

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**PUBLIC ART FUND EXHIBITION EXPLORES
DIGITAL CULTURE THROUGH NEW SCULPTURES
BY SEVEN INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS**



IMAGE OBJECTS

**June 30 – November 20, 2015
City Hall Park, Lower Manhattan**

FEATURED ARTISTS:

Alice Channer, Lothar Hempel, Jon Rafman,
Amanda Ross-Ho, Timur Si-Qin,
Hank Willis Thomas, and Artie Vierkant

June 24, 2015, NEW YORK, NY—Public Art Fund presents a new thematic group exhibition at City Hall Park exploring the relationship between contemporary sculptural practice and the digital landscape. The show features a diverse international group of seven artists—**Alice Channer, Lothar Hempel, Jon Rafman, Amanda Ross-Ho, Timur Si-Qin, Hank Willis Thomas, and Artie Vierkant**—who share an interest in the interplay between images and objects, and the ways in which rapidly changing visual culture and imaging technology influence how we understand and perceive the world around us. ***Image Objects* is on view June 30 – November 20, 2015 at City Hall Park, Lower Manhattan.**

Image Objects features seven new commissions that examine how the democratization of image creation through smart technology and internet networks has changed the way that sculpture is being created by artists, as well as how those works are viewed by the public. The seven works in this exhibition respond to a landscape in which life—and art—is captured by the camera's lens and played out online. In some cases, the artists utilize the same sets of tools used by the public to document the everyday—from basic computer software to image filters and social networks; in others, they push the limits of technology with 3-D printing and the manipulation of materials. The tension between natural and manmade objects is highlighted by the installation of these works in an urban park.

“The way that we interact with the world is has become increasingly mediated, with so much of our experience taking place through the lens of our own camera or someone else's and being

posted to social media platforms. This show looks at how artists are consuming images and making sculptures that are reflective of the interface between the viewer, lens, and artwork. The artists featured in this exhibition represent a direct and transformative interpretation of the relationship between an image-based culture and public consumption,” said exhibition curator **Andria Hickey**, Public Art Fund Curator.

The exhibition’s title is a nod to **Artie Vierkant’s** influential essay of the same name, as well as a series of his works that exists somewhere between physical sculptures and altered documentation images. Working from flat abstract color compositions created digitally to have the appearance of layered dimensionality, the artist makes UV prints on dibond and precision-cuts them to create photographic prints with the depth and presence of a sculpture. Each time these pieces are documented officially, the resulting photos are altered, generating derivative works that do not accurately represent the original physical object. For City Hall Park, Vierkant is creating a sculptural version of an Image Object that explores the loss of fixity in objects and images in the digital era. Printing these digitally altered images directly on a large, irregular cut-steel structure, the visual gaps between the form and the layered images expose how perception is altered by the lens of a camera or the screen. Similarly, **Amanda Ross-Ho’s** new work acknowledges the role that photography plays in framing the way we experience images of objects. The second iteration of a recent public sculpture (*The Character and Shape of Illuminated Things*, which was on view at the MCA Chicago in 2013), Ross-Ho’s new work is similarly derived from an image in a photography handbook published in 1980, before the widespread use of digital photography. Centered between a cube and sphere, an oversized mannequin’s head is outlined by a green neon square mimicking facial recognition software found on applications like Facebook—a nod to the idea that public art today is frequently experienced through the lens of a camera.

Transforming a two-dimensional image into a three-dimensional form, **Hank Willis Thomas’** new work explores themes of subjectivity and historical context, while challenging ideas of authorship and originality. His life-size bronze sculpture shows an arm reaching to the sky and balancing a basketball, a detail from a 1986 photograph of a Harlem Globetrotter spinning a basketball on his finger in the likeness of the Statue of Liberty, which can be seen in the background. Isolating the player’s gesture from the context of the photograph, Thomas addresses questions about how an image’s meaning is changed by the framing of the camera’s lens. In the context of a digital landscape, the sculpture invites the viewer to ask questions about the symbolic value an image communicates, especially when cropped or otherwise manipulated. **Lothar Hempel** comments on the impact that images have on memory or one’s understanding of a single moment over a period of time by utilizing a similar approach to image appropriation. For *Image Objects*, he has combined a cut-aluminum sculpture that has been digitally printed with an image of a woman on two skateboards cut from a dated photograph with a familiar spinning computer memory ball mechanically rotating atop the image. Layering digital and analog references, Hempel draws connections between the evolving nature of memory in our technologically mediated environment.

Timur Si-Qin pushes this idea further in a new work—his first outdoor commission—for *Image Objects*. Adapting an archetypal advertising display that might be seen announcing car dealerships along suburban highways or providing directions in an office park, Si-Qin’s work features a logo created by the artist to promote the idea of peace. Viewed in the park, an unexpected setting to confront advertising, this work investigates consumer culture, revealing how the psychological dimension of marketing displays frames the interpretation of symbols and brands in the urban landscape.

Like several other artists in the show, **Alice Channer** explores the potential of merging digital and physical realms. Investigating themes of nature, evolution, and mass production, the seven rocks that form her sculpture *R O C K F A L L* began as small pieces of found concrete rubble. Using 3-D scanning, Channer virtually stretched the forms, which were then cast in concrete, aluminum, and Cor-ten steel to resemble large-scale rocks that reveal the marks of their digital making. Situated in the natural, albeit man-made park, these rocks form an uncanny succession of natural and unnatural forms. Similarly **Jon Rafman's** two new marble sculptures from his *New Age Demanded* series are being realized using 3-D creation software. Derived from traditional figurative busts, Rafman's works have been digitally manipulated and carved with lasers, rendering perfect lines and impossible curves that could never have been formed using hammer and chisel.

This exhibition is curated by Public Art Fund Curator Andria Hickey.

VISITING THE EXHIBITION

City Hall Park is located in Lower Manhattan, and is bordered by Broadway, Chambers Street, Centre Street, and Park Row.

Hours: 7:00am – 12:00am daily

Subways: A, C, E to Chambers Street; 4, 5, 6, J to Brooklyn Bridge-City Hall; R to City Hall; 2, 3 to Park Place

City Hall visitor information is available by calling 311.

EXHIBITION SUPPORT

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ABOUT PUBLIC ART FUND

Public Art Fund brings dynamic contemporary art to a broad audience in New York City by mounting ambitious free exhibitions of international scope and impact that offer the public powerful experiences with art and the urban environment.

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Image: Amanda Ross-Ho, *THE CHARACTER AND SHAPE OF ILLUMINATED THINGS (FACIAL RECOGNITION)*, 2015. Rendering. Courtesy Mitchell-Innes & Nash. Image courtesy of 3Dmass Design & Engineering and Alessandro Zezza

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