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HIGH LINE ART PRESENTS

HIGH LINE PLINTH: A NEW LANDMARK DESTINATION FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

TWELVE SHORTLISTED ARTISTS ANNOUNCED

OPENING IN 2018

ON THE SPUR, THE NEWEST SECTION OF THE HIGH LINE AT WEST 30TH STREET AND 10TH AVENUE

New York, NY (January 9, 2017) – Presented by Friends of the High Line, High Line Art is pleased to announce the **High Line Plinth**, a new landmark destination for major public art commissions in New York City located on the High Line at West 30th Street and 10th Avenue. Designed as the focal point of the Spur, the newest section of the High Line, the High Line Plinth will designate the first space on the High Line dedicated specifically to art, featuring a rotating program of new commissions. The High Line Plinth is inspired by the Fourth Plinth in London’s Trafalgar Square, a widely respected, high-profile venue for a changing program of temporary commissioned artworks, whose influence reaches far beyond the art world and inspires dialogue amongst the general public.

After collecting and reviewing more than 50 proposals from a wide range of artists recommended by an international advisory committee, High Line Art has selected 12 shortlisted proposals for the inaugural Plinth Commissions by artists **Jonathan Berger, Minerva Cuevas, Jeremy Deller, Sam Durant, Charles Gaines, Lena Henke, Matthew Day Jackson, Simone Leigh, Roman Ondak, Paola Pivi, Haim Steinbach, and Cosima von Bonin**. Hailing from Mexico City, Slovakia, Kenya, the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Israel, and from all corners of the United States, the artists also vary greatly in age – ranging from 32 to 72 years of age. Additionally, the





artists differ in the stages at which they find themselves in their careers—from emerging, such as Minerva Cuevas, Lena Henke, and Jonathan Berger; mid-career, like Matthew Day Jackson and Cosima von Bonin; and established, such as Haim Steinbach and Charles Gaines. An **exhibition of sculptural models** of their proposed artworks will be exhibited from **February 21 to April 30, 2017 on the High Line at West 14th Street**. In spring 2017, two out of the 12 shortlisted proposals will be selected as the first two High Line Plinth commissions. The first artwork will be installed in 2018 to coincide with the opening of the Spur, and each artwork will be on view for 18 months.

The Spur, the new section of the High Line that features the Plinth, is designed to bring together the three most beloved aspects of the park: horticulture, public programs, and art. As the largest open space on the High Line, the Spur will offer unprecedented sightlines with sweeping views of New York City, lush, canopy-like plantings, public seating, and more open space for Friends of the High Line to expand its free programming and public art program. A map and rendering of the Spur, which is designed by James Corner Field Operations (Project Lead), Diller Scofidio + Renfro, and Piet Oudolf, can be found in addendum.

The High Line Plinth is one of the only sites in New York City dedicated solely to a changing series of new, contemporary art commissions. Artworks selected for the Plinth will change the skyline of the city, viewable from many different vantage points: from the street, from rooftops, from the east and west on 30th Street, and from the north and south on 10th Avenue. Given the changes occurring in the neighborhoods surrounding the High Line and in many parts of New York City, it is essential now more than ever to designate a space in the area that is permanently devoted to culture, art, and the exchange of ideas.

"High Line Art continues to reach a broad, diverse audience — including more than 2.3 million New Yorkers annually — with free, world-class artwork 365 days a year," said Robert Hammond, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Friends of the High Line. "The High Line Plinth will expand the program's impact by creating a one-of-a-kind destination for public art on the Spur, a new section of the park with even more space for public programming and dynamic horticulture."

"The High Line Plinth will provide artists with an opportunity to work on a larger scale than ever before possible on the High Line, and to engage with the breathtaking vistas that open up around this new site," says Cecilia Alemani, Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director and Chief Curator of High Line Art. "As a new landmark to this space, the High Line Plinth will create a new symbol of this incredible nexus of horticulture, art, and public space in the ever-evolving metropolis that is New York City. I am excited to work with artists who think critically about the meaning of public space and public life, and create artworks that not only respond to the site, but also spark conversations among a wide audience."

Learn more about the High Line Plinth at art.thehighline.org/highlineplinth.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

High Line Art worked with an international advisory committee of 13 artists, curators, and art world professionals who each submitted recommendations of artists to invite to submit a proposal for the Plinth. This committee includes Carol Bove (artist), Yilmaz Dziewior (Director, Museum Ludwig, Cologne, Germany), Reem Fadda (Associate Curator, Middle Eastern Art, Guggenheim Abu Dhabi Project, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum), Rashid Johnson (artist), Eungie Joo (independent curator), Pablo Leon de la Barra (Director, Casa França-Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), Helen Molesworth (Chief Curator, The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles), Virginia Overton (artist), Franklin Sirmans (Director, Pérez Art Museum Miami), Mari Spirito (Art space and Protocinema, Istanbul, Turkey), Phil Tinari (Director, Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing, China), Adrian Villar Rojas (artist), and Jochen Volz (Curator, 32nd São Paulo Biennial, São Paulo, Brazil). High Line Art then selected 12 shortlisted artists, two of whom will be chosen to present the first two inaugural High Line Plinth commissions.

ABOUT THE PROPOSALS (REFERENCE IMAGES IN ADDENDUM)

Jonathan Berger (b. 1980, New York, NY. Lives and works in New York) proposes *Bell Machine*, a working carillon that exists simultaneously as a piece of sculpture and an instrument. The piece consists of a structure housing a large metal drum, whose rotation activates a series of small hammers that ring the 183 bells which are suspended above—operating much like a music box or player piano. Berger proposes to work with The Verdin Company, America's oldest bell foundry, to design, fabricate, and assemble the carillon's structural framework, bells, and mechanics. Berger plans to collaborate with artist and musician Michael Stipe, who will write eighteen musical pieces for the carillon, each of which will play for one of the eighteen months that the work is on view.

Minerva Cuevas (b. 1975, Mexico City, Mexico. Lives and works in Mexico City) proposes *Rumble*, a brass sculpture of an elephant lifted upside-down by a crane. Throughout history, the elephant has been known as an





extraordinary beast, a worker in human enterprise, a source of entertainment, and a legendary being. The peculiar moment of suspension in Cuevas's work asks viewers to reflect on the future growth of cities and our relationship with the natural world.

Jeremy Deller (b. 1966, London, United Kingdom. Lives and works in London, United Kingdom) proposes *Untitled*, a slide perched atop the Plinth in the form of a giant chameleon. As the artist explains, "There is something magical about chameleons; they can do things that we can only dream of."

Sam Durant (b. 1961, Seattle, WA. Lives and works in Los Angeles, CA) proposes *Untitled (drone)*, a representation of the unmanned Predator drone mounted high above the piazza level. Stripped of its external devices, the abstracted plane evokes the polished modernist sculptural forms of artists like Constantin Brancusi and Barbara Hepworth. The airplane acts as a wind vane, rotating atop its 20-foot column. In recognizing the sculpture as a drone, visitors may imagine a shadow that, while largely absent in the United States, is increasingly omnipresent in countries and regions far from our own.

Charles Gaines (b. 1944, Charleston, SC. Lives and works in Los Angeles, CA) proposes *Tilted Tower*, an aluminum 40-foot tower with a gridded network of chambers, tilted at an angle of 82 degrees leaning towards the James A. Farley Post Office on 30th Street and 9th Avenue. Inside each chamber is a fabricated replica of a mailbox, each outfitted with a plaque dedicated to a discontinued New York-area newspaper. The work pays homage to the US Postal Service and print journalism, two institutions that have historically bridged the space between democracy and capitalism. Gaines aims to remind viewers of the significance of private and public community services that democratize civil society.

Lena Henke (b. 1982, Warburg, Germany. Lives and works in New York, NY) proposes *Ascent of a Woman*, a singular, gigantic, upturned breast that will slowly erode and change at the mercy of the weather. The breast's visible outer layer of soil, sand, and clay will eventually reveal new forms cast into the inner mold. By inserting a sensual feminized form onto the High Line, the work presents the city and the body in a surreal entanglement with one another, challenging New York City's rational and modernist approach to public space.

Matthew Day Jackson (b. 1974, Panorama City, CA. Lives and works in New York, NY) proposes *The Great Stone Faces*, a faux-natural rock tower installed on a steel armature and populated by cast bronze nocturnal animals. The work is inspired by a myriad of sources including Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion, the Disneyland Matterhorn ride, W. G. Sebald's novel *Austerlitz*, John James Audubon's *Birds of America*, and outdoor outfitter retail chains. The work seeks to point out the strange ways in which humans glorify nature through synthetic recreation, which often mirrors society in both its inhabitants and constructed environment.

Simone Leigh (b. 1968, Chicago, IL. Lives and works in New York, NY) proposes *Cupboard VII*, her first monumental work in her continuing series of sculptures, *Anatomy of Architecture*, which conflates vernacular forms from places as varied as West Africa and the American South with the body. This figurative work continues Leigh's practice of using form and material culture to forward her ongoing exploration of black female subjectivity.

Roman Ondak (b. 1966, Zilina, Slovakia. Lives and works in Bratislava, Slovakia) proposes a sculpture titled *The Island*, in which he mounts 193 replicas of all the United Nations member states' flags on flagpoles arranged in a compact grid on the Plinth. These flags, which are on view in front of the United Nations Headquarters, are scaled to match the size suitable for all to fit on the surface of the Plinth, but placed in such close proximity to each other that they blend to form a single entity.

Paola Pivi (b. 1971, Milan, Italy. Lives and works in Anchorage, Alaska) proposes a reproduction of the Statue of Liberty standing twenty-feet-high and with an inflatable cartoon style mask affixed onto Lady Liberty's visage. The new face changes weekly, with each mask featuring the portrait of a person who has gained his or her freedom in the United States, or who seeks to do so. The stories of the individuals represented will be available for visitors to reference online.

Haim Steinbach (b. 1944, Rehovot, Israel. Lives and works in New York, NY) proposes *Chicken Coop*, a chicken coop on 22-foot stilts. Steinbach reimagines the chicken coop in the form of a penthouse – the apartment at the very top of a city building, most often the most exclusive piece of property in the building. Steinbach's work imagines raising chickens within the framework of human demographics and economics.

Cosima von Bonin (b. 1962, Mombasa, Kenya. Lives and works in Cologne, Germany) proposes *WORKING IDLER*, a sculpture of a Pinocchio-like figure with his elongated nose caught in a cement wall. The figure stands on the Plinth with two staircases on either side of the platform giving viewers access to stand next to the 10-foot-tall





sculpture. Von Bonin derived the specific likeness for this character from a number of antique children's books she collected in her research, specifically that of an Italian Pinocchio depicted in the 1930s.

ABOUT HIGH LINE ART

Presented by Friends of the High Line, High Line Art commissions and produces public art projects on and around the High Line. Founded in 2009, High Line Art presents a wide array of artwork including site-specific commissions, exhibitions, performances, video programs, and a series of billboard interventions. Curated by Cecilia Alemani, the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art, and produced by Friends of the High Line, High Line Art invites artists to think of creative ways to engage with the uniqueness of the architecture, history, and design of the High Line and to foster a productive dialogue with the surrounding neighborhood and urban landscape. For further information on High Line Art, please visit art.thehighline.org.

ABOUT FRIENDS OF THE HIGH LINE

Friends of the High Line raises 98% of the High Line's annual budget.

Owned by the City of New York, the High Line is a public park maintained, operated, and programmed by Friends of the High Line, in partnership with the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation.

SUPPORT

Major support for the High Line Plinth comes from the High Line Plinth Committee, a group of contemporary art leaders committed to realizing major commissions and engaging in the public success of the Plinth. The High Line Plinth Committee includes Shelley Fox Aarons, Fairfax Dorn, Andrew Hall, Hermine Riegerl Heller, J. Tomilson Hill, Dorothy Lichtenstein, Donald R. Mullen, Jr., Mario J. Palumbo, Jr, and Marissa Sackler

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SOCIAL MEDIA INFORMATION

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Images: Clockwise from top left: Jeremy Deller, *Untitled*, 2016 (rendering); Simone Leigh, *Cupboard VII*, 2016 (rendering); Paola Pivi, *Untitled*, 2016 (rendering); Sam Durant, *Untitled (drone)*, 2016 (rendering). Proposals for the High Line Plinth. Commissioned by High Line Art. Courtesy the artists and Friends of the High Line

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