoody, Christy and Bill Gautreaux, Arthur Lewis and Hau Nguyen, *december*, and Carol and Michael Staenberg. Special thanks to Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago.



Ebony G. Patterson: *...when the cuts erupt...the garden rings...and the warning is a wailing...*, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 11, 2020–February 21, 2021. Photo: Dusty Kessler.

## Ebony G. Patterson ...when the cuts erupt... the garden rings...and the warning is a wailing...

Ebony G. Patterson encourages viewers to look closer, to be drawn in by shimmering textures and bright colors. For the artist, beauty is a trap that captures awareness and makes the invisible seen—the garden an abundant setting for attraction. Her two new site-specific installations extend her longtime exploration of the garden and its metaphorical possibilities. Among those is the idea of the garden as a “postcolonial” symbol, where the invisible remnants of violent histories interrupt visible space—Black bodies slowly exposed beneath plantlife. The garden is also a symbol for the feminine, as suggested in the final phrase of the exhibition title, *...and the warning is a wailing...*: through the body of a woman we enter the world, and through the wailing and warning of women’s voices we exit. The artist reminds us that women serve as public figures of mourning, with the garden as a space for lamentation. Patterson creates a visual pageantry akin to funeral rites, which include the accessories of bling culture—a fashion gesture that demands visibility by those unseen. A backdrop to these works is Patterson’s thinking about the circulation and consumption of violent images online. In the making of the Project Wall installation, Patterson shreds, tears, and damages paper to produce new forms—acts of violence we are drawn to as beauty.

# A Homecoming

Chief Curator Wassan Al-Khudhairi speaks with Ebony G. Patterson about the artist’s return to St. Louis for her Fall/Winter exhibition.



Ebony G. Patterson. Photo courtesy the artist and Monique Meloche Gallery, Chicago.

I spoke with Ebony G. Patterson during the summer of 2020 about her memories of St. Louis. Patterson studied at the Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis, receiving an MFA in 2006. She moved to the city for graduate school in 2004, the year after CAM opened to the public. Patterson already held a BFA in Painting from Edna Manley College in Kingston, Jamaica, which was the artist’s home until leaving for Wash. U. After graduation she taught at the University of Kentucky, and now lives and works in Chicago. In 2018 she received the prestigious Stone & DeGuire Contemporary Art Award from her St. Louis alma mater.

Patterson told me she is looking forward to her return to St. Louis. “It’s like a homecoming,” she said, “although during my time there I never thought of the city as my home, because I think of Jamaica as home.” Time has changed her concept of “home” over the years, but she remembers CAM as being influential to her as a young artist. “I learned about the possibilities of space,” she recalled, “and the kinds of possibilities that artists can execute when they’re allowed to explore their full range. So CAM is a very important place for me.”

Her past experience at the Museum inspired her to re-imagine the exhibition she had first proposed. When the dates for the exhibition opening were postponed to fall due to COVID-19, she pushed herself to create another new work. CAM is regarded as a highly adaptable space for artists, as it came to be for Patterson. “I felt I had the

opportunity to experiment, to think of the museum exhibition as a means toward problem solving.” In part, the fact that CAM is a non-collecting institution allowed her to think differently about the idea of what a “museum exhibition” is or could be. “Museums are spaces for works that are ready for ‘the canon,’ works that are ready to be formalized and written about.” CAM offered her an alternative, or as she defined it, “a space that gave me an opportunity to play.”

Patterson shared with me memories of shows she saw at CAM in the aughts: “Yoshitomo Nara I remember vividly. There was Laylah Ali and Jill Downen. I still have a gallery guide from Jill’s show. I used to teach my students about her work.” Patterson informed me that she actually has shown work at CAM previously. In 2006, the museum invited regional artists to submit works on paper, with those works maintained in flat files for public access. The idea was to give local artists more exposure, and Patterson was one of them. “My first CAM show was in a flat file,” she told me with a trace of irony.

“I’ve always thought about the possibility of a show in St. Louis,” she continued, “and the relationship it may have with students at Wash. U. I went to school there and now I’m back in another capacity—I like the idea of presenting them with the idea of a full circle.”



Ebony G. Patterson: *...when the cuts erupt...the garden rings...and the warning is a wailing...*, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 11, 2020–February 21, 2021. Photo: Dusty Kessler.



# Yowshien Kuo

## Western Venom

Presented by Teen Museum Studies

Beautiful, brutal, and hauntingly familiar, Yowshien Kuo's paintings and narratives are meant to empower individuals and communities that might feel displaced in American history. *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. 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. Teen Museum Studies participants selected *Western Venom* from more than twenty artist proposals. They worked directly with Kuo to organize and implement the exhibition as part of the six-week summer program.

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



Courtesy Yowshien Kuo.



Yowshien Kuo: *Western Venom*, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 11, 2020–February 21, 2021. Photo: Dusty Kessler.

# Stories of Resistance

*Stories of Resistance* examines the myriad ways in which resistance takes form across the world. Through the perspectives of an international array of artists working across a full range of media, the exhibition sheds light on the situations from which acts of resistance emerge. Featuring a diverse body of work, the exhibition nonetheless identifies several themes and motifs that recur across history, cultures, and regions. Resistance may be found in the rewriting of history, exposing or filling in the blatant absences left out of the dominant narrative. Resistance emerges from within governmental, corporate, or institutional structures and systems of power. Resistance takes shape in labor movements and in actions to protect water, land, and other natural resources. Migration, movement, and exile—most often depicted as acts of desperation—are here shown as acts of agency in the face of persecution, oppression, and inequality.

To encompass the epic range of human resistance worldwide, the exhibition activates the entire museum space, inside and outside, with video, performance, photography, drawing, sculpture, and installation. Participating artists include Bani Abidi, Banu Cennetoğlu, Kemang Wa Lehulere, Candice Lin, Jen Liu, Guadalupe Maravilla, Tuan Andrew Nguyen, and Dread Scott, with additional artists to be announced, many of whom make their U.S. debut at CAM. A publication expanding on resistance as multidisciplinary action will coincide with the exhibition.

The exhibition and accompanying catalog are generously supported by a grant from The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Additional publication support is provided by Furthermore: a program of the J. M. Kaplan Fund.



Tuan Andrew Nguyen, *The Boat People* (still), 2020. Single-channel video, 4K. Super 16mm transferred to digital (color, 5.1 surround sound), © the artist. Courtesy the artist and James Cohan, New York.

Spring/Summer 2021  
Mar 12–Aug 15



Jen Liu, *Pink Slime Caesar Shift*, 2018. 4K video (color, 2-channel sound). 24:21 minutes. Courtesy the artist and Upstream Gallery, Amsterdam.



# A Shift in the Narrative

CAM Chief Curator Wassan Al-Khudhairi was moving toward the completion of her planning for *Stories of Resistance*, scheduled to open September 2020. Then a pandemic happened.

Stories of Resistance *is meant to be ambitious. It takes up all of our galleries. Unlike a solo artist exhibition, the ideas and concepts have to be sketched out and artists selected to help build the ideas to make them tangible for the visitors. In curating such a large thematic exhibition, I often try to start with a few large ideas and works of art and then build around those. I had just begun to do this for Stories of Resistance, then COVID happened.*

The pandemic hits and everything halts.

I redirect my attention to addressing the quick and immediate closure of the museum to the public. The sudden closure has implications, first for the public, but also for the artists whose works are on display, and those who loaned their works from museums, and public and private collections.

The most difficult part of the closure is that it is indefinite. We have no idea when we will be able to reopen. Many of us believe we can reopen within a few weeks. But in a few weeks we know more about the virus, its deadly effects, and how highly contagious it is.

*I was initially interested in exploring the idea that migration is an act of resistance. As I started to focus more on this, I felt that an exhibition that considered acts of resistance in and of themselves could expand notions of resistance. Resistance can be physical. It can be loud and in your face but it can also be subversive and quiet. Either way, resistance has power to bring about change. Situated in St. Louis, the impulse to expand these ideas into an exhibition seemed urgent and relevant. The Black Lives Matter movement took shape here in this city.*



Banu Cennetoğlu, *Gurbet's Diary* (27.07.1995–08.10.1997), 2016–17. 82,661 words from Gurbet's Diary. *I Engraved My Heart into the Mountains* by Gurbetelli Ersöz in mirror image, 107 days, and 145 press-ready lithographic limestone slabs displayed on two painted iron shelves. Courtesy the artist and RODEO. Installation view, documenta 14, Gennadius Library, Athens, 2017.



Guadalupe Maravilla, *Disease Thrower #7*, 2019. Courtesy the artist.

Our curatorial team begins by alerting the artists first: We've closed the museum and we cannot say when we'll be able to reopen. Those emails are followed by emails to the Brooklyn Museum regarding the loans of Liz Johnson Artur's work and her exhibition, *Dusha*, (which was originally organized by the Brooklyn Museum). We also email around ten or so lenders associated with Derek Fordjour's exhibition, *SHELTER*.

We establish an internal task force to draft a COVID reopening plan, which is followed by an implementation team, which I head, to work with colleagues on initiating new precautions in the space.

*I want the exhibition to consider what resistance can look like, who is involved in these acts, and why they are compelled to take action. I want to consider the sites of these actions.*



Jen Liu, *Pink Slime Caesar Shift*, 2018. 4K video (color, 2-channel sound). 24:21 minutes. Courtesy the artist and Upstream Gallery, Amsterdam.

The city looks over our plans and approves our reopening. The transportation of art is suspended due to COVID and it is not safe to assemble an installation crew, so we choose to reopen in July with the exhibitions that were still on view in March. We need to contact all the lenders of Liz and Derek's exhibitions again, this time asking if we have permission to extend our loan agreements. Thankfully everyone is very understanding and cooperative. All loan agreements need to be amended, sent back out, signed, and returned. Our planned summer exhibitions are rescheduled to open in September. We communicate with the artists to let them know.

Our registrar Jen Nugent changes all the shipping that was originally scheduled for the end of the season (May). Art shippers are able to get back to work and everything is rescheduled.

The pandemic causes the suspension of all business, so in addition to shipping, artists are having a difficult time getting materials and services they need, i.e. vinyl printing, mounting, framing. Some artists can't get to their studios because public transportation has either been canceled or may put their health at risk.

I reach back out to the artists I invited pre-COVID to participate in *Stories of Resistance*. Until now it has felt insensitive to write to artists and ask for anything. I especially have not felt like I can ask artists about timelines, schedules, and deadlines.



Candice Lin, *On Being Human (The slow erosion of a hard white body)*, 2018. Pit-fired ceramics, welded metal frame, wooden structure, plastic tubing, fired ceramics, unfired porcelain, glass distillation system, hot plate, plants, dried mushroom (grown from the care and distilled urine of Occidental students), welded metal, plastic buckets, pumps, timers. Dimensions variable. Courtesy the artist and François Ghebaly, Los Angeles. Photo: Ian Byers-Gamber.

Several of them are living in New York City. They had assumed right away that the exhibition dates would shift. For many of them all their projects were either suspended or postponed. I want to pick up the conversation.

*Resistance can take form in protests, and it can take form in re-writing history. It is wide, the range of resistance. I hope the exhibition will capture it.*

*Stories of Resistance* opens at CAM on Friday, March 12, and runs through August 15, 2021.



# Shara Hughes

Shara Hughes is known for vibrant landscapes that combine a myriad of styles. At CAM she presents a selection of dreamscape paintings, conveying her intuitive approaches to the depiction of spaces within “invented landscapes.” She describes her process as “making a mess and then fixing it.” From an idiosyncratic pictorial logic, she creates “placeless” prairies, seascapes, woodlands, rock formations, caves, and valleys reminiscent of 19th-century Fauvism. Yet her subject is not the landscape, but more akin to 20th-century abstraction, in which the drama of mark-making compels the eye and mind. Her paintings are balanced by dichotomies that both compete and merge: beauty/ugliness, push/pull, escapism/engagement, hope/fear. Still, viewers can identify celestial bodies, bulbous trees, starlit skies, and placid lakes. Her flowers are both sensual and aggressive. Her paintings contain a psychological complexity that derives from her memories and observations, but are devoid of narrative. Hughes brings to life a world that is elegantly chaotic—infused with a vibrant harmony of the organic, the objective, and the surreal.



Shara Hughes, *Cascade*, 2016. Oil, spray paint, and enamel on canvas, 68 × 60 inches. Courtesy the artist and Rachel Uffner Gallery.



Shara Hughes, *Just Another Pretty Face*, 2019. Oil and acrylic on canvas, 68 × 60 inches. Courtesy the artist and Rachel Uffner Gallery.



Kathy Butterly, *Super Bloom*, 2019. Clay, glaze, 6 1/4 × 9 1/2 × 10 inches. Courtesy the artist and James Cohan, New York. Photo: Alan Wiener.

# Kathy Butterly

Kathy Butterly describes herself as a painter who happens to work in clay. The artist spends months creating small-scale sculptures, which evolve for her like individual personalities. Alluring in vibrant colors and fleshy forms, Butterly’s ceramics stem from reflections on relationships, motherhood, and catastrophes—both personal and global. Hers is a painstaking process, firing the ceramic up to thirty times, building layers upon the manipulated casts. She meticulously paints and carves fine details of nets or chains upon the viscous clay. Each piece contains a surprising range of textures, suggesting skin, moss, and a variety of other organic materials.

CAM offers a “micro-retrospective” of Butterly’s work. A single form serves as a starting point: the pint glass, or what the artist calls “cup forms,” from 1993 to 2018. Derived from the same cast, viewers are witness to an astounding range of manipulations to the individual works. The exhibition also features the premiere of a new series of works—all created at a much larger scale. Butterly sees this new series as increasingly abstract, and refers to the works as “journeys of the mind,” “headscapes,” or “brain planets,” imbued with the anxieties and concerns of our current crises: a global pandemic, racial injustice, and environmental collapse.



Kathy Butterly, *Crossed Arms*, 2019. Clay, glaze, 6 1/4 × 6 1/4 × 6 1/4 inches. Courtesy the artist and James Cohan, New York. Photo: Alan Wiener.

Fall/Winter 2021–22  
Sep 3–Feb 20





# Year in Review



# Exhibition Highlights

## Best Museum 2019

“The artists are more diverse, the work shown is more rigorous in addressing contemporary issues, and St. Louis—and the world—has taken notice. Various outlets (*The New Yorker*, *Artsy*, *Vice*) have covered these shows and artists, which keeps CAM in the national dialogue. Meanwhile, the Great Rivers Biennial continues to promote local artists, and St. Louis has a contemporary arts institution that looks more like the actual city.” *Riverfront Times*, October 2019



## Bethany Collins: Chorus

“Bethany Collins’s *Chorus* uses language as a prism to explore American history and the nuance of racial and national identities.” *St. Louis Public Radio*, September 2019

*Bethany Collins: Chorus*, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 6–December 29, 2019. Photo: Dusty Kessler.

Following a popular fall season, spring exhibitions were closed from mid-March to mid-July. CAM reopened with the spring exhibitions intact, giving audiences more opportunities to see the works in person.



## Stephanie Syjuco: Rogue States

“In Syjuco’s work, both the Photoshop transparency layer and the chroma-key green function as metaphors for white supremacy, an ‘invisible’ force that erases or overwhelms aspects of culture by superimposition.” *Artforum*, November 2019

“Stephanie Syjuco addresses the complexities surrounding citizenship and immigration—the competing narratives, the politicization, the demonization.” *St. Louis Magazine*, September 2019

*Stephanie Syjuco: Rogue States*, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 6–December 29, 2019. Photo: Dusty Kessler.



## Jonathas de Andrade: Voyeristico

In *Voyeristico*, de Andrade suggests a fetishistic impulse toward paper money, evident in the slow handling of cash with heightened soundtrack, emphasizing the sensual quality of touch.

*Jonathas de Andrade: Voyeristico*, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 6–December 29, 2019. Photo: Dusty Kessler.

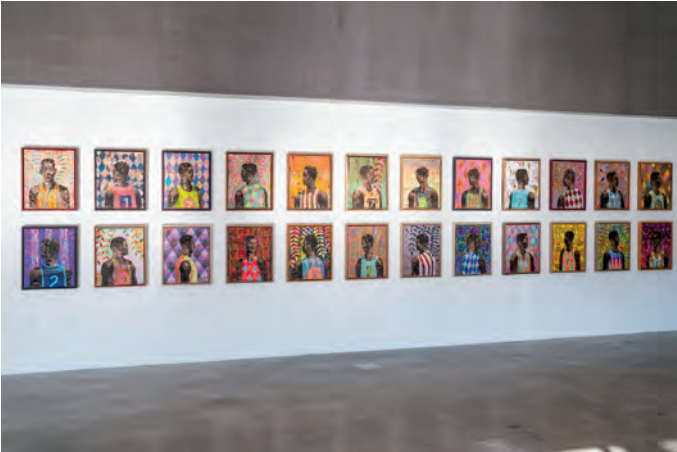


## Liz Johnson Artur: Dusha

“A Johnson Artur photograph is what it is, without label or pretence.” *Huck*, March 2020

“Johnson Artur carefully considers the ways in which her work will be shown, and how viewers can engage with her archive. She creates video and sound installations, and experiments with materials by printing on leather, newspaper, or linen to add a tactile quality to the images. For the St. Louis show, she made a fabric book that visitors can look through.” *Artsy*, February 2020

*Liz Johnson Artur: Dusha*, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, January 17–August 23, 2020. Photo: Dusty Kessler.



## Derek Fordjour: SHELTER

“The common material for *SHELTER*, rusty corrugated steel sourced near St. Louis, can also be found around the world... sometimes left by a previous, imperialistic resident.” *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, January 2020

“By situating his paintings in this temporary refuge, Fordjour poses his artworks as opportunities for pause, for relief from, and for contemplation of the uncertainty that lies beyond these makeshift walls.” *Hyperallergic*, April 2020

*Derek Fordjour: SHELTER*, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, January 17–August 23, 2020. Photo: Dusty Kessler.



## Marina Zurkow: The Thirsty Bird

Zurkow visualizes our reliance on the interdependence of oil and water resources: the oil industry uses vast amounts of water to drill in a region where water is scarce, and there is an ever-present threat of contaminated drinking water from drilling. We participate in a dangerous cycle of consumption, with petroleum—fossil fuels—outlasting us all.

*Marina Zurkow: The Thirsty Bird*, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, January 17–August 23, 2020. Photo: Dusty Kessler.



# Making SHELTER

Derek Fordjour’s first art museum exhibition included his installation *SHELTER*, an ambitious undertaking for both artist and CAM. Fordjour’s team of builders and technicians worked months ahead of the installation date to work out logistics that included the construction of corrugated metal walls, the turning of a mysterious carnival wheel, and the sounds of a storm. At CAM, multiple samples of dirt were considered to serve as the installation’s 22,000 pound floor. The result was a phenomenal art experience for all the senses, and the awakening of concerns for the underprivileged and people in migration. Fordjour’s profound resurrection of found materials delivered as both high art and a tribute to the genius of those who live off the scraps of society.



Derek Fordjour: *SHELTER*, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, January 17–August 23, 2020. Photo: Dusty Kessler.

# Education Galleries



**Margaret Keller: Botanica absentia**  
Teen Museum Studies participants selected *Margaret Keller: Botanica absentia* from twenty-two artist proposals, choosing Keller’s installation, in part, because of the students’ serious concerns for the fate of the Earth in the wake of climate change. Keller created a fictive memorial and archive dedicated to lost trees, the installation emerging out of her belief that we are at the tipping point of global calamity.

Margaret Keller: *Botanica absentia*, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 6–December 29, 2019. Photo: Dusty Kessler.

**ArtReach: Vashon High School**  
The Vashon-CAM partnership entered into its third year of art-making, with the work on view at CAM during the spring and summer. Painter Luisa Otero Prada guided the classes through a survey of masks from cultures all over the world and invited the students to construct their own. Interdisciplinary artist Esther Neff introduced classes to fiber art. Neff shared her knowledge of stitching, quilting, and embroidery, which resulted in individually monogrammed baseball caps and a community quilt.

ArtReach: Vashon High School, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, January 17–August 23, 2020. Photo: Dusty Kessler.





# Program Highlights

Whether the museum was open or closed to the public, CAM found innovative ways for audiences to connect with our exhibitions throughout the year.



## First Fridays

The monthly event became more interactive with First Friday revelers getting to know one another through blind contour drawing, learning a thing or two about hand-sewing with local artist Janie Stamm, and a little gin tasting, among other artful activities.

Photo: Wil Driscoll.



## RE: Living History

Stephanie Syjuco's flag installation, *To the Person Sitting in Darkness*—an American flag with black and red stripes and skull and crossbones for stars—was inspired by an impassioned essay by Missouri's own Mark Twain, in response to the U.S. invasion of the Philippines at the turn of the 20th century. Actor Richard Garey traveled from Hannibal to portray “Sam” Clemens, speaking truth against imperialism, past and present.

Photo: Orlando Thompson.



## Reniel del Rosario

To coincide with *Stephanie Syjuco: Rogue States*, artist Reniel del Rosario sold handmade souvenirs in CAM's shop. Reflecting both artists' concerns regarding culture and consumption, del Rosario offered ceramic *Bootleg Ai Wei Wei (Sunflower Seeds)* and *The Ideal Meal (Ramen)*, and other items as a lampoon of consumerist notions of art and national identity.

Photo: Chris Bauer.

## RE: Soul

One of the first programs canceled at CAM due to the coronavirus, RE: Soul returned as a virtual evening of live performance, with DJ James Biko and Tyrone Day AKA DJ Reminise tracing the history of soul music through spinning and sampling, relating to Liz Johnson Artur's exhibition, *Dusha*; the title is the Russian word for “soul.”

Photo: CAM Staff.



## Artist Talks

Stephanie Syjuco, Bethany Collins, Liz Johnson Artur, and Derek Fordjour all shared their thoughts about their work with nearly standing-room-only audiences. This speaks to the heightened relevance of their exhibitions to diverse communities.

Photo: Chris Bauer.



## Feast Your Eyes

Vicia's Jane Sacro prepared kamayan, a traditional Filipino feast, for a communal dining experience inspired by Stephanie Syjuco's exhibition.

Photo: CAM Staff.



## DJs-In-Residence

Syna So Pro (Syrhea Conaway) entertained CAM audiences with live instrumentals and electronic loops in the fall season, and James Biko spun afro-progressive beats in the spring.

Photo: Virginia Harold.



## Stroller Tours / Morning Play Dates

Families joined kid-friendly tours and art activities the second Saturday of each month, with one Saturday being extra-special because of Halloween Weekend!

Photo: Jon Gitchoff.

## Drawing from Observation

Following a tour of *Stephanie Syjuco: Rogue States*, everyday artists joined Museum Educator José Garza in a drawing workshop with Syjuco's art as the subject matter.

Photo: CAM Staff.





# CAM'S 2020 Gala

HONORING  
Alison & John Ferring

Gala Chairs  
Susan Barrett &  
Margaret McDonald

In a year of postponements and cancellations, one of the most heart-wrenching was that of Create, CAM's 2020 Gala. The namesake of Create: The CAMpaign, the party of the year was slated to honor Alison and John Ferring, the outstanding CAMpaign co-chairs, and whose support and love for the museum and any number of significant St. Louis institutions make them all-too worthy of exuberant appreciation. A film had been commissioned and completed featuring numerous local luminaries singing their praises. Inventive cocktails, artful dancing, and inspired beats by DJ David Kirkland were planned for a creative night at the Four Seasons. Guests were getting ready to play and be playful and don couture emulating famous artists from past CAM exhibitions. The night was to be golden.

The biannual CAM Gala is also a fundraiser. So not only was the cancellation of the party a huge disappointment, it spelled disaster for the museum and its exhibition and education programs. CAM's galas raise nearly fifteen percent of its annual operating revenue.

But here's what the Create guests did. They threw in their support for the museum anyway. The Gala turned out to be golden after all.

# Create Gala Donors

<div>\$25,000+</div> <div>Ferring Family Foundation</div>	<div>\$2,500-\$4,999</div> <div>Terry Hoffmann and Jeff Hartz Hedwig Lee and Eric S. Williams Ann R. Ruwitch and John Fox Arnold Kathleen and Douglas Sprong Pam and Greg Trapp Amanda Trudell Cambridge and Paul Cambridge Webster University</div>	<div>\$500-\$999</div> <div>Arch Grants Eric Barr Tania Beasley-Jolly and William Jolly Daron Hendrix Philip Slein Gallery Judy and Paul Putzel Sissy and Edwin Thomas</div>
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# Annual Report

Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis  
Fiscal year July 1, 2019–June 30, 2020

CAM was closed to the public beginning March 15, 2020 due to COVID-19.

26,620  
Museum attendance

July 1, 2019–March 15, 2020

208,160  
Virtual audience

2,137  
Off-site engagement

13  
Exhibitions

108  
Tours

109  
Programs (89% free)

59  
Artists hired for programs

3,414  
Youth served

## Operating Revenue

Individual contributions	\$715,882
Grants & sponsorships	\$282,285
Public funding	\$232,715
Fundraising events (net)	\$243,541
Earned income	\$305,991
Investment earnings	\$392,710
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Total operating revenue	\$2,173,124

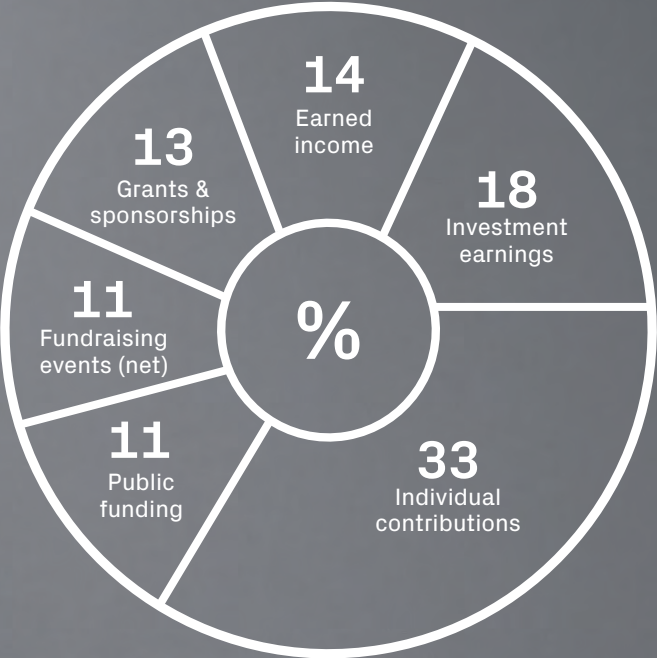
## Operating Expenses

Exhibitions & programs	\$1,677,391
Administration	\$110,952
Fundraising	\$381,298
<hr/>	
Total expenses	\$2,169,641

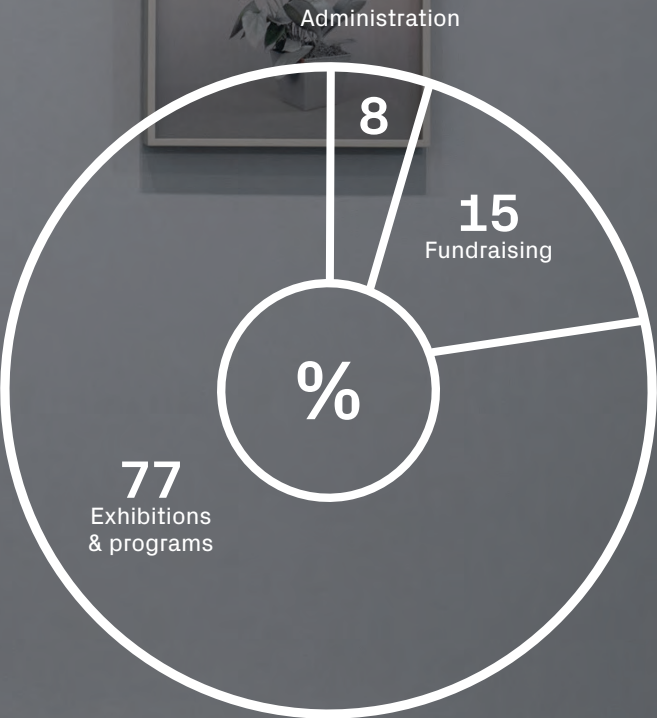
## Net Assets

Beginning of year	\$19,552,762
End of year	\$19,582,361

## Where Funding Comes From



## Where Funding Goes



Stephanie Syjuco: *Rogue States*, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 6–December 29, 2019. Photo: Dusty Kessler.



# Annual Giving

## July 1, 2019– June 30, 2020

CAM is grateful for the many donors who provided support this year.



CAM ArtBus. Photo: Rebecca Clark.

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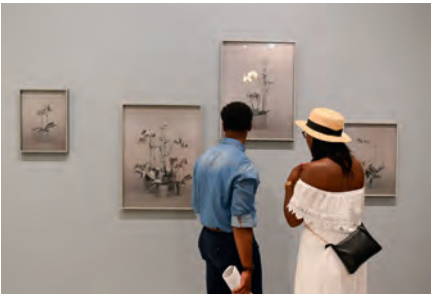


Photo: Michael Thomas.

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Bethany Collins. Photo: Chris Bauer.

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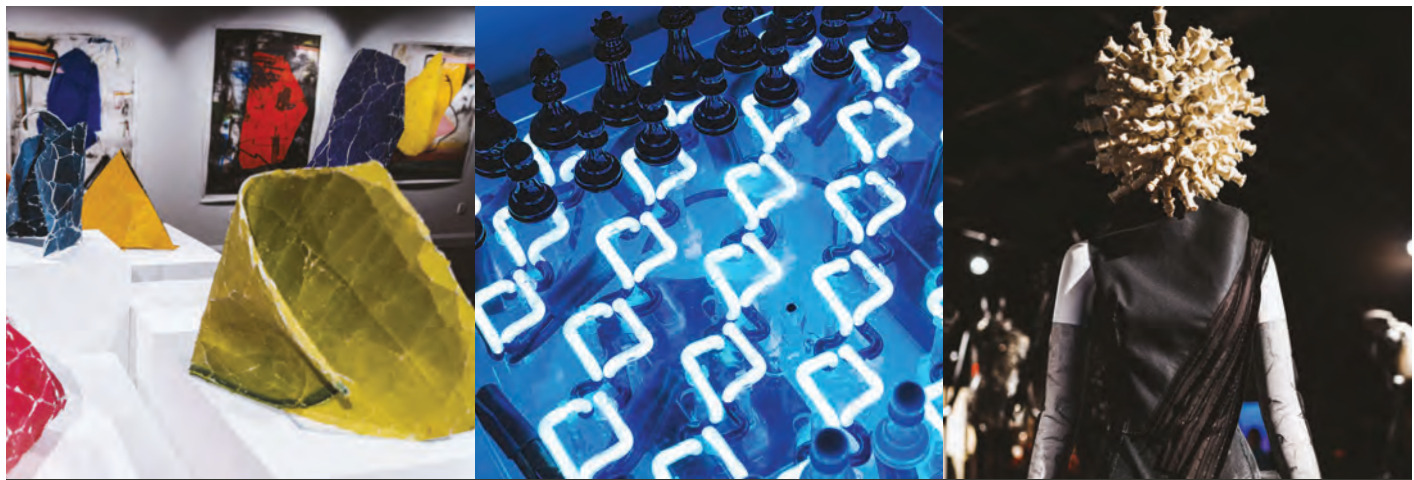
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# Kodner Gallery

## Modern and Contemporary



BALDESSARI  
S h e r m a n  
W a r h o l  
L i c h t e n s t e i n  
P i c a s s o  
T r o v a  
C h a g a l l  
D a l i  
K o l l w i t z  
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N e i m a n  
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F r i e d m a n  
H a r i n g  
M o t h e r w e l l

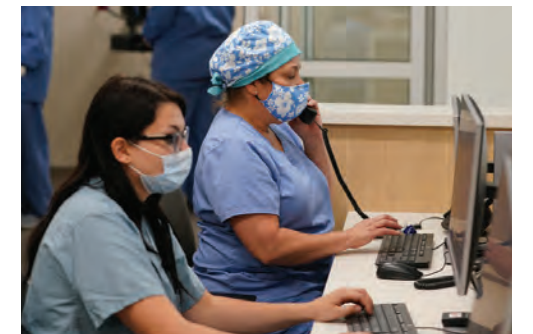
Avoid the auctions. Consult Kodner.

Whether you are getting started, expanding your collection, or considering selling your works of art, let the expert art consultants at Kodner Gallery assist you with confidence, quality and personal service.



The ***FUTURE*** of  
***MEDICINE*** begins  
September 1, 2020.

Built around the expertise provided by SLUCare, the physicians of Saint Louis University School of Medicine, the new SSM Health Saint Louis University Hospital boasts an elevated experience through many features including a fully-integrated registration system, all private patient rooms, convenient parking, and an expanded emergency department and Level I Trauma Center. In fact, more than 500 front line physicians, nurses, staff and patients were consulted in the planning and construction process. Additionally, those seeking outpatient services will enjoy the spacious, comfortable surroundings of the Center for Specialized Medicine, conveniently located on the hospital grounds. Visit [ssmhealth.com/SLUHTopDocs](https://ssmhealth.com/SLUHTopDocs) to learn more.





# Visitor & Member Information

## Hours

Thu–Sun 10:00 am–5:00 pm  
Open until 8:00 pm Fri

Make a free reservation at  
[camstl.org/tickets](https://camstl.org/tickets).

## Address and Parking

3750 Washington Boulevard  
St. Louis, MO 63108

CAM is located in the Grand Center Arts District, next door to the Pulitzer Arts Foundation, at the corner of Spring Street and Washington Boulevard. Free and metered parking is available along Washington Boulevard and Spring Street. Visitors may also take advantage of numerous parking lots in the Grand Center district.

## Membership

CAM members support the work of some of today’s most innovative artists. Members contribute to a thriving art scene in St. Louis and make it possible for us to bring contemporary art to thousands in our community.

### All CAM Members receive:

- / Invitations to exclusive member events and programs, including Opening Night Member Previews
- / Discounted prices to select programs like Feast Your Eyes
- / 10% discount in CAM’s shop
- / Subscription to *Mesh*, CAM’s annual magazine

**Become a member today!**  
**Visit [camstl.org/join](https://camstl.org/join)**

## Connect with CAM

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

CAM strives to be an inclusive, accessible space. If you have questions or feedback about accessibility at CAM, contact [info@camstl.org](mailto:info@camstl.org).

**CAM is free.**  
**Visit often!**



*Ebony G. Patterson: ...when the cuts erupt...the garden rings...and the warning is a wailing... installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 11, 2020–February 21, 2021. Photo: Dusty Kessler.*

ALEX KATZ  
*PEONIES*

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