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Contemporary Art  
Museum St. Louis

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**CALL FOR ARTISTS: Great Rivers Biennial 2026 applications are now open to emerging and mid-career artists in the St. Louis metropolitan region**



**April 9, 2025 (St. Louis, MO)** - The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM) and the Gateway Foundation are proud to announce the call for artists for the [Great Rivers Biennial 2026](#). Established in 2003, the collaborative initiative grants three emerging and mid-career artists working in the greater St. Louis metropolitan region with an unrestricted cash award, and elevates their profiles through an exhibition and programming at CAM. Now in its 12th edition, the [Great Rivers Biennial](#) takes place every two years and has recognized the standout creative voices of 36 local artists since its founding, contributing to the larger cultural ecosystem supporting artists in our region.

The Gateway Foundation has raised its artist honorarium to \$25,000, up from \$20,000, for selected artists who will be featured in the *Great Rivers Biennial 2026* exhibition, on view at CAM from **September 11, 2026–February 7, 2027**.

“It is profoundly evident how the Great Rivers Biennial has shaped the artistic landscape of St. Louis, deepened our appreciation for local talent, and connected it with the national art community over the past two decades,” said Lisa Melandri, Executive Director of CAM. “The Gateway Foundation’s generous increase of the award up to \$25,000 is a testament to its commitment to nurturing creativity, which will empower these artists to push the boundaries of their work in ways unimaginable.”

As with previous Biennials, a distinguished panel of jurors will review all submissions that meet the eligibility requirements. Ten artists, selected as semi-finalists, will receive studio visits from the jurors along with CAM curatorial staff in Summer 2025. Up to three artists will be selected for the award. The *Great Rivers Biennial 2026* jurors are **Jessica Hong**, Chief Curator at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City, **Margot Norton**, Chief Curator at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley,

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

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and a third juror forthcoming. The exhibition will be 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.

“We’re thankful to have such a partner as CAM in this endeavor. With each edition, the Great Rivers Biennial consistently identifies a trio of tremendously talented St. Louis based artists who always deliver a series of compelling work,” said Heather Sweeney, Executive Director of the Gateway Foundation. “The receipt of a competitive award is crucial to the success of the biennial, as it not only offers selected artists space to envision new pieces but elicits experimentation with mediums or perspectives outside of their existing body of work.”

### **Previous Great Rivers Biennial Recipients**

2024: Basil Kincaid, Saj Issa, and Ronald Young  
2022: Yowshien Kuo, Yvonne Osei, and Jon Young  
2020: Kahlil Robert Irving, Tim Portlock, and Rachel Youn  
2018: Addoley Dzegede, Sarah Paulsen, and Jacob Stanley  
2016: Lyndon Barrois Jr., Nanette Boileau, and Tate Foley  
2014: Brandon Anschutz, Carlie Trosclair, and Cayce Zavaglia  
2012: David Johnson, Asma Kazmi, and Mel Trad  
2010: Martin Brief, Sarah Frost, and Cameron Fuller  
2008: Juan William Chávez, Corey Escoto, and Michelle Oosterbaan  
2006: Jason Wallace Triefenbach, Moses, and Matthew Strauss  
2004: Jill Downen, Adam Frelin, and Kim Humphries

### **Eligibility Requirements**

The Great Rivers Biennial is open to artists working in all media, including drawing, ceramics, film and video, installation, painting, performance, photography, printmaking, sculpture, and textiles. To be eligible for this opportunity, artists must have lived within the following counties in Missouri and Illinois for at least one year prior to the application deadline and continue to reside in the area during the designated planning, production, and exhibition period:

- Missouri: St. Louis City, St. Louis County, Jefferson County, or St. Charles County
- Illinois: St. Clair County or Madison County

***Applications are due June 1, 2025, 11:59 pm CT. For complete eligibility requirements and to apply, visit [camstl.org/grb](https://camstl.org/grb).*** Additional eligibility questions can be directed to Grace Early, Exhibitions Assistant at [gearly@camstl.org](mailto:gearly@camstl.org).

### **Related Event**

#### **Great Rivers Biennial Application Workshop**

Tuesday, April 22, 2025, 6:00pm – 7:00pm

Eligible artists are encouraged to participate in a free workshop led by Midwest Artist Project Services co-founder Brigid Flynn on Tuesday, April 22 at CAM. The workshop will offer the opportunity to learn how to submit a competitive application, ask questions, and meet other applicants. Registration is required; visit [camstl.org](https://camstl.org)



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## About the Jurors



**Jessica S. Hong** is the Chief Curator at the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art in Kansas City, Missouri. She is formerly the Senior Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art at the Toledo Museum of Art where she organized the premiere of Stan Douglas's major film installation *Doppelgänger* in a U.S. institution, *Living Legacies: Art of the African American South*, *Alexandra Daisy Ginsberg—Machine Auguries: Toledo*, the artist's first U.S. solo presentation, and Toledo's presentation of *Marisol: A Retrospective*. Prior to the TMA, Hong was the inaugural Associate Curator of Global Contemporary Art at Dartmouth's Hood Museum of Art and Assistant Curator at the Institute of Contemporary Art/Boston. Before the ICA, she was part of the new Division of Modern and Contemporary Art that launched the renovated Harvard Art Museums. She was

previously based in New York and held curatorial positions at Independent Curators International (ICI), SculptureCenter, and the Whitney Museum of American Art. Hong received her B.A. from Barnard College, and M.A. from the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University. Photo: Flanders Creative



**Margot Norton** is Chief Curator at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA), where she leads the curatorial team and oversees the exhibition program. At BAMPFA she curated and co-curated *MATRIX 283/ Gabriel Chaile (2023)*; *MATRIX 286/Amol K. Patil (through April 2025)*; *To Exalt the Ephemeral: The (Im)permanent Collection (through July 2025)*; and the BAMPFA presentation of *Making Their Mark: Works from the Shah Garg Collection (through April 2025)*. Norton was previously Allen and Lola Goldring Senior Curator at the New Museum, New York, where she curated over forty exhibitions including recent solo shows with Carmen Argote, Diedrick Brackens, Lynn Hershman Leeson, Wangechi Mutu, Pepón Osorio, Mika Rottenberg, Bárbara

Wagner and Benjamin de Burca, and the 2021 New Museum Triennial: *Soft Water Hard Stone*. In 2017, she curated the Sequences Real Time Art Festival in Reykjavik, Iceland, and the Georgian Pavilion at the 2019 Venice Biennale with artist Anna K.E. She regularly contributes to exhibition catalogues and publications and is also co-founder and current editorial council member of Museums Moving Forward, an independent, limited-life organization devoted to envisioning and creating a more just museum sector by 2030. She holds an MA in Curatorial Studies from Columbia University, New York. Photo: Elliott Jerome Brown Jr.

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

GATEWAY FOUNDATION



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### **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. From prominent public sites downtown to community college campuses in St. Louis County and a substantial installation site within the Missouri Botanical Garden, the Foundation has purchased and installed more than 70 sculptures in the area. Additionally, the Foundation has designed and funded the lighting of the Gateway Arch, City Hall, the Old Courthouse, the Civil Courts Building, the City's three landmark Water Towers, and other historically and architecturally significant structures. More information is available at [gateway-foundation.org](http://gateway-foundation.org) and [citygardenstl.org](http://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](http://camstl.org).