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Contemporary Art  
Museum St. Louis

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CAM Presents *Great Rivers Biennial 2024: Saj Issa, Basil Kincaid, Ronald Young* Featuring New Work by Three St. Louis-based Artists, Opening September 6**

**Great  
Rivers  
Biennial**

**August 19, 2024 (St. Louis, MO)**—The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM) and the Gateway Foundation present the ***Great Rivers Biennial 2024*** (GRB) featuring new works by St. Louis-based artists **Saj Issa, Basil Kincaid** and **Ronald Young**. The Great Rivers Biennial Art Award is a collaborative initiative established in 2003 between CAM and the Gateway Foundation. Every two years, the program grants emerging and mid-career artists working in the greater St. Louis metropolitan region with a significant honorarium and a major exhibition opportunity. This initiative, now in its 11th edition, has recognized the standout

creative voices of 33 local artists and contributed to the larger cultural ecosystem supporting artists in our region. *Great Rivers Biennial 2024: Saj Issa, Basil Kincaid, Ronald Young* will be on view from **September 6, 2024–February 9, 2025**.

The three award winners were unanimously chosen in summer 2023 by a distinguished panel of independent jurors: **Rita Gonzalez**, Terri and Michael Smooke Curator and Department Head of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art; **Jamillah James**, Manilow Senior Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago; and **Caroline Kent**, a Chicago-based artist and Assistant Professor of Painting at the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences at Northwestern University. The jurors made the selection after visiting the studios of ten semifinalist artists who were chosen from a pool of 96 applicants. The jurors will return to St. Louis to celebrate the opening of the exhibition and participate in a panel discussion with the awardees on September 7, 2024 at 11:00 am, which is free and open to the public.

**Great Rivers Biennial 2024 Exhibition**

**Saj Issa** is a Palestinian-American artist who draws on her experience living between St. Louis and Ramallah. Her multidisciplinary practice extends across painting, sculpture, ceramics, and video to consider the Palestinian landscape through environmental, historical, and contemporary lenses. Issa's body of work reflects changing notions of belonging and a sense of home, while honoring Palestine's culture and flora.

**Basil Kincaid's** impressively-scaled patchwork quilts unite vibrant compositions with elaborate embroidery, appliqué, and beading. He incorporates fabrics gifted to him by friends and family with textiles sourced in St. Louis and Ghana—including handwoven Ashanti Kente. This exhibition also features Kincaid's abstract works, which pay homage to undersung

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Hours  
10–5 Wed  
10–5 Thu  
10–8 Fri  
10–5 Sat & Sun

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African American quilters, influential artists including Alma Thomas and Paul Klee, as well as Color Field painting.

**Ronald Young** celebrates the hard-won beauty of uninhabited sites throughout St. Louis. Through his work, Young elevates salvaged materials including weathered domestic hardware, nails, and disintegrating wooden molding into compelling, multilayered sculptures. He shows us that even in the midst of crisis—or perhaps because of it—it is possible to find moments of beauty and reckoning.

*Great Rivers Biennial 2024* is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Dean Daderko, Ferring Foundation Chief Curator, and Misa Jeffereis, Associate Curator, with support from Grace Early, Exhibitions Assistant.

## GATEWAY FOUNDATION

The Great Rivers Biennial is made possible by the Gateway Foundation.

### About the Artists



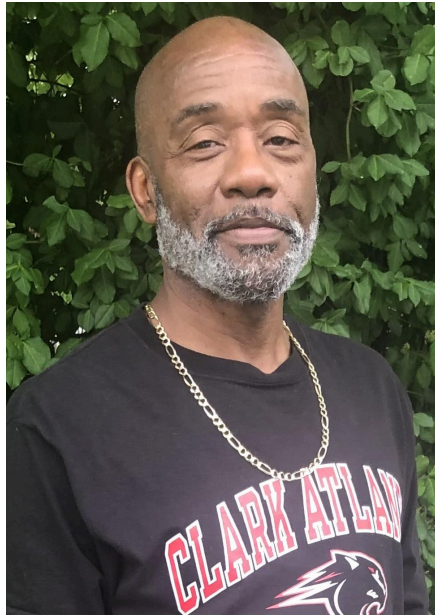
**Saj Issa** (b. 1994, St. Louis, MO) received a BFA from Webster University, St. Louis, and a MFA at the University of California, Los Angeles. Growing up between St. Louis and Ramallah, Palestine, her practice is an exploration of displacement, identity, social issues, and consumerism. Issa provokes, informs, and entertains viewers with her work, which has been exhibited at *Felix Art Fair* in Los Angeles, *Materials Fair* in Mexico City, the exhibition *Many* at the Craft Contemporary Museum, Los Angeles, and most recently, *Your Refuge* installed on the exterior of The Luminary as a part of *psa-stl*. Issa is a recipient of the 2022 NCECA Graduate Student Fellowship, and has been selected to appear in

*New American Paintings*, No. 159 & 165 MFA Annual Issue. She has been an artist-in-residence at Craft Alliance Center of Art and Design, St. Louis, and Belger Crane Yard Studio, Kansas City. *Photo: Saj Issa.*



**Basil Kincaid** (b. 1986, St. Louis, MO) is an artist who honors and evolves traditional practices through quilting, drawing, collaging, photography, installation, and performance. Kincaid received his BA in drawing and painting at Colorado College, Colorado Springs and has exhibited works with Hauser & Wirth, Mindy Solomon Gallery, Kravets

Wehby Gallery, Kavi Gupta Gallery, Carl Kostyál, and others. Kincaid has received fellowships from the Regional Arts Commission, St. Louis, and United States Artists. Recent solo exhibitions include *The New Bend* at Hauser & Wirth, New York and Los Angeles locations; *New African Portraiture* at the Kunsthalle Krems, Austria; *All in One Feeling* at Mindy Solomon Gallery, Miami; *Dancing the Wind Walk*, a semi-permanent fabric monument during Frieze Los Angeles 2023, with support from the Art Production Fund; and a ceremonial installation at Laumeier Sculpture Park in St. Louis, among others. Kincaid's work is in the collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. *Photo: Basil Kincaid Studio.*



**Ronald Young** (b. 1956, St. Louis, MO) creates mixed-media assemblages from objects he finds in his immediate environment: aged doors, old tools, wood molding trim, rusty chains, ropes, bricks, and nails are among the objects he salvages and repurposes in his practice. His socially-conscious artworks celebrate the resourcefulness and resilience of African Americans. A retired art teacher with over 33 years of experience, Young received his MFA from the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Art at Washington University in St. Louis, where he was the recipient of a Chancellor's Graduate Fellowship. He received a Fulbright Scholarship to study in Japan in 2007. Recent exhibitions of Young's work include the solo exhibition *The Prevalence of Ritual* at The Gallery at The Kranzberg and a group exhibition *Ferguson and Beyond: Artistic Responses to a Decade of Social Upheaval 2014-2024* at Webster University's Hunt Gallery. Young's works are in public

and private collections across the US, including the St. Louis University Art Museum and Clark Atlanta University, where Young received his undergraduate degree. *Photo: Ronald Young.*

### **Related Events**

#### **Friday, September 6**

Patron and Press Preview, 10:00–11:30 am (RSVP required)

Member Preview, 6:00–7:00 pm

Public Opening, 7:00–9:00 pm

#### **Saturday, September 7**

Panel Discussion

Great Rivers Biennial Artists and Jurors, 11:00 am–12:00 pm

#### **Friday, October 4**

First Friday: Celebrating Basil Kincaid, 5:00–9:00 pm

#### **Friday, November 1**

First Friday: Celebrating Ronald Young, 5:00–9:00 pm



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## Friday, February 7

First Friday: Celebrating Saj Issa, 5:00–9:00 pm

For press access on September 6, including interview opportunities with the artists, jurors, and curators, contact Alexia Majors at [amajors@camstl.org](mailto:amajors@camstl.org)

For full event details, visit [camstl.org/calendar](https://camstl.org/calendar)

### **About the Gateway Foundation**

Founded in 1986, the Gateway Foundation seeks to enrich life and culture in the St. Louis area by supporting efforts to acquire, create, or improve tangible and durable art and urban design. In 2009, the Foundation's largest project, a two-block sculpture park called Citygarden, opened in downtown St. Louis in the Gateway Mall. Notable installations can be seen by visiting Citygarden, the Missouri Botanical Garden, Washington University, the Central Library, The Science Center, and The Sheldon Concert Hall, to name just a few, with more than 70 installations throughout the region. Additionally, the Foundation has arranged for and funded the lighting of the Gateway Arch, St. Louis City Hall, the Old Courthouse, the Civil Courts Building, the City's three landmark Water Towers, and other historically important and/or architecturally significant structures, and has funded the building of several City playgrounds and parks. More information is available at [gateway-foundation.org](https://gateway-foundation.org) and [citygardenstl.org](https://citygardenstl.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](https://camstl.org).

###

Other exhibitions in St. Louis:

#### **Pulitzer Arts Foundation**

*Scott Burton: Shape Shift* on view Sep 6, 2024–Feb 2, 2025

*Brendan Fernandes: In Two* on view Sep 6, 2024–Feb 2, 2025

#### **Laumeier Sculpture Park**

*Monika Weiss: Metamorphosis (Sound Sculpture)* on view Aug 24–Dec 15, 2024

#### **Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum**

*Design Agendas: Modern Architecture in St. Louis, 1930s–1970s* on view Sep 13, 2024–Jan 6, 2025

**Saint Louis Art Museum**

*The Work of Art: The Federal Art Project, 1935–1943* on view Aug 2, 2024–Apr 13, 2025

*Narrative Wisdom and African Arts* on view Oct 19, 2024–Feb 16, 2025

*Currents 124: Crystal Z Campbell* on view Oct 25, 2024–Mar 9, 2025

*Bolts of Color: Printed Textiles after WWII* on view Nov 8, 2024–Apr 20, 2025



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