

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Lauren Kistner, Marketing & Communications Manager
314.615.5277 / lkistner@laumeier.org

Raqs Media Collective Announced as Inaugural Exhibition in the Adam Aronson Fine Arts Center at Laumeier Sculpture Park

(ST. LOUIS, MO)—Laumeier Sculpture Park announced *Raqs Media Collective: Art in the Age of Collective Intelligence* as the inaugural exhibition in the Whitaker Foundation Gallery of the new Adam Aronson Fine Arts Center. *Zlatko Ćosić + Ashley McQueen: Harmony in 3*, a short film that is part of the 2015 Kranzberg Exhibition Series, will be presented in the lobby of the building. Both exhibitions, plus an outdoor commission by Raqs entitled *If the World is a Fair Place Then...*, will run Friday, October 16, 2015, through Sunday, February 14, 2016, with a free opening reception on Thursday, October 15, 5:00–8:00 p.m.

Raqs Media Collective: Art in the Age of Collective Intelligence and If the World is a Fair Place Then...

The [Raqs Media Collective](#) (pronounced *rux*) consists of three media practitioners—Jeebesh Bagchi, Monica Narula and Shuddhabrata Sengupta—based in New Delhi, India. *Art in the Age of Collective Intelligence* includes a large series of photographs and a constructed library of books expanding on Raqs' ongoing preoccupation with change from the inside. Layered texts within the photographs and books examine the ideas of "fairness" and "unfairness" using cut-out fragments of passages as shadowed insertions, leaving both physical and contextual marks.

If the World is a Fair Place Then... is an outdoor commission inspired by the more than 500 responses to the prompt gathered by Laumeier in 2014. Forty stainless-steel bands etched with various thoughts, feelings and ideas from the responses encircle tree trunks along Laumeier's Art Hike Trail, exploring Raqs' interest in the history of World's Fairs—especially the 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis—and the polyphony of the crowd.

"Our collaboration with the Raqs Media Collective is the perfect exhibition with which to open the new Adam Aronson Fine Arts Center to the public," said Marilu Knode, Laumeier's Executive Director. "Raqs' separate yet related indoor exhibition and outdoor commission allow us to physically link our indoor and outdoor activities within the Park—one of our main objectives for the new building."

The Raqs Media Collective exhibition also marks the launch of Laumeier's new five-year programming theme [New Territories](#), 2015–2019. *New Territories* takes a broad look the world's cultural zones as they have directly and indirectly impacted life in St. Louis. Projects and activities will twist the economic acronym BRICS [Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa] beyond the market forces driving the global economy.

***Zlatko Ćosić + Ashley McQueen: Harmony in 3* 2015 Kranzberg Exhibition Series**

Video artist [Zlatko Ćosić](#) and choreographer Ashley McQueen honor the labor that goes into the manicured landscape at Laumeier with *Harmony in 3* for the 2015 Kranzberg Exhibition Series. Through a series of dance performances held in 2014 that were captured to create a short film, Ćosić and McQueen explore Laumeier's unique partnership with St. Louis County Parks, highlighting the passion and hard work that goes into the care and maintenance of the Park. The 14-minute film will be shown on a loop in the lobby of the Adam Aronson Fine Arts Center. The Kranzberg Exhibition Series is supported by Nancy and Ken Kranzberg.

What: Inaugural Exhibitions in the Adam Aronson Fine Arts Center
Raqs Media Collective: Art in the Age of Collective Intelligence
Zlatko Ćosić + Ashley McQueen: Harmony in 3
Plus the Raqs Media Collective outdoor commission, *If the World is a Fair Place Then...*

Where: Laumeier Sculpture Park, 12580 Rott Road, Saint Louis, Missouri 63127
Adam Aronson Fine Arts Center

When: Friday, October 16, 2015–Sunday, February 14, 2016
Opening Reception: Thursday, October 15, 5:00–8:00 p.m.

About the Adam Aronson Fine Arts Center

The \$4 million Adam Aronson Fine Arts Center is the centerpiece of Laumeier's \$10 million *Sculpting the Future* Capital Campaign. Named in honor of a co-founder of the Park and designed by [Trivers Associates](#), St. Louis, the building provides a compelling contrast to Laumeier's historical buildings. The Aronson enables Laumeier to grow its presence as a national and international leader in contemporary arts programming.

The barn-style shape of the building provides maximum flexibility for artist experimentation inside the large gallery. The metal roof stands out in contrast to the cedar wood siding, which was selected to help the building blend into the surrounding landscape. Uniquely shaped "fins" on the exterior block direct morning sunlight from hitting the gallery walls inside, while the glazed windows allow for views into the gallery from the outside. The Aronson will serve as the new public focal point of the Park, featuring a large indoor gallery, reception area, collections storage, conservation space and event facilities. Beginning Friday, October 16, 2015, the Adam Aronson Fine Arts Center will be open to the public Wednesday–Sunday, 10:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

About the Artists

Raqs Media Collective was formed in 1991 by independent media practitioners Jeebesh Bagchi (b. 1965, New Delhi, India), Monica Narula (b. 1969, New Delhi, India) and Shuddhabrata Sengupta (b. 1968, New Delhi, India). They are described as artists, media practitioners, curators, researchers, editors and catalysts of cultural processes. In 2001, Raqs co-founded Sarai at the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) in New Delhi, where they coordinated media productions, pursued and administered independent research and practice projects and also worked as members of the editorial collective of the Sarai Reader series. They have had solo exhibitions at The Tate Britain and Frith Street Gallery in London; Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels; Asia Art Archive, Hong Kong; Centro de Arte dos de Mayos (CA2M), Madrid; Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Cambridge and the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis. Raqs has exhibited in group exhibitions and art fairs worldwide, including 56th Venice Biennale 2015; Manifesta 7 in Trentino (which they co-curated); the Garage Center for Contemporary Culture, Moscow; the 29th Sao Paulo Biennial in 2010, the 8th Shanghai Biennale in 2010; Emocao Art. ficial, Sao Paulo; Nature Morte Gallery, New Delhi; Bose Pacia, New York; Roomade Office for Contemporary Art, Brussels; Serpentine Gallery, London; Astrup Fearnley Museum, Oslo; Mori Museum, Tokyo; Istanbul Biennial in 2007; Ogaki Biennale of New Media Art in 2006; 51st Venice Biennale in 2005; Taipei Biennial in 2004 and Documenta 11, Kassel, Germany, in 2002. They live and work in New Delhi, India.

Zlatko Ćosić was born in Banja Luka, Yugoslavia, present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina. He earned his M.F.A. in Visual Art from Washington University in St. Louis and his B.A. in Video Production & Interactive Digital Media from Webster University. Ćosić's work spans from short films, video and sound installations to theater projections and live audio-visual performances. His themes often relate to issues of identity, immigration and the complexity of living in a new environment, concentrating on the necessity to embrace cultural differences and establish dialogue among people. Ćosić's video installations have been shown at the Kemper Art Museum, Cecille R. Hunt Gallery, Sheldon Galleries, Des Lee Gallery and Gallery 210, St. Louis; Project 4 Gallery, Washington, D.C.; Hunter College Time Square Gallery, New York; Kulturprojekte, Berlin; Kulturkiosken Gallery, Gävle, Sweden; Academy of Fine Arts, Sarajevo; and Stimultania Art Gallery, Strasbourg, France. His videos have also been shown at the Pulitzer Arts Foundation and Contemporary Art Museum, St. Louis; Saint Louis Art Museum; dokumentART Festival, Germany; Atlanta Underground Film Festival; FIVA, Argentina; Espacio AVAart Gallery, Spain; Torrance Art Museum, Los Angeles; Institut Für Alles Mögliche, Berlin; XX.9.12 FABRIKArte, Venice; East Art Gallery, Tehran; Holdudvar Gallery, Budapest; National Historical and Architectural Museum, Kiev; VIDEOPLAY, Buenos Aires; Regional Museum of History of Colima, Mexico; Moscow Museum of Modern Art; The Format Gallery, Milan; Qorikancha Museum, Peru, and Pinnacles Gallery, Australia. Ćosić currently lives in St. Louis and works as a multimedia producer, professor and artist.

Ashley McQueen is originally from Montgomery, Alabama, and began dancing with the Alabama Dance Theatre under Kitty Seale and Foye DuBose. She received training from Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, American Ballet Theater, Mark Morris Dance Group, Paul Taylor Dance Company and the Alabama Ballet. McQueen attended Birmingham-Southern College before transferring to Webster University and graduating with her B.F.A. in Dance, Ballet Emphasis (with honors). In 2013, she studied in Thailand under the direction of Pichet Klunchun. McQueen has created works for Southern Danceworks, Common Thread Contemporary Dance Company, Big Muddy Dance Company, Alabama Dance Theatre and Arova Contemporary Ballet. Her work has been presented at Southeast Regional Ballet Association Festival performances, St. Louis National Dance Week and the American College Dance Festival. McQueen received the Monticello Award and full-tuition scholarship to attend the National Choreography Intensive as both a dancer and choreographer; as well as a scholarship to the Glenda Brown Choreography Project. McQueen has choreographed and directed her own concerts through ANNONYArts, "Variations on Exchange," presented at Satori, and "Drenched," an exploration of contemporary dance and water. In 2015, Ashley relocated to New York City to direct SMASHWORKS, a dance collective dedicated to the promotion of unique and innovative collaboration.

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Laumeier Sculpture Park is a living laboratory where artists and audiences explore the relationship between contemporary art and the natural environment. Founded in 1976, Laumeier is one of the first and largest dedicated sculpture parks in the country, making it an institution of international significance as well as a unique complement to the cultural landscape of the St. Louis region. Laumeier is a nonprofit, accredited art museum that operates in partnership with St. Louis County Parks. Projects and programs are supported by the Mark Twain Laumeier Endowment Fund, the Regional Arts Commission, the University of Missouri-St. Louis, Missouri Arts Council and the Arts and Education Council of St. Louis. Laumeier presents 60 works of large-scale outdoor sculpture in a 105-acre park available free to the public year-round, and serves 300,000 patrons annually through temporary exhibitions, education programs, public events and sculpture conservation.