



For Immediate Release



Iván Argote, *Dinosaur*, 2024. A High Line Plinth commission. Photo by Timothy Schenck.

FRIENDS OF THE HIGH LINE PRESENTS PIGEON FEST

Celebrate National Pigeon Appreciation Day on Saturday, June 14 with free programming on the High Line focused on urban ecology and NYC's unofficial mascot

New York, NY (May 15, 2025) — Today, Friends of the High Line announced **Pigeon Fest**: a free, all-day festival celebrating National Pigeon Appreciation Day on Saturday, June 14 from 12pm to 8pm on the High Line along 30th Street and the Spur.

During Pigeon Fest—which was inspired by Iván Argote's *Dinosaur*, the striking 17-foot-tall aluminum pigeon sculpture looming above 10th Ave in New York City—visitors can enjoy a full-day festival for all ages, celebrating pigeons, urban ecology, and public art. Taking place along the half-mile stretch of 30th Street on the High Line, the festival will feature free public programming including pigeon-themed carnival games, family-friendly art workshops, a pigeon impersonation pageant, a concert presented in collaboration with the Birdsong Project, and a Discovery Fair. More than a dozen organizations engaged in work around birds, urban wildlife, migration, and monuments will share information about their important work, host demonstrations, and present hands-on educational activities.

Pigeon Fest brings together artists, musicians, scientists, horticulturalists, activists, educators, and the public to play and learn together, while exploring the intersection of art, nature, and city life. More information about Pigeon Fest can be found at thehighline.org/pigeonfest.



"Pigeons are New York's unofficial mascot. We've been awed by the overwhelming response to Iván Argote's *Dinosaur* sculpture, and we saw an opportunity to explore urban ecology and the important relationship New Yorkers have with nature and wildlife," said **Alan van Capelle**, Executive Director, Friends of the High Line. "Love them or hate them, people are fascinated by our feathered neighbors, and this festival felt like a fitting way to celebrate New Yorkers' dynamic relationship with art, nature, and, most specifically, pigeons."

"Over time, I've realized how much *Dinosaur* is about empathy," said artist **Iván Argote**. "This sculpture pays tribute to a humble companion, and in doing so, it challenges our ideas of monumentality and invites us to rethink our relationship with the other species we live alongside. I feel Pigeon Fest will, without a doubt, be a memorable moment in New York—an 'I was there' kind of memory."

Pigeons first arrived in the US via Europe, likely in the 1800s. They were kept as domesticated animals and were once indispensable as military messengers in both World War I and World War II, saving hundreds of soldiers' lives. Many of these pigeons received gallantry awards and were celebrated as war heroes, before technology eventually rendered them obsolete. Today, pigeons are our largely derided and despised neighbors. By spotlighting this misunderstood bird, Iván Argote and the High Line seek to reconsider who deserves to be honored and memorialized, while opening broader conversations around our urban ecosystem and how we can better share our city with nature and wildlife.

Join us for a day of learning, connection, and rethinking what it means to live alongside art and nature in the city.

Pigeon Fest

Saturday, June 14 from 12pm to 8pm
The High Line, 30th Street and the Spur

Zumba: Pigeon Dance Party

12pm

Strut your stuff during a high-energy Zumba dance class next to *Dinosaur*. Zumba is a Latin-inspired dance fitness class that incorporates Latin and international music and dance movements such as Salsa, Merengue, Cumbia, Bachata, and many more. All levels are welcome, this event is free and open to the public. Please wear comfortable clothes and shoes to move around in. This class is led by **Maria Assis Silva**.

Mother Pigeon's Impeckable Puppet Show

1pm

Mother Pigeon's Impeckable Puppet Show is based on the real-life adventures of **Mother Pigeon**, famed Union Square artist and advocate for all city wildlife. This show is great for the whole family with fun sing-alongs from Mother Pigeon, Frankie The Pigeon, and Max The Rat.

Pigeon Impersonation Pageant

2pm

Join us for NYC's first ever Pigeon Impersonation Pageant, where contestants will compete for the title of NYC's Best Pigeon Impersonator. Hosted by legendary costume designer and New York City icon, **Machine Dazzle**, contestants will be judged on plumage (costume), strut, and



sound by a panel of experts. The competition promises creativity, humor, and plenty of pigeon pride, with a special appearance by **Iván Argote**. Don't miss this playful and unforgettable celebration of pigeons and their unique charm!

Panel Discussion: Building Bird-friendly Cities

3:30pm

How can we make our cities more livable—for birds and people alike? Join us for a lively conversation with experts working at the intersection of policy, ecology, and urban design. This panel brings together leading voices in the field: **Qiana Mickie**, Executive Director of the Mayor's Office of Urban Agriculture; science writer and birding advocate **Christian Cooper**; horticulture specialist **Ethan Dropkin**; and moderator **Richard Hayden**, Senior Director of Horticulture at the High Line. Together, they will explore the vital role birds play in maintaining healthy urban ecosystems—controlling pests, pollinating plants, and dispersing seeds—and the growing threats they face from habitat loss, urban expansion, and climate change. The discussion will highlight innovative, actionable strategies such as planting native species, creating green corridors, and advancing conservation policies that make cities more resilient and welcoming for birds and other wildlife.

Artist Talk with Iván Argote & Cecilia Alemani

4:15pm

Join artist **Iván Argote** and **Cecilia Alemani**, the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art, for a conversation on the making of *Dinosaur* and the role public art plays in city life and civic memory. Reflecting on Argote's practice, this conversation will also explore how monuments can be reimagined to challenge dominant narratives, honor overlooked histories, and create space for collective reflection.

Musical Concert, Curated in Collaboration with the Birdsong Project

5:30 – 8pm

The day culminates in a vibrant outdoor concert on the Dinosaur Stage, curated in collaboration with **the Birdsong Project**. This special musical program celebrates the sounds of nature and the rhythms of the city through a dynamic lineup.

The full programming lineup for Pigeon Fest can be found at thehighline.org/pigeonfest.

SUPPORT

Lead support for High Line Art comes from Amanda and Don Mullen.

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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 a public park on the West Side of Manhattan operated, maintained, and funded by the nonprofit conservancy Friends of the High Line. Through our work with communities on and off the High Line, Friends of the High Line is 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 the park under a license agreement with NYC Parks.

For more information, visit thehighline.org and follow us on [Facebook](#), [X](#), [Instagram](#), and [TikTok](#).

@HighLineNYC @HighLineArtNYC

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