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Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Celebrate World AIDS Day with Day With(out) Art featuring a virtual screening and conversation on December 1



Still from *Realce (Highlight)*, directed by Camilo Tapia Flores.

November 17, 2025 (St. Louis, MO)—The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis commemorates World AIDS Day with a virtual screening and conversation, [Day With\(out\) Art](#), on Monday, December 1, from 6:00–7:30 pm. Presented in partnership with Visual AIDS, this event features newly commissioned short films exploring drug user experiences and harm reduction practices as they intersect with the ongoing HIV crisis. The screening will be followed by a live talkback moderated by Michelle Dezember, CAM's Director of Learning and Engagement, and Crystal Ellis, owner of Crystallized Sexuality, LLC.

Day With(out) Art is a national program that originated in 1989 on [World AIDS Day](#) to honor the lives and artistic contributions of those lost to the AIDS crisis. For the past fifteen years, Visual AIDS has commissioned new video works and partnered with hundreds of arts and community organizations to present screenings that continue to de-stigmatize HIV, encourage care for those living with HIV, and support ongoing advocacy and education.

Featuring work by filmmakers **Kenneth Idongesit Usoro** (Nigeria), **Hoàng Thái Anh** (Vietnam), **Gustavo Vinagre** and **Vinicius Couto** (Brazil/Portugal), **Camilo Tapia Flores**

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Hours
10–5 Wed
10–5 Thu
10–8 Fri
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CAM is free. Visit often!

(Chile/Brazil), **Camila Flores-Fernández** (Peru/Germany), and **José Luis Cortés** (Puerto Rico), “Meet Us Where We’re At” amplifies the voices of drug users as cultural producers, storytellers, and essential participants in the global response to HIV. Harm reduction has long been central to the AIDS movement, including practices such as needle exchange programs and safe injection sites. This year’s program brings these practices and personal experiences to the forefront, highlighting the ongoing role of care, advocacy, and community-led survival strategies.

Visitors interested in viewing the films in their entirety are encouraged to attend the [Day With\(out\) Art Drop-In Film Screenings](#) at CAM on Friday, December 5, from 10:00 am–9:00 pm. The films will be screened on loop throughout the day in a dedicated screening space on Level 2 of the Museum, adjacent to a pop-up display of a portion of the AIDS Memorial Quilt. Program runtime is approximately one hour.

Day With(out) Art is presented in partnership with Visual AIDS. This event is free and open to all; advance registration is encouraged at camstl.org.

Visual AIDS

Accessibility and Content Notes

As this is a program centering harm reduction it will contain depictions of sexual activity and drug use. This event takes place on zoom. Registered users will receive a link. To request an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter for this event, please contact programs@camstl.org with as much prior notice possible to ensure availability.

Event Details

What: Day With(out) Art Virtual Screening

When: Monday, December 1, 2025

Time: 6:00–7:30 pm

Where: Zoom

Cost: Free (registration encouraged at camstl.org)

What: Day With(out) Art Drop-In Film Screenings

When: Friday, December 5, 2025

Time: 10:00 am–9:00 pm

Where: Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (3750 Washington Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108)

Cost: Free



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About the Videos

***Voices of Resilience*, directed by Kenneth Idongesit Usoro:** *Voices of Resilience* follows the lives of queer individuals and drug users living with HIV in Nigeria. Through personal interviews and experimental visual storytelling, the film shows the protagonists' worlds as they seek out underground harm reduction services.

***The Sister's Journey*, directed by Hoàng Thái Anh:** Through a documentary style, *The Sister's Journey* explores the daily life of a transgender woman in Vietnam using drugs. The film delves into her fear of stigma, struggles she faces, and the vital role of harm reduction services and healthcare available to her.

***chempassion*, directed by Gustavo Vinagre and Vinicius Couto:** In the magical realist film, *chempassion*, a gay man reminisces about his orgy days and chem sex, and considers his future while speaking with an apparition of G.H., a canonical fictional character of Brazilian literature.

***Realce (Highlight)*, directed by Camilo Tapia Flores:** *Realce* is a documentary short following two HIV-positive friends, DJ Deseo and porn actor Fernando Brutto, during one of their performances at Rio de Janeiro's Carnival. The duo move through the streets of Rio and Carnival "blocos," sharing their reflections on friendship, undetectability, their relationship with sex, and drug use within their own community.

***Ghost in the Park*, directed by Camila Flores-Fernández:** *Ghost in the Park* traces the narratives of the community of Görlitzer Park, an area in Berlin known for public drug use and trade. Highlighting "drug consumption buses" that promote safer use and aim to reduce HIV transmission among drug users, the space of the bus is taken as an axis through which the experiences and feelings of the community around the park are amplified.

***¿Por qué tanto dolor? (Why so much pain?)*, directed by José Luis Cortés:** Instead of asking, "Why so much meth in the gay community?," Cortés's experimental film provokes the deeper question, "Why so much pain?" The film delves into the emotional and social wounds that fuel addiction and risk-taking behaviors.

The artists in this program were selected by a jury of artists/community workers including Eva Dewa Masyitha, Heather Edney, Charles Ryan Long, and Leo Herrera. For more information, visit visualaids.org.



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About Crystal Ellis

Crystal Ellis (she/her) is the founder of Crystallized Sexuality, which offers the sex education adults desire, along with customized toolkits to gain confidence in relationships and expand their capacity for pleasure.

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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