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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***A Counting* creates a sound portrait of the voices, languages, and cultures of St. Louis**



**Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis**

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314.535.4660 camstl.org



February 15, 2021 (St. Louis, MO) - The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis invites people across the city to share their voice and demonstrate the diversity of languages spoken by those who live here. Today, St. Louis joins the expanding roster of cities to participate in *A Counting*, the first project by Ekene Ijeoma's Poetic Justice group at MIT Media Lab. The St. Louis edition of *A Counting* is being developed with CAM as part of [CAM Anywhere](#), the museum's online audience engagement platform.

Conceived as an ongoing series, the generative sound and video work features St. Louisans counting to 100 in their language(s) and accent(s). Locals are invited to call a hotline and listen or participate by counting aloud. Callers' recordings are algorithmically spliced into separate number samples, which the caller and volunteers are invited to transcribe on the website. These samples are then remixed in real-time into a count to 100 with a different voice and language for every number. When one count ends, another starts. Across the series, when available, the number 1 is spoken in a language Indigenous to the region of the city. In St. Louis, for example, that would include Chickasaw, Illini, Ioway, Otoe-Missouria, Osage, Quapaw, Sac & Fox and Shawnee languages and dialects. Every participant who shares their name, from callers to transcribers, is credited in the video and on the website.

"*A Counting* creates space for all languages and accents to coexist," says Ijeoma. As more St. Louisans contribute their voices, a sound portrait of the city emerges, one

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that encompasses many accents, dialects, and languages. “A *Counting* serves as a meditation and speculation of what a unified society could sound like.”

To access the St. Louis edition, visit camstl.org/a-counting. Call 314-470-8445 to add your voice or to listen to the counting stream. A video of the count can be viewed online at a-counting.us/stl.



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About Ekene Ijeoma and Poetic Justice

Ekene Ijeoma is a conceptual artist whose practice encourages new ways of seeing and understanding social issues. Leveraging computational design and conceptual art strategies, Ijeoma translates research and data studies into multimedia and multisensory works of art. Recent exhibitions and commissions of Ijeoma’s work include *Heartfelt* at The Kennedy Center (2019), *Who We Are* at the Museum of the City of New York (2019), *Landed* at Neuberger Museum of Art (2016), *New Americas* at Annenberg Space for Photography (2016), *Design and Violence* at the Museum of Modern Art (2015), *Design of the Year* at Design Museum London (2015), and the Istanbul Design Biennial (2015). In 2019, Ijeoma was appointed as an Assistant Professor in the Media Lab at MIT and founded Poetic Justice, a group of critical thinkers and makers who are exploring new forms of justice through art. *A Counting* marks the first major public art project by the group.

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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