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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CAM presents new commission, *Hai-Wen Lin: Orientation*, on the Museum's Facade as part of Street Views series, opening September 5, 2025**



Hai-Wen Lin, *Orientation*; *1st Score*; *Movement for Two* (performance still), 2021. Photo courtesy of the artist.

**August 4, 2025 (St. Louis, MO)**—The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM) will present *Orientation*, a new video by Chicago-based artist Hai-Wen Lin. This marks Lin's first museum commission. Originally conceived in 2021 when it was performed by the artist with their collaborator Charlie Thornton, *Orientation* brings together the Chinese practice of feng shui and the popular party game Twister. For this commission, Lin and Thornton have organized a new performance for the camera, reimagining the performance as a video projection for CAM's facade as part of the Museum's ongoing Street Views series. *Hai-Wen Lin: Orientation* will be projected daily, from dusk to midnight, **September 5, 2025–February 8, 2026**.

In *Orientation*, two performers respond simultaneously to a series of spoken commands in two separate languages, which appear in the video as subtitles. The resulting performance fuses the elements of two seemingly disparate influences: the Chinese practice of feng shui, which strives to create harmony between people and their surroundings through the strategic arrangements of objects in space, and the popular party game Twister. In Twister, players compete to be the last person balanced on rows of red, yellow, blue, and green dots on a large plastic mat while they receive and respond to instructions like "left hand, red. Right foot, yellow" until someone (or everyone) reaches their physical limits and collapses.

In *Orientation*, Lin reacts only to instructions offered in Mandarin, while Thornton follows a differing set of commands in English. Lin has also adapted the classic Twister format by offering cardinal directions in lieu of colors: “Right foot, south. Left hand, northeast.” For Lin, the task of orienting oneself in the performance is just as much a mental struggle to focus on the directions in Mandarin as it is a physical one to move their body. Across CAM’s 61-foot wide projection, a larger-than-life pair of bodies grapples, engages, accommodates, and supports one another. This choreography becomes a dance of mutual support and care as Lin and Thornton move with and around one another.

Lin appreciates feminist writer Sara Ahmed’s book *Queer Phenomenology*, in which she explores what it means for bodies to be situated in space and time. “Bodies take shape as they move through the world, directing themselves toward or away from objects.” In this formulation, an orientation is an attraction to those bodies or objects we feel compatible with. Ahmed continues: “queerness disrupts or reorders these relations by not following accepted paths.” For Lin, the goal of *Orientation* is not to follow a linear path toward victory, but to model a world organized around recognizing and celebrating difference. *Orientation* offers a (dis)oriented place where we revel in seeing each other succeed, and where hands are extended in assistance.

### **Related Events**

#### **Friday, September 5**

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

#### **Thursday, October 23**

Artist Talk: Hai-Wen Lin, 6:00 pm–7:00 pm

*Hai-Wen Lin: Orientation* 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.

This exhibition and Street Views are generously supported in part by Whitaker Foundation.

## **WHITAKER FOUNDATION**

*CAM will host a press preview on September 5, 2025. For press inquiries, including access to the preview or interview opportunities with the artist or curator, contact Alexia Majors at [amajors@camstl.org](mailto:amajors@camstl.org)*

## **About the artist**



**Hai-Wen Lin** (b. 1994 in Urbana, IL) is an artist living somewhere beneath the sky. Their work explores constructions of the body and the attunement of oneself to the environment, often working through metaphor, etymology, sunlight, wind, and the way time passes perfectly when you are out walking on a beautiful day. Lin is an alumnus of the Skowhegan School of Painting and Sculpture and received a M.Des in Fashion, Body and Garment from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. They are one of the American Craft Council's 2024 Emerging Artists and a 2023 CFDA Fashion Future Graduate, as well as a recipient of a LeRoy Neiman Summer Fellowship at Ox-Bow School of Art, the Fall 2023 Hopper Prize, and a MacDowell Fellowship in Visual Arts. Lin has been an artist-in-residence at Bemis Center for

Contemporary Arts and the Grand Canyon National Park, among others. Lin has exhibited work at the Chinese American Museum of Chicago, the San Jose Museum of Quilts and Textiles, the Pittsburgh Glass Center, the walls of their home, their friend's home, on a plate, on a lake, on their body, in the air. Photo: Wassaic Project.

## **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).

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