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PUBLIC ART FUND ANNOUNCES 2027 50TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR EXHIBITION

Season to launch with the unprecedented exhibition, I Happen to Like New York, *featuring works by 19 leading contemporary painters*

Along with solo exhibitions by Ugo Rondinone, Lotus Kang, Catherine Opie, Firelei Báez, and a one-day-only public celebration, orchestrated by Jeremy Deller

I Happen to Like New York
March 1 - April 25, 2027
JCDecaux bus shelters in New York in association with New York City Tourism + Conventions and JCDecaux bus shelters in Chicago and Boston

Ugo Rondinone: Love Invents Us
May 4, 2027-March 19, 2028
Brooklyn Bridge Park, Brooklyn

Lotus Kang: Crybaby
June 8 – November 21, 2027
City Hall Park, Lower Manhattan

Catherine Opie: More Women
July 7- September 12,2027
JCDecaux bus shelters in New York City, Chicago, and Boston

Firelei Báez: Ayida Wedo
September 8, 2027 - August 20, 2028
Doris C. Freedman Plaza, Central Park

***Jeremy Deller Presents* The Magic Realm**
A Celebration of 50 Years of Public Art Fund
October 16, 2027
Great Hill, Central Park

November 17, 2026, NEW YORK, NY – As **Public Art Fund** approaches its **50th anniversary in 2027**, the organization will mark the occasion with a season of exhibitions and special projects that weave contemporary art into the life and experience of New York City and beyond. The 2027 program will include the presentation of new images by leading contemporary artists across JCDecaux bus shelters in New York in association with New York City Tourism + Conventions, as well as on JCDecaux bus shelters in Chicago and Boston; major outdoor sculpture exhibitions in Brooklyn Bridge Park, City Hall Park, and Central Park; a new portrait series honoring eminent women in the arts and culture; and a special single day artist-organized celebration in Central Park.

"Public Art Fund's 50th anniversary is an opportunity to reflect on the extraordinary artists, ideas, and public spaces that have shaped our history while looking ahead to what public art can become," says **Nicholas Baume**, Artistic and Executive Director of Public Art Fund. "With projects that are ambitious, playful, thought-provoking, and deeply responsive to their surroundings, the season underscores the belief that art belongs in the public realm – free and accessible to all – and that artists can transform the way we experience the city and one another. As we celebrate 50 years, we're excited to continue that tradition while opening new possibilities for the next generation of public art."

Bringing art into unexpected public spaces has been central to Public Art Fund's mission since its founding. In 1977, during its inaugural exhibition season, Alex Katz transformed Times Square with *Nine Women*, a 240-foot billboard painting that replaced the advertising typically presented there. Fifty years later, *I Happen to Like New York* brings Katz's work back into an unconventional public setting, alongside paintings by 18 other leading contemporary painters: **Joe Bradley, Cecily Brown, Jane Dickson, Nicole Eisenman, Spencer Finch, Derek Fordjour, Louis Fratino, Jeffrey Gibson, Jamian Juliano-Villani, Adam McEwen, Julie Mehretu, Toyin Ojih Odutola, Elizabeth Peyton, R.H. Quaytman, Dana Schutz, Tschabalala Self, Rudolf Stingel,** and **Sarah Sze.** Presented on 500 JCDecaux bus shelters throughout New York in association with New York City Tourism + Conventions, and an additional 200 in Boston and Chicago, the exhibition creates a direct connection between Public Art Fund's earliest history and the work of

artists shaping painting today.

At Brooklyn Bridge Park, **Ugo Rondinone** will present his first major survey of outdoor works, bringing together sculptures spanning three decades of his practice, together with a major collaborative artwork created with children from across New York City. At City Hall Park, **Lotus Kang** will debut four new bronze sculptures that expand her interest in birds as figures of movement and migration, and the precarity of belonging and inheritance. **Catherine Opie** will transform JCDecaux bus shelters across New York, Chicago, and Boston with a new series of portraits celebrating accomplished women in the arts and culture, while **Firelei Báez** will create a new figurative bronze sculpture for Doris C. Freedman Plaza, drawing on her paintings and drawings of Caribbean figures that connect humanity with flora and fauna. The anniversary year will culminate in a participatory "birthday" celebration, bringing Public Art Fund to a new site in Central Park; orchestrated by **Jeremy Deller**, the event brings together artist-led creativity, play, and public participation in an event designed to welcome everyone.

In the fall of 2027, Monacelli will publish a book charting the evolution of Public Art Fund as a pioneering institution while making a compelling case for the essential contribution that public art makes to the life of a city. Drawing on extensive archival research and new print and video interviews with artists and partners, the organization will also launch a dedicated microsite for the anniversary year to help tell the unique story of Public Art Fund.

The Public Art Fund 2027 season includes:

I Happen to Like New York
Joe Bradley, Cecily Brown, Jane Dickson, Nicole Eisenman, Spencer Finch, Derek Fordjour, Louis Fratino, Jeffrey Gibson, Jamian Juliano-Villani, Alex Katz, Adam McEwen, Julie Mehretu, Toyin Ojih Odutola, Elizabeth Peyton, RH Quaytman, Dana Schutz, Tschabalala Self, Rudolf Stingel, Sarah Sze
March 1 – April 25, 2027
JCDecaux bus shelters in New York in association with New York City Tourism + Conventions and JCDecaux bus shelters in Chicago and Boston

Marking Public Art Fund's 50th anniversary, *I Happen to Like New York* brings together new works by 19 of New York's most celebrated contemporary painters, each responding to the phrase "I happen to like New York," borrowed from Cole Porter's 1930 song of the same name. Without sugar-coating the city, Porter's whimsical song captures its irresistible appeal—a sentiment echoed in the artists' varied perspectives on the city and its enduring creative energy. While each artist offers a highly distinctive response, the works explore shared themes, from iconic locations and the city's artistic legacy to the energy of urban life, the everyday experience of its residents, and the cosmopolitan, colorful, quirky, and endlessly creative character of New York.

I Happen to Like New York brings the works of these remarkable contemporary painters to Public Art Fund's most widely distributed platform – 700 JCDecaux bus shelters – *presented across all five boroughs of New York in association with New York City Tourism + Conventions, as well as Chicago and Boston.*

I Happen to Like New York is curated by Artistic & Executive Director Nicholas Baume with contributions from Senior Curator Melanie Kress, Associate Curator of Public Practice Gabriela López Dena, and Assistant Curator Jenée-Daria Strand.

Ugo Rondinone: Love Invents Us
May 4, 2027 – March 19, 2028
Brooklyn Bridge Park, Brooklyn

Swiss-born, New York-based artist Ugo Rondinone presents his first major survey of outdoor works, bringing together three decades of monumental sculpture along the waterfront of Brooklyn Bridge Park. Spanning from his early neon rainbow *Cry Me a River* (1997) to different bodies of work in aluminum, stone, and bronze, ranging from natural materials and surfaces to high-key colored finishes, Rondinone explores the relationship between humanity and nature. The exhibition will also include a major collaborative artwork created with children from all five boroughs of New York City.

With the Manhattan skyline as a backdrop for the exhibition, the sculptures enter into a dialogue with the city, the water, the sky, and the changing seasons, transforming the waterfront into a landscape of shared experience.

Ugo Rondinone: Love Invents Us is curated by Artistic & Executive Director Nicholas Baume.

Lotus Kang: Crybaby
June 8 – November 21, 2027
City Hall Park Lower Manhattan

Canadian-born, New-York based rising star Lotus Kang presents a new series of sculptures derived from her collection of kitsch ceramic bird figurines popularized in the US in the 1950s. Produced by Napco ceramics as a sign of American domestic comfort following WWII, most of the figurines' production labor was outsourced to Japan. To Kang, the birds are migratory forms that exist between places of origin, ultimately becoming placeless. For City Hall Park, Kang builds on the series, developing multiple parent-chick sculptures at the largest scale to date, as well as other symbols from her sculptural lexicon, such as the lotus root, kelp knot, and perilla leaves. The exhibition brings her indoor installations outdoors for the first time, gathering a poetic assembly of artworks to consider attachment, desire, and loss in continual cycles.

Lotus Kang: Crybaby is curated by Senior Curator Melanie Kress.

Catherine Opie: More Women
July 7 – September 12, 2027
JCDecaux Bus Shelters in New York, Chicago, and Boston

One of the leading photographers of her generation, Catherine Opie will create a series of portraits of highly accomplished women in the arts and culture. Returning to the high key color backgrounds used in her early breakthrough works of the 1990s, the series is being shot in New York during the fall of 2026. *More Women* plays off the title of Robert Mapplethorpe's *Some Women*, his 1989 collection of portraits of prominent women in a range of creative fields. Those

artfully posed subjects, Joan Didion wrote, “seem to be inhabitants of a world in which survival depends on the ability to seduce, beguile, conspire, deceive.” By contrast, Catherine Opie’s women do not depend on the artifice of makeup, lighting and theatrical pose, they project a sense of authority, comfortable in their own skin, addressing the viewer directly on their own terms, in tacit solidarity with their colleague behind the camera.

More Women is both timely as a presentation of strong female role models and particularly fitting for a woman-founded arts organization celebrating its 50th anniversary.

Catherine Opie: More Women is curated by Artistic & Executive Director Nicholas Baume.

***Firelei Báez: Ayida Wedo* (working title)**
September 8, 2027 - August 20, 2028
Doris C. Freedman Plaza, Central Park

New York-based artist Firelei Báez will present a new bronze sculpture for Doris C. Freedman Plaza inspired by her paintings of figures from Caribbean history and spirituality. The work will capture her ongoing interest in mythological, literary, and religious figures in transformation that embrace connections between humanity and the landscapes we live in. An artist familiar with working in the public realm, this exhibition will mark the first time Báez presents her new trajectory of figurative bronze sculpture in public space. Báez’s exhibition draws upon her ongoing practice of following interlocking European and African histories, reimagining them to explore new possibilities for the future.

Firelei Báez: Ayida Wedo is curated by Senior Curator Melanie Kress.

Jeremy Deller Presents *The Magic Realm: A Celebration of 50 Years of Public Art Fund*
October 16, 2027
Great Hill, Central Park

Artist Jeremy Deller will orchestrate *The Magic Realm*, a participatory celebration marking 50 years of Public Art Fund. This one-day public gathering at the Great Hill in Central Park will feature a procession with music and costumes, artist-led workshops for making and all sorts —including crafts, dressing up and photo ops— and a performance stage, as well as elements inspired by Public Art Fund history.

The Magic Realm is curated by Artistic & Executive Director Nicholas Baume with Associate Curator of Public Practice Gabriela López Dena, and Assistant Curator Jenée-Daria Strand.

Publication: *50 Years of Public Art Fund*
Published by Monacelli, fall 2027

This richly illustrated anniversary publication tells the story of fifty years of Public Art Fund, a pioneer and leader in the field, which has grown and flourished in New York City and beyond. Over the past five decades, Public Art Fund has developed groundbreaking works of public art, collaborated with over 600 artists, and shaped the fabric of cultural life in New York City. The

book documents hundreds of artworks from across the organization's history and includes forewords by Susan K. Freedman and Elizabeth Fearon Pepperman, essays by Nicholas Baume, Thomas Dyja, Melanie Kress, Gabriela López Dena, Nicholas C. Morgan, Blake Oetting, Katerina Stathopoulou, and Jenée-Daria Strand, together with contributions from artists, partners and colleagues across the decades.

Currently On View: New York City

Woody De Othello: Guardian Spirit
On View through March 8, 2027
Brooklyn Bridge Park, Brooklyn

For his first solo outdoor exhibition in New York City, Woody De Othello (b. 1991, Miami, Florida) presents *Guardian Spirit*, comprising four recent large-scale bronzes and three new totemic redwood sculptures. This exhibition highlights the artist's ongoing exploration of nkisi—ritual objects from Western and Central Africa that embody spiritual presences and channel protective or healing forces. Othello approaches sculpture making through a tender focus on the world around us, highlighting the emotional force behind the objects and rituals that shape our daily lives.

Each work showcases Othello's sculptural language, whereby everyday objects become extensions of intimate actions. *In thought in mind,* an enlarged phone and comb suggest these objects' outsized importance: how something as fleeting as a phone call can change the course of our lives.

Communication is a recurring theme of the exhibition. *Capacity*, *inner knowing*, and *Involution* feature trumpet horn-shaped appendages merging with ears and hands to suggest connections between sensation and emotion, mirroring nkisi, which unify the physical and spiritual realms. Othello hand carved three totems with symbolic reliefs: outstretched hands for compassion, kneeling figures for reverence, ears for listening and birds for freedom. Each gesture blends into the next, evoking the shifting ways we experience emotion, memory, and consciousness.

Woody De Othello: Guardian Spirit is curated by Assistant Curator Jenée-Daria Strand.

Camille Henrot: Dogs
On view through August 29, 2027
Doris C. Freedman Plaza, Central Park

For her first public exhibition in New York City, Camille Henrot introduces a group of sculptures of dogs – for her, symbols of domesticated life – that bring handcrafted delight to the park's entrance. The collection of dogs on leashes marks a new outdoor chapter in Henrot's recent body of work that explores how etiquette, order, and societal rules shape the imagination and inventiveness of young life. Each dog has its own unique personality and materiality, mirroring the wide variety of shapes and sizes of canine companions she meets across her own Upper West Side neighborhood. In painting, sculpture, film, drawing, and more, Camille Henrot tries to understand the world, or to at least respect its nonsense. Interested at once in banal and quotidian phenomena and the most far-reaching societal structures, Henrot follows the stories that we tell, the structures we impose to create order, and the symbols we invent to approximate shared understanding.

Camille Henrot: Dogs is curated by Senior Curator Melanie Kress.

Currently On View: Traveling Exhibitions

- ***Thaddeus Mosley: Touching the Earth*,** Pittsburgh Cultural Trust Arts Landing (Pittsburgh, PA)
- ***Monira Al Qadiri: First Sun*,** The Lassonde Art Trail (Toronto, Canada)

Currently On View: Ongoing Permanent Installations
Continuing in 2027, Public Art Fund also has several works permanently on view at locations including:

- JFK Airport Terminal 6 (scheduled to open in December 2026): **Nina Chanel Abney, Nevin Aladağ, Candida Alvarez, Felipe Baeza, Kerstin Brätsch, Jane Dickson, Teresita Fernández, Charles Gaines, Sky Hopinka, Shara Hughes, Laure Prouvost, Barbara Kruger, Eddie Martinez, Kambui Olujimi, GaHee Park, Uman, Charline von Heyl, Dyani White Hawk, Haegue Yang**
- LaGuardia Terminal B: **Jeppe Hein, Sabine Hornig, Laura Owens, Sarah Sze**
- Moynihan Train Hall: **Stan Douglas, Elmgreen & Dragset, Kehinde Wiley**
- Newark Terminal A: **Layqa Nuna Yawar, Karyn Olivier**
- Planet Word (Washington, D.C.): **Rafael Lozano-Hemmer**

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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.

SUPPORT
Bloomberg Philanthropies is the presenting sponsor of the Public Art Fund 2027 Exhibition Season.

Leadership support for *I Happen to Like New York* is provided by the Fuhrman Family Foundation, Elizabeth Fearon Pepperman & Richard C. Pepperman II, and Jennifer Harris.

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Leadership support for Jeremy Deller Presents *The Magic Realm* is provided by Elizabeth Fearon Pepperman & Richard C. Pepperman II, and Jennifer Harris.

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