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Contemporary Art
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CAM and Gateway Foundation announce the winners of the tenth Great Rivers Biennial Award

Great Rivers Biennial

October 20, 2021 (St. Louis, MO) - The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis and the Gateway Foundation announce the winners of the tenth Great Rivers Biennial Arts Award Program: **Yowshien Kuo**, **Yvonne Osei**, and **Jon Young**. The artists' ambitious project proposals involve painting, sculpture, photography, textiles, video, installation, sound, and performance. The award winners were chosen by a distinguished panel of jurors following individual studio visits with ten semi-finalists, selected from among 105 artists who applied. A collaborative initiative between CAM and the Gateway

Foundation, the Great Rivers Biennial (GRB) is designed to recognize artistic talent in the greater St. Louis metro area. Generously funded by the Gateway Foundation since the inaugural Biennial in 2004, the GRB awards each artist with \$20,000 and a major exhibition in CAM's main galleries, on view **September 9, 2022 through February 12, 2023**.

From the initial field of applicants ten proposals were chosen. All the finalists received in-person studio visits by the jurors, with the ultimate selection made after two days of travel throughout the St. Louis metro region, which included stops in Alton, IL and Florissant, MO. The three jurors are **Carmen Hermo**, Associate Curator for the Brooklyn Museum's Elizabeth A. Sackler Center for Feminist Art; **Jen Liu**, a New York-based visual artist working in video, painting, dance performance, and biomaterial; and **Hamza Walker**, Director of LAXART, a nonprofit art space in Los Angeles, and adjunct professor at the School of Art Institute of Chicago. Walker was a juror for the first Great Rivers Biennial, in 2004. CAM Chief Curator Wassan Al-Khudhairi and Assistant Curator Misa Jeffereis will act as organizing curators; the artists will work closely with them over the course of the coming year for the successful implementation of their exhibitions. The jurors will return to St. Louis for a public panel discussion with the GRB artists during the opening weekend of the fall/winter exhibitions in 2022.

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About the Great Rivers Biennial 2022 award winners



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Yowshien Kuo (b. 1985, St. Louis) was educated in both Taiwan and the United States, receiving his MFA from Fontbonne University in St. Louis in 2014. Kuo's artistic intentions are to humanize those relegated by recent histories. Through his work he advocates for compassion and empathy towards those who feel a constant sense of disassociation from the circumstances of their daily life. His recent solo exhibitions include James Fuentes online gallery (New York) and the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis as part of an exhibition organized by the Teen Museum Studies program, *Western Venom*. Other notable exhibitions include Art Taipei 2021 with Artnutri Gallery; Praise Shadows Gallery, Boston; and LVL3 in Chicago. Kuo's work was featured on the cover of *New American Paintings* and has appeared in *Artsy*, among other

publications. He has been a recipient of the Critical Mass award and has received funding from the Regional Arts Commission in St. Louis.



Yvonne Osei (b. 1990, Hamburg, Germany) is a German-born Ghanaian multidisciplinary artist, art educator, and arts advocate living and working in St. Louis. Her international creative practice explores topics of beauty, racism and colorism, the authorship and ownership of history, as well as the residual implications of colonialism in postcolonial West Africa and Western cultures. Her work also utilizes textile designs and clothing as artistic mediums to foreground sociopolitical issues of global concern. Osei is the 2016–17 Romare Bearden Graduate Minority Fellow at the Saint Louis Art

Museum and the 2017–20 Curator-In-Residence for the Millstone Gallery at the Center of Creative Arts (COCA). She is the recipient of the 2018 Saint Louis Visionary Award for Emerging Artist, the 2018 Creative Stimulus Award by Critical Mass for the Visual Arts, and the 2019 Futures Fund Grant by The Luminary in St. Louis. Osei received her MFA from Washington University in St. Louis, where she was a Chancellor's Graduate Fellow, Mr. and Mrs. Spencer T. Olin Fellow, and Danforth Scholar.



Jon Young (b. 1981, Winston-Salem, NC) is a citizen of the Catawba Indian Nation in Rock Hill, South Carolina. Young explores the development of language and signage in the American West. Young's wood, sand, and fabric sculptures, which he refers to as "waymarks," adopt historical symbols from Paleolithic cave paintings, ancient Greek pottery, and imagery of Hollywood Westerns and Looney Tunes cartoons.

Young depicts the histories and mythologies of the frontier, an ideological concept popularized by the historian Frederick Jackson Turner, which has signified both European opportunity and indigenous genocide. His recent solo exhibitions include Carl

Kostyál at Intersect Art Fair, Aspen; J Hammond Projects, London; LCCC, Cheyenne, WY; and No Place Gallery, Columbus OH. Young holds a BFA from the University of Wyoming. He was a Chancellor's Graduate Fellow at Washington University in Saint Louis, 2018–19, and was awarded a Lighton International Artist Exchange Program Grant in 2020.



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Previous Great Rivers Biennial Award winners

2020: Kahlil Robert Irving, Tim Portlock, Rachel Youn
2018: Addoley Dzegede, Sarah Paulsen, Jacob Stanley
2016: Lyndon Barrois Jr., Nanette Boileau, Tate Foley
2014: Brandon Anschultz, Carlie Trosclair, Cayce Zavaglia
2012: David Johnson, Asma Kazmi, Mel Trad
2010: Martin Brief, Sarah Frost, Cameron Fuller
2008: Juan William Chávez, Corey Escoto, Michelle Oosterbaan
2006: Jason Wallace Triefenbach, Moses, Matthew Strauss
2004: Jill Downen, Adam Frelin, Kim Humphries

About the Gateway Foundation

The Gateway Foundation strives to enrich St. Louis life and culture by supporting efforts to acquire, create, and improve tangible and durable art and urban design. The focus of Gateway is to foster and support cultural and artistic activities devoted to improving the quality of life in the St. Louis metropolitan area. Visit the Gateway Foundation's website at gateway-foundation.org and Twitter feed [@CitygardenSTL](https://twitter.com/CitygardenSTL).

About the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis creates meaningful engagement with the most relevant and innovative art being made today. Founded by civic and cultural leaders in 1980, the Museum transformed from a small gallery into an internationally recognized arts institution, now permanently housed in a flexible, open, and inviting building designed by renowned American architect Brad Cloepfil. CAM's distinct architecture reflects the organization's values and supports a dynamic range of exhibitions, public programs, educational initiatives, and community collaborations. The only museum in the region solely dedicated to contemporary art, CAM is one of the preeminent non-collecting institutions of its kind in the United States. We are a site for discovery, a welcoming space, free and open to all. For more information, visit camstl.org.

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