



For Immediate Release



Okwui Okpokwasili, *Poor People's TV Room*, 2017.
New York Live Arts. Photo by Ian Douglas.

OKWUI OKPOKWASILI BRINGS A PROCESSIONAL PERFORMANCE TO THE HIGH LINE AS A CLOSING HOMAGE TO SIMONE LEIGH'S SCULPTURE *BRICK HOUSE*

Simone Leigh's Celebrated High Line Plinth Commission is in its Final Weeks on the Park

New York, NY (April 19, 2021) — High Line Art announces *On the way, undone*, a performance by Okwui Okpokwasili. Okpokwasili and three other performers will move from the southern end of the High Line in a procession to the Spur at 30th Street and 10th Avenue, where the performance culminates around Simone Leigh's sculpture *Brick House*, the inaugural High Line Plinth commission. The performance will take place at 7pm on May 3, 4, 5, and 6, 2021. *On the way, undone* is organized by Melanie Kress, High Line Art associate curator.

On the way, undone is a performance inspired by Simone Leigh's High Line Plinth commission *Brick House*. *On the way, undone* is at once an homage and a pilgrimage: performers trace a path from the south end of the park to Leigh's sculpture at 30th Street, carrying a metaphorical vessel that also carries them. The performers will begin in the Chelsea Market Passage at 16th Street with a four-part vocalized score. A procession then extends throughout the park, leading the audience to the Plinth, where the performance culminates. Okpokwasili performs with Mayfield Brooks, Anaïs Maviel, and Samita Sinha.



“It’s an honor to work with Okwui Okpokwasili on the occasion of our farewell to Simone Leigh’s *Brick House*,” said Melanie Kress, High Line Art associate curator. “Okpokwasili’s virtuosic performance *On the way, undone* continues an incredible ongoing dialogue between the two artists, furthering shared themes of Black women’s collective creativity, strength, and gratitude.”

The performance takes place during the final weeks of the display of Simone Leigh’s celebrated sculpture *Brick House* on the High Line. *Brick House* inaugurated the High Line Plinth program in June 2019 to wide public and critical acclaim. The sculpture is a 16-foot-tall bronze bust of a Black woman with references to West African and Southern United States architecture styles. *Brick House* is named for the term for a strong Black woman who stands with the strength, endurance, and integrity of a house made of bricks. *On the way, undone* is in dialogue with *Brick House*, informed by the sculpture’s visual metaphor of being sheltered and carried by the resilience of Black womanhood.

Okwui Okpokwasili is a writer, performer, and choreographer. In her multidisciplinary performances straddling theater, dance, sound, and visual arts, Okpokwasili evokes the memories of women—of adolescent sexual awakening in the inner city (*Bronx Gothic*, 2014), forgotten women engaged in embodied revolt in the Women’s War of 1929 and the threads of that action in the Bring Back our Girls movement (*Poor People’s TV Room*, 2018), and of a young girl who refuses to have her hair straightened, as it’s a direct link to the spiritual plane (*Adaku’s Revolt*, 2019). Her transcendent performances quake through the fissures of interior and corporeal experience, realized amid spare sets designed by her husband and collaborator Peter Born.

Check-in for *On the way, undone* will be at ground level at 14th Street and 10th Avenue, underneath the High Line. The performance will begin in the Chelsea Market Passage at 16th Street, followed by a procession north. The audience is encouraged to follow the performance, while maintaining 6-foot distance between individuals or households. The audience may stretch for as long as a city block in order to maintain social distance. The procession will turn east at 30th Street, culminating on the Spur at 10th Avenue. There will be seating and additional space for the audience at the Spur.

All persons with disabilities are encouraged to attend. To request additional information regarding accessibility or accommodations at a program, please contact art@thehighline.org. Program venues are accessible via wheelchair, and ASL interpretation can be arranged two weeks in advance.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Okwui Okpokwasili (b. 1972) is an Igbo-Nigerian American artist, performer, and writer based in Brooklyn, New York. Her performance work has been commissioned by the Center for the Art of Performance at UCLA with REDCAT, Los Angeles, California (2018); the 10th Annual Berlin Biennale, Berlin, Germany (2018); Jacob’s Pillow, Becket, Massachusetts (2018); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota (2017); and Danspace Project, New York, New York with Performance Space New York, New York (2014). She has been the recipient of two New York Dance and Performance Bessie Awards, and was a 2018 MacArthur Fellow.



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.

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 and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#).

SUPPORT

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@HighLineArtNYC @bornokwui #OnTheWayUndone #HighLinePlinth

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