



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## NICHOLAS GALANIN DEBUTS MONUMENTAL SCULPTURE CALLING FOR CARE AND CONNECTION WITH LAND



***Nicholas Galanin: In every language there is Land / En cada lengua hay una Tierra***

**Opens May 16**

**Brooklyn Bridge Park, Empire Fulton Ferry Lawn**

**May 15, 2023, NEW YORK, NY—Public Art Fund debuts *In every language there is Land / En cada lengua hay una Tierra*, a monumental corten steel sculpture by artist Nicholas Galanin.** The artist's first public artwork in New York City, this new 30-foot tall sculpture combines references to the U.S.-Mexico border wall and Pop Art, serving as a point of focus to consider the legacy of colonization and its impact on migration and our relationships with Land across generations, cultures, and communities. *In every language there is Land / En cada*

*lengua hay una Tierra* questions the concept of border walls, which are designed to cut across land and water, restricting access to the migratory routes necessary for various life forms. The sculpture is constructed using the identical material and scale of the U.S.-Mexico border wall, deploying materials that may otherwise have been destined for the construction of the wall. Spelling out the word “LAND” as a multiplied and dynamic sculptural form, Galanin’s work defeats the function of the wall as a barrier to entry, focusing instead on the Indigenous connection with Land and mutual sustainability that transcends borders. ***Nicholas Galanin: In every language there is Land / En cada lengua hay una Tierra* is on view from May 16 through Fall 2023 in Brooklyn Bridge Park.**

“Indigenous care for Land and community is rooted in connection based on mutual sustainability. Rather than nationalism or capital, this perspective always embodies a deep respect for life beyond any single generation. *In every language there is Land / En cada lengua hay una Tierra* questions barriers to Land, which directly reflect barriers to love, love for Land, community, and future generations,” said **artist Nicholas Galanin**.

“Nicholas Galanin has developed one of the most distinctive and powerful bodies of work in contemporary North American art,” said **Nicholas Baume, Public Art Fund Artistic & Executive Director**. “It is profoundly shaped not only by his Lingít-Unanga̋ heritage, knowledge, and practice, but also by his facility with the forms and concepts of international contemporary art. This Public Art Fund commission, his first public project for New York City, promises to be a major cultural event.”

Based in Sitka, Alaska, Galanin works from his experience as a Lingít and Unanga̋ artist, centering Indigeneity in his practice through concept, form, image, and sound. Through a multidisciplinary practice, which includes sculpture, installation, film, and performance, Galanin reclaims creative agency in historical and social narratives, demonstrating contemporary Indigenous art and culture as continuously evolving and embedding his work with incisive observation and reflection. *In every language there is Land / En cada lengua hay una Tierra* builds on the artist’s practice of creating resonant and critically layered artworks that expand and refocus themes of culture and contemporary social conditions beyond temporal bounds and binary classifications.

Resisting categorization, *In every language there is Land / En cada lengua hay una Tierra* simultaneously references the U.S. border wall, mass marketing, as well as an Indigenous conception of fluid communities and interconnected Land. In contrast to the divisiveness, exclusion, and violence represented by the border wall, these 30-foot tall layered steel walls spell out the word “LAND,” a call for care and reflection on the geographies we traverse. Galanin draws the form and font of the sculpture from recognizable Pop Art imagery to implicate mass media and pop culture in the dissemination of nationalism. With a title that

includes both English and Spanish, two languages imposed by colonial regimes on either side of the border, Galanin's work calls into question non-Indigenous approaches to ownership and national borders. Through language, form, and material, Galanin imbues the work with layers of criticality for how the notions of division and Land ownership are upheld, calling attention to the consequences of enforced exclusion that divides peoples and Land for extractive purposes.

Alternating between abstraction and definition, our perception of the sculpture is transformed as we experience it from different vantage points. Viewed head on, the work clearly reads "LAND," but as a viewer moves through and around the work, its form shifts and the dynamic and abstracted nature of the sculpture becomes apparent. The work's mutability illuminates the lack of borders and division in Galanin's Indigenous view of a united natural ecosystem and way of life, embracing peaceful movement from one place to another.

At a time of growing divisions across barriers and borders, *In every language there is Land / En cada lengua hay una Tierra* questions the reduction and enforced limitation on relationships with Land. Through multifaceted art historical and political references, Galanin transforms what he sees as the oppressive and violent structure of a border wall into a sculpture rooted in connection to Land, centered on mutual care and an embodiment of respect for life beyond any single generation or species.

*Nicholas Galanin: In every language there is Land / En cada lengua hay una Tierra* is curated by Public Art Fund Artistic & Executive Director Nicholas Baume with support from Assistant Curator Jenée-Daria Strand.

**@PublicArtFund #NicholasGalanin**

## **ABOUT THE ARTIST**

Nicholas Galanin (b. 1979, Sitka, AK) creates art rooted in his perspective as an Indigenous man connected to the land and culture to which he belongs. His work is embedded with incisive observation and critical thinking to advocate for social and environmental justice. Through concept, form, image, and sound, Galanin expands and refocuses the intersections of culture, centering Indigeneity. His works are vessels for knowledge, culture and technology—inherently political, generous, unflinching, and poetic. Deftly engaging with past, present and future, Galanin celebrates the beauty, knowledge and resilience of Indigenous people. Avoiding binaries and categorization, Galanin's multilayered practice seeks to envision, build and support Indigenous sovereignty.

Over the past two decades Galanin's work has ranged across media, materials and processes, including powerful examples of public art. In 2020 Galanin excavated the shape of the shadow of the Capt. James Cook statue in Hyde Park for the Biennale of Sydney, examining the effects of colonization on land, critiquing anthropological bias, and ultimately suggesting the burial of

the statue and others like it. In 2021 he created an analog to the Hollywood sign for the Desert X Biennial in Palm Springs CA, which reads “INDIAN LAND”, directly advocating for and supporting the Land back and Real Rent initiatives. Ultimately, his practice invites us to analyze and rethink the assumptions of embedded power structures and revalue those of Indigeneity, including care for land, community, and future generations.

Galanin holds a BFA from London Guildhall University in Jewellery Design and an MFA in Indigenous Visual Arts from Massey University in New Zealand, prior to which he apprenticed with master carvers and jewelers in his community; he is represented by Peter Blum Gallery in New York, and his music is released by Sub Pop Records in Seattle. Galanin lives and works with his family on Lingít Aani, Sitka, Alaska.

## **WHEN & WHERE**

*In every language there is Land / En cada lengua hay una Tierra* is on view from May 16, 2023 through Fall 2023 in Brooklyn Bridge Park at the north side of the Empire Fulton Ferry Lawn.

In addition, the exhibition can be explored anytime, anywhere, on the free **Bloomberg Connects** app.

## **RELATED FREE PROGRAMMING**

**A roster of free programs**, including public performances, panel discussions, artmaking workshops, and in-depth discussions, will accompany the exhibition.

Confirmed programming includes:

### **Mobile Printing Power: Screenprinting in Public Space**

August 5, August 19 and September 2, 2023

Corona Plaza, Queens & Brooklyn Bridge Park

### **Performance with Raven Chacon and Laura Ortmann**

October 21, 2023

Brooklyn Bridge Park, Empire Fulton Ferry Lawn

## **VISITING THE EXHIBITION**

Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation is the not-for-profit entity responsible for the planning, construction, maintenance and operation of Brooklyn Bridge Park, an 85-acre sustainable waterfront park spanning 1.3 miles along Brooklyn’s East River shoreline. As steward of the park, the park has transformed this previously deteriorated stretch of waterfront into a world-class park where the public can gather, play, relax, and enjoy sweeping views of New York Harbor. The self-sustaining park was designed by the award-winning firm of Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc. and features expansive lawns, rolling hills, waterfront promenades, innovative playgrounds, a greenway, sports facilities, and the popular Jane’s

Carousel. Brooklyn Bridge Park serves thousands of people on any given seasonal day, who come to picnic, walk their dog, play soccer, jog, bike, or roller skate. It is a signature public investment for the 21st century and will be an enduring legacy for the communities, elected officials, and public servants who made it happen.

**Subways:** A, C to High Street; F to York Street; 2, 3 to Clark Street; R to Court Street; 4, 5 to Borough Hall.

**Buses:** B25 to Fulton Ferry Landing; B67 to Jay Street & York Street.

**Ferry:** East River Ferry, New York Water Taxi, or Governors Island Ferry to Brooklyn Bridge Park.

## ABOUT PUBLIC ART FUND

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

## SUPPORTS

Leadership support for *Nicholas Galanin: In every language there is Land/ En cada lengua hay una Tierra* is provided by Ellen & Andrew Celli; Angelo K. H. Chan & Frederick Wertheim; the Girlfriend Fund; Jennifer Sykes Harris; the Jacques and Natasha Gelman Foundation; Holly & Jonathan Lipton; Elizabeth Fearon Pepperman & Richard C. Pepperman II; Peter Blum Gallery; Allison & Paul Russo; and Karen & Sam Seymour with major support from Linda Lennon & Stuart Baskin. Additional support is provided by Carla Shen.

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**IMAGE CREDITS:**

Nicholas Galanin

*In every language there is Land / En cada lengua hay una Tierra, 2023*

Corten steel

Courtesy of the artist and Peter Blum Gallery

Photo: Nicholas Knight, courtesy Public Art Fund, NY.

Presented by Public Art Fund at Brooklyn Bridge Park, New York, May 16, 2023 through Fall 2023