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Contemporary Art
Museum St. Louis

3750 Washington Blvd
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

First Friday celebrates St. Louis native and Great Rivers Biennial 2026 exhibiting artist Vincent Stemmler on December 4



Great Rivers Biennial 2026: Vincent Stemmler, installation view, Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, September 10, 2026–February 7, 2027. Photo: Izaiah Johnson.

November 17, 2026 (St. Louis, MO)—The Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis (CAM) presents **First Friday: Celebrating Vincent Stemmler** on December 4 from 5:00 pm–9:00 pm. As a part of the ongoing First Fridays in Grand Center series, this event will showcase art, music, and culture in honor of local artist Vincent Stemmler, who is featured in CAM's fall/winter 2026 exhibition, *Great Rivers Biennial 2026*.

First Friday: Celebrating Vincent Stemmler is a casual gathering for visitors to mingle with the artist and explore their presentation, in which dried stalks of mullein, a plant that pops up where soil has been disturbed, populate an installation of concrete and rebar sculptures. Suggesting both construction and ruin, the work draws visitors into an imagined world of Stemmler's making.

Attendees are invited to drop-in and make native plant seed balls while enjoying light bites and a playlist inspired by the artist's exhibition. Drinks and specialty cocktails will be available for purchase from the bar. This program is free and open to the public.

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In addition to the festivities, visitors will have the opportunity to view CAM's newly-installed fall 2026 exhibitions as the galleries will be open late until 9:00 pm—including fellow Great Rivers Biennial artists Vaughn Terrell Davis Jr. and Lauren dela Roche. The fall 2026 exhibitions will be on view through **February 7, 2027**. For more information, visit camstl.org.

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 support from Grace Early, Exhibitions Assistant.

The Great Rivers Biennial is made possible by the Gateway Foundation. In 2026, the Foundation will celebrate its 40th anniversary, marking four decades of support for public art, urban design, fellowships, and cultural grantmaking throughout the St. Louis region.

40 GATEWAY FOUNDATION
40 YEARS × SINCE 1986

For press access on December 5, including interview opportunities with Lauren dela Roche and curators, contact Alexia Brown at abrown@camstl.org.

Event Details

What: First Friday: Celebrating Vincent Stemmler
Where: Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, 3750 Washington Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108
When: Friday, December 4, 2026
Time: 5:00 pm–9:00 pm
Admission: This event is open to the public and free to attend.

Event Schedule

/ 5:00 pm: Bar and CAM Shop opens

/ 6:00–8:30 pm: Drop-in art activity

Related Events

Artist Talk: Lauren dela Roche & Vaughn Terrell Davis Jr. at Webster University
Friday, November 20, 12:00–1:00 pm

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About the Artist



Vincent Stemmler (b. 1989, St. Louis, MO) is a multidisciplinary artist whose work engages with found materials—ranging from manmade objects and detritus to natural elements like sticks and stones—to explore the complex relationships between environment, identity, and transformation. Working across mediums of sculpture, installation, photography, collage, and mold-based processes, Stemmler's practice is rooted in the act of collecting and recontextualizing what the world leaves behind. Guided by interests in ecology, psychology, history, and architecture, Stemmler examines how our environments shape our inner worlds. By combining organic and synthetic remnants, Stemmler's work invites viewers to consider the narratives embedded in discarded materials, and the ways in which decay, preservation, and perception intersect. Stemmler's most recent solo exhibition, *Doom Scroll*, was presented by the Kranzberg Arts Foundation, St. Louis in 2023. That same year, they were featured in *Counterpublic*, St. Louis's citywide public art triennial. Stemmler holds a BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an MFA from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, with a record of exhibitions spanning local, national, and international venues.

Previous Great Rivers Biennial Recipients
2024: Saj Issa, Basil Kincaid, 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 Anschultz, 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

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. This year, the Foundation will celebrate its 40th anniversary, marking $136 million invested through grantmaking for public parks, playgrounds, lighting initiatives, and cultural organizations across the St. Louis metropolitan area. 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

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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 about the Gateway Foundation and its 40th Anniversary year are available at gateway-foundation.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.

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