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Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wassan Al-Khudhairi selected 2021 Center for Curatorial Leadership Fellow



Photo: Orlando V Thompson II

November 25, 2020 (St. Louis) – The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis announces the selection of Chief Curator Wassan Al-Khudhairi to be among the twelve 2021 Center for Curatorial Leadership (CCL) Fellows. The CCL made the announcement yesterday. The fourteenth group of annual Fellows was chosen from a record number of applicants. They are selected based on “their exceptional curatorial achievements, demonstrated innovative thinking, and commitment to advancing the field” the CCL announcement reads. The 2021 Fellows join CCL from twelve museums across the United States and Mexico—from large-scale encyclopedic museums, non-collecting contemporary art centers such as CAM, museums on the campuses of historically Black colleges and universities, culturally specific institutions, and regional museums with focused areas of expertise.

Al-Khudhairi will join her CCL Fellows for a six-month program, primarily held virtually during the pandemic. The program includes rigorous instruction, a custom-designed Columbia Business School curriculum, collaborative learning and networking with fellows and established leaders in the curatorial field, and significant opportunities for mentorship. Al-Khudhairi says of the CCL Fellowship, “I am greatly honored to be selected for this extraordinary opportunity. I look forward to meeting with my 2021 Fellows and sharing our broad range of experiences together. The CCL Fellowship is a program for growth, development, and the expansion of a network of people with real vision. This is a perfect time for the intense work and interactions the program offers, especially as museums are pursuing new strategies to connect with audiences, communities, and artists in more relevant ways.”

Wassan Al-Khudhairi recently was selected Focus Curator for the 2021 Armory Show, in New York City, and awarded the \$25,000 VIA Art Fund 2021 Curatorial Fellowship, both in recognition of her curatorial achievements. She is the Chief Curator at the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, where she has organized numerous exhibitions including those with Derek Fordjour, Stephanie Syjuco, Bethany Collins, Paul Mpagi Sepuya, Lawrence Abu Hamdan, Guan Xiao, Hayv Kahraman, Trenton Doyle Hancock, and SUPERFLEX. Prior to her position at CAM, Al-Khudhairi was the Hugh Kaul Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Birmingham Museum of Art where she organized the first large-scale exhibition of the museum’s contemporary collection, *Third Space / shifting conversations about contemporary art*. The exhibition’s accompanying publication received the 2019 AAMC Curatorial Award for Excellence. Al-Khudhairi was invited to be a Curator for the 6th Asian Art Biennial in Taiwan in 2017 and Co-Artistic Director for 9th Gwangju Biennial in South Korea in 2012. Serving as the Founding Director of Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art in Qatar, Al-Khudhairi oversaw the opening of the Museum in 2010 and co-curated the first presentation of the museum’s collection *Sajjil: A Century of Modern Art* and curated *Cai GuoQiang: Saraab*. She holds a BA in Art

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CAM is free. Visit often!

History from Georgia State University and an MA with Distinction from the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.

About the Center for Curatorial Leadership

The Center for Curatorial Leadership (CCL) trains curators to become visionary leaders of art museums. At a time when the demands of cultural institutions and the public are rapidly evolving, CCL provides essential tools to guide today's museums and anticipate future challenges. The CCL model encompasses mentorships with innovators and museum directors, rigorous coursework in strategic management, and professional networks for support and growth. With its graduates now at the helm of major art institutions, CCL is helping to build the next generation of museum leaders, ones who combine traditional curatorial connoisseurship and art historical scholarship with administrative, managerial, and strategic expertise.

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.



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