



For Immediate Release



Photo by Timothy Schenck

HIGH LINE ART COMMISSIONS JULIA PHILLIPS FOR *OBSERVER, OBSERVED*, AN INTERACTIVE INSTALLATION CAPTURING THE ACT OF WATCHING

New York, NY (August 11, 2022) — High Line Art announces *Observer, Observed*, a new commission by artist Julia Phillips. An interactive cast bronze binocular stand paired with a LED screen, *Observer, Observed* toys with perceptions of surveillance in public space. The installation, Phillip's first public artwork, will be on view from September 2022 through August 2023 on the High Line near 26th Street. *Observer, Observed* is organized by Cecilia Alemani, Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art.

For the High Line, Phillips expands on previous work with *Observer, Observed*, playing on publicly accessible binocular towers commonly found at tourist and scenic destinations. Phillips crafts a set of binoculars with a custom shaped adjustment handle, cast in bronze and attached to an adjustable metal support structure, installed on the Flyover on the High Line. Visitors can interact with the sculpture by looking through the binoculars onto the adjacent streets and buildings — while a nearby LED screen transmits live footage of the visitor's eyes, captured by a camera inside the binoculars. The title of the work, *Observer, Observed*, refers to the power dynamics at play between perception and spectatorship in public space.

HIGH LINE ART



Julia Phillips works in ceramics and metal to create objects and scenes that are intimately connected to the body. Her sculptures propose support structures for the human form while emphasizing its absence. She makes impressions of the body in the form of casts of limbs, handprints, and other corporeal traces. Though evocative of physical functions and experiences, her work highlights power relations between individuals— and between individuals and institutions—functioning as a metaphor for social and psychological experiences. For example, for her recent *Observer II*, Phillips cites Alfred Hitchcock’s *Rear Window* as a source of inspiration. The sculpture, a set of ceramic binoculars on a stainless steel stand, questions the responsibility inherent in the act of observing, whether in an intimate situation or an anonymous one, like lurking on social media.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Julia Phillips (b. 1985, Hamburg, Germany) lives and works in Chicago, Illinois and Berlin, Germany. Recent solo exhibitions of her work have been featured at institutions including Kunstverein Braunschweig, Braunschweig, Germany (2019) and MoMA PS1, Long Island City, New York (2018). Her work has been featured in notable group exhibitions including *The Milk of Dreams*, 59th International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia (2022), *Grief and Grievance: Art and Mourning in America*, New Museum, New York, New York (2021); *Smashing into my heart*, The Renaissance Society, Chicago, Illinois (2021); *Feminist Histories: Artists After 2000*, Museum of Art of São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2019); *We don’t need another hero*, 10th Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art (2018), *2018 Triennial: Songs for Sabotage*, New Museum, New York, New York (2018); and *We Go As They*, The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, New York (2017).

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 #JuliaPhillips

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