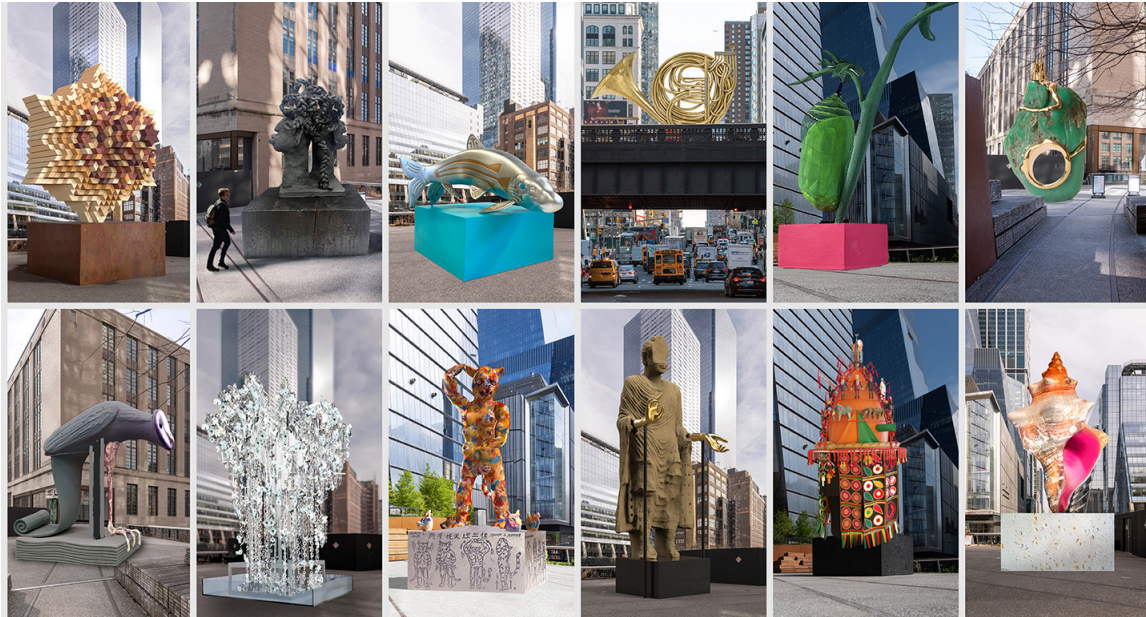




For Immediate Release



ARTISTS ANNOUNCED FOR HIGH LINE PLINTH SHORTLIST

Models of the 12 Shortlisted Proposals for the Landmark Public Art Series will be on Display March 19 through June 2024

New York, NY (March 12, 2024) — The High Line announced today the 12 shortlisted artists for the fifth and sixth High Line Plinth commissions. The Plinth is the park's most prominent stage for art commissions, offering artists the opportunity to produce monument-scale artwork for display at one of New York City's busiest corridors. Located on the High Line at 30th Street and 10th Avenue, the Plinth is visible at street level for nearly a mile away in multiple directions.

Selected from an initial group of 56 proposals submitted by 49 artists from 31 countries and across the US, the shortlisted proposals are by artists **Dana Awartani, Leilah Babirye, Natalie Ball, Sammy Baloji, Abraham Cruzvillegas, Rachel Feinstein, Camille Henrot, Mire Lee, Candice Lin, Emeka Ogboh, Tuan Andrew Nguyen, and Gala Porras-Kim**. These 12 proposals will be exhibited as maquettes (or scale models) on the High Line starting March 19 through June 2024, in the High Line's Coach Passage, a space directly adjacent to the Plinth.

"These 12 proposals for the High Line Plinth each offer an exciting perspective on the power and potential of public art to connect us with history, the natural environment, and each other," said Cecilia Alemani, the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art. "We look forward to seeing what new reactions the 3-D maquettes provoke and invite visitors to share their thoughts."



Visitors will be able to experience three-dimensional perspectives of the proposals, presented as maquettes at approximately 1:16 scale, and are encouraged to leave feedback on the proposals via an on-site QR code to help inform the curatorial team's decision. Two out of the 12 shortlisted artists will be selected to create the full-scale fifth and sixth High Line Plinth commissions, to be installed in spring 2026 and fall 2027 respectively.

The artists were nominated by an international advisory committee of artists, curators, and arts professionals convened by High Line Art. The High Line Art team, in conjunction with the Plinth Committee, then selected 12 proposals for further consideration. Their sculptural models span a wide range of materials, from green jasper to seashell to sandstone, with some including kinetic elements, offering visitors the opportunity to consider the varying impacts and challenges of their construction at full size. With forms as varied as geometric figures and a cat-demon, and evoking themes that include healing, community, and migration, these proposals present each artist's vision for monumental public art in New York City in the 21st century. The models are exhibited a short distance away from the Plinth, where the third commission, Pamela Rosenkranz's *Old Tree*, is currently on view.

The Shortlisted Artists and Proposals

- **Dana Awartani** (b. 1987, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia) lives in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. ***An Ode to Our Ancestors*** is a 12-pointed stone sculpture inspired by sacred geometry. In particular, the work looks to six-fold symmetry, which is ever-present in nature—from living tissue cells to flowers and snowflakes. Awartani looks at the ecosystem of the High Line—its bees and birds, hives and nests, and trees and blades of grass alike, while also recalling a bygone tradition of stone masonry in New York's domestic architecture.
- **Leilah Babirye** (b. 1985, Kampala, Uganda) lives in New York. ***Agali Awamu (Togetherness)*** is a 16-foot-tall cast bronze sculpture featuring two genderless faces connected through intricate, interwoven rubber braids. The faces point vigilantly in two opposite directions, watching over passersby underneath. The Lugandan phrase *agali awamu* alludes to "togetherness," but the term also encompasses the communal spirit of uniting in solidarity and looking out for one another.
- **Sammy Baloji** (b. 1978, Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of Congo) lives in Lubumbashi, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Brussels, Belgium. ***Listen Closely: You'll Hear Their Feet Beating Out And Beating Out*** is an oversized horn that references the musical histories of the American South. In the 1730s, "free mulattos, blacks, and Native Americans" were required to serve in the military, but as drummers and trumpeters, forbidden to bear arms due to fears of uprisings. These instruments came to symbolize community and solidarity, making music, rather than weapons, a tool for resistance.
- **Natalie Ball** (b. 1980, Portland, Oregon) lives in Chiloquin, Oregon. ***KISS THE KOPTU*** represents the koptu and c'waam, two sacred suckerfish that have existed for millions of years and are endemic to the Upper Klamath Basin on the Klamath Tribes territory in Oregon. Ball is attempting to counter a non-tribal narrative that devalues them as "trash fish" in order to legitimize unsustainable agriculture. The work carries the tribes' kinship design to celebrate tribal sovereignty and the community who continue to love and protect the fish relatives.
- **Abraham Cruzvillegas** (b. 1968, Mexico City, Mexico) lives in Mexico City, Mexico. ***Untitled Pupa*** represents the chrysalis of a monarch butterfly and a milkweed branch. The mostly green sculpture stands on a matte pink painted plinth, producing a contrast in color, texture, and brightness. Both the chrysalis and the branch are designed to be representative of their real-life counterparts, producing another contrast with the urban landscape. Monarch



butterflies travel annually from their sanctuary in Michoacán, in the West of Mexico, the land of some of the artist's family ancestors, to the US and Canada, passing through New York City.

- **Rachel Feinstein** (b. 1971, Defiance, Arizona) lives in New York, New York. **Castle on the Rock** recalls romantic imagery from Renaissance paintings depicting a distant castle on a hill, a beacon surrounded by nature. The 18-foot-tall sculpture is made completely out of carved green jasper from Brazil, and features a road, castle, and inner ring in polished brass. Visitors will be able to sit in the work's carved-out center, encouraging direct engagement with the sculpture.

- **Camille Henrot** (b. 1978, Paris, France) lives in New York, New York. **You Were Found** is a larger-than-life bronze sculpture of a barn owl. Traditionally, the barn owl is associated with keen observation, intelligence, and witchcraft and magic, symbolizing the afterlife. Though nocturnal and rarely seen, the owl at the Spur makes itself known—taking a rest from flight on the Plinth. One of its legs is wounded, replaced with a wooden peg. Its tail unfurls into a scroll—the top sheet of paper in a stack of pages that come to form its perch, the pedestal.

- **Mire Lee** (b. 1988, Seoul, South Korea) lives in Amsterdam, Netherlands. **The Leaking Machine** resembles a metallic silver chandelier or a dreamcatcher topped with multiple “ribs” that hold water hoses that endlessly leak. Several “rain chains” are hung from the leakage points of the hoses, covered with palm-sized objects gathered from the surrounding community. Participants are encouraged to put their energy and spirit into the objects, wishing for the health and vitality of their loved ones. *The Leaking Machine* is inspired by artist Emery Blagdon's work, *The Healing Machine* (1955 – 1986), a composition of handmade objects intended to channel the healing powers of the earth.

- **Candice Lin** (b. 1977, Concord, Massachusetts) lives in Los Angeles, California. **Cat-Demon Protector** is a 13-foot-tall, colorfully painted, aluminum sculpture of a “cat-demon.” The cat stands in a traditional pose from qigong, an ancient Chinese practice of coordinated movements and breathwork that encourages good health and spirituality. Additionally, *Cat-Demon Protector*'s head is mechanized to rotate 360 degrees at the top of every hour—resembling an *Exorcist*-like cuckoo clock. The work will be complemented by an AR component that engages viewers with an animation of *Cat-Demon Protector* teaching qigong. Similar instructions are also etched into the aluminum-cladded plinth.

- **Tuan Andrew Nguyen** (b. 1976, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam) lives in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. **The Light that Shines Through the Universe** is a 30-foot-tall sandstone homage to the Bamiyan Buddhas, two 6th-century monumental statues in central Afghanistan that were destroyed in 2001 by the Taliban. Nguyen symbolically casts the Buddha's hands, missing from the original monuments long before their final destruction, from brass artillery shells. They are arranged in mudras—or ritual gestures—that express fearlessness in compassion. The work's title is a direct reference to the nickname used by local communities for the larger of the two Buddhas: “Salsal,” which means “the light shines through the universe.”

- **Emeka Ogbob** (b. 1977, Enugu, Nigeria) lives in Lagos, Nigeria, and Berlin, Germany. The *ijele* is a revered emblem among the Igbo people in southeastern Nigeria. The nearly 15-foot-tall, intricately crafted mask is carried in masquerade performances on special occasions and features colorful depictions of humans, animals, and spiritual motifs. Ogbob's **Ijele 2.0** updates this tradition, incorporating modern-day representations to exemplify the adaptability and relevance of this cultural practice. The work is adorned with puppet-like effigies of various 21st-century figures—Barack Obama, Xi Jinping, Angela Merkel, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Pope Francis, Elon Musk, and Vladimir Putin, among others. Ogbob also revised the original banners to include contemporary symbols referring to cryptocurrency, global protest, the COVID-19 virus, climate change, and artificial intelligence.



- **Gala Porras-Kim** (b. 1984, Bogotá, Colombia) lives in Los Angeles, California. **Future spaces replicate earlier spaces** is a sculpture based on a *Strombus* conch which was often used throughout global antiquity as an instrument in rituals and as a decorative object. The exterior of the sculpture is pearlescent and marked with etchings inspired by traditional Mayan conch carving, and the work is propped vertically on a base made with shell stone. The work will play music made from the sounds of an 18,000-year-old conch instrument.

Pamela Rosenkranz's *Old Tree*, the third Plinth commission, is currently on view through September 2024, and the fourth Plinth commission, to be announced, will follow. Each Plinth commission will be on view for 18 months.

The High Line Plinth is a landmark destination for public art, designed as the focal point of the Spur. Unlike most sections of the park, the Spur is conceived as a natural gathering space; the Plinth serves as the anchor and center of this piazza, creating a dialogue with the towering skyscrapers and arresting vistas of the immediate surroundings.

SUPPORT

Lead support for High Line Art comes from Amanda and Don Mullen. Major support is provided by Shelley Fox Aarons and Philip E. Aarons, The Brown Foundation, Inc. of Houston, and Charina Endowment Fund.

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 K. Belfer, Fairfax Dorn, Kerianne Flynn, Hermine Riegerl Heller, Janine and J. Tomilson Hill, The Holly Peterson Foundation, Annie Hubbard, Miyoung Lee and Neil Simpkins, Jennifer Levitt, W. Scott McCormack and Noah Jay, Amanda and Don Mullen, Douglas Oliver and Sherry Brous, Mario Palumbo and Stefan Gargiulo, Susan and Stephen Scherr, Eric Schwartz and Debra Fram, Susan and David Viniar, Olivia Walton, and Vivian and James Zelter.

High Line Art is supported, in part, with public funds from the National Endowment for the Arts, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the New York City Council, under the leadership of Speaker Adrienne Adams.

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](#).

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