



For Immediate Release



Sam Durant, *Untitled (drone)*, 2016-2021 (rendering).

## **SAM DURANT'S *UNTITLED (DRONE)* IS SECOND COMMISSION FOR THE HIGH LINE PLINTH**

**Large-scale outdoor sculpture to be displayed on the High Line at the Spur, located at 30th Street and 10th Avenue, from May 2021–August 2022**

**New York, NY (April 14, 2021)** — High Line Art announces the second High Line Plinth commission: *Untitled (drone)*, a large-scale fiberglass sculpture mounted 25 feet high, by artist Sam Durant. Located on the park at West 30th Street and 10th Avenue, the Plinth, as a landmark destination for major public art, features a rotating program of new monumental commissions. Durant's artwork will be installed on the High Line in May 2021 and will be on view through August 2022, following Simone Leigh's *Brick House*, the Plinth's inaugural installation, which has been displayed since 2019.

Across drawings, sculptures, installations, and community-driven public projects, Durant examines the ways in which groups of people make their values visible and heard in public space. One of his central subjects is America, its history and the complexities of its power relationships. Over the past two decades, Durant has investigated the nature of public space—



both its physical manifestation with monuments and public institutions, and the activities that take place in the public realm, including political rallies and civic uprisings.

For the Plinth, Durant presents *Untitled (drone)*, a sculpture in the shape of an abstracted drone sitting atop a 25-foot-tall steel pole. Durant removes all details from the drone—decals, landing gear, cameras, weapons—rendering it as a streamlined sculpture that evokes the biomorphic forms of Constantin Brancusi or Barbara Hepworth. Shaped from white fiberglass, the sculpture hovers above 10th Avenue, rotating on its steel pole as directed by the wind.

The sculpture is modeled after the Predator drone, a remotely piloted aircraft that was used by the US military beginning in 1995 to conduct reconnaissance around the world and, later, airstrikes in countries including Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya, Pakistan, Syria, Somalia, and Yemen. Its successor is currently employed by US Customs and Border Protection to surveil the nation's borders and in support of law enforcement agencies, most recently in May 2020 to monitor protestors in Minneapolis responding to the murder of George Floyd. Similar technologies also have been adopted domestically by companies facilitating widespread city-sanctioned surveillance. With this work, Durant seeks to make visible the intentionally obscured drone warfare perpetuated by the US, and to remind the public that drones and surveillance are a tragic, menacing, and pervasive presence in the daily lives of many living outside—and within—the United States.

Cecilia Alemani, the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art, says, "With Sam Durant's *Untitled (drone)*, the High Line Plinth continues its mission to present new, powerful, thought-provoking artworks that generate and amplify some of today's most important conversations. With the Plinth program, we continue to challenge the assumptions that underlie public space: What is the function of the artworks that punctuate our parks and plazas? What is the responsibility of art and artists when it comes to standing against violence and warfare? *Untitled (drone)* brings critical visibility to issues that remain both hidden and pervasive in our societies. The High Line is a site for artists to take risks and realize courageous projects that face our contemporary crises. Our role is to support artists and their ideas."

"*Untitled (drone)* is meant to animate the question about the use of drones, surveillance, and targeted killings in places far and near, and whether as a society we agree with and want to continue these practices," says artist Sam Durant. "Art is a place where we can speculate about alternatives, other possibilities, where we can bring forward things that are unsaid, unknown or hidden from view, and have discussions about them. Art offers us the opportunity to think about the world in new ways. In moments of crisis, this is extremely important."

An extensive public engagement and interpretation program for *Untitled (drone)* will be offered in conjunction with the sculpture's presentation. More details will be announced in the coming months.

#### **ABOUT THE HIGH LINE PLINTH**

The [High Line Plinth](#) is the first space on the High Line—and one of the only sites in New York City—dedicated solely to new, monumental, contemporary art commissions. Artworks on the Plinth rotate every 18 months and are selected from proposals solicited from artists around the world. Along with the widely celebrated *Brick House* by Simone Leigh, Durant's work was selected from a shortlist of 12 artworks—narrowed down from over 50 total submissions—



proposed in 2016 for the first and second High Line Plinth commissions. High Line Art has shortlisted 12 proposals for further consideration for the third and fourth Plinth commissions, to be installed in 2022 and 2024, respectively. An exhibition of maquettes of the shortlisted proposals is on view on the High Line through spring 2021.

### **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

Sam Durant was born in 1961 in Seattle, Washington and lives and works in Berlin, Germany. Recent new projects and solo exhibitions have been presented internationally at the ARoS Museum, Aarhus, Denmark (2020); Blum & Poe, Los Angeles (2020); Paula Cooper Gallery, New York (2020); Library Street Collective, Detroit (2019); Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis (2015); Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles (2014); and Museo d'Arte Contemporanea (MACRO), Rome, Italy (2013). Notable public commissions include *The Meeting House*, a Trustees Art in Public Places project, Concord, Massachusetts (2016); *Labyrinth*, Mural Arts, Philadelphia (2015), and *What #isamuseum*, The Getty Center, Los Angeles (2013). His work has been featured in group exhibitions at Copenhagen Contemporary, Denmark (2020); Historisches Museum Frankfurt/Main, Frankfurt, Germany (2019); The Geffen Contemporary at MOCA, Los Angeles (2016); Fundación/Colección Jumex, Mexico City, Mexico (2013); and Museum of Modern Art, New York (2011). His work has been featured in international exhibitions including dOCUMENTA 13, Kassel, Germany (2012) and the Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2004). His work is represented in major collections worldwide, including Tate, London, England; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Museum of Modern Art, New York; and Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst, Ghent, Belgium.

### **ABOUT HIGH LINE ART**

Founded in 2009, High Line Art commissions and produces a wide array of artworks on the High Line, including site-specific commissions, exhibitions, performances, video programs, and a series of billboard interventions. Led by Cecilia Alemani, the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art, and presented by the High Line, the art program invites artists to think of creative ways to engage with the unique architecture, history, and design of the park, and to foster a productive dialogue with the surrounding neighborhood and urban landscape.

For further information on High Line Art, please visit [thehighline.org/art](https://thehighline.org/art).

### **ABOUT THE HIGH LINE**

The High Line is both a nonprofit organization and a public park on the West Side of Manhattan. Through our work with communities on and off the High Line, we're devoted to reimagining public spaces to create connected, healthy neighborhoods and cities.

Built on a historic, elevated rail line, the High Line was always intended to be more than a park. You can walk through the gardens, view art, experience a performance, enjoy food or beverage, or connect with friends and neighbors—all while enjoying a unique perspective of New York City.

Nearly 100% of our annual budget comes through donations. The High Line is owned by the City of New York and we operate under a license agreement with NYC Parks.

For more information, visit [thehighline.org](https://thehighline.org) and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#).



## **SUPPORT**

Major support for the High Line Plinth is provided by members of the High Line Plinth Committee and contemporary art leaders committed to realizing major commissions and engaging in the public success of the Plinth: Shelley Fox Aarons and Philip E. Aarons, Jennifer and Jonathan Allan Soros, Elizabeth Belfer, Suzanne Deal Booth, Fairfax Dorn, Steve Ells, Kerianne Flynn, Andy and Christine Hall, Hermine Riegerl Heller and David B. Heller, J. Tomilson and Janine Hill, The Holly Peterson Foundation, Annie Hubbard and Harvey Schwartz, Miyoung Lee and Neil Simpkins, Dorothy Lichtenstein, Amanda and Don Mullen, Douglas Oliver and Sherry Brous, Mario Palumbo and Stefan Gargiulo, Susan and Stephen Scherr, Susan and David Viniar, and Anonymous.

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