



## **UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS**

**Sep 18, 2026 – Feb 21, 2027**

**SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

**INSTITUTE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART AT VCU**





*Landscape with child crossing the Styx*, 2021. Acrylic and resin on cotton poly. 48 x 60 in. Studio Museum in Harlem; Museum purchase with funds provided by Harry and Lana David, 2021.16

## Upcoming Exhibitions at the Institute for Contemporary Art at VCU

In September 2026, the Institute for Contemporary Art at VCU will present three powerful exhibitions by award-winning and critically acclaimed artists Tony Cokes, Cassi Namoda, and Diane Severin Nguyen. While distinct in their mediums and approaches, these artists' practices share compelling thematic similarities, particularly in their engagement with cultural memory, and the politics of representation. Each artist, in their own way, challenges viewers to critically engage with the information and imagery they consume, pushing beyond surface interpretations.

## We Need Your Support

Our exhibition program represents the most critical component of our mission to listen, create, and make art public. Through our dedication to exhibiting and commissioning new works from living artists, we provide a vital platform for exploring new ideas, engaging diverse audiences within the university and the broader community, and fostering connections with an international network of contemporary artists. These exhibitions are not merely displays of art; they are catalysts for critical thinking, interdisciplinary exchange, and a deeper understanding of contemporary issues, directly contributing to VCU's academic mission and Richmond's vibrant cultural landscape. **We hope you will consider offering your support as we prepare to present the exceptional works of Tony Cokes, Cassi Namoda, and Diane Severin Nguyen.**



## Tony Cokes

Tony Cokes (b. 1956, Richmond, Virginia) creates politically resonant works in a visual language all his own. Cokes was named a John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Fellow in 2024. His exhibition at the ICA marks the artist's homecoming to Richmond and VCU's School of the Arts, where he received a master of fine arts in sculpture in 1985. Curated by ICA Senior Curator and Director of Curatorial Affairs Amber Esseiva, Cokes' exhibition will explore questions of artistry and personhood, touching on themes such as means of artistic production, intent, and the formation of personal identity.

Since the 1980s, his work has surfaced latent ideologies of popular culture, confronting issues of structural racism, power, visibility, and the defiant pleasures still found under capitalism. Cokes samples and remixes fragments of our media landscape to subvert its governing codes. His tightly choreographed video essays layer found text over vibrant colors and dissonant soundtracks,

exploiting the gaps between sensory regimes to heighten and complicate the reading experience. Quoted passages from current events or critical theory take on a new tenor when set to music, resulting in propulsive animations that appeal to the mind and body alike. Cokes' immersive works make text feel visceral and let rhythm spur new insight. His art attests, "it is possible to dance and think at the same time."



Top image: Portrait of Tony Cokes. (photograph © John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; courtesy the artist and the MacArthur Foundation) Bottom image: Tony Cokes, Installation view, *Testament E: MF.slow.cancel.2014*, Batalha Centro de Cinema, Porto, 2024–25







## Cassi Namoda

Cassi Namoda's (b. 1988, Maputo, Mozambique) work explores the history and culture of post-colonial Africa, especially the exchange between vernacular traditions and Portuguese colonialism in the Lusophone continent. Curated by ICA Executive Director Jessica Bell Brown, Namoda's exhibition of paintings and video works from the past five years to the present will be the first solo museum presentation of the artist's work in the United States.

Namoda's syncretic paintings are woven from a capacious symbolic language—she references global mythologies, indigenous folk art, European painting traditions, colonial power systems, and more in her dreamlike narratives and sensual landscapes. Characters and motifs (conjoined twins, fierce suns) recur within these intimate tableaux, often bolstered by references to literary, cinematic, and architectural aesthetics. Washed colors, bold compositions, and flat perspective further the paintings' aura of magical realism. The result is often a sense of romance and *saudade* injected into modernity and the art historical canon. Her work is represented in several international collections and museums.

Centered on the idea of pastiche as a strategy for bringing together a wide range of cultural reference points and narratives, the exhibition will parse the forward edges of the artist's interests in postcoloniality, magical realism, design, and world-building through a lusotropical and Global South lens.



Images (clockwise): Portrait of Cassi Namoda. (photograph courtesy the artist), Cassi Namoda, *Self loathing in 100 percent humidity*, 2022. (artwork © Cassi Namoda), Cassi Namoda, *The joy of living, outweighs misery and sorrow*, 2020. (artwork © Cassi Namoda)





## Diane Severin Nguyen

Diane Severin Nguyen (b. 1990, Carson City, California) works across photography, video, and installation, approaching the photographic moment as one of transformation. Curated by ICA Assistant Curator Egbert Vongmalaithong, Nguyen's exhibition will explore the artist's current trajectory, which considers histories of victimhood, propaganda, and sentimentality through popular forms of media and image-making. Nguyen will stage a theatrical and sonic performance alongside a presentation of a newly commissioned installation, with selections from her genre-defying films.

Moving beyond documentation, she engages photography as a moment of tension, shaped by desire, speculation, and material instability. Her video work extends these concerns, examining power, victimhood, and propaganda as forces that shape both cultural and self image. Nguyen's practice has been described as a "commitment to transience" with subjects that, though grotesque and painful, are also beautiful—like a pupa taking on the new shape and biology of a moth. Nguyen has exhibited her work internationally and lives and works in New York.



Images (clockwise): Diane Severin Nguyen, *In Her Time*, 2023, video installation, 4k video: color and sound, 62:37 minutes, installation view, Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai, 2023. Commissioned and produced by the Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai, with support from the Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver. (artwork © Diane Severin Nguyen; photograph by Rockbund Art Museum), Portrait of Diane Severin Nguyen. (photograph by Diana Pfammatter), Diane Severin Nguyen, *Spring Snow*, 2025, installation view, Galerie Molitor, Berlin, 2025. (artwork © Diane Severin Nguyen; photograph by Marjorie Brunet Plaza)

# SPONSORSHIP RECOGNITION & BENEFITS

---

## **Platinum Sponsor** **\$10,000**

- Prominent Recognition on Exhibition Signage
- Prominent Recognition in Select Exhibition Social Media
- Prominent Recognition on Exhibition Opening Invitations
- Prominent Recognition on Exhibition Donor Wall
- Prominent Recognition on Exhibition Webpage
- Special Mention in an Upcoming Issue of *Studio*, a VCUarts' Publication
- Verbal Recognition at Exhibition Programs
- Invitations to the Exhibition Opening
- Priority Reservations and Seating for Exhibition Programs
- Guided Tour of Exhibition for up to 15 Guests

---

## **Gold Sponsor** **\$5,000**

- Tiered Recognition on Exhibition Signage
- Tiered Recognition in Select Exhibition Social Media
- Tiered Recognition on Exhibition Opening Invitations
- Tiered Recognition on Exhibition Donor Wall
- Tiered Recognition on Exhibition Webpage
- Invitations to the Exhibition Opening
- Priority Reservations and Seating for Exhibition Programs
- Guided Tour of Exhibition for up to 15 Guests

---

## **Silver Sponsor** **\$2,500**

- Tiered Recognition on Exhibition Donor Wall
- Tiered Recognition on Exhibition Webpage
- Invitations to the Exhibition Opening
- Priority Reservations and Seating for Exhibition Programs
- Guided Tour of Exhibition for up to 15 Guests

---

## **Bronze Sponsor** **\$1,000**

- Tiered Recognition on Exhibition Donor Wall
- Tiered Recognition on Exhibition Webpage
- Invitations to the Exhibition Opening

To process your sponsorship payment online, please [use this link](#) or scan the QR code located below.







## ABOUT THE ICA

The Institute for Contemporary Art at Virginia Commonwealth University is a non-collecting institution that showcases a changing slate of exhibitions, performances, and programs. With a mission to listen, create, and make art public, the ICA is a place to explore new ideas, providing an open forum for dialogue and collaboration across the region and the world. Opened in 2018 in the LEED Gold-certified, Steven Holl-designed Markel Center, the ICA is a part of VCU's School of the Arts, linking the campus and the city of Richmond to an international network of contemporary artists and organizations, and encouraging working partnerships with VCU departments, faculty, students, and the broader community. ICA admission is free and open to all.

## ABOUT VCUARTS

VCU is a major, urban public research university with national and international rankings in sponsored research. Located in downtown Richmond, VCU enrolls more than 31,000 students in 222 degree and certificate programs in the arts, sciences, and humanities.

One of the nation's leading schools of arts and design, VCU School of the Arts offers 15 undergraduate and 10 graduate degree programs in fine arts, design, performing arts, historical research, and pedagogical practice. Distinguished faculty members are internationally recognized in their respective fields, contribute significantly to the stature of VCU, and are committed to mentoring the next generation of artists, entrepreneurs, scientists, scholars, and engaged citizens

of diverse communities around the world. Its campus in Qatar provides students and faculty with a direct tie to the Middle East, and underscores the school and university's commitment to global education and experience.

**For more information,  
please contact Maya Erhardt,  
Senior Director of Strategic  
Development, at  
erhardtmb@vcu.edu or  
804.828.2815**

## COVER IMAGE

Diane Severin Nguyen, *In Her Time*, 2023, video installation, 4k video: color and sound, 62:37 minutes, installation view, Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai, 2023. Commissioned and produced by the Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai, with support from the Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver. (artwork © Diane Severin Nguyen; photograph by Rockbund Art Museum)