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Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis announces new Deputy Director Jessica Whittaker



CAM Deputy Director Jessica Whittaker

September 26, 2022 (St. Louis, MO) – The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM) is pleased to announce that Jessica Whittaker has been appointed Deputy Director. In this role, she will lead the financial administration of the Museum, as well as advance CAM’s business planning, human resources, and visitor experience efforts in support of the museum’s strategic goals. Whittaker becomes the newest member of CAM’s senior leadership team when she begins her tenure as Deputy Director on October 3, 2022.

Prior to this role, Whittaker was the Director of Visitor Services at the Cleveland Museum of Art, where she oversaw the implementation of long-term strategic planning in the Visitor Services department. There she developed an extensive professional development program, restructured the department to optimize resource utilization, and created internship pipelines for college students to encourage a new generation of talent in the hospitality industry. Throughout her career, Whittaker has developed a considerable record in hospitality operations, visitor experience management, and leadership development.

“CAM is extraordinarily fortunate to welcome Jessica Whittaker to our leadership team,” said Lisa Melandri, Executive Director. “Jessica brings an incredible wealth of cultural leadership experience to this position. We’re excited to have such a dynamic and empathetic culture builder on our team who will excel at providing oversight to all museum operations. We are delighted to welcome her to St. Louis and to CAM.”

“I’m thrilled to become a part of the CAM team,” said Whittaker. “My background has always been in small organizations doing big things. CAM does big things, from the scope of the museum’s exhibitions to their far-reaching education programs. I look forward to bringing my background in finance, human resources, and visitor experience to this dynamic community space, where we can continue to do great things together.”

Whittaker received a BA in Accounting at Kentucky State University and an MBA in Hospitality, Tourism, and Event Management at Midway University in Midway, Kentucky.

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Her previous leadership experience includes more than ten years at the Buffalo Trace Distillery in Frankfort, Kentucky, where she oversaw a team of more than 50 guest experience associates as Visitor Experience Team Lead. There she expanded programming, increased visitation, and generated creative ideas to address the challenges presented since the onset of the pandemic. Whittaker also possesses more than a decade of human resources and finance experience, having worked as an Accountant and Human Resources Administrator with the Paul Sawyer Public Library in Frankfort, Kentucky; Finance Supervisor with Shelby County Public Schools; Internal Policy Analyst and Public Accounts Auditor with the Commonwealth of Kentucky; and Membership Specialist with the Girl Scouts of Kentucky's Wilderness Road.

Whittaker looks forward to bridging her previous experience as an administrative leader with her new position as Deputy Director at CAM, and is energized to work with staff on a number of key operational and strategic issues. "I'm looking forward to promoting the museum's fiscal transparency and to connecting with the entire team. I plan to continue to build the visitor experience to bring more eyes to the museum, to experience CAM's incredible space, programs, and exhibitions. I'm really interested in taking it all in and making connections."

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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