



For Immediate Release



Rari en New York, 2014 (video still). Courtesy of the artist.

HIGH LINE ART PRESENTS *INSECTAGEDDON* BY ARTIST AND POET CECILIA VICUÑA, A DAY-LONG FESTIVAL AND CALL TO ACTION TO SAVE INSECTS, ON SEPTEMBER 25

***Insectageddon* Inspires and Culminates the High Line's Annual Month-Long Horticulture Celebration, This Year Expanded to Dozens of Partner-Sites across the US**

New York, NY (August 19, 2021) — High Line Art announces *Insectageddon*, a free day-long festival conceived by artist and poet Cecilia Vicuña. As a celebration of insects and call to action to address global insect die-off, *Insectageddon* will consist of interdisciplinary and interactive performances, poetry readings, workshops, and more throughout the High Line, and take place on September 25, 2021. The event addresses the devastating loss of insect populations around the world due to the immense scale of toxic industrial farming, pesticides, and habitat destruction. Twenty-six partner sites across New York City and the United States will also be hosting their own events in conjunction with the festival. *Insectageddon* is the culminating event for the High Line's annual [Horticulture Celebration](#), which takes place each September. *Insectageddon* is organized by Cecilia Alemani, the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art, and Melanie Kress, High Line Art Associate Curator, with Constanza Valenzuela, High Line Art Curatorial and Exhibitions Assistant.



Cecilia Vicuña is an artist and poet based in New York City, originally from Santiago, Chile. Vicuña's work connects deeply with the changing realities of natural and political realms. In her *precarios* (works made of natural and industrial debris) and *quipus* (large hanging installations of knotted skeins made of unspun wool), she embraces the impermanence of material realities in our world, celebrates unexpected magical moments of transformation, and mourns the loss of nature's beauty that we ourselves precipitate.

Insectageddon is a collective performance and call to action envisioned by Vicuña, celebrating the millions of insects that visit and make their home on the High Line every year. Vicuña uses the natural and lively landscape of the park to raise awareness of the importance of insects for maintaining the vegetal world, as well as all living beings that rely on plants to live. For the event, Vicuña and the event's partners bring together artists, activists, citizen scientists, climate change scholars, entomologists, performers, and young people in an effort to both reflect and raise awareness of our interconnectedness in the web of life. Performances will be outfitted in colorful patterned insect costumes and sets designed by Gregory Corbino in collaboration with Vicuña.

The schedule of *Insectageddon* programming on the High Line includes:

ARTIST PERFORMANCES

3 – 6pm

At various locations on the High Line

Francisca Benitez and Sunder Ganglani, *Bombus impatiens and other harmonies*

3:30pm

On the Flyover, on the High Line between 25th and 27th streets

Benitez and Ganglani will present a harmonizing vocal duet inspired by the Latin and common names of the insects found on the High Line in synchronicity with an ASL interpreter.

Christy Gast, *Goldenrod Transect*

4pm

Meet on the High Line at Gansevoort Street

Gast will present a durational performative walk around goldenrod, a native plant found in several locations throughout the High Line. Gast will have with her a giant soft sculpture of a goldenrod, as a prop for educational, creative, and interactive collaboration with the public. The performance will travel between Gansevoort Street and 16th Street.

Poet's ANThology (A living ANThology)

5pm

Various locations on the High Line

Invited poets will perform at different spots throughout the High Line, spontaneously in conversation with guests. Poets will be wearing insect cyborgian costumes designed by Cecilia Vicuña and created by Gregory Corbino. The Poet's ANThology will culminate at the 10th Avenue Overlook with a poetry performance by **Cecilia Vicuña** and **Ricardo Gallo** set to music. Poets include **Lee Ann Brown, Marcella Durand, Brenda Coultas, Edwin Torres, Laynie Brown, Eleni Sikelianos, Latasha Diggs, E.J. McAdams, Sarah Riggs,** and **Omar Berrada.**



READINGS AND PERFORMANCES

3 – 6pm

At the 10th Avenue Overlook at 17th Street

Poets, scientists, artists, and climate activists speak about their work involving insects and ways we can move forward together. Speakers include: sixth-grade entomologist **Anusha Vaish**; poet **Julie Patton**; mycologist and filmmaker **Giuliana Furci**; renowned activist **Bertha Lewis**; bee biologist and Field Associate at the American Museum of Natural History **Sarah Kornbluth**; High Line staff gardener **Scout Kerensky-Coodley**; and the revered theatrical troupe **Reverend Billy and the Stop Shopping Choir**; among others.

ART WORKSHOPS

3 – 6pm

In the Chelsea Market Passage, on the High Line between 15th and 16th Streets

High Line education staff facilitates thematic art-making workshops for all ages about insects and Cecilia Vicuña and her artwork. These workshops also take place each Saturday throughout the month of September as part of the High Line's annual Horticulture Celebration. Topics and activities are listed as follows:

Celebrating Insects: Insect masks and endangered and beneficial insects

During this workshop, participants explore why insects are important and what they can do to protect them. After learning about endangered insects and why insects are important, participants will be invited to create an insect mask inspired by four endangered insects that call New York State home. Participants will use paper, markers, cardstock, and string to design their mask, choosing to create pop-up elements or decorate the mask with drawing supplies.

Celebrating Insects: Cecilia Vicuña, artist spotlight and mini wire insect sculptures

In this workshop, participants will learn about Cecilia Vicuña and her body of work. Participants will create a small wire sculpture of an insect out of various wire materials. This sculpture will be attached to a pencil to mimic the movement of insects while writing or drawing. These sculptures reference Vicuña's insect hat, as well as wire kinetic sculpture that will appear during the festival.

Celebrating Insects: Exploring native bees on the High Line

In this experience, participants will learn about the essential role different kinds of native bees play on the High Line, what they need to thrive, and how pesticides, habitat loss, and climate change threaten their survival. Participants will be invited to explore a bee box by taking it apart and putting it together, learn about the different sizes of native bees in the "Which bee lives where?" matching game, and draw different kinds of native bees found on the High Line.

FILM PROGRAM

3 – 4pm

The Backyard at Hudson Yards, near 11th Avenue and 32nd Street

8 – 9pm

On the High Line in 14th Street Passage, at 14th Street

Artists and filmmakers present a series of videos and short films exploring the profound



creativity and ingenuity of insects. The series features films by **Isabella Rossellini, Cecilia Vicuña, Pedro Neves Marques**, and more. The same films will be screened both at Hudson Yards in the afternoon and on the High Line in the evening.

INSECT-INSPIRED CULINARY DELIGHTS OFFERED BY HIGH LINE FOOD VENDORS

In the Chelsea Market Passage, on the High Line between 15th and 16th streets

High Line food vendors have collaborated to present insect-inspired culinary delights. Enjoy options from Hearth, L'Arte del Gelato, La Newyorkina, Tastalu, and Berlin Currywurst.

As the High Line has a timed-entry reservation system on weekends, visitors are encouraged to make a timed-entry reservation to attend *Insectageddon* programming. Reservations for September 25 will be made available starting September 13. Reservation information is subject to change; check thehighline.org for updates.

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 with at least two weeks advance notice.

Insectageddon has been developed with the support of our advisors: Anusha Vaish, sixth grader and trailblazing insect guardian; and Chrissy Word and Emily Fano of the New York City Pollinator Working Group (NYCPWG). In addition, the High Line Network, Community Engagement, Education, and Horticulture departments' staff, especially Taryn Cunha, Scout Kerensky-Coodley, Eric Rodriguez, Yuki Kaneko, and John Gunderson, have guided the program development throughout.

Costumes and sets are built and designed by Gregory Corbino in collaboration with Cecilia Vicuña.

PARTNER EVENTS

In addition to the programming on the High Line, this year's Horticulture Celebration is expanded to partner sites across New York City and the US. All events are on September 25, 2021, unless otherwise noted.

[BridgePark Richmond](#) with **Partners in the Arts, Richmond Public Schools**, and **Richmond Parks & Rec**
Richmond, VA

BridgePark is working with Partners in the Arts, Richmond Parks & Rec, and Richmond Public Schools to develop arts integrated content focused on bees. Students, artists, and teachers will develop art content that will demonstrate the importance of pollinators to our environmental health. A family-oriented event, the *Insectageddon* scavenger hunt will allow participants to find clues at their own pace.



[Brighter Choice Community School](#)

Brooklyn, NY

On Monday, September 27, in this activity, students will learn what an insect is and what some of their adaptations are. Then they will put their knowledge into play by “creating” an insect that is adapted to live in their assigned environment.

[Bronx River Alliance](#)

Bronx, NY

For this year’s International Coastal Cleanup Day, Bronx River Alliance is celebrating insects, whose survival is threatened. Visitors are invited to enjoy some activities, join a cleanup team, and learn how to help save our insects.

[Buffalo Bayou Partnership](#)

Houston, TX

Visitors are invited to join BBP for Bugstock at Buffalo Bend Nature Park for bug-inspired activities, music, plant giveaways and [Brandon Ballengée’s Love Motel for Insects](#) sculpture.

[Farmers Garden](#)

Brooklyn, NY

Friends of Flowers at Farmers Garden is an all-ages event celebrating the web of life. Through exploration and education, the program will raise awareness of why insects are awesome and their close relationship with native wildflowers, many of which have amazing health benefits. Visitors are invited to get hands-on with plants that offer beauty, food, and medicine, learn about sustainable growing practices, and discover why gardeners love insects. In addition to workshops and family-friendly activities, there will be art, music, free food, and a plant swap.

[Freshkills Park Alliance](#) with **the Staten Island Museum** and **Ash Ferlito**

Staten Island, NY

Across two events, visitors are invited to take an all-ages insect walk and explore mothing with Freshkills Park.

[Hunters Point Parks Conservancy](#) with [Newtown Creek Alliance](#)

Long Island City, NY

Visitors are invited to join HPPC and Newtown Creek Alliance for a planting project at their pollinator meadow at the medians on 48th Ave. in Long Island City.

[J. M. Rapport School Career Development](#)

Bronx, NY

Visitors are invited to see J. M. Rapport School for Career Development’s chickens and



learn about the bugs they eat and the bugs that try to eat them. Participants will see how they work to keep some bugs away from the plants while trying to attract others. Learn about how gardeners bring in armies of ladybugs to kill unwanted pests in our indoor hydroponic farm. The garden is always changing, but insects are always there.

[James Baldwin Outdoor Learning Center](#) with [Van Cortlandt Park Alliance](#)

Bronx, NY

JBOLC and visitors will be local and global as they participate in this world-wide collective celebration of insects. Artists, activists and scientists will help us raise awareness of human interdependence with insects.

[Memphis River Parks Partnership](#)

Memphis, TN

Visitors are invited to join the Partnership and partners for an afternoon around the riverfront parks while stopping to take photographs of local insect life. Learn how insects impact plant life and how they help to make the parks a wonderful natural space for everyone.

[Newtown Creek Alliance with NOoSPHERE Arts](#)

Brooklyn, NY

A Monarch's Journey is an immersive site-specific dance & music performance among the wildflowers of industrial Greenpoint inspired by the annual Monarch migration.

[Pioneer Works](#) with [Red Hook Farms](#)

Brooklyn, NY

Visitors are invited to join Pioneer Works and Red Hook Farms on Thursday, September 23 to explore ecosystems on sidewalks. Participants will plant and cultivate pollinator habitats by caring for the urban forest. Bring gloves if you have them; tools are provided.

[Staten Island Museum](#)

Staten Island, NY

Experience the exhibition *Magicalcada*, an immersive environment of imaginative vignettes made with insects, created by artist Jennifer Angus.

[Smiling Hogshead Ranch](#)

Long Island City, NY

Visitors are invited to join gardeners of Smiling Hogshead for an info session and garden walk highlighting different types of bees & butterflies who live there. What is the difference between a native and a honey bee anyway?



[Trinity Park Conservancy](#)

Dallas, TX

The Conservancy's Insectapalooza Guide will curate activities and resources which cultivate appreciation of the many species of insects that rely on the Trinity River and its surrounding habitats.

[The Voelker Orth Museum, Bird Sanctuary & Victorian Garden](#)

Flushing, NY

The Voelker Orth Museum's garden is home to a thriving bee colony. Visitors will learn about bees, their ecosystem, and how they support our community through storytelling and an art activity.

[The Western New York Land Conservancy](#) with [Buffalo Museum of Science](#), [Just Buffalo](#), and [Eastern Monarch Butterfly Farm](#)

Buffalo, NY

Why are insects important? What role do they play on a healthy planet? How can we ensure a future rich in insect life? *Insectageddon*-Buffalo will highlight the role insects play in our lives.

ABOUT THE HORTICULTURE CELEBRATION

Held annually, the High Line's month-long horticulture celebration highlights a different aspect of the park's horticulture and sustainability initiatives through educational and interactive public programming and on-site signage. This year during the month of September, "Celebrating Insects on the High Line" will take a closer look at the interconnectedness between insects, plants, and the greater web of life, including humans.

Though they are small in size, the impact of insects shouldn't be underestimated—insects play a critical role in all ecosystems, pollinating flowering plants, acting as a food source for birds and other small animals, playing a role in decomposition and maintaining soil quality, and even performing pest control. With 1.5 million named species and an estimated 10 quintillion individual insects alive at any given moment, insects greatly outnumber any other animal on the planet. Insects are also a bellwether of ecosystem issues—their current die-offs point to the impacts of climate change, pesticides, habitat loss, and pollution, even if the full breadth of those impacts aren't being seen as vividly higher up in the food chain.

At the High Line, the park's gardeners recognize the importance of insects in the health of the gardens and the city at large. From installing bee hotels and water features for wild bees to adjusting our annual Spring Cutback to leave key insect habitats intact, the gardeners are constantly evolving and evaluating their practices to have a positive impact on the park's smallest residents and visitors. Celebrating Insects on the High Line is an opportunity to take a closer look at these hidden, unique relationships between plants and insects in the park and beyond, and spread awareness of the critical role people can play in insect conservation efforts.



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Cecilia Vicuña (b. 1948, Santiago, Chile) lives and works in New York, New York. Recent solo exhibitions have been featured at institutions including Museo Universitario de Arte Contemporáneo, Mexico City, Mexico (2020); Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami, Miami, Florida (2019); Museum of Modern Art, New York (2019), Tate Modern (2019), Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art, Rotterdam, Netherlands (2019); and Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (2019). Notable group exhibitions include *Collaboration for a Dark Sky*, Centro Cultural de España, Santiago, Chile (2019); and *Radical Women: Latin American Art, 1960 – 1985*, traveling to Pinoteca de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil; and Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York (2018). Vicuña's work has been presented in major international exhibitions including documenta 14, Athens, Greece; Kassel, Germany (2017); 18th Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, Australia (2012); Whitney Biennial, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, New York (1997); 2nd Havana Biennial, Havana, Cuba (1986); and the 4th Medellín Biennial, Medellín, Colombia (1981).

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 more 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 #Insectageddon

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