

Mesh

Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis
Magazine 2026-27

Front cover
Andrea Carlson: Endless Sunshine, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, March 6–August 9, 2026. Photo: Izaiah Johnson.

Inside front cover
Photo: Tyler Small.

About CAM

The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis works to enrich lives through experiences with contemporary art. Focused on a dynamic array of changing exhibitions, CAM contributes to the global and local cultural landscape. CAM is a site for discovery, free and open to all.

CAM is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. Exhibitions, programs, and general operations are funded through contributions from generous individuals, foundations, corporations, and public funders.

General operating support is provided by Clayco; Edward Jones; Missouri Arts Council, a state agency, with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts; Trio Foundation of St. Louis; and CAM Board of Directors and members.

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Generous loans of artwork to CAM exhibitions are provided by Teresa Baker; Jessica and Marwan Bitar; Andrea Carlson; Sara Carter; de boer, Los Angeles & Antwerp; Ayana Evans; Forge Project Collection; Gochman Family Collection; Jersey Heritage Collections; Kukje Gallery; kurimanzutto, Mexico City / New York; Hai-Wen Lin; Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art; Mary Patricia Anderson Pence; Private Collection; Private Collection, Los Angeles, CA; Private Collection, Miami, FL; Jessica Silverman, San Francisco; Dr. Jennifer Stevens; Tia Collection, Santa Fe, NM; Alix Umen; and Haegue Yang.

Support for CAM's learning and engagement programs is provided by Anonymous; Clayco; Counterpublic; Crawford Taylor Foundation; Dana Brown Charitable Trust, U.S. Bank Trustee; Employees Community Fund of Boeing; The Gellman Team; Great Rivers Greenway; The Mary Ranken Jordan and Ettie A. Jordan Charitable Foundation; Missouri Arts Council, a state agency; Norman K. Probstein Charitable Foundation; PNC Arts Alive; Pulitzer Arts Foundation; Regional Arts Commission; Robert Lehman Foundation; The Saigh Foundation; Ann Y. Sheehan; Jeanne C. and Rex A. Sinquefield; St. Louis Philanthropic Organization, Inc.; Stantec; The Strive Fund; and The Terry and Phyllis Weiss Youth Education Fund.

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**deceased*

Letter from the Director

Dear Friends,

CAM's existence is a crucial component of our city's creative landscape. The work we do, the ability to engage with over 30,000 people each year, is only amplified by being part of St. Louis's extraordinary arts ecosystem. I've spent a great deal of time with colleagues across arts and culture disciplines, and together, we create a city that is truly great to live and thrive in. Our spaces, whether a museum or stage, allow us to generate opportunities for everyone to experience wonder, learning, and joy.

We have lived up to our promise of giving a global view into what contemporary art can be. Our exhibitions moved between past and present with purpose, honoring the legacies of those who came before while providing a reverent look at the histories shaping our world.

Teresa Baker's most comprehensive presentation to date explored land as a holder of people, culture, and memory. Haegue Yang's meditation on place and ancestry culminated in a newly commissioned sculpture inspired by Cahokia Mounds. Hai-Wen Lin transformed our facade into a personal negotiation between language, space, and identity. Andrea Carlson challenged the colonial impulse to own and consume landscapes using a distinct visual language. Claude Cahun and Marcel Moore reminded us that art has always been resistance work, which feels as urgent now as ever. And through our Street Views series, Ayana Evans illuminated Grand Center with a *Teaser* of what's to come.

As for youth education and programming, our monthly Play Dates and summer Family Day welcomed families to celebrate creativity and pure fun. Teen Museum Studies collaborated with Janie Stamm on *Mermaid's Purse*, giving students a direct hand in shaping the Museum experience. And through ArtReach, artworks by Sumner and Vashon students traveled to Lambert International Airport, greeting millions with their vision for St. Louis.

Even amid external financial challenges, we presented over 100 programs—majority free—connecting visitors with exhibiting artists and building meaningful partnerships with St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis, Cahokia Historic Site, SLU Vogue, Brickline North CDC, and many more.

The coming season brings the return of Ayana Evans, her first museum survey exhibition celebrating her dedication to live arts. In collaboration with Counterpublic, we're honored to share the first presentation of Juanita McNeely's work in her hometown, and video works by Tony Cokes highlighting St. Louis's musical legacy. *Great Rivers Biennial 2026* features work by local artists Vaughn Terrell Davis Jr., Lauren dela Roche, and Vincent Stemmler. And further on the horizon is *Time Hop*, a group exhibition that considers how artists channel the past to inform the future.

We walk into this next chapter with great satisfaction, knowing that St. Louis remains a landmark for discovery and for possibility. We are grateful, every day, to be an important part of that number and we cannot wait for you to witness what's ahead!





Lisa Melandri
Executive Director

Lisa Melandri. Photo: Justin Solomon.

Visitor Grams

Come in, see art, for free!
Everyone is welcome at CAM.













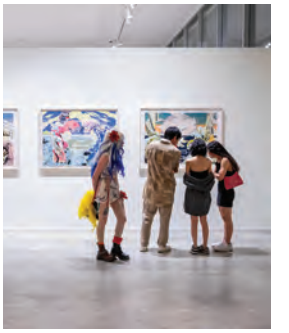


























Photos: Wil Driscoll and Tyler Small.



John Cameron Mitchell at Behind This Mask: Celebrating Claude Cahun and Marcel Moore. Photo: Wil Driscoll.

Happenings & Highlights

ArtReach at St. Louis Lambert



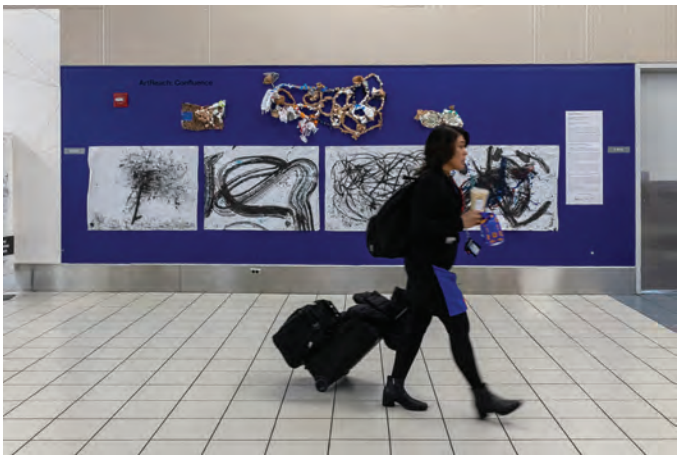
ArtReach: Zines as Activism, installation view, St. Louis Lambert International Airport, July 23–December 15, 2026. Photo: Jane DiCampo.

International Airport

Presented as part of the Lambert Art and Culture Program, works by student artists from Sumner and Vashon High Schools have greeted millions of travelers with a vision of St. Louis, uplifting regional pride while elevating the visitor experience.

CAM's *ArtReach: Confluence* landed on the East Wall in Terminal 2 last winter. Students worked under the guidance of Resident Teaching Artists Adrienne Outlaw and Dee Levang to explore the theme of "confluence," honoring the waterways that shape St. Louis's identity and the coming together of artistic disciplines. Students worked in a "flow" state with water-based media, experimenting across mediums and finding ways to repurpose post-consumer plastic pollution from the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. The exhibition was on view through June 2026.

Taking its place is *ArtReach: Zines as Activism*, developed in partnership with Counterpublic. This exhibition showcases a selection of prints created by Sumner student artists that explore their criticisms and aspirations for a better future. Under the direction of RTA Cleonique Hilsaca, who drew on her experiences as an immigrant Latinx artist and zinester, students engaged in research, drawing, screen-printing, and self-publishing alongside visits with local artists, printing workshops, and a trip to the Zine & Minicomic Collection at the St. Louis Public Library. *ArtReach: Zines as Activism* is on view at St. Louis Lambert International Airport near Gate E14 in Terminal 2 and will remain on view through December 15, 2026.



ArtReach: Confluence, installation view, St. Louis Lambert International Airport, December 18, 2025–June 18, 2026. Photo: Jane DiCampo.

New Publications Bridge Art and Environment

In the past year, CAM has produced two publications that have contributed new scholarship to the field, offering valuable insights into the work and artistic practice of many remarkable artists: *Like Water* and the *North St. Louis Creative Field Guide*.



Like Water cover. Designed by Ryan Polich.

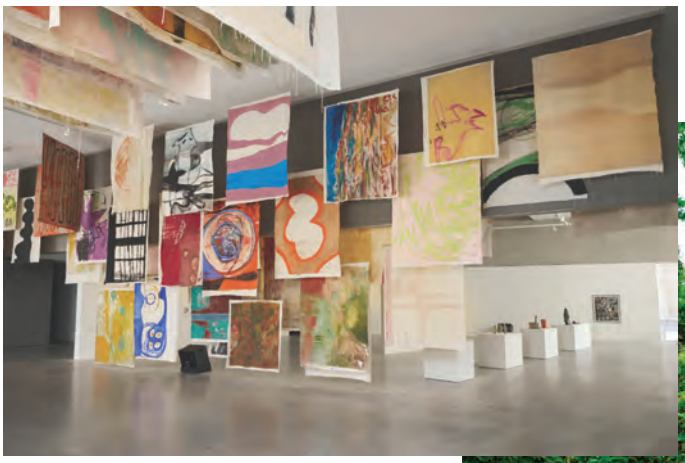
Like Water, presented during the spring/summer 2025 season, featured an international and multigenerational group of artists considering landscape as both a material condition and an interior emotional state. The catalog documents works by Jamal Cyrus, Simone Fattal, Dionne Lee, Candice Lin, Beatriz Santiago Muñoz, Vivian Suter, and features over 30 full-color images of the exhibition. This publication includes a foreword by Executive Director Lisa Melandri, acknowledgements and an essay by Ferring Foundation Chief Curator Dean Daderko, and more.



North St. Louis Creative Field Guide cover. Designed by WORK/PLAY.

The *North St. Louis Creative Field Guide* grew from a resident- and artist-led project exploring nature as an art studio for wellbeing, community building, and renewed investment in place. Designed by WORK/PLAY, this 132-page, full-color book includes essays, photographs, and artworks preserving knowledge about art and nature in North St. Louis. Contributors include project curator Michelle Dezember; lead artists Dail Chambers and Juan William Chávez; community engagement lead Alexis Creamer; and working group members Cary Brown, Gabi Cole, AleXeana harlem, Tosha Phonix, Rev. LaQuindlyn Shanae, Ronda Smith Branch, and Frankie Williams. The Field Guide is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis.

Both publications, along with past CAM exhibition publications, are available for purchase at the CAM shop where members receive a 10% discount.



Like Water, installation view. Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, March 7–August 10, 2025. © Vivian Suter. Courtesy of the artist and Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis. Photo: Izaiah Johnson.



Ronda Smith Branch. Photo: Tyler Small.

Haegue Yang's *Mound Vehicles*





(above) Exhibiting artist Haegue Yang with Associate Curator Misa Jeffereis and local facilitators for the *Mound Vehicles* activation, Mee Jey, Marina Peng, Chanel Thomas, Rodrick Whetstone, and Gray Wilde. Photo: Tyler Small. (below) Haegue Yang's *Mound Vehicles* activation on September 5, 2025. Photo: Tyler Small.

To mark her exhibition, *Quasi-Heartland*, CAM commissioned Haegue Yang to create a new work responding to the Museum's architecture and the St. Louis region's precolonial history. The resulting sculpture, *Mound Vehicle*s, was inspired by Yang's 2024 visit to Cahokia Mounds and engages with the Mississippi River landscape that surrounds it.

A room-sized installation featuring Yang's signature Venetian blinds in blue and green, *Mound Vehicles* carries layered meaning in its materials: green references the grass covering existing mounds, while blue represents the Mississippi River and subterranean water. Taking the shape of a mound in four component parts, the sculpture is outfitted with branch-like handlebars and casters, designed to be mobilized by facilitators through a series of choreographed movements.

To celebrate the commission, *Mound Vehicles* was activated during CAM's opening weekend and at each First Friday throughout the exhibition's run. Facilitated by Mee Jey, Marina Peng, Chanel Thomas, Rodrick Whetstone, and Gray Wilde, each activation lasted approximately 10 minutes and drew crowds of up to 100 visitors—many returning throughout the season to experience the work again.

Some sites and histories transcend time. As Yang put it, "inspiration is holistic" and *Mound Vehicles* reminds us that the most ancient places still have something to say, and that art remains one of the most powerful ways to listen.

Curators from across the US visit St. Louis

In July, CAM and the Pulitzer Arts Foundation co-hosted the 2026 Contemporary Curators Conference. More than 60 curators from across the United States gathered in St. Louis for three days of discussions and visits throughout the city and its environs. Co-hosts Dean Daderko, Ferring Foundation Chief Curator at CAM, and Stephanie Weissberg, Senior Curator at Pulitzer Arts Foundation, noted that "it was a pleasure spending time with all of our colleagues, and visiting the exceptional museums, collections, and cultural organizations that define St. Louis's contemporary art community."



Photo: CAM staff.

Planned Giving at CAM

The Visionary Society is CAM's planned giving program for those who wish to leave a lasting legacy in contemporary art and our community. Since its founding, CAM has been shaped by supporters committed to its mission of bringing new ideas and perspectives into public conversation. The Visionary Society carries that spirit forward, inviting you to have your own legacy entwined with the Museum's future.

Joining the Visionary Society means standing alongside supporters who believe in art's power to inspire, challenge, and transform. Planned gifts, including bequests, securities, and real estate, give CAM the freedom to take bold artistic risks, champion emerging artists, and offer free programs to thousands each year. Together, we can preserve a lasting legacy of bold, transformative art in St. Louis.

To learn more about joining, contact Sherry Thomas, Director of Development, at sthomas@camstl.org or 314-446-7494.



Photo: Tyler Small.

CAM's Café Offers a Moment to Take an Art Break

















With a new seasonal menu, CAM's café features some of the best local flavors including fresh sandwiches, salads, and pastries from Winslow's Table, Goshen coffee, Big Heart Teas, and sweet frozen treats from Poptimism and Ted Drewes. Whether you're meeting a colleague for coffee, catching up with friends over lunch, or simply looking for a little creative inspiration, the café is a welcoming spot to enjoy great food and see some art too.

The café is open Wednesday–Saturday from 10:00 am–3:00 pm. Every purchase benefits the Museum. CAM members receive a 10% discount.



Photos: Izaiah Johnson.

Teresa Baker: Somewhere Between Earth and Sky



Teresa Baker: Somewhere Between Earth and Sky, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 5, 2025–February 8, 2026. Photo: Izaiah Johnson.

Travels Across the US

A hallmark of CAM's programming has been presenting significant, early-career solo exhibitions including Amy Sherald, Sanford Biggers, Cindy Sherman, and Paul Mpagi Sepuya, among others. *Teresa Baker: Somewhere Between Earth and Sky*, which opened last fall at CAM, continues this trajectory. Visitors outside St. Louis will soon have a chance to explore Baker's work when the exhibition travels to the Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, where it will be on view from March 27–August 29, 2027, and later at the Abroms-Engel Institute for the Visual Arts at the University of Alabama in Birmingham from September 30, 2027–March 18, 2028.

Ferring Foundation Chief Curator Dean Daderko states, "I'm thrilled to bring this compelling work by a rising star to new audiences in Los Angeles and Birmingham. Baker's large-scale, colorful artworks on artificial turf adopt the language of painting, and connect her deep appreciation of Modernist abstraction with references to her Native American Mandan/Hidatsa heritage."



CAM exhibiting artist Teresa Baker in conversation with Ferring Foundation Chief Curator Dean Daderko. Photo: CAM staff.

CAM People



Photo: Tyler Small.

New Board Members





Photo: Paige Miller.

Building Community

Poonnasa Corn

Poonnasa Corn is focused on building community in St. Louis. As financial services executive and advisor at Compass Retirement Solutions, she leads strategy and operations while also working directly with individuals, families, and communities—an aspect of her work she especially enjoys. Originally from Thailand, Corn has lived in St. Louis for more than 20 years and proudly calls it home. “The decision to join CAM’s Board was an easy one,” says Corn. “It reflects my desire to give back to the community that has given me so much, while supporting an institution that brings people together through creativity and new perspectives.”

She is particularly drawn to contemporary art’s ability to spark curiosity, challenge the way we see the world, and create conversations across different backgrounds and experiences. As a Board member, “I appreciate the opportunities to contribute my business and community experience while supporting CAM’s work to make contemporary art engaging and accessible to the broader audiences across the St. Louis community.”

Focusing on Positive Impact

Ashley Elchert

For Ashley Elchert, her decision to join CAM’s Board was deeply personal. She has seen firsthand through her children how art and creativity can shape a person’s confidence and identity, and truly help them thrive. It was important to her to support an institution like CAM that creates access and belonging through art. “Serving on the Board has given me a deeper understanding of the thought, care, and vision required to make contemporary art engaging and accessible to diverse audiences.”

“What resonates most with me is its commitment to making art accessible to all and creating space for new ideas, perspectives, and conversations,” says Elchert. That commitment aligns closely with the purpose of Edward Jones, where Elchert serves as a General Partner. “At Edward Jones, we focus on opportunities for positive impact to improve the lives of our clients and colleagues and, together, better our communities and society. That is something I see at CAM too. Both organizations are grounded in creating opportunities for people to connect, grow, and contribute to a stronger community.”



Examining Ideas

Dennis Hyland

As a senior architect with Kiku Obata and Company, Dennis Hyland's work requires a delicate balance of community collaboration and creative innovation. He appreciates the thoughtful architecture of CAM and the building's ability to adapt in ways that accommodate art in so many forms. "I see it as a place to expand our thinking and examine ideas and issues through different lenses—a welcome respite," says Hyland. "The ideas that have informed my practice of architecture and design—history, culture, community, livability, quality of life—mirror issues confronted by artists and curators through CAM's exhibitions. I felt joining CAM's Board was an opportunity to continue to learn from voices that are current and relevant to contemporary culture."

He and his wife, Eleanor, have been in CAM's orbit for many years and have continued to follow the vibrant art scene in St. Louis. They feel fortunate to witness the emergence of the cultural district that includes CAM, the Pulitzer Arts Foundation, and, most recently, Counterpublic. "I'm excited about the growing relationships between CAM and its neighbors and the opportunities for collaboration. Free access to art and ideas provides a richer experience for all in St. Louis."



Committed to Community Engagement

Melanie Schmickle

As an attorney, Melanie Schmickle has dedicated much of her career to strengthening organizations that enrich the St. Louis region. Joining CAM's Board was an opportunity to continue that work. "CAM's mission immediately resonated with me because I believe the arts play a vital role in helping people more fully express their humanity, creativity, and perspectives," says Schmickle. "I share the belief that art should be accessible, thought-provoking, and relevant to everyday life. I admire the Museum's commitment to community education and its ability to create spaces where people of all backgrounds can engage with new ideas, challenge assumptions, and explore different forms of expression."

As a member of the Development Committee, Schmickle values the opportunity to support an institution that is both culturally significant and deeply connected to the community. Her prior board service with area organizations has reinforced her appreciation for mission-driven governance and collaborative leadership. "At CAM, I am inspired by the dedication of fellow Board members and staff who are committed to expanding access to contemporary art and meaningful educational experiences." Schmickle sees CAM's ability to connect contemporary art with learning opportunities as a way to extend its impact far beyond the Museum's walls, making it a valuable asset to the St. Louis community.



In Memoriam

John H. Ferring IV

Our dear friend John Ferring passed away on March 2, 2026. A champion of St. Louis arts and culture, John's commitment to CAM spanned decades and took many forms. He served on the Board of Directors, including a term as board president from 2004 to 2007, chaired CAM's first endowment campaign, and later co-chaired the second alongside Alison Ferring from 2015 to 2021. He and Alison also co-chaired Create: The CAMpaign, the Museum's major fundraising initiative.

John understood how transformational art is. How being surrounded by it makes life more thoughtful, more meaningful. He lived that belief and brought it with him everywhere he went. A devoted philanthropist and trusted thought partner, John's generosity touched every corner of this institution and well beyond it. John and Alison have been the people who make things happen, keeping CAM vibrant, alive, and flourishing. Our Museum is, in part, their legacy as John's impact and presence are woven into the very walls of CAM. We feel this loss keenly, and we are eternally grateful for his many contributions to our institution and to St. Louis.



Members of CAM's Friends Board at the 2025 Contemporary Circle Celebration. Photo: Tyler Small.

CAM's Junior Board is now the Friends Board

Over the past two decades, CAM's Junior Board has brought extraordinary energy, creativity, and dedication to the Museum. This year, we are evolving that group into something even more expansive. We are proud to introduce the CAM Friends Board. The Friends Board builds on everything the Junior Board has represented—passion, ambassadorship, and a true commitment to growing contemporary art's reach in St. Louis—while opening the door wider. By moving beyond specific age ranges and years of experience, the Friends Board becomes a more inclusive, capable, and diverse body of advocates for this Museum. Members will serve as ambassadors in the community, help build new partnerships, bring prospective members through our doors, and show up for CAM in ways big and small throughout the year.

Beyond a simple name change, this transition marks the expansion of our community, and it reflects exactly what CAM is about: making space for more voices, more perspectives, and more people to be part of something meaningful.

For information on joining CAM's Friends Board, contact members@camstl.org.



Back row: Rodrick Whetsone, Milton Stevenson, Grant Benoit. Front row: Joni Gordon, Andrew Catanese and Hufsa Adeen. Photo: CAM staff.

Inspiring the Next Generation

Our Resident Teaching Artists (RTAs) set CAM's education programming apart from others. Each academic year, CAM hires RTAs to lead our ArtReach in-school programs and teen studio programs at the Museum. They meet regularly to form a community of practice that includes skill sharing and professional development, and work closely with students to realize their work. Some RTAs collaborate with CAM staff to organize an exhibition of student work in our Education Galleries—allowing students to see their work in their hometown Museum and share it with their friends and family. Thank you to all of our RTAs, past and present, who work hard to inspire the next generation of artists in our community. We couldn't do it without you!

All are Welcome at CAM

At CAM, it is important that we are a space that is inviting and welcoming to all. Whether it is your first visit to an art museum or you are a frequent visitor, we appreciate that you are at CAM. Our talented and dedicated Visitor Experience team is here to greet visitors, answer questions, and ensure that everyone feels welcome.



CAM's Visitor Experience Team. Photo: CAM staff.

CAM People

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Ash Anders
Facilities Manager
Brandon Barr
Teen and Adult Programs Manager
Alexia Brown
Communications Manager
Bernadette Burrus
Café Coordinator
Erica Buss
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David Tanner
Deputy Director
Sherry Thomas
Director of Development

Visitor Experience Associates

Joshua Boysaw
Lead Visitor Experience Associate
Chanel Thomas
Lead Visitor Experience Associate
Naysa Adams
Juliette Callahan

Installation Crew

Teron Bowman II
Mad Green
Kevin Harris
Ennis Kristiansen
Destiney Lomax
Jackson Hescock
Tara Phelan
Frieda Silva
Chanel Thomas
Chuck Tucker

Resident Teaching Artists 2026–27

Hufsa Adeen
Grant Benoit
Andrew Catanese
Joni Gordon
Milton Stevenson
Rodrick Whetsone

Friends Board 2026–27

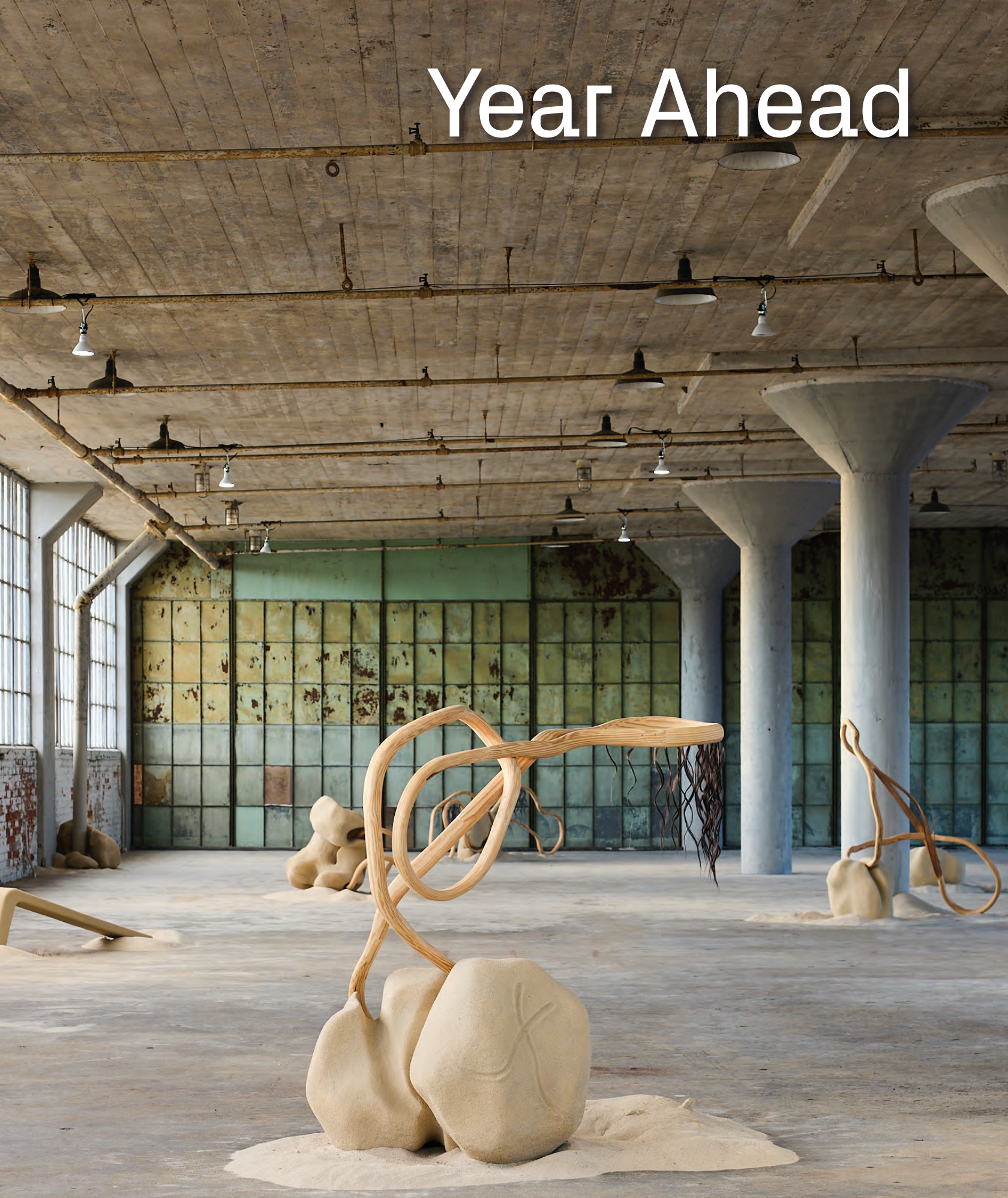
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CAM staff at the 2026 Spark Gala. Photo: Tyler Small.

Year Ahead



Blas Isasi, *1,001,532 CE*, 2024. Wood, steel, powder coat, modeling clay, hair extensions, polystyrene foam, unfired clay, spray paint, sand, water. Variable dimensions. Installation view, *Prospect.6: the future is present, the harbinger is home*, New Orleans, 2024. Photo: Alex Marks.

Fall/Winter 2026–27
Sep 10–Feb 7

Ayana Evans: Nobody's Gonna Love You the Way I Do

Trained as a painter, Ayana Evans has established an unapologetic and emotionally invigorating voice as a performance artist over the last two decades. In her early guerilla-style performances, Evans wore a neon green, zebra-striped catsuit in public to test her own self-confidence and gauge audience reactions. Since then, her work has become a vehicle for laying bare the ways class, race, gender, and sex can structure broader social attitudes. Orchestrating collective experiences, Evans generates work that is accessible, humorous, challenging, and often profound.

Nobody's Gonna Love You the Way I Do is the first museum survey exhibition of work by the Brooklyn-based performance artist. The exhibition includes documentation of works that span over twenty years of Evans's creative process: videos of guerilla performances, works staged for audiences across the world, ephemera, and a coat rack draped with feather boas—adornments that often figure in Evans's performances—comes with an open invitation for visitors to don them and walk a red carpet.

Ayana Evans: Nobody's Gonna Love You the Way I Do is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Dean Daderko, Ferring Foundation Chief Curator, with support from Grace Early, Exhibitions Assistant.



Ayana Evans, *Loophole of Retreat: Sparkle #5: I Love You*. Performance still, *Loophole of Retreat* symposium, Venice, October 2022. Photo: Glorija Blazinsek.

This exhibition is generously supported in part by Shereen and Michael Fischer, Pat Whitaker and Dick Miles, and Whitaker Foundation. The C.R.E.A.M. Fair is generously supported in part by Jenny Birgé and Alison and Sam Foxman.

WHITAKER
FOUNDATION

Figuring It Out Together: A Conversation with Ayana Evans



Ayana Evans at ViVA Performance Festival, Montreal. Photo: Paul Litherland.

Excerpt from a conversation between Ayana Evans and Ferring Foundation Chief Curator Dean Daderko

Dean Daderko: Your work is very improvisational. You don't always know exactly what you're going to do before you do it.

Ayana Evans: The last performance I did, I had a bunch of unknowns, and I was thrilled by it. I love figuring it out. To me, that's the most important part. If I'm figuring it out with the audience, then we bond. That's the meat of my art. It's not the finished product. Not the perfect photo. Not the moment at the end when everyone claps. We go through this whole journey together.

DD: Your performances are also therapeutic, for you and your audience.

AE: I think everybody has a hurt. In art, we talk about pain, but usually there's a barrier. I feel if I bring it up, I should also try to address how to make it better. I'm always thinking—How do you transcend that? And then also—How do you take up space with it? I want it to be in the atmosphere.

DD: During a recent performance in Montreal, you disclosed that you lost your worldly possessions in a catastrophic fire a month prior, and three days before that, you had an embryo implantation, which was unsuccessful due to the stress of the moment. You made yourself extremely vulnerable, and by sharing this, sought healing.

AE: There was a part of me that thought: I need hands laid on me. I don't believe a lot of things people say at church. But when someone prays over you and puts their hands on you and says "I wish good for you," it feels amazing. I wanted that, so I asked the audience to touch and sing to me. Even with language, racial and cultural barriers, they understood everything. Everybody connected. It WAS transformative.

Great Rivers Biennial 2026

The Great Rivers Biennial (GRB)—a collaborative initiative between CAM and the Gateway Foundation—recognizes and fosters artistic talent in the greater St. Louis metropolitan area. The three artists selected each receive $25,000 in unrestricted funding and an exhibition opportunity at CAM. Since 2003, the GRB has recognized the standout creative voices of 36 local artists in our region.

For *Great Rivers Biennial 2026*, artists Vaughn Terrell Davis Jr., Lauren dela Roche, and Vincent Stemmler will present ambitious exhibitions that explore figuration, gesture, materiality, and color through painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, video, and digital media.

Davis, dela Roche, and Stemmler were unanimously selected by a distinguished panel of independent jurors: Leslie Hewitt, artist and Associate Professor of Art at Rice University in Houston; Margot Norton, Chief Curator at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive in Berkeley; and Pavel Pyś, Curator of Visual Arts and Collections Strategy at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis.
This year's finalists were selected from a group of 10 semifinalist artists, and an overall pool of 93 applicants.

Great Rivers Biennial 2026 is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Dean Daderko, Ferring Foundation Chief Curator, and Misa Jeffereis, Associate Curator, with assistance from Grace Early, Exhibitions Assistant.

This exhibition is made possible by the Gateway Foundation. The artist talk is generously supported in part by the Robert Lehman Foundation.

Great Rivers Biennial

40 GATEWAY FOUNDATION
40 YEARS × SINCE 1986



From left to right: *Great Rivers Biennial 2026* exhibiting artists Vaughn Terrell Davis Jr., Lauren dela Roche, and Vincent Stemmler. Photo: Izaiah Johnson.



Vaughn Terrell Davis Jr., *A Subtle Reminder*, 2023. Acrylic, pigment, aerosol, and dye on canvas. 104 × 80 × 25 inches. Installation view, *Vaughn Terrell Davis. Jr.: Black Orchids*, Romer Young Gallery, San Francisco, 2025. Photo courtesy Romer Young Gallery.

Vaughn Terrell Davis Jr. pours richly pigmented acrylic paint onto raw canvas, soaking it in layers of vibrant, saturated color. Once dry, he uses blades to incise, shred, and unravel the fabric's warp and weft. Davis challenges painting's traditional two-dimensionality by orchestrating configurations that drape and sag, bridge walls and floors, and reach into the air. He will present a selection of new and existing paintings, surrounding viewers in color and dynamic movement.

Lauren dela Roche will present a series of new, large scale paintings on quilted vintage feed sacks. In these works, female figures rest alongside one another, languishing in architectural spaces animated by sumptuous color, pattern, animals, and abstract shapes. Experimenting with new forms and mediums, her presentation will include encaustic wax paintings, figurative works in cast bronze, and a sculpture fabricated from vintage dollhouses.



Lauren dela Roche, *Domino*, 2025. Acrylic on found cotton feed sack, 36 × 44 inches. Courtesy the artist.



Vincent Stemmler, *Stillness*, 2018, Concrete, rebar, dried plant specimen, plastic bottle, butterfly, 10 × 18 × 8 inches. Installation view, *Sticks in the Mud*, Florissant Valley Contemporary Art Gallery, 2020.

Vincent Stemmler uses common building materials like concrete and rebar to create sculptures within an installation that simultaneously suggests construction and ruin. Stemmler will position figurative works in cast cement—life casts animated by digital elements—amongst a field of dried plant stalks. By adapting a Victorian-era parlor trick called "Pepper's Ghost," he incorporates clear acrylic sheets and hidden video screens into these sculptures, with reflecting images appearing to hover in mid-air like ghosts or specters. Stemmler's accompanying video installation extends this narrative of regeneration.



Juanita McNeely, *Triskaidekaptych*, 1986. Oil on linen, 13 panels, overall: 72 × 624 inches. Installation view, James Fuentes, New York, 2020.

CAM x Counterpublic:
Juanita McNeely

Juanita McNeely (1936–2023, Ferguson, MO) dedicated more than five decades to painting, drawing, and ceramics, developing a frank and unflinching visual language centered on the body as a site of vulnerability, desire, and resilience. Presented as part of Counterpublic 2026: *Coyote Time*, this exhibition marks the first solo exhibition of her work in her hometown.

While living in St. Louis, McNeely's practice was shaped by profound personal experiences, including life-changing illness and injury. She produced large-scale paintings depicting the body in states of tension and transformation, with figures both elastic and precarious. Her posthumous presentation at CAM centers on *Triskaidekaptych* (1986), a monumental 13-panel painting bringing together human and animal forms in a vivid chromatic palette animated by rapid brushstrokes, as well as a selection of related drawings. An exhibition of paintings, drawings, and ceramics that trace the evolution of McNeely's practice will also be on view at the Saint Louis Art Museum from September 9, 2026–February 28, 2027.

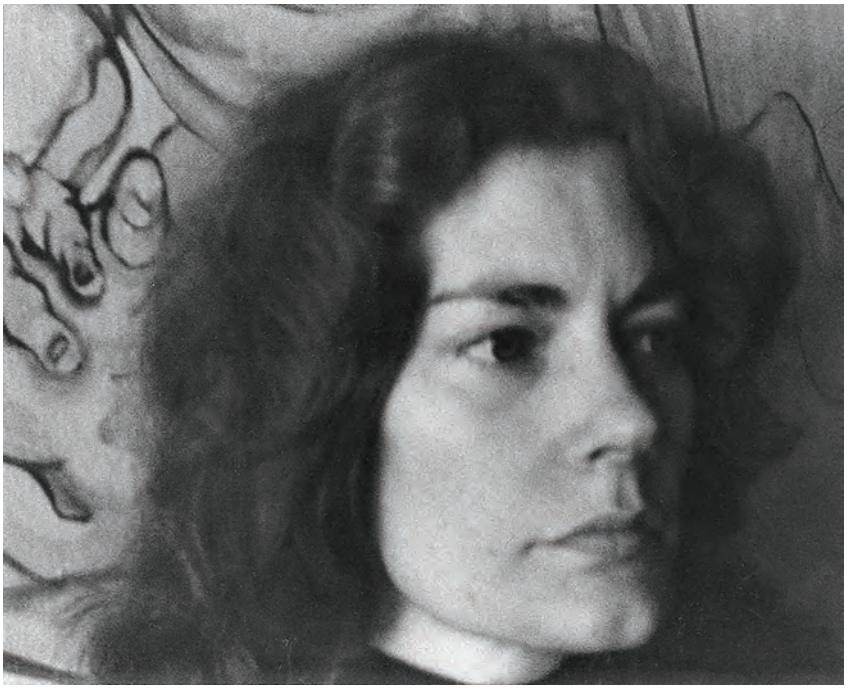
Juanita McNeely is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis as a part of Counterpublic 2026: *Coyote Time* by Raphael Fonseca, Counterpublic 2026 co-curator, with assistance from Dean Daderko, Ferring Foundation Chief Curator.

This exhibition is generously supported in part by Counterpublic and Whitaker Foundation. The artist talk is generously supported by the Robert Lehman Foundation.

COUNTERPUBLIC

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A Full Circle:



Juanita McNeely in front of one of her paintings, 1977. Photo courtesy Jeremy Lebensohn.

Hall W. Rockefeller in conversation with Juanita McNeely

Juanita McNeely: In another gallery, I had lots of bleeding women on the walls. I used to paint that a lot, because it was what I knew and what was real to me. I remember this woman came to the door and she said, "What are you doing here?" I responded, "What do you mean?" She said, "You have my child right here. And they see all this blood coming out of a woman." I turned around and said, "First of all, you came inside. Second of all, can I ask you what is so awful about a woman bleeding?" I said, "That's how you give birth. That's how you die. That's how you live. Blood is quite beautiful if you look at it." And I said, "It's a way of teaching."

HWR: Do you think that your work is motivated, in the way that Joan Semmel was motivated to depict the body, by the contorted body, the body in pain?

JM: Yes, in pain, maybe. But I don't think of it as contortion. But yes, of course they are. I just don't think in those terms, in a sense. I get an idea or a feeling of what I want to say, I think for a long time, and I make loose sketches that are far off from the ideal—I never really think about one particular thing that it has to be. But I do paint blood a lot.

Excerpted and reprinted with the permission of James Fuentes Gallery. Originally published in 2022.

CAM x Counterpublic:
Tony Cokes

Since the 1980s, Tony Cokes has developed a visual language all his own, sampling and remixing fragments of the media landscape to confront issues of structural racism, power, and visibility. His tightly choreographed video essays layer found text over vibrant colors, often with dissonant soundtracks, creating a propulsive, immersive form that makes reading them feel visceral.

Presented as part of Counterpublic 2026: *Coyote Time*, Cokes's newly commissioned work explores the global legacy of Tina Turner, the "Queen of Rock and Roll" whose career began in St. Louis. Rooted in archival material—including Turner's time at Sumner High School in The Ville neighborhood—the work is both deeply personal and historically expansive. *TT The River Won't Stop (Edit)* transforms CAM's facade nightly from dusk to midnight as part of the Museum's ongoing Street Views series, freely accessible to all passersby. Cokes's multi-sited project extends beyond CAM to the nearby Antioch Baptist Church, and connecting the two locations is a series of outdoor billboards across the Ville.

Tony Cokes is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis as a part of Counterpublic 2026: *Coyote Time* by Stefanie Hessler, Counterpublic 2026 co-curator, with assistance from Dean Daderko, Ferring Foundation Chief Curator.

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

COUNTERPUBLIC

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Tony Cokes, installation view, Dia Bridgehampton, Bridgehampton, New York, 2023. © Tony Cokes. Courtesy the artist; Dia Art Foundation, New York; Greene Naftali, New York; Hoffman Donahue, Los Angeles and New York; Felix Gaudlitz, Vienna; and Electronic Arts Intermix, New York. Photo: Bill Jacobson Studio, New York.

Tony Cokes:



Portrait of Tony Cokes. Photo: Don Stahl. Courtesy the artist; Dia Art Foundation, New York; Greene Naftali, New York; Hoffman Donahue, Los Angeles and New York; Felix Gaudlitz, Vienna; and Electronic Arts Intermix, New York.

Finding the Artisanal in the Digital

Excerpt from an interview
with Tony Cokes
by Ricardo Alves

Ricardo Alves: On the outset of your career you relied more on archival images and found footage. What made you shift to bare text on a vibrant background instead?

Tony Cokes: Just after 9-11, I was working on two different projects. One was a repertoire of images in and around the "war on terror", and I was not sure whether I wanted to be dealing in traumatic images — these images were already circulating. I didn't need to recirculate them and I thought it might be more effective to talk about them in their absence. At the same time, there were gaps in archives, or things that were not recorded.

On the other hand, I had written some short essays about then contemporary popular music, and I used looped clips of a generic music video. I wondered what would happen if I removed that clip and just concentrated again on the text.

At a certain point I said no to traumatic images, to images of popular culture, and I liked the effect. It took me back to the tropes of conceptual art and minimalism. At the same time, using vocabulary that they would never use — a lot of structuralist films, for instance, have no soundtrack.

RA: Music, however, is vital for your work.

TC: I thought it might be interesting to fill that gap using certain visual approaches and techniques, but adding sound to them. Ways of re-encoding things that had already been received. There are layers and a production process in the music itself. It's almost a substitute for traditional montage in a documentary or narrative film, having this process that seems to be in the background. For me, it's a complimentary and maybe complicating presence in the work.

Excerpted and reprinted with the permission of Agenda Porto.
Originally published December 2024.

Spring/Summer 2027
Mar 5–Aug 15, 2027



Eric-Paul Riege, + *[pronounced t']*, 2021. Mixed fibers and materials. Installation view of *Prospect.5 triennial, Yesterday we said tomorrow* at the Contemporary Art Center in New Orleans, LA. Courtesy the artist.

Time Hop

Time Hop is a thematic group exhibition featuring seven artists from across the country and globe—from New Mexico, Peru, New York, Mexico, Hong Kong, London, and Berlin—with new, commissioned, and recent works as well as live performance and related programming.

Time Hop takes as its starting point the complex times in which we're living amidst political instability and ecological vulnerability. It poses the question: What can we learn from the past in order to inform our future? *Time Hop* considers how an artwork can transport us to a different time, tapping into the precolonial past by connecting with familial lineage and deep listening to the land through folklore, storytelling, ancestral learning, and spirituality. Artists in this exhibition incorporate ancient traditions of making, often simultaneously projecting into the future, ultimately as means towards liberation and healing.

Participating artists include Monira Al Qadiri, Dominique Fung, Blas Isasi, Tau Lewis, Noé Martínez, Eric-Paul Riege, and Wong Kit Yi.

Time Hop is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by Misa Jeffereis, Associate Curator.

Major support for *Time Hop* is provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. This exhibition is generously supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts, Jane and Robert Clark, Alexis M. Cossé and Erik Karanik, JiaMin and Michael Dierberg, Ann R. Ruwitch and John Fox Arnold, Ann Y. Sheehan, and Whitaker Foundation.

The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts

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Tau Lewis transforms recycled materials into large-scale figurative sculptures through labor-intensive techniques like hand-sewing, applique, carving, and assemblage. She is committed to using recycled materials for the memories they hold and the past lives they allude to. Lewis likens the practice of upcycling to diasporic methods of art making and survival. Her sculptural forms also reference talismans, or objects with magical powers that bring luck. Lewis situates her work within the deep history, vibrant present, and oracular future of Black cultural production.

Monira Al Qadiri's video *The Craft* features the artist's home videos from the 1990s. Narration by Al Qadiri describes how embassy buildings are like spaceships, and she recounts a story of a UFO sighting she experienced as a girl. Al Qadiri, a Kuwaiti artist, was raised in Dakar, Senegal by two parents who worked at the Kuwait Embassy. This piece underscores the idea that in order to grapple with the complicated geopolitics of her childhood in the Middle East, Al Qadiri invented stories and created an alternate narrative to reason her way through these complex realities.



Monira Al Qadiri, *The Craft*, 2017. VHS video (color, sound). 16 minutes. Co-commissioned by Gasworks and the Sursock Museum. Courtesy the artist. Photo: Andy Keate.

Eric-Paul Riege is a Diné weaver and fiber artist. He uses weaving as both means and metaphor to interlace tales from Diné spirituality with stories from his own experiences and cosmology. Riege creates soft sculptures made of wool that function as adornment for Diné holy people, and conduits between the earthly and spiritual realms. Riege describes the sculptures as "totems of memory" because they carry both the ancestral stories that flow through the hands of generations, and the tactile residue of their making.

Peruvian artist **Blas Isasi** will present a sculptural installation entitled *1,001,532 CE*. The piece was inspired by the Battle of Cajamarca of 1532, which initiated Spanish and European colonization across South America and the fall of the Incan Empire. *1,001,532 CE* is a reimagining of the event one million years into an imagined future, prompting us to consider what we can learn from the past. His work incorporates the Andean philosophy of balance between humans and the natural world.

Mexico City-based artist **Noé Martínez** will present a selection of sculptures and drawings that utilize the body, sound, and movement to invoke his Huastecan Indigenous Mexican ancestors. Martínez's ceramics are inspired by pre-conquest Huastecan pottery as well as ritual rattles and musical instruments found in archaeological burial sites of the Huasteca.

Wong Kit Yi's *Inner Voice Transplant* video installation explores the notion of ancient temples as predecessors for hospitals where the physical and spiritual were interconnected. The video uses karaoke-style captions, songs, and animations to touch on various themes including ancient rituals to reanimate the dead, the use of incense as a tool to summon the gods in temples, and the Jiang-shi soul hopper from Chinese folklore. In addition to *Inner Voice Transplant*, Wong is creating a site-specific video commission for Street Views.



Wong Kit Yi, *Inner Voice Transplant (still)*, 2022. HD video (color, sound). 38 minutes. Photo: Courtesy the artist.

Dominique Fung paints historical events and artifacts and casts light on overlooked or forgotten stories. *A Tale of Ancestral Memories* is an 88-foot long painting that focuses on the matriarchal society of female divers on Korea's Jeju Island. This multigenerational community of female free-divers dive into the ocean without oxygen tanks to harvest from the sea. Fung's work begins undersea and journeys across the land, following the harvest from below to above the earth's surface. The work explores the cyclical rhythm of life, death, and rebirth in both the material and spiritual worlds.



Neeka Allsup:
Infinite Landscapes

Presented by Teen Museum Studies



(left)
The Abyss: "Unknown - Deep - Natural". 48×36 inches. Oil on hand stretched canvas. Photo: Courtesy the artist.

(right)
Neeka Allsup. Photo: Courtesy the artist.

CAM's Teen Museum Studies program (TMS) is a summer-intensive internship that guides high school-aged participants through the process of selecting a St. Louis-based artist and presenting an exhibition of their work. The 2026 TMS cohort selected Neeka Allsup for her dedication to self discovery and personal reflection through surrealist paintings.

Allsup's oil-on-canvas works are deeply inspired by her interests in psychology, tarot cards, and dream analysis. This imbues her art with a personal, mysterious component that explores symbolism within the subconscious. Her exhibition, *Infinite Landscapes*, invites viewers to incorporate their unique personalities into the artwork through custom interactive tarot cards that allow for hundreds of thousands of permutations.

Her idea for the dream-like landscape is to create a welcoming environment for introspection that isn't given enough space in the fast-paced modern world—where social media distracts us with the carefully-curated lives of others. Allsup's work hopes to reground us in our own identities and aspirations by inviting us to look inward and find clarity in the surreal.

Neeka Allsup: Infinite Landscapes is organized for the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis by the 2026 Teen Museum Studies cohort: Vajra Binion-Anderson, Claire Eltoft, Ivy Kanak, Estella Meyr, Suraq Sahed, Sophia Samaki, Lennon Sharp, Geronimo Thomas, Wyatt Valleroy, Khloe Wallace, Phoenix Whetstone, and Jacob Williams, with support from Brandon Barr, Teen and Adult Programs Manager.

Teen Museum Studies is generously supported in part by Jeanne and Rex A. Sinquefield; The Terry and Phyllis Weiss Youth Education Fund; The Strive Fund; Anonymous; Crawford Taylor Foundation; Norman K. Probstein Charitable Foundation; and The Mary Ranken Jordan and Ettie A. Jordan Charitable Foundation.

Year in Review



Haegue Yang: Quasi-Heartland, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 5, 2025–February 8, 2026. Photo: Izaiah Johnson.

Exhibition Highlights

Fall/Winter 2025–26

Teresa Baker's most comprehensive exhibition to date, Haegue Yang's new commission for CAM inspired by Cahokia Mounds, Hai-Wen Lin and Ayana Evans on CAM's facade, a time capsule celebrating 30 years of teens making art, CAM Connect's inaugural exhibition, new large-scale paintings on birchbark by Andrea Carlson, a historic show honoring the legacy of Claude Cahun and Marcel Moore, and St. Louis artist Janie Stamm presented by Teen Museum Studies were all on view.

Haegue Yang: Quasi-Heartland

"If you like whimsy, puppets or seeing regular objects in a new light, then head over to CAM for its exhibition *Quasi-Heartland* featuring South Korean artist Haegue Yang. There are enormous textile and rattan creatures that look like things out of 'Where the Wild Things Are,' as well as paper sculptures and a new piece called *Mound Vehicles* that Yang constructed specifically for CAM from repurposed venetian blinds." – *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, December 2025



Haegue Yang: Quasi-Heartland, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 5, 2025–February 8, 2026. Photo: Izaiah Johnson.



Visitors at CAM's FW25 opening. Photo: Tyler Small.

Teresa Baker: Somewhere Between Earth and Sky

"As one of the 16 biggest artists at US Museums right now, Baker has the 'most comprehensive presentation of her work to date' at CAM, featuring bronzes, baskets, and works on paper—but what she is best known for are thoughtful paintings that function as abstract landscapes. 'For me, land also holds people, it holds culture, and memories—I'm exploring all of that in my work,' she has said." – *artnet*, September 2025



Hai-Wen Lin: Orientation, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 5, 2025–February 8, 2026. Commissioned by the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis. Photo: Izaiah Johnson.

Hai-Wen Lin: Orientation

"What does it mean for people of diasporic experience, immigrants, Chinese-Americans—to shut off, to not listen to the dominant voice? To try to refuse the directive of English? That's so much of an internal mental experience that you can't experience unless you understand both languages. What you end up doing is constantly having to negotiate, share that space, accommodating each other and entering each other's physical space." – Artist Talk with Hai-Wen Lin, October 2025



Central Baptist Church Quilters at CAM's FW25 opening. Photo: Tyler Small.

Access is an Invitation: CAM Connect Showcase

"We want folks to feel like they can come on in. Like we are setting the space for them, with intention," says CAM Community Access Manager and exhibition organizer Alexis Creamer. "We want them to know that there is a place for them in the art ecosystem, and we want them to come experience it. Each piece has a power of its own, and it's rooted in present day, what is happening right now as a result of human connection through art." – *Ladue News*, December 2025

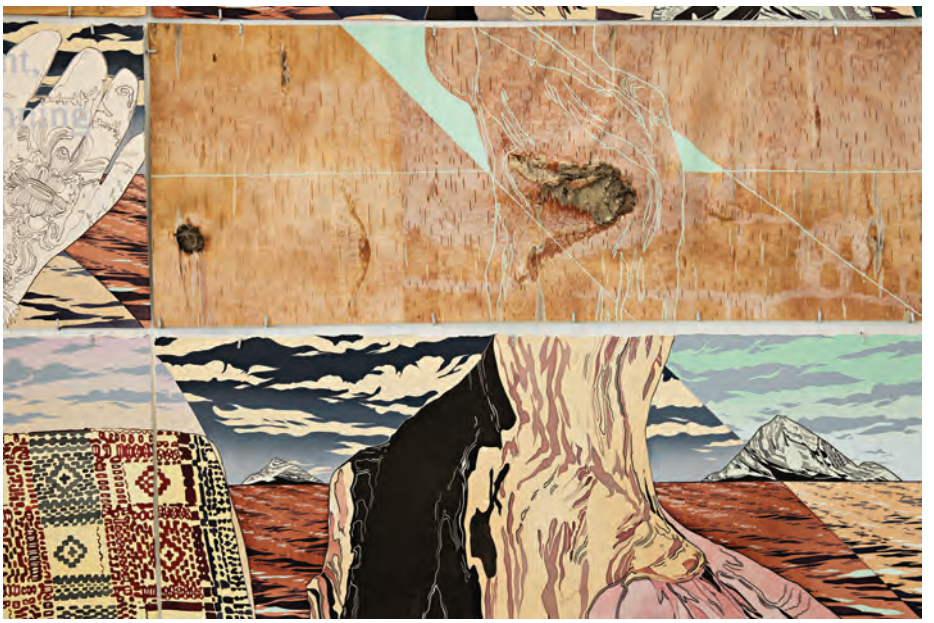


Visitors in *We Find Ourselves: 30 Years of Teens Making Art*. Photo: Tyler Small.

We Find Ourselves: 30 Years of Teens Making Art

"Thirty years ago, a group of teens walked into what was then the Forum of Contemporary Art in St. Louis. They were curious, asked questions and wanted to get involved. At the time, the organization had no experience with arts education programming—but that visit pushed the Museum to rethink how it connected with the community. The museum's youth programming (New Art in the Neighborhood and ArtReach) has now impacted more than 30,000 youth, several of whom have become working artists in St. Louis and beyond." – *St. Louis Public Radio*, November 2025

Spring/Summer 2026



Andrea Carlson: Endless Sunshine, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, March 6–August 9, 2026. Photo: Izaiah Johnson.

Andrea Carlson: Endless Sunshine
"Featuring art on an unconventional medium: birchbark, *Andrea Carlson: Endless Sunshine* harkens to her Grand Portage Ojibwe and Scandinavian ancestry. The exhibit explores how Indigenous history and remembrance displaces the American landscape as it's portrayed in mainstream museums, archives, and art. Standing before multi-panel paintings, the viewer is confronted with settings that embody Indigenous land dispossession."
– *St. Louis Magazin*e, February 2026

And I Saw New Heavens and a New Earth: The Partnership, Art, and Activism of Claude Cahun and Marcel Moore
"What can writing and artmaking do in the face of structural violence? Quite a bit, it seems. The show centres not just the artistic and romantic partnership between Cahun and Moore, but also their anti-fascist activism during the island's Nazi occupation—foregrounding the pair's shared intimacy and joint bravery, presenting art as something with political value." – *frieze*, April 2026



Visitors exploring *And I Saw New Heavens and a New Earth: The Partnership, Art, and Activism of Claude Cahun and Marcel Moore*. Photo: Tyler Small.



Janie Stamm: Mermaid's Purse presented by Teen Museum Studies, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, March 6–August 9, 2026. Photo: Izaiah Johnson.

Janie Stamm: Mermaid's Purse presented by Teen Museum Studies
"TMS cohort member Kamille Jefferson says that Stamm's work fit the group's focus on finding an artist whose work was both inspiring and had broad appeal. 'At first, we really focused on inspiring themes [and] making sure that everybody was included with that theme, so everybody could be inspired by it,' she says. 'I love the fact that [CAM] is free, and it's very community-driven. I definitely wanted to be a part of that,' Stamm says." – *St. Louis Magazine*, February 2026



Exhibiting artist Ayana Evans. Photo: Tyler Small.

Ayana Evans: Teaser
Evans digs into subjects like sexism, racism, and the apparent exclusivity of the art world—using her work to ask questions and render answers. By challenging the notion that a singular, stable, authentic self exists, she claims space for multiplicity, complexity, and self-determination. Evans's neon green, zebra-striped catsuit illuminated the Museum's facade making it a public gallery every evening from dusk to midnight.



Visitor at CAM's spring/summer 2026 opening. Photo: Tyler Small.

Teen Studio Art Exhibition 2026
Students in LEAP Middle School Initiative and New Art in the Neighborhood explored "confluence" and "collaborative futures," engaging with water as material, metaphor, and a lens for community. Artists Simiya Sudduth, Misty Long-Donoho, and Anna Katz led collaborative murals, ice dyed silk, and ceramics. NAN artists Adrienne Outlaw, Dee Levang, and Ahlam Khamis created encaustic prints, recycled artworks, and mythological installations.

Program Highlights

Bringing a variety of perspectives and experiences, CAM's range of programs offered activities for visitors of all ages.



Janie Stamm in conversation with TMS participants Kamille Jefferson and Jaclyn Morton. Photo: CAM staff.

Artist Talks
Audiences had the opportunity to hear directly from artists, curators, and collaborators through memorable talks by exhibiting artists Teresa Baker, Hai-Wen Lin, Andrea Carlson, Janie Stamm, and Dr. Angela Cooper from Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site.



Family Day 2025. Photo: Tyler Small.

Play Dates and Family Day
Blending the creativity of art making with the rhythm of music, the grace of dance, and other captivating performances, our family-focused programs offer an exciting avenue for our youngest visitors to engage with art. With Play Dates every second Saturday of the month, and our annual summer Family Day, families come out for a variety of interactive experiences at CAM.



Photo: CAM staff.

Artwork and Arias
Inspired by CAM's Sping/Summer 2026 exhibition season, Opera Theatre of Saint Louis's Gerdine Young Artist Ashlyn Brown, curated a special selection of arias exploring ways that art can act as a force of resistance against challenging times and oppressive ideologies. Artwork and Arias is co-presented by Opera Theatre of Saint Louis.



SLU Vogue participants Allison Mueller, Rahmat Adekunle, Laney Taylor and Shubham Limbachiya at First Friday: Sights and Sounds. Photo: Sam Bruemmer.

First Friday
Every month, CAM introduces community members and art lovers to unique experiences and perspectives through First Fridays in Grand Center. Highlights included: Faeded with Maxi Glamour, See Art Together in collaboration with the Pulitzer Arts Foundation, Sites & Sounds hosted by SLU Vogue, Together for the Earth celebrating the launch of the North St. Louis Creative Field Guide publication, and more.

Day With(out) Art
For the 37th World AIDS Day celebration, CAM hosted the Visual AIDS screening, *Meet Us Where We're At*, where filmmakers explored the experiences of drug users and harm reduction practices as they intersect with the ongoing HIV crisis. The event also featured a temporary display of the AIDS Memorial Quilt. Day With(out) Art was co-presented with Visual AIDS.



Photo: St. Joseph's Academy.

Tours
Visitors of all ages engaged with the exhibitions through onsite tours. Designed to make connections between the art on view and its relevance to our lives, free tours are offered to schools, universities, community organizations, and companies. As part of the Deaf Visual Arts Festival, CAM partnered with DEAF Inc. and Angela Botz to provide a guided tour in American Sign Language.

St. Louis Symphony Orchestra
Musicians from the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra presented *Terra Memoria*, a powerful program at CAM exploring the convergence of music and contemporary art. Drawing inspiration from *And I Saw New Heavens and a New Earth* and *Andrea Carlson: Endless Sunshine*, the musical selection explored themes of memory and erasure in our relationships to place, land, and home.

Cocktail with the Curators
This event provides members the unique opportunity to chat with our Ferring Foundation Chief Curator Dean Daderko and Associate Curator Misa Jeffereis in a casual setting, get behind-the-scenes insights about our current exhibitions, and raise a glass to contemporary art.



Photo: CAM staff.

Film Screenings
For the annual Whitaker St. Louis International Film Festival, CAM presented two short film programs inspired by *Teresa Baker: Somewhere Between Earth and Sky* and *Haegue Yang: Quasi-Heartland*. The featured films explored the deep connection between people and place, and the power of creating in-between forms of expression that honor both past and present. These events were co-presented with Cinema St. Louis.



Photo: CAM staff.

Neighborhood Holiday Party
In partnership with Brickline North Community Development Corporation, CAM hosted its fourth annual Neighborhood Holiday Party. Guests created festive mug rugs alongside the Central Baptist Quilters, enjoyed food and drinks, and closed out the night with a live performance from HEAL Center for the Arts Point of View Jazz Ensemble—bringing together neighborhood partners and community members to reflect, create, and connect through art and fellowship.



Photo: CAM staff.

Feast Your Eyes
A favorite night among CAM audiences, this event delivered a delicious culinary adventure highlighting *Haegue Yang: Quasi-Heartland*. Acclaimed chef Melanie Hye Jin Meyer—owner of Tiny Chef—created a Korean-inspired street food experience rooted in personal storytelling and tradition, drawing from her journey reconnecting with Korean culture, cuisine, and family.



Photo: CAM staff.

Music as the Message: Stepping Into Peace
Emmy-winning soprano, composer, and educator Adrienne Danrich led a two-day retreat at CAM exploring music's power to inspire healing, joy, and community. In collaboration with The Sheldon, free performances across both venues included *If You Can Breathe, You Can Sing* with the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra's IN UNISON chorus, and *Hearing Color, Seeing Sound* with vocalist Chuck Flowers and visual artist Dave Pfanstiel.



Photo: Wil Driscoll.

Behind This Mask: Celebrating Claude Cahun and Marcel Moore
Poet Elizabeth Hoover, actor and playwright John Cameron Mitchell, art historian Jennifer Shaw, and exhibition co-curators Dean Daderko and Svetlana Kitto came together to explore the enduring legacy of Claude Cahun and Marcel Moore. Through readings and conversation, the program celebrated two visionary artists whose challenges to fixed notions of identity, gender, and selfhood remain as relevant as ever.

Special Events



2026 Gala: Spark

See our Spark!

Watch the mission video.

Attendees during the Fund the Need Auction at Spark: CAM's 2026 Gala. Photo: Tyler Small.

Guests arrived dressed to dazzle for Spark: CAM's 2026 Gala, held at the 21c Museum Hotel St. Louis. The evening's theme celebrated art as a beacon of creativity, imagination, and possibility across the St. Louis region.

Gala Chairs Jane and Bob Clark welcomed CAM's most dedicated supporters for cocktails and a seated dinner, where Executive Director Lisa Melandri reflected on art as the spark that lives within all of us. The evening paused to honor the memory of Emeritus Board Member John H. Ferring IV before Honorary Gala Chairs Alexis M. Cossé and Erik Karanik took the stage, recognized as among CAM's most devoted and visionary champions.

The Fund the Need auction was hosted by local journalist Chelsea Haynes, whose radiant charm lit up the room and ignited a spirited moment of giving. Guests generously raised their paddles in support of beloved CAM programs including New Art in the Neighborhood, guided tours, youth transportation, Artist Talks, and Family Days. The evening generated over $415,000, one of the most successful fundraisers in CAM's history—keeping CAM free and accessible to all.



CAM Executive Director Lisa Melandri with Spark Gala Chairs Jane and Bob Clark. Photo: Justin Solomon.

As the clock struck 9, guests made their way to the Spark Lounge, where the night continued to glow over nightcaps and the luminous sounds of local saxophonist Rhoda G.

"For over 20 years, we've welcomed thousands of neighbors, students, families, artists, and visitors from around the world into a space illuminated by innovative ideas and the people who believe in them," said CAM Executive Director Lisa Melandri. "Every shining point of light in CAM's universe showed up and our sky is so much brighter for it."



CAM Executive Director Lisa Melandri with Honorary Spark Gala Chairs Alexis M. Cossé and Erik Karanik. Photo: Tyler Small.



Winning team with their Fall in Love with CAM trophies. Photo: CAM staff.

Trivia Night
Supporters turned out for the annual Trivia Night fundraiser, presented by CAM's Junior Board, raising over $24,000. Emceed by the fabulous Jade Sinclair, the evening featured eight exciting rounds covering food, St. Louis history, art, film, fashion, culture, and more. Between rounds, guests enjoyed Heads or Tails, the Booze Tower Ring Toss, and a silent auction featuring curated items from local artists, makers, and restaurants.

All proceeds benefited CAM's free youth arts education programs in schools and on-site, including ArtReach, LEAP Middle School Initiative, New Art in the Neighborhood, and Teen Museum Studies. These immersive programs provide opportunities for young people to learn from regional, national, and international artists and culminate in professionally installed student exhibitions at CAM.

Contemporary Circle Celebration
Members at the Patron level and above gathered at CAM for an evening of appreciation at the Contemporary Circle Celebration. While supporters mingled over summertime cocktails, wine, and small bites, Board Chair Paul Cambridge shared updates on CAM's Board of Directors, followed by Executive Director Lisa Melandri, who highlighted the Museum's achievements, programming, and community partners. Associate Curator Misa Jeffereis closed the evening with an exclusive preview of the artists and exhibitions planned for the year ahead.

Impact by the Numbers

July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026

27,774
Museum attendance

282,610
Virtual audience

2,375
Offsite attendance

4,650
Youth served

181
Programs + Tours (99% free)

84
Artists hired for programs

Community Partners and Collaborators

Schools & Universities

Carver Elementary School
Clayton School District
Ferguson Middle School
Gateway STEM High School
Grand Center Arts Academy
Hazelwood High School
Jennings School District
Kirkwood High School
Maplewood-Richmond Heights High School
McCluer North High School
Montessori Lab School
Nerinx Hall High School
Regional Office of Education Metro East
Rosati-Kane Academy
St. Louis Public Schools
Special School District Of St Louis County
St. Joseph's Academy
St. Louis Homeschool Network
STEAM Academy Middle School
Sumner High School
Vashon High School
Washington High School
Windsor High School
Lindenwood University
Saint Louis University
Washington University in Saint Louis
SIUE Upward Bound Scholars Academy
Webster University

Community Organizations

21c Museum
Association of the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora
Brickline North Community Development Corporation
Burns & McDonnell
Cahokia Mounds State Historic Site
CannonDesign
Central Baptist Quilters
Cinema St. Louis
Covenant Blu Neighborhood Association
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St. Louis Mosaic
St. Louis Symphony Orchestra
United Adult Day Center
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Wyman Center
YMCA

Photo: Tyler Small.

Annual Report

July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026

Operating Revenue

Individual contributions	$1,141,787
Grants & sponsorships	$517,468
Public funding	$280,516
Fundraising events (net)	$471,043
Earned income	$197,860
Investment earnings	$783,975
Total revenue	$3,392,649

Operating Expenses

Exhibitions & programs	$2,535,164
Administration	$219,714
Fundraising	$625,341
Total expenses	$3,380,219

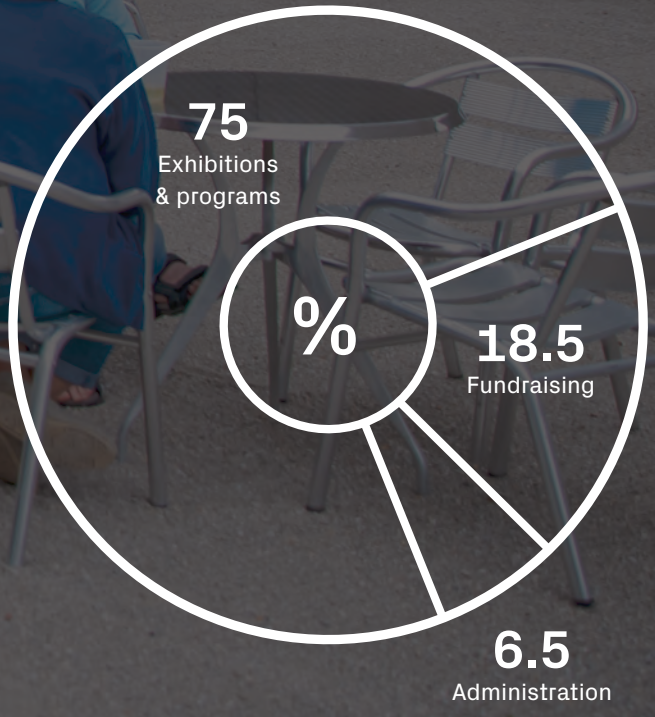
Net Assets

Beginning of year	$30,274,491
End of year	$32,564,019

Where Funding Comes From



Where Funding Goes



Annual Giving

July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026

CAM is grateful for the many donors who provided support this year.

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ARPA for the Arts, a collaboration between the Regional Arts Commission of St. Louis, Community Development Administration of St. Louis (CDA), and the City of St. Louis
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Photo: Tyler Small.

$25,000–$49,999

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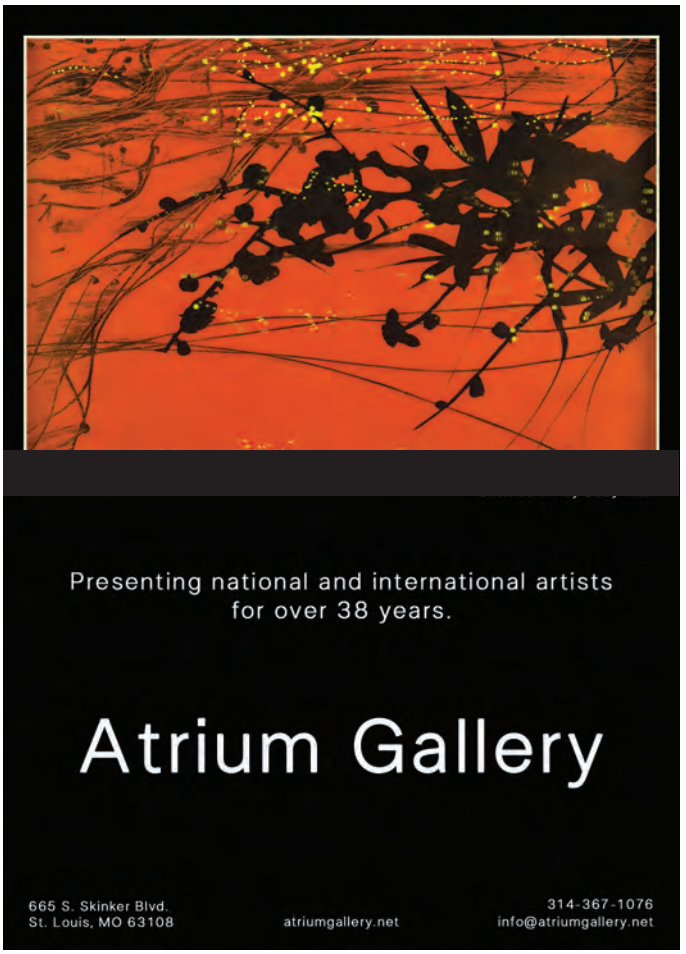
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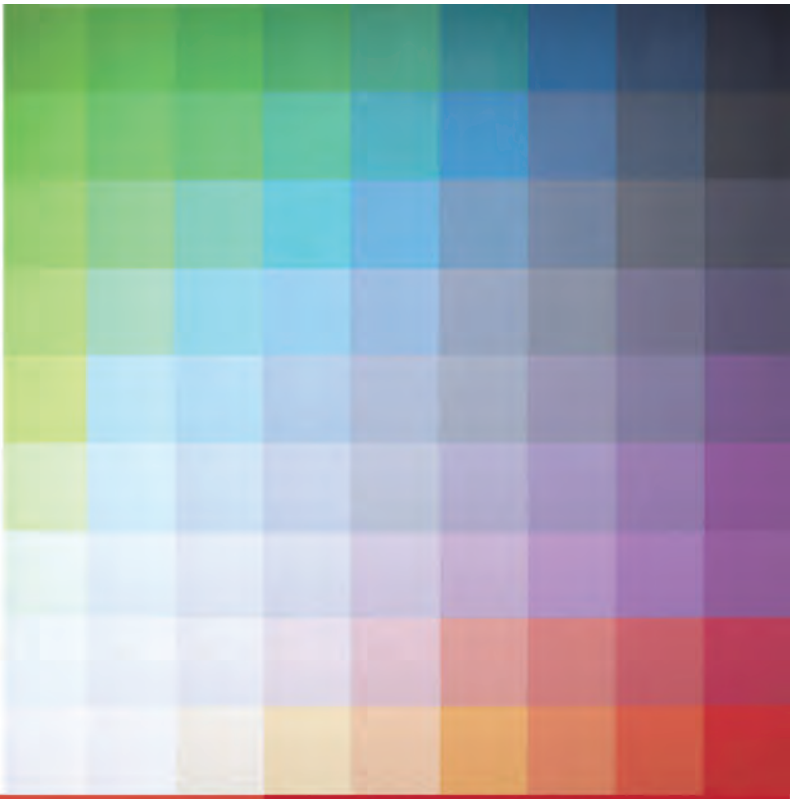
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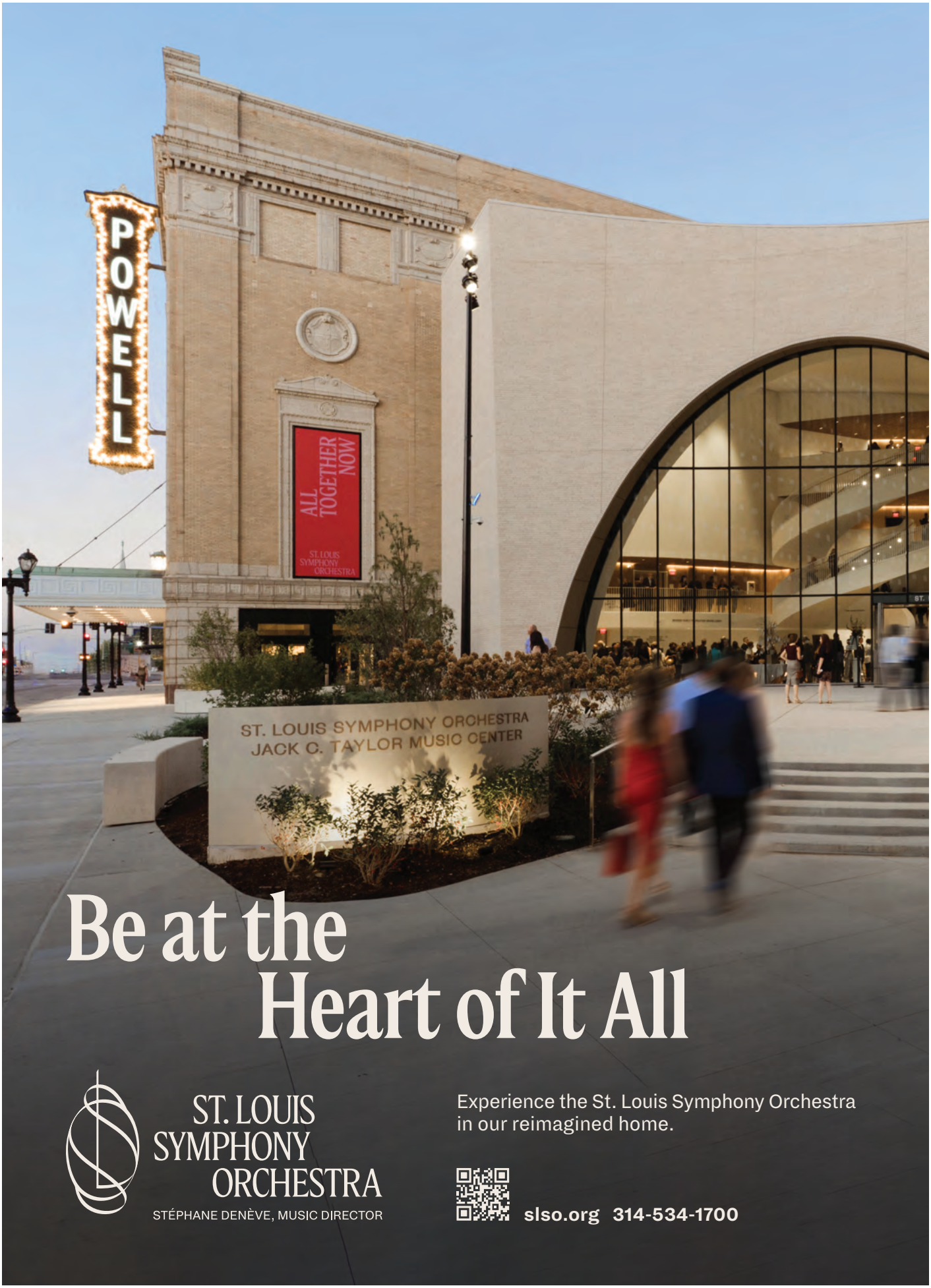
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Horacio Coppola, *Nocturno. Calle Corrientes, desde Reconquista hasta Plaza de la República* (*Nocturne. Corrientes Street, from Reconquista to Plaza de la República*), 1936 (detail). Gelatin silver print, 11 13/16 × 15 3/4 in. Estate of Horacio Coppola and Grete Stern, courtesy Galería Jorge Mara–La Ruche, Buenos Aires.



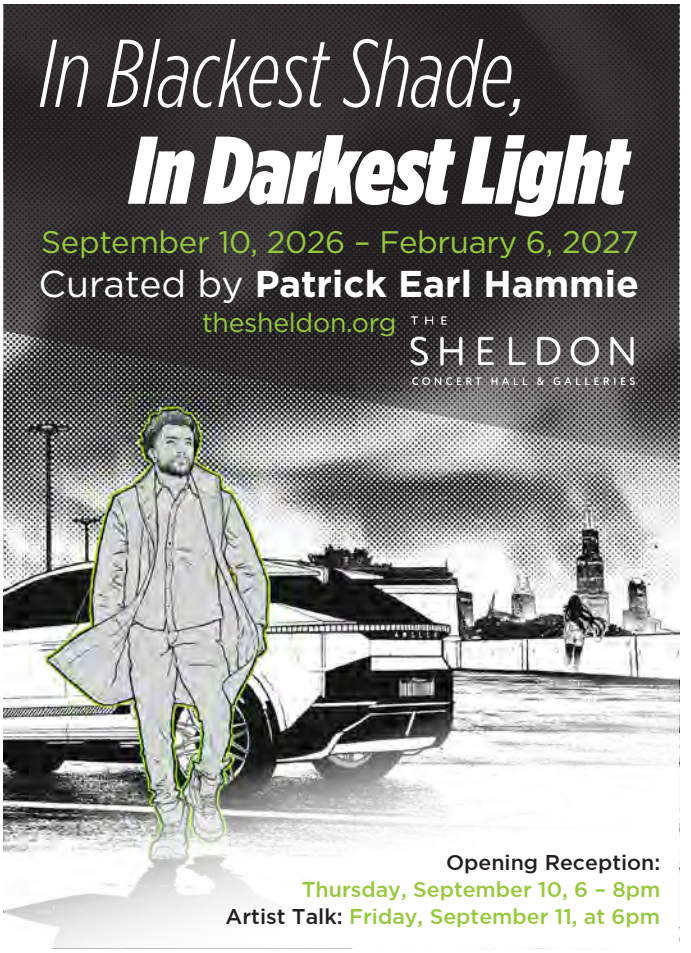
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Membership

CAM members support the work of some of today's most innovative artists. Members contribute to a thriving art scene in St. Louis and make it possible for us to bring contemporary art to thousands in our community.

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Photo: Tyler Small.



DONALD SULTAN

Wall Poppies, 2024
Painted aluminum with black
flocked stainless steel centers
34 x 36 inches
(86 x 91 cm)

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