

Press contact: Alexia Majors
314.535.0770 ext. 313
amajors@camstl.org



Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis

3750 Washington Blvd
St. Louis, MO 63108
314.535.4660 camstl.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis announces the opening of
US: United Sapiens, a public artwork created by Mee Jey as part of Collective
Impact partnership with Creative Reaction Lab**



Artist rendering of *US: United Sapiens*. Courtesy Mee Jey

May 7, 2024 (St. Louis, MO)—The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM) announces the unveiling of *US: United Sapiens*, a public sculpture co-created with artist Mee Jey, which will be installed outside the Veterans Community Project St. Louis (VCP). A community celebration with the artist, community members, and VCP staff and volunteers will be held on **Saturday, May 18 from 10 am to 12 pm at VCP**, which is located at 1515 N. Grand Boulevard in St. Louis, MO. Guests are invited to add embellishments to the sculpture, enjoy a complimentary reception, and learn about VCP's mission to serve the veteran population of the St. Louis region. The event is free and open to the public.

US: United Sapiens was commissioned as part of [Collective Impact](#), a collaborative initiative between CAM, Creative Reaction Lab (CRXLAB), and a cohort of community members. The sculpture celebrates cooperation and solidarity through five interconnected steel figures, which will be woven with colorful cables and small embellishments designed and created with community participation.

For this culminating iteration of the two-year collaborative endeavor, Collective Impact once again engaged a cohort of artists and residents in the North St. Louis neighborhoods

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of Covenant Blu Grand, Jeff VanderLou, The Ville, and Vandeventer, who identified the theme “Building Beautiful Community.” Artists were invited to propose projects that promote connectivity and creative fellowship, and the group ultimately selected Mee Jey’s work for its potential to generate a positive impact. Collective Impact selected the Veterans Community Project St. Louis as the home for *US: United Sapiens* because of its accessible, central location and its mission of housing through “strength and support of the community.”

Collective Impact community participants included Audrey Ellermann, Melita Harry, Ronald Jones, Alexis Merriweather, Ada Parker, DeZha Smith, DaZanni Smith, Quinton Ward, and Frankie Williams.

US: United Sapiens was organized for Veterans Community Project St. Louis by Michelle Dezember, CAM’s Director of Learning and Engagement, and Miriam Ruiz, CAM’s Education Manager, in partnership with Creative Reaction Lab.

About Mee Jey

[Mee Jey](#) (b. 1987) is a multidisciplinary Indian artist who has received the St. Louis Visionary Emerging Artist Award and the Mother Art Prize (London, UK). Mee Jey has shown works, performed, and been creatively associated with the Saint Louis Art Museum, Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, Missouri History Museum, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, Zabudowicz Collection (London, UK), and Middlesex University (London, UK). She has held artist residencies at Laumeier Sculpture Park, the Craft Alliance, and Kranzberg Arts Foundation. She earned a BA in History and MA in Archaeology from Delhi University and Jawaharlal Nehru University, respectively, and an MFA from the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts at Washington University in St. Louis.

About Veterans Community Project

Established in Kansas City, Missouri, by a group of combat Veterans, Veterans Community Project (VCP) provides high quality and well-developed strategic services that enable Veterans to meet the challenges of day-to-day living, resolve immediate crises, and move towards permanent stability. VCP’s solution is simple: provide Veterans a home of their own and individualized, wraparound support services that not only help get them back on their feet but ensure they continue standing. The tiny homes in VCP Village offer Veterans a sense of security, and the opportunity to reintegrate into the community at their own pace. Each home is pet-friendly and fully furnished with everything a Veteran needs, from new furniture to dish towels. Specially trained case managers work one-on-one with each resident to achieve incremental, lasting results in the areas of health and wellness, education, employment, financial literacy, and the development of a personal support network. When the Veteran is ready, VCP provides support in finding a long-term housing solution, which may include market-rate rentals, homeownership, or subsidized housing. Not only does the Veteran take the entire contents of the tiny house with them, but they take the ongoing support of the Village as well. For more information, visit veteranscommunityproject.org.

About Creative Reaction Lab

Creative Reaction Lab’s mission is to educate, train, and challenge Black and Latina/ae/o/e/x youth to become leaders designing healthy and racially equitable communities. We’re challenging the belief that only adults with titles (e.g. mayors, CEOs,

etc.) have the power and right to challenge racial and health inequities. However, we are conscious that it's not just the work of the people that have been historically underinvested to dismantle oppressive systems. Therefore, we are rallying an intergenerational movement of [Redesigners for Justice](#). For more information, [visit crxlab.org](#).



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](#).



Collective Impact is presented by PNC Arts Alive. This program was generously funded by the Mid-America Arts Alliance, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the state arts agencies of Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and Texas.

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