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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CAM presents a video by Ayana Evans on the Museum's facade, opening March 6 in anticipation of the performance artist's fall 2026 survey exhibition



Ayana Evans, *You gotta watch this sh*t* (still), 2018. Photo courtesy of the artist.

January 21, 2026 (St. Louis, MO)—The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM) will present the exhibition *Teaser* by New York-based performance artist Ayana Evans, as part of the Museum's ongoing Street Views series. *Teaser* showcases the video work, *You gotta watch this sh*t* (2018), in which Evans mugs for the camera and explores constructions of identity and character. [Ayana Evans: Teaser](#) will be presented from **March 6–August 9, 2026** with the video projected on CAM's facade daily from dusk to midnight.

Evans moves fluidly between video, performance, and live arts, employing humor and directness to challenge assumptions about identity. Within the artist's practice, performance and live arts are often therapeutic—Evans uses them to generate moments of vulnerability, to resist imposed narratives, and to reclaim agency through embodied action. She consistently pokes at established social structures that shape perception and behavior, while she advocates for empathy, complexity, and lived connection.

In *You gotta watch this sh*t*, Evans performs for the camera in one of her signature neon green, zebra-striped catsuits against a similarly patterned backdrop. In tightly framed shots

that focus on her face and gestures, Evans cycles through exaggerated expressions, emotional registers, and poses, confronting viewers with shifting performances of identity. She exposes dissonances between character and self, surface and interiority, as she invites viewers to reflect on the variability and instability of selfhood. Her performances destabilize expectations of a singular “authentic” self, and open space for multiplicity, contradiction, and self-determination.

Wearing hyper-visible clothing initially served as a way for the artist to test her own self-confidence, and Evans now uses it to draw attention to how appearance shapes perception, revealing societal assumptions that are projected onto bodies—especially those of Black women. Over time, her brightly-colored catsuits have become a signature uniform, and operate as both armor and invitation.

The exhibition title *Teaser* reflects the emotional playfulness of this video work, and signals what is to come next fall. “*Teaser* anticipates a comprehensive exhibition celebrating Ayana Evans’s longtime commitment to live arts, and we’re so pleased that CAM’s audiences have an opportunity to experience Ayana’s work as a part of Street Views.” says Dean Daderko, Ferring Foundation Chief Curator. “We are eager for everyone to not only see more of Evans’s work, but also to watch her perform, and perhaps to participate in it themselves.” Evans’s survey exhibition—*Nobody’s Gonna Love You the Way I Do*—will be on view at CAM next season from September 10, 2026 through February 7, 2027.

Ayana Evans: Teaser is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Dean Daderko, Ferring Foundation Chief Curator, with support from Grace Early, Exhibitions Assistant.

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

W H I T A K E R F O U N D A T I O N

CAM will host a press preview on March 6, 2026. For press inquiries, including access to the preview or interview opportunities with the artist or curator, contact Alexia Majors at amajors@camstl.org

About the artist



Ayana Evans (b. Chicago, IL) is a NYC-based performance artist whose guerilla-style work has been staged at El Museo del Barrio, The Barnes Foundation, The Bronx Museum, Crystal Bridges Museum, Newark Museum, Queens Museum, and various public spaces. Her performances have been reviewed in *The New York Times*, *Bomb Magazine*, *ArtNet*, *Hyperallergic*, and *New York Magazine's The Cut*. She received the Franklin Furnace Fund (2017–18), NYFA Fellowship (2018), Jerome Hill Artist Fellowship (2021–22), was Professor of the Practice at



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Brown University (2021–22), and won the 2022 Chamberlain Award at Headlands Art Center. Residencies include Yaddo, Skowhegan, Vermont Studio Center, and Robert Blackburn Printmaking Workshop. Her current solo projects include exhibitions at Loyola University (Spring 2025) and Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (2026), and an annual arts career fair serving 200+ formerly incarcerated individuals. Evans is currently a professor at Fordham University, Brooklyn College, and NYU.

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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