



**For Immediate Release**



Kapwani Kiwanga, *On Growth*, 2023. Photo by Andrea Teutli.

## **KAPWANI KIWANGA'S SCULPTURE *ON GROWTH* TAKES ROOT ON THE HIGH LINE**

### **Kiwanga's Commission Reminds Visitors of the Legacies of Natural and Economic History**

**New York, NY (November 13, 2023)** — The High Line today announced the debut of Kapwani Kiwanga's *On Growth*, a larger than life fern-inspired sculpture enclosed in a color-shifting glass structure, now on view along the park where it overlooks Little West 12th Street. The sculpture, which links together the past and future through intersecting narratives about nature, botanic technology, and global economics, will be on display through October 2024.

"*On Growth* is a mesmerizing work that opens a window into a complex story about our historical and ongoing relationships with nature," said Cecilia Alemani, the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art. "We are excited to present Kiwanga's work here amid the High Line's gardens, which feels like the perfect environment for a piece that explores these themes."

Kiwanga's new commission for High Line Art draws on the histories of institutional and commercial botanic nurseries from the 19th century onwards that heavily influenced the scientific understanding of plants and horticulture of today. The work references Wardian



cases, a predecessor of the terrarium, which were used to transport uprooted plants to Europe from overseas, allowing those species to continue to thrive amid London's polluted air in the late 19th century. These enclosures resembled jewelry cases of the time and, similarly, often protected treasures from distant lands. With this inspiration, *On Growth* features a fern-like sculpture enclosed in a multifaceted case constructed from dichroic glass, which captures and transforms light that passes through it, changing tone and shade as it is viewed from different vantage points.

Often grounding her projects in architecture and botany, Kiwanga is a conceptual artist working across film, performance, sculpture, and installation. Through exhaustive research into topics including history, social asymmetries, and marginalized stories, Kiwanga constructs artworks that tease apart imbalances and the imperceptible nuances that comprise the architecture of power.

Kiwanga has created artworks that engage a wide variety of subjects including mono-crop agriculture in Tanzania, the oil and fracking industries, ceremonies related to key moments in African independence, and historical racist lantern laws from New England and New York. In her ongoing work *Flowers for Africa*, she installs fresh arrangements of cut flowers that are replicas of bouquets visible in archival images of the inauguration ceremonies of African countries. In 2024, she will represent Canada at the 60th Venice Biennale.

#### **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

Kapwani Kiwanga (b. 1978, Hamilton, Canada) lives and works in Paris, France. Kiwanga has presented her work in solo exhibitions at institutions around the world, including Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Wolfsburg, Germany (2023); CAPC Musée d'art Contemporain de Bordeaux, Bordeaux, France (2023); Museum of Contemporary Art Toronto, Toronto, Canada (2023), New Museum, New York, New York (2022); Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany (2020); Kunstinstituut Melly, Rotterdam, Netherlands (2020); Power Plant, Toronto, Canada (2017); South London Gallery, London, England (2015), and Jeu de Paume, Paris, France (2014). Notable and recent group exhibitions include *Ecologies of Elsewhere*, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati, Ohio (2022); *This is Not Africa – Unlearn What You Have Learned*, AROS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus, Denmark (2021); *Prelude*, Luma Arles, Arles, France (2021); *Nine Lives*, Renaissance Society, Chicago, Illinois (2020); *Entangled Things*, Museum of Contemporary Art Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan (2020); and *Undefined Territories. Perspectives on Colonial Legacies*, Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain (2019). Kiwanga's work has been featured in major international exhibitions including the 59th Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy (2022); Toronto Biennial of Art, Toronto, Canada (2019); Glasgow International, Glasgow, Scotland (2018); and Lubumbashi Biennale, Lubumbashi, Republic of Congo (2016). She has been the recipient of numerous prizes, including the Zurich Art Prize (2022), the Prix Marcel Duchamp (2020), Frieze Artist Award (2018), and the annual Sobey Art Award (2018). She is a 2023 Guggenheim 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](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](#), [X \(Twitter\)](#), [Instagram](#).

### **SUPPORT**

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**@HighLineArtNYC #KapwaniKiwanga**

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