

— For Immediate Release

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***TARGET ART IN THE PARK: A MAJOR EXHIBITION OF
INTERACTIVE WORKS BY INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS FOR
THE REVITALIZED MADISON SQUARE PARK***

The first major group show in the three-year series of contemporary art exhibitions organized by Public Art Fund on behalf of City Parks Foundation

***Works by Navin Rawanchaikul • Teresita Fernandez • Tobias Rehberger
On View May 31 through September 2001***

NEW YORK CITY (March 1, 2001) – Marking the revitalization of Madison Square Park, *Target Art in the Park* – a three-year series of contemporary art exhibitions – kicks off the summer season in New York with major installations by international artists Navin Rawanchaikul, Teresita Fernandez and Tobias Rehberger. This landmark group exhibition includes three interactive projects situated throughout the park and emanating out into the city.

Target Art in the Park, organized by Public Art Fund, is dedicated to bringing the most engaging contemporary art to Madison Square Park. *Target Art in the Park* is funded through a \$1 million gift from Target Stores to the City Parks Foundation. The City Parks Foundation, with ongoing support from the City of New York/Parks & Recreation, is overseeing the historic park's revitalization initiative, the Campaign for the New Madison Square Park. The *Target Art in the Park* program debuted last fall while the park was still undergoing renovations with Tony Oursler's two-week nocturnal sound and light installation *The Influence Machine*.

ARTISTS' PROJECTS

NAVIN RAWANCHAIKUL's *I © Taxi*:

Beginning at the southwest entrance to Madison Square Park at 23rd Street between Fifth and Madison Avenues, visitors encounter Thai artist Navin Rawanchaikul's *I © Taxi* project. The work includes comic books, taxi tents, benches and food stands, all of which depict a collage of stories Rawanchaikul is collecting from New York taxi drivers.

Using the yellow taxicab as a New York symbol, Rawanchaikul portrays everyday life through the eyes of cab drivers. Building upon his experiences in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and in other cities throughout the world, Rawanchaikul uses the taxi as the very essence of urban life symbolizing the flowing energy of the city's streets and the dynamic connection between the city's different districts and people.

Rawanchaikul is working with Long Island City-based Checker Cab Company to gather true-life cabby tales, which he will transform into a Manga-style comic book. In addition to the 50,000 comic books that will be distributed by the Checker Cab fleet around New York City, another 50,000 will be available in the park as well as at P.S. 1 Center for Contemporary Art and area airports. Rawanchaikul has also created installations for the entire fleet of 200 Checker Cabs, which will be fitted with special Rawanchaikul-designed seats with "Bollywood"-style montages of imagery drawn from the comic books.

At Rawanchaikul's taxi café, a food stand and four hand-painted taxi tents portray scenes of everyday urban life. The tents will offer shade over wooden benches that re-create the city skyline in silhouette. Rawanchaikul's food stand will sell traditional Thai and Indian specialties. Additional city-wide project components include a companion *I © Taxi* café at P.S. 1 Center for Contemporary Art in Long Island City and a 115-by-50-foot *I © Taxi* banner hanging opposite the Port Authority in Times Square.

TERESITA FERNANDEZ's *Bamboo Cinema*:

Situated on the lawn near the 25th Street and Fifth Avenue entrance to the park, Miami-born Teresita Fernandez's installation *Bamboo Cinema* creates new views of Madison Square Park by luring visitors into an eight-foot tall plexi-glass "bamboo" labyrinth that perforates the surroundings much like a slow-moving film strip.

The vertical walls of the labyrinth are constructed of staggered, transparent plastic poles of differing diameters and heights that are silk-screened with a vertical, striped pattern of intense green and yellow hues. These bamboo-like stalks are embedded in the ground in concentric circles creating a translucent circular maze into which visitors will be drawn to find its center.

While viewers walk around and through the labyrinthine space, the transparent poles allow different degrees of visibility from every angle. The further one wanders into the labyrinth, the more perforated the movement of people, traffic and all other types of motion outside the structure becomes. Conceptually, the artwork's title comes from the cinematic effect that occurs when human eyes are presented with a bombardment of graphic vertical lines. As in the earliest examples of cinematic devices, the vertical lines act as a continuous shutter, constantly interrupting any movement so that it appears to flicker. *Bamboo Cinema* is set into motion by visitors entering the piece and moving through it. Those who interact with *Bamboo Cinema* simultaneously become the mechanism that makes it work and witness its dynamic effects.

TOBIAS REHBERGER's *Tsutsumu*:

On the east side of the park, snow will fall this summer over German artist Tobias Rehberger's *Tsutsumu*, a scenic Japanese garden that merges landscape, art and unnatural weather patterns to create a surprising installation. A small bench set next to a rock and tree form a small Japanese garden, with snow falling mysteriously on the serene area daily. A mini-park within the park, this installation is an escapist ideal that contrasts with the local plants and trees. Amidst melting snow, park visitors sit within *Tsutsumu*'s utopian setting, where it is cool in summer and there is always a peaceful place to rest.

Tsutsumu provides an intimate public space that reflects an idyllic conception of a garden. A storybook fantasy of what a garden can offer, the snow covering furthers the idealism inherent in the work by making a cool space in warm weather. Rehberger invites viewers to sit in his garden to contemplate the unusual and surprising summertime snowstorm, and the relationship between plants as landscape and plants as art.

Public Art Fund

The Public Art Fund is New York's leading presenter of artists' projects, new commissions, installations, and exhibitions in public spaces. With 25 years of experience and an international reputation, the Public Art Fund identifies, coordinates and realizes a diversity of major projects by both established and emerging artists throughout New York City. By bringing artworks outside the traditional context of museums and galleries, the Public Art Fund provides a unique platform for an unparalleled public encounter with the art of our time.

The Public Art Fund is a nonprofit arts organization supported by generous gifts from individuals, foundations and corporations, and with public funds from The New York State Council on the Arts, a State Agency, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

Campaign for the New Madison Square Park

Led by the City Parks Foundation with ongoing support from the City of New York/Parks & Recreation, the Campaign for the New Madison Square Park is a dynamic partnership of corporations, nonprofit organizations, individuals, and city government working to rebuild, restore and improve Madison Square Park. The Campaign has already raised \$5 million in public and private funds for the redesign and reconstruction of the park, which will be completed in the spring of 2001. The Campaign now seeks to raise an additional \$6 million to ensure the protection, maintenance and programming of Madison Square Park.

Target Stores

Minneapolis-based Target Stores serves guests at 976 stores in 46 states nationwide by delivering today's best retail trends at affordable prices. Whether visiting a Target Store or shopping online at target.com, guests enjoy a fun and convenient shopping experience with access to thousands of unique and highly differentiated items. The largest division of Target Corporation (NYSE:TGT), Target Stores gives back more than \$1 million a week to its local communities through grants and special programs. Since opening its first store in 1962, Target has partnered with nonprofit organizations, guests and team members to help meet community needs.

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