

LEONARDO DREW

CITY IN THE GRASS

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DREW

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Leonardo Drew

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City in the Grass

Mad. Sq. Art 2019

Leonardo Drew
City in the Grass

June 3 - December 15, 2019

Madison Square Park
New York

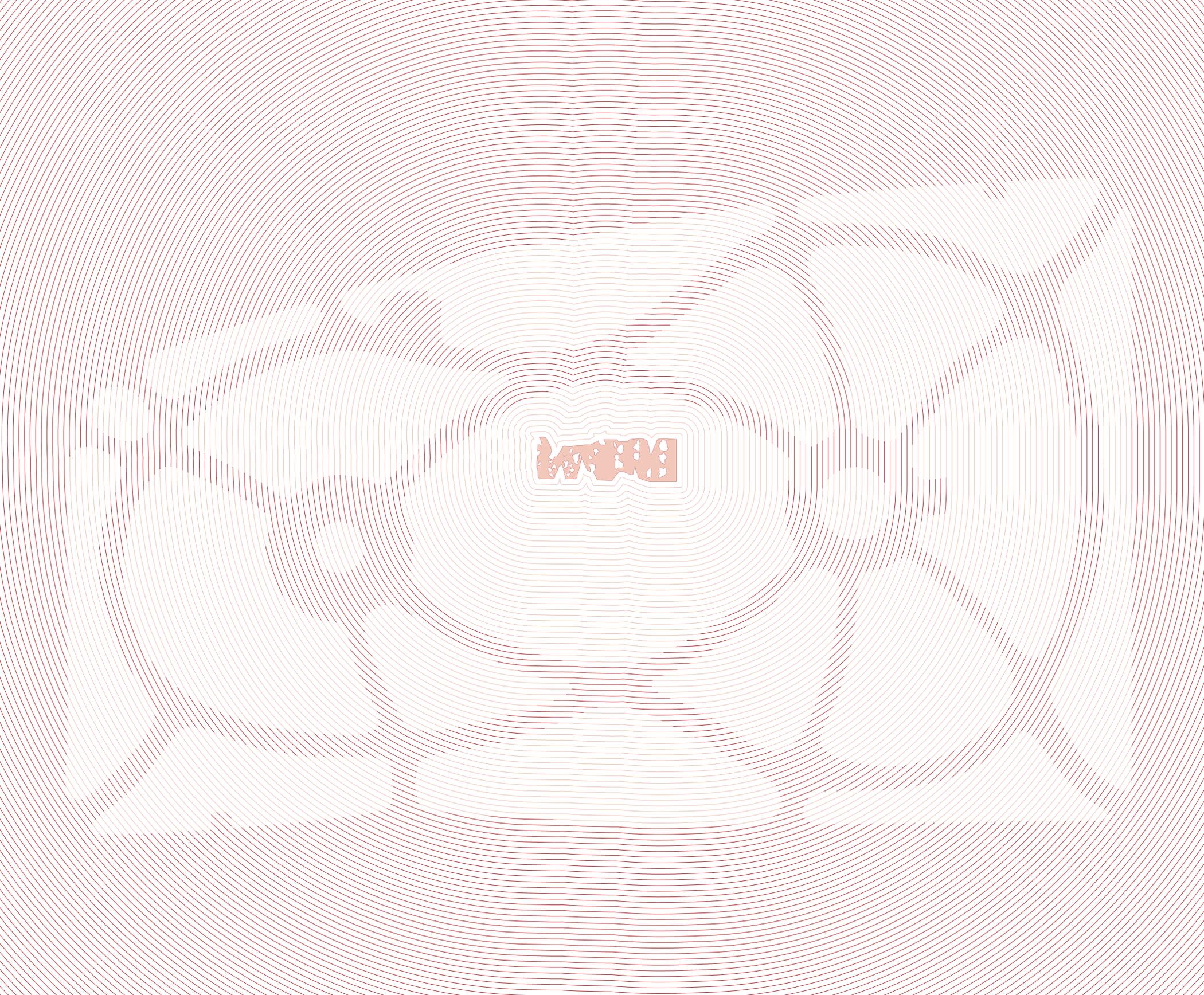
Commissioned by

Madison Square Park
Conservancy

March 1 - August 30, 2020

North Carolina Museum of Art
Raleigh, North Carolina





WAVE



FIG. 1

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FIG. 2



FIG. 3

Introduction

Brooke Kamin Rapaport

When Leonardo Drew's *City in the Grass* opened in Madison Square Park in the late spring of 2019, the public immediately and intuitively grasped what the artist had anticipated. People sat on the work, ate their lunch situated in its nooks and folds, sprawled on its gentle hills, and allied with a cityscape that first formed in the artist's imagination. As adventuresome Parkgoers literally leaped on and from the piece, one hundred feet long by thirty feet wide, others had to take a leap of faith to corporeally engage. For some, the opportunity to physically interact with and walk on art—even a work of public art—was dubious, because of the aesthetic induction of learned behavior.

If art critic Harold Rosenberg's timeworn "arena in which to act" empowered 1950s action painters to take on the space in the picture plane and realize work that became "not a picture but an event," then four decades later, critic and theorist Rosalind E. Krauss moved the verticality of the wall where painters work into the horizontality of the floor as the next conquerable space for artists.¹ Her essay "Horizontality" famously traces the impulse for floor work in the twentieth century (which continues in the twenty-first) from the social realist mural painter David Siqueiros (Mexican, 1896–1974) to the Abstract Expressionist painter Jackson Pollock (American, 1912–1956) to the conceptual artist and writer Robert Morris (American, 1931–2018) to the Pop icon Andy Warhol (American, 1928–1987) to the self-portrait photographer Cindy Sherman (American, b. 1954).² Krauss describes the unexpected role of turf typically meant for ambulation as activated by artists: "The floor had become a production site that was set in direct opposition to the vertical axis of the easel of the artist's studio, or the wall of the bourgeois apartment, or the high-cultural ideals of the museum."³ The ground plane was now another dimension and an opportunity. The Minimalist artist Carl Andre (American, b. 1935) recognized this radical involvement when, starting in the mid-1960s, he placed tiles of industrial materials directly on the floor, inviting people to walk on the work.⁴

As much as Drew's impetus to realize a work on the ground plane and to construct a linear sculpture of

interconnecting sections can be reasonably considered a nod to Andre's art, *City in the Grass* ultimately subverts the cool asceticism of Minimalism. This is demonstrated not only in Drew's public art project in Madison Square Park. He is best known for assemblages in wood—either in relief format or as complete interior environments. *City in the Grass*, his first major outdoor sculpture, is a departure. His typical production corresponds to the verticality of the wall rather than the horizontality of the lawn. Yet he initially constructs sculpture on the ground plane in his Brooklyn studio. It is often in looking over and onto the initial process that the artist further assesses how he will build a sculpture. He considers materials, sectional placement, and organization while lingering over a work's inception. Only after key aspects are deliberated does the work assume its expected placement on the wall. Drew cites the children who play on the street in front of his studio as the motivation for energizing the ground plane. According to the artist, his engagement with the floor enables his young neighbors to take a page from Jonathan Swift's 1726 satire *Gulliver's Travels* and experience what it would be like to be Lemuel Gulliver hovering over the island nation of Lilliput, where the inhabitants are about hand height.

City in the Grass is a sprawling, undulating sculpture with a richly textured surface on which Drew has built layer upon layer of materials. Over his years as an artist, he has incorporated worn-raw cotton, oxidized metal, corroding canvas, torn paper, and burned or treated wood—materials often associated with oppression and urban decay. In this project the artist uses new materials, including aluminum and sand. *City in the Grass* features an aluminum structure on which colorful sand mixed with mastic resin creates a pattern evoking a Persian carpet. A collaged cityscape in wood hovers at the ground plane, and sixteen-foot-high plywood towers covered in the sand mixture and assembled materials are roused from a base. Drew presents a topographical view of an abstracted cityscape atop a patterned panorama. The subtlety of the curvilinear foundation contrasts with the artist's color choices, which are a purposeful clash engaging enlarged scale and coarse texture.

Three distinct vocabularies purposefully cohere and conflict here: the vivid carpet, the wood mosaics, and the skyscrapers displaying elements of collage. They physically

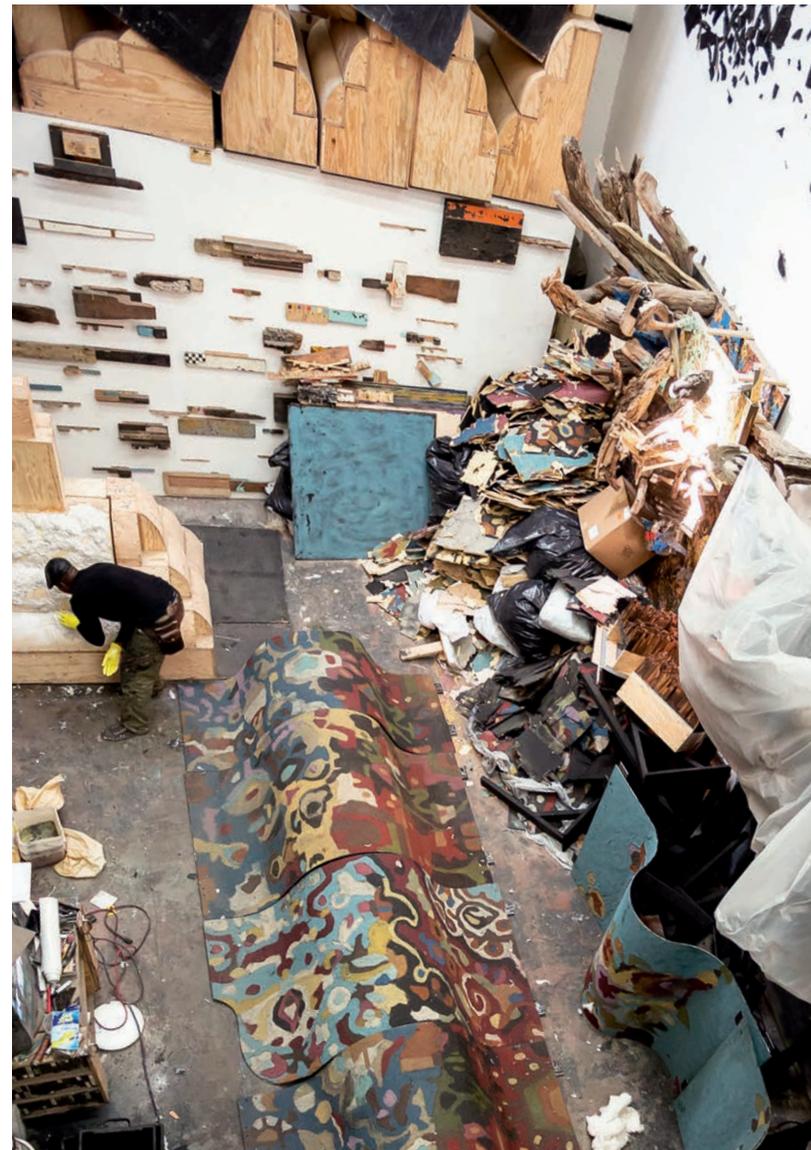


FIG. 4

unite across the site, but they also confront one another—commingling but competing. That is the beauty and the resonance of *City in the Grass*, which summons the very layers of urban life shown in an urban park.

For this work, the artist began with an aerial photograph looking down on the city as it unfolded, carpetlike. A carpet—the central metaphor of *City in the Grass*—can refer to home, to comfort, to domesticity. But here, the carpet is filled with voids or holes that symbolize wear and

tear and the promise but lapsed commitment of home life, comfort, and stability. The artist planned for grassy undergrowth to emerge through those deliberate gaps, to remind how a forgotten remnant can become overgrown, careworn, and tattered. *City in the Grass* coalesces around and confronts complicated domestic themes.

Sand is a telling choice on the ground plane and in the towering structures: it is bright and joyous while also calling forth the evanescent memory of a sand castle that suggests durability but ultimately collapses. The towers that push up from the carpet refer, of course, to the Empire State Building, seen from the lawn of Madison Square Park. But they also allude to buildings or structures—like the Watts Towers in Los Angeles or the great stupas of India—that the artist has seen in his extensive national and international travels. Drew takes images he has witnessed or otherwise experienced, considers them, and transforms them into material for his sculpture. Why wouldn't an artist who so often contends with and conjures architectural space want to create work in the public realm? It is a natural development for Leonardo Drew.

Drew's opening gambit was for people to enliven the heaving expanse of *City in the Grass*, to take on the colorful patterns in the undulating carpet and respond to the sculpture not from the vantage point of an onlooker whose gaze alights from north to south, but from the active participation of an agent. He has brought wonderment to a public urban site, inviting people to join the company of onlookers and audience, participants and stakeholders, those who walk on the work by coincidence or by deliberation.

Like all of Madison Square Park's exhibitions, *City in the Grass* could not have been realized without the consistent support and counsel of the Conservancy's Board of Trustees, including Board Chair Sheila Davidson. Our Art Committee, chaired by Ron Pizzuti, is a group of thoughtful advisors who share their guidance, generosity, and wisdom. We are grateful to Christopher Ward of Thornton Tomasetti, who worked with the Conservancy and the artist. Our thanks to Jamie Perrow and Emily Johnson at UAP, whose expertise as fabricators and problem solvers was a significant boon to the project. At Madison Square Park Conservancy, Tom Reidy, Senior Project Manager; Julia Friedman, Senior Curatorial Manager; and Tessa Ferreyros, former Curatorial

Manager, have been outstanding colleagues on all aspects of this endeavor. Keats Myer, Executive Director, has been steadfast in her support of the artist's work. In his studio, the artist was assisted by Melissa Diaz and Clement Louisy. Gratitude to Christopher Bedford, Dorothy Wallis Wagner Director, Baltimore Museum of Art, and Lauren Haynes, Curator of Contemporary Art at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, whose stunning essays in this volume share insight into Leonardo Drew's practice. Valerie L. Hillings, Director, and Linda Dougherty, Chief Curator and Curator of Contemporary Art, at the North Carolina Museum of Art, have worked with great enthusiasm to bring *City in the Grass* to their institution.

Leonardo Drew has proceeded on this project with fearlessness and with great distinction. His newfound role of bringing his work into the public realm is destined for future prominence.

Brooke Kamin Rapaport is the Deputy Director and Martin Friedman Chief Curator of Madison Square Park Conservancy.

1. Harold Rosenberg, "The American Action Painters," *ARTnews*, December 1952, 22.
2. Rosalind E. Krauss, "Horizontality," in Yve-Alain Bois and Rosalind E. Krauss, *Formless: A User's Guide* (New York: Zone Books, 1997), 93.
3. *Ibid.*
4. It is difficult to mention Carl Andre's work without noting that in 1985, he was charged with the murder of his third wife, the artist Ana Mendieta. She died in a fall from a window of their Greenwich Village apartment. Andre was later acquitted.



FIG. 5



FIG. 6

Artist's Statement

Leonardo Drew

Reaching. It's all about reaching. Life lays out its plan, but you need to reach to achieve. My journey to realize *City in the Grass* is a life diagram filled with twists, turns, thrills, and doors blown wide open. What I had in mind and where I ended up are vastly different . . . for all the right reasons. Working outside and understanding the poetic and concrete concerns is a learning curve that needed to be addressed. The idea of meeting the existing (historic) skyscrapers with a vertical/monumental structure was quickly scrapped. This type of approach to the outdoors had been "done, done!" *What if* had to come into play: What if we switched the perspective? How the kids in my neighborhood read my works on the floor of my studio convinced me that this was the direction. Gulliver, Lilliput. From cinema, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Metropolis* . . . And from the spiritual, the great stupas, to go nose to nose with the Empire State Building and its surrounding iconography. So simple. How the idea of an undulating *City in the Grass* became a color field of rugs is another story. Life is alive, and as you push through, art is revealed and made concrete. My many trips to China and my explorations in the traditions of porcelain and glazing brought in the possibilities of "something else!" Art became "alive, and in living color!" The details are explained in the piece itself. Imagining that my philosophy of viewers being complicit in the completion of the art could be made whole is truly a revelation in this particular work. While they walk on it, lie on it, climb on it, they add to (and subtract from) the new iteration "the new self of the work." Could not and would not have it any other way . . .



FIG. 7



FIG. 8

Shrinking the Skyline, All for You

Christopher Bedford

Breaking tradition for me is like a dangling carrot. “What if” has been my mantra; threw out my life and I see no reason to abandon that now. . . . Break it, beat it and fully realize what’s possible. “Gloves raised and teeth clenched!”

—Leonardo Drew¹

The most striking dimension of Leonardo Drew’s unusually arresting public installation *City in the Grass* is the artist’s delicate play with scale. In an uncanny game of phenomenology, Drew guides us gently through an experience that is otherworldly and cosmic, while maintaining an intimacy of encounter all too uncommon in works of public art. His subject could not be bigger—the city itself—and yet Drew shrinks this enormous subject down so that the city is ours as viewers. Spread across Madison Square Park’s central lawn, the installation comprises three primary elements: a trio of sculptural renderings of the Empire State Building, realized in a material vocabulary that evokes the work of Spanish architect-mystic Antoni Gaudí (1852–1926); surrounding these scaled-down skyscrapers, cityscapes imagined in tiny rectangles of raw and painted wood, scaled not to the human form but to the blades of grass around the installation; and finally, undulating aluminum waves painted with glittering sand that are at once sculptures, paintings, places for play, and seating where visitors may linger, lounge, and wonder. Rounding out Drew’s composition are the verdant trees of the Park (not his doing!) and beyond them the Empire State Building itself (clearly not his doing!), stately and withheld in the distance, yet inches from our bodily experience in the Park. From the blades of grass that define the site to the towering presence of the eminent Art Deco building that dominates the skyline, Drew’s command of scale and viewer experience is entirely intentional and unerring. But to what end?

From his first mature work, the now iconic *Number 8* (1988, Fig. 9), Drew’s engagement with the production of art has been an act of sheer labor-based *intention*. Though



FIG. 9

one's eyes may discern otherwise, he does not work with found materials. He uses the machine that is his studio to ensure that all the materials admitted into his works have only one author: himself. Drew has touched every square inch of everything. To explain this tendency, the artist very often conjures his upbringing in Bridgeport, Connecticut, in a modest apartment with a panoramic view of a sprawling landfill. In his early years, he would scour this site and then assemble objects from the things he found. For Drew, to reiterate this “found” visual experience would be, as he puts it, to “pedal in reverse.”² By this he means two things: a return to a period of time in his life that he sees as his origin but not his future, and a return to a compositional method predating the labor-based practice of self-determination that characterizes his work in the studio



FIG. 10

today. This commitment, then, is both social/autobiographical and—perhaps as a consequence—formal.

In an account of Drew's early formal development, curator Valerie Cassel Oliver observes:

In 1995, Drew's investigation into the language of materiality directly took on the formalist strategies of minimalist traditions, primarily the large-scale grid format. His use of the grid—a format historically steeped in social critique—liberated Drew to extend his inquiry into the nature of painting by adopting an (ironically) more ordered sculptural gesture. Playing upon the tension between order and chaos, he introduced complexity within the simplistic frame. By employing the grid as canvas and objects as paint, [he] focused on the object as a profound and powerful presence. Laboriously fabricating and processing the raw materials used in his work, Drew overturned viewer expectations of the object as comprising “found” detritus. In doing so, he subverted one history in the service of another.³

The recurring terms of Drew's engagement with art history are spelled out clearly here by Cassel Oliver: a natural skepticism for dominant concepts and a willingness to challenge them; a learning-by-doing approach to formal innovation, grounded in materials and labor; and a desire for his own subjectivity to infiltrate formal language and produce a frankly autobiographical social abstraction.

Drew's approach to the public commission for Madison Square Park is strikingly similar, methodologically. Here is the artist's own account of that process:

My journey to realize *City in the Grass* is a life diagram filled with twists, turns, thrills, and doors blown wide open. What I had in mind and where I ended up are vastly different . . . for all the right reasons. Working outside and understanding the poetic and concrete concerns is a learning curve that needed to be addressed. The idea of meeting the existing (historic) skyscrapers with a vertical/monumental structure was quickly scrapped. . . . This type of approach to the outdoors had been “done, done!” *What if* had to come into play: What if we switched the perspective? How the kids in my neighborhood read my works when they were on the floor of my studio convinced me with certainty that this was the direction. Gulliver, Lilliput. From cinema, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Metropolis* . . . And from the spiritual, the great stupas, to go nose to nose with the Empire State Building and its surrounding iconography. So simple . . . To imagine that my philosophy of the viewer being complicit in the completion of the art could be made whole is truly a revelation in this particular work. While they walk on, lie on, climb on, they add to (and subtract from) the new iteration. “The New Self of the Work!” Could not and would not have it any other way.⁴

As narrated with crystalline clarity here, Drew’s willingness to interrogate formal norms, experiment with a range of unlikely materials, and draw inspiration from his own

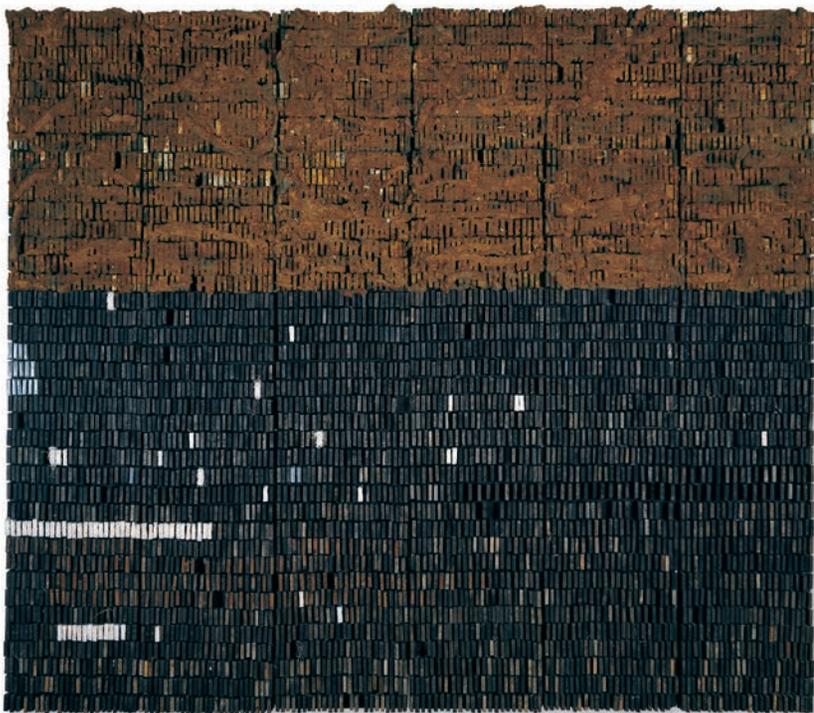


FIG. 11



FIG. 12

orbit combined to produce *City in the Grass*. Not incidentally, this very same alchemical process of thought and work, work and thought, led him to claim the grid as part of his artistic vocabulary almost twenty-five years earlier. The resulting gestures upend and complicate art history, no question, but *City in the Grass* is all the more striking for the audacity and publicness of Drew's experiment with a historically unyielding tradition.

Forty years into his career, this is the first commission in a public space that Drew has accepted and executed. For an artist with a demonstrated command of scale, even sublime scale, it would have been rudimentary, perhaps even natural, to scale up a tried-and-true material approach already native to his working practice in order to dominate the Park setting, and maybe even wage perspectival war with the Empire State Building peering over the trees. Drew's eventual decision to do the very opposite is the critical formal move that drives the installation's resounding success. So unfamiliar is humility of scale in a work of public art that it is initially difficult to decipher just what Drew is up to. In fact, the scale of the installation is so modest that it is barely visible from the adjacent sidewalk. It would be difficult to overstate how radical a decision this is, given the pervasive overreliance on large-format gestures to produce effect in public sculpture, a manner adopted and maintained over generations—think Richard Serra, Jeff Koons, Alexander Calder, Robert Indiana, Tony Smith, Mark di Suvero, Anish Kapoor; and the list goes on.

The sharpness of the contrast between Drew's work and that of his forebears and contemporaries implies various registers of important critique. His very determined rejection of "normative" scale in favor of something he himself describes as Lilliputian is intended to summon a very approachable magic that gives the human body—even a child's body—great agency in the encounter. Like the objects made in his studio, all of which have numbers as titles, to give the viewer pure autonomy in meaning-making, *City in the Grass* achieves this end through the generosity of its overture to interact without being overawed. This is a rhetoric not of domination but of collective participation, the modesty of scale suggesting that the object is nothing without you, the viewer. And it is notable that the genesis of the form occurred not in conversation with a history of

public sculpture, but in service of the neighborhood kids playing in Drew's studio. Careful observation of the mechanics of their interaction with his work produced the form for an installation *not simply in a public space, but for that public*. The intelligence and sensitivity of this conception inspire a sense of mastery in the viewer. We are invited not to behold in passive wonder but to interact with a sense of comfortable belonging.

Classically well-known works of public art have traditionally inspired awe as a consequence of their sheer scale, through the implication of great expense in fabrication, by grand and elusive ambition of conception, and via a distant reverence induced by the sense that we don't know quite how or why they were made. Drew rejects every one of these standard precepts in a work that is hand-wrought, scaled to us, conceptually accessible, and physically approachable. The intellectual and emotional work required to reach that point is palpable when we are in the presence of Drew's installation in Madison Square Park. As the artist says, "Reaching. It's all about reaching. Life lays out its plan, but you need to reach to achieve."⁵ With *City in the Grass*, Leonardo Drew reached all the way up to the sky, so that he could bring everything he felt and found up there down to us.

Christopher Bedford is the Dorothy Wallis Wagner Director of the Baltimore Museum of Art.

1. Leonardo Drew, correspondence with the author, September 2, 2019.
2. Leonardo Drew, in conversation with Larry Ossei-Mensah, *Viewpoints, with Galerie Lelong*, episode 3, <https://player.fm/series/viewpoints-2490673/viewpoints-episode-3-leonardo-drew-larry-ossei-mensah>.
3. Valerie Cassel Oliver, "Points of Departure," in *Leonardo Drew* (Milan: Edizioni Charta, 2012), 9-10.
4. Drew, correspondence with the author.
5. *Ibid.*



FIG. 13



FIG. 14

City in the Grass

Lauren Haynes

Leonardo Drew believes that his artwork is completely finished only when the viewer is engaging with it. His works, made of wood, paper, cotton, paint, and often a variety of other materials, range in scale. Whatever the scale, they can overtake a room and overwhelm your senses and your experiences. Drew's works are titled with a number (and sometimes a number and letter)—a simple system to tell them apart. This also allows for visitors to bring their own views to the works; they are not guided in a particular direction based on a title. Drew's Madison Square Park project, *City in the Grass*, is the perfect demonstration that his works are not finished until they are experienced by viewers. Public art is meant to engage, particularly in a setting like Madison Square Park, filled with a variety of people from the neighborhood or from farther afield. It's a place that attracts New Yorkers on their lunch breaks, children and their caregivers, tourists exploring the city, and everyone in between. Topography has always been a part of Drew's work. His ability to combine and meld wood and invent shapes and levels is a distinctive part of his practice. He renders his materials in such a way that they often have the look of found objects. Yet he fashions each piece into the shape that he wants it to be. Drew's city in the Park seems to float upon its carpet base.

In December 2017, Drew created a site-specific work at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. As is typical of his large-scale installations, he used elements that had already been used in another installation, *Number 197* (2017, Fig. 15), at the de Young Museum in San Francisco. Watching Drew work with the installation team on *Number 184T* (2017, Figs. 16–18) at Crystal Bridges was a revelation. His process is deeply intuitive and shows how closely he is connected with his materials and the vision he has for his art. Employing primarily wood and paint, he produces works that don't look quite like anything else in the contemporary art world.

A little over six years ago, I had my first in-depth conversation with Drew about his work. That phone call and our ongoing dialogues have affirmed for me that his style and



FIG. 15

way of working are all his own. He has honed his practice for the past three decades. Like many artists, he is influenced by others and has a great understanding of art history. Drew's work calls to mind artists who have preceded him, and he will continue to be a touchstone for artists alongside him now and those who come after. He relentlessly pushes his materials and his method, often turning very basic materials into massive installations. *Number 184T* was planned and created while we were opening a new part of the Crystal Bridges campus and a secondary entrance for the museum. Drew envisioned a work that could be experienced both inside and outside the museum. He imagined, and realized, a particular view into the museum that previously wasn't available. As I look at this work on a regular basis, I am most struck by how it has changed the way guests interact with the space and how they engage not only with Drew's work but with the works around it as well.

After *Number 184T* and other recent works, *City in the Grass* feels like a natural progression for Drew—one of his wall-bound assemblages come to life. His skill in guiding bodies in space is on view at large scale in Madison Square Park. *City in the Grass* is a resting place and a place of play all at once. Drew has not only taken his work into the public realm, but done so by coaxing more than expected from his materials. He's also not afraid to introduce new elements

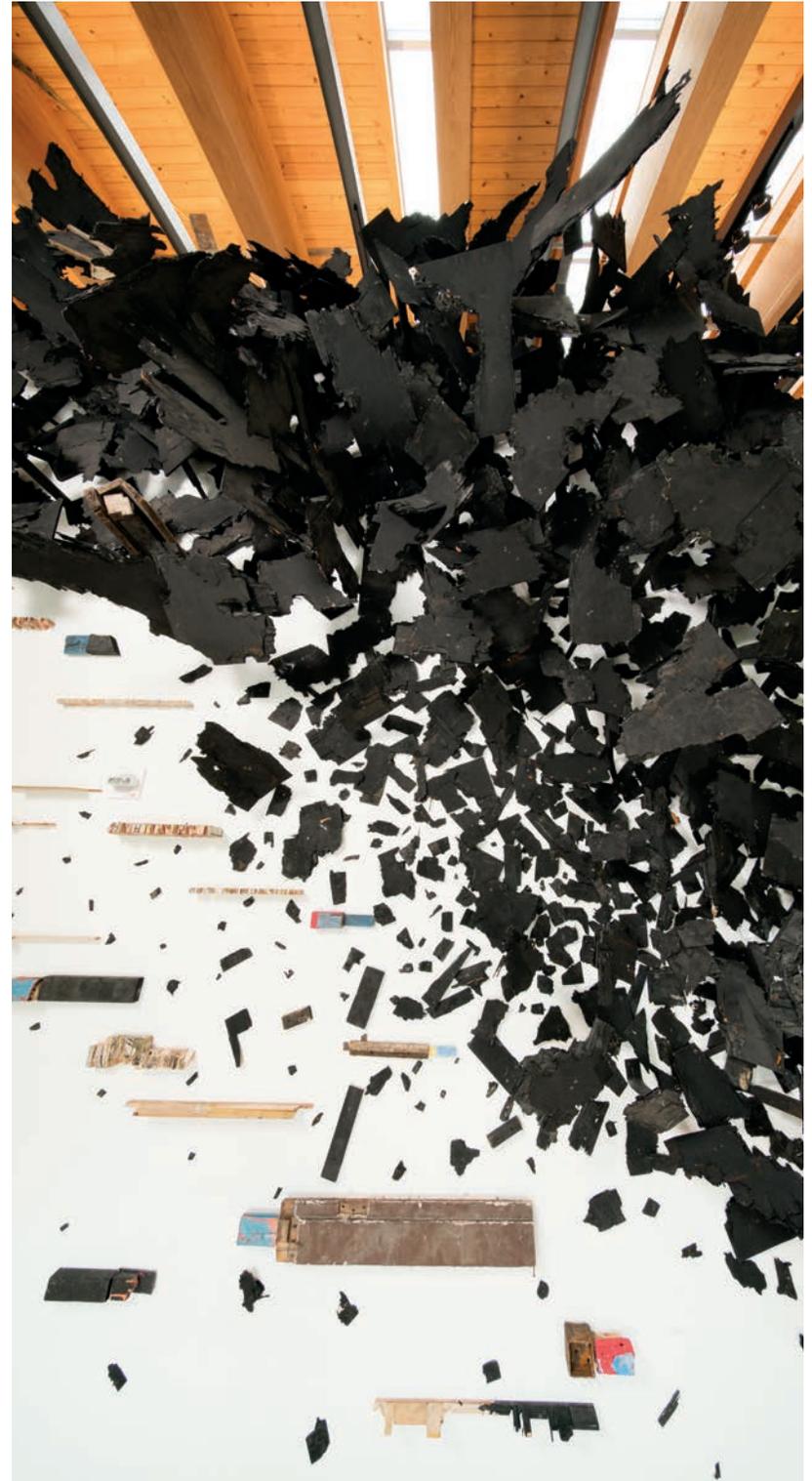


FIG. 16



FIG. 17



FIG. 18

into his work. Drew's palette before this work featured very little if any color. *City in the Grass*, like other 2019 works by him, introduces color in a grand way. This change is partially a result of his recent trips to China, which have further influenced his work in large-scale porcelain sculpture. Because of the interaction with porcelain, color comes through in his work in completely novel ways.

City in the Grass is an exciting look into the future of Drew's art. His work has consistently proceeded to a higher level. This ever-changing progress relates to how invested he is with viewer experience and engagement. His early childhood fascination with discarded and leftover materials has brought him to create a floating city in the Park. Drew is at the forefront of assemblage artists working in abstraction. Like all of his works, *City in the Grass* is enlivened by visitors who spend time to involve themselves with the work. In the artist's own words: "I would love it to take abuse because my work really is about a weathered history of our journey on this planet—the cycle of birth, life, death and regeneration. The piece is going to find itself in a whole other level of loveliness if it's allowed to live."¹

Lauren Haynes is the Curator of Contemporary Art at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art in Bentonville, Arkansas.

1. Hilarie M. Sheets, "Leonardo Drew Rides His Magic Carpet to a New Field," *The New York Times*, May 30, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/30/arts/design/leonardo-drew-madison-square-park.html>.



FIG. 19

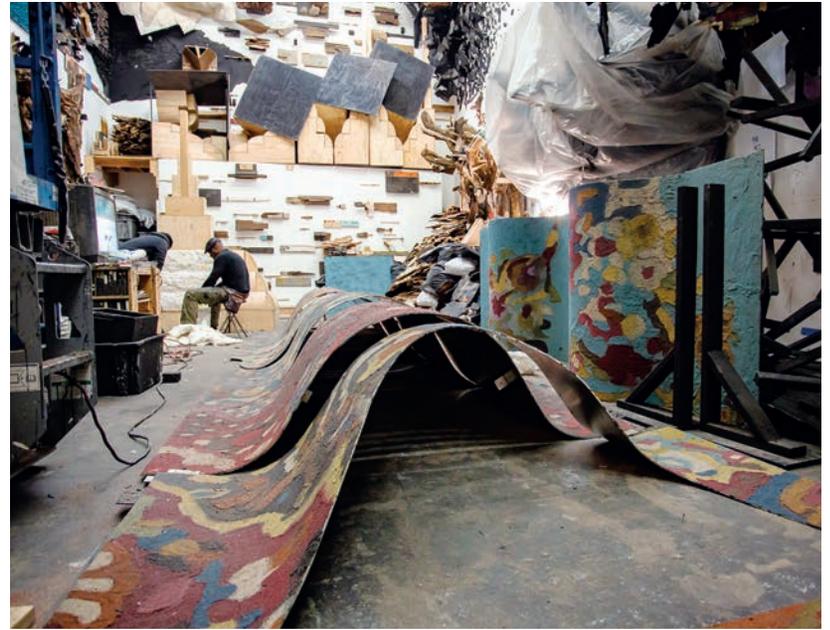


FIG. 20



FIG. 21



FIG. 22



FIG. 23

Leonardo Drew

WORK IN THE EXHIBITION

City in the Grass, 2019

Aluminum, sand, wood, cotton, and mastic

102 × 32 feet

Collection the artist, courtesy Talley Dunn Gallery, Galerie Lelong, and Anthony Meier Fine Arts

BIOGRAPHY

- 1961** Born in Tallahassee, Florida
Lives and works in Brooklyn, New York

EDUCATION

- 1985** BFA, The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, New York
- 1982** Parsons School of Design, New York

ARTIST ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A thank you to my assistants, Clement Louisy and Melissa Diaz, for their diligence and focus and for operating without breaks. Thank you to the ever-present and beloved Pamela Joyner and Fred Giuffrida. Thank you to Galerie Lelong, Anthony Meier Gallery, and Talley Dunn Gallery for their support and backing. A wink, hug, and nod to my girl Tessa Ferreyros, and to Tom Reidy, Julia Friedman, Keats Myer, and the Madison Square Park team for keeping it together. And of course thanks to Brooke Kamin Rapaport for her continued push to bring to the Park and from the artist the very best in ingenuity and grand-scale greatness. Love to you all.

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2019** *City in the Grass*
Madison Square Park, New York
Leonardo Drew
Anthony Meier Fine Arts, San Francisco
Leonardo Drew: Cycles, from the Collections of Jordan D. Schnitzer and His Family Foundation
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Leonardo Drew
Galerie Lelong, New York
Leonardo Drew
Pearl Lam Galleries, Hong Kong
- 2017** *Leonardo Drew: Number 197*
de Young Museum, San Francisco
Leonardo Drew
CAM Raleigh, Raleigh, NC
Leonardo Drew
Talley Dunn Gallery, Dallas
Recent Acquisition: Leonardo Drew
Academy Art Museum, Easton, MD
- 2016** *Leonardo Drew*
Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York
Leonardo Drew: Eleven Etchings
Crown Point Press, San Francisco
- 2015** *Leonardo Drew*
Pearl Lam Galleries, Hong Kong
Unsuspected Possibilities
SITE Santa Fe, Santa Fe, NM
Leonardo Drew
Talley Dunn Gallery, Dallas
Leonardo Drew
Pace Prints, New York
Leonardo Drew
Galerie Forsblom, Helsinki
Leonardo Drew
Vigo Gallery, London
- 2014** *Leonardo Drew*
Anthony Meier Fine Arts, San Francisco
- 2013** *Selected Works*
SCAD Museum of Art, Savannah, GA
Exhumation/Small Works
Canzani Center Gallery, Columbus College of Art & Design, Columbus, OH
Leonardo Drew
Vigo Gallery, London
- 2012** Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York
Pace Prints, New York
- 2011** Anthony Meier Fine Arts, San Francisco
Vigo Gallery, London
Galleria Napolinobilissima, Naples
- 2010** Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York
Window Works: Leonardo Drew
Artpace, San Antonio, TX
- 2009** *Existed: Leonardo Drew*
Blaffer Art Museum, University of Houston
Existed: Leonardo Drew
Weatherspoon Art Museum,
University of North Carolina, Greensboro
Existed: Leonardo Drew
deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum, Lincoln, MA
Fine Art Society, London
- 2007** Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York
- 2006** Palazzo delle Papesse, Centro Arte Contemporanea, Siena, Italy
- 2005** Brent Sikkema, New York
- 2002** The Fabric Workshop, Philadelphia
- 2001** Mary Boone Gallery, New York
Royal Hibernian Academy, Dublin
- 2000** Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC
The Bronx Museum of the Arts, Bronx, NY



FIG. 24

- 1999 Madison Art Center, Madison, WI
- 1998 Mary Boone Gallery, New York
- 1997 Samuel P. Harn Museum of Art,
University of Florida, Gainesville
- 1996 University at Buffalo Art Gallery,
State University of New York, Buffalo
Mary Boone Gallery, New York
Currents: Leonardo Drew
Saint Louis Art Museum
- 1995 Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego
Pace Roberts Foundation for Contemporary Art,
San Antonio, TX
Ground Level Overlay
Merce Cunningham Dance Company
collaboration, New York
- 1994 San Francisco Art Institute,
Walter/McBean Gallery, San Francisco

Thread Waxing Space, New York
- 1993 Herbert F. Johnson Museum,
Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
- 1992 Thread Waxing Space, New York

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2019** *Riffs and Relations: African American Artists and the European Modernist Tradition*
The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC

Linda Pace Foundation
Ruby City, San Antonio, TX
- 2018** *Talisman in the Age of Difference*
Stephen Friedman Gallery, London
- 2017** *Solidary & Solitary: The Joyner/Giuffrida Collection*
Ogden Museum of Southern Art, New Orleans

New at NOMA: Recent Acquisitions in Modern and Contemporary Art
New Orleans Museum of Art

Materialised Condition
Pearl Lam Galleries, Singapore
- 2016** *Haptic*
Alexander Gray Associates, New York

Structures of Recollection
Pearl Lam Galleries, Hong Kong

Continuum
Vigo Gallery, London
- 2015** *Black: Color, Material, Concept*
The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York

Unsuspected Possibilities
SITE Santa Fe, Santa Fe, NM

Showing Off: Recent Modern and Contemporary Acquisitions
Denver Art Museum
- 2014** *Summer Group Show*
Galerie Forsblom, Helsinki
- 2013** *Material World*
Denver Art Museum
- 2012** *San Antonio Collects Contemporary*
San Antonio Museum of Art, San Antonio, TX

Against the Grain: Wood in Contemporary Art, Craft and Design
Mint Museum, Charlotte, NC
- 2011** *Toward the Third Dimension*
David Floria Gallery, Aspen, CO

The Bearden Project
The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York
- 2010** *From Then to Now: Masterworks of Contemporary African American Art*
Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland

Collected: Reflections on the Permanent Collection
The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York

Lost and Found: Selections from the MCA Collection
Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago
- 2009** *Your Golden Teeth II*
Marianne Boesky Gallery, New York
- 2008** *30 Americans*
Rubell Family Collection, Miami
- 2007** *Lost and Found: Materials, Myths & Memories*
Blue Star Contemporary Art Center, San Antonio, TX

New Directions in American Drawing
The Columbus Museum, Columbus, GA

Repeat Performances: Seriality and Systems in Art Since 1960
Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH
- 2006** *Legacies: Contemporary Artists Reflect on Slavery*
New-York Historical Society, New York

Black Alphabet: ConTEXTS of Contemporary African-American Art
Zachęta National Gallery of Art, Warsaw
- 2005** *Leonardo Drew and Kara Walker*
Sikkema Jenkins & Co., New York

Between Image and Concept: Recent Acquisitions in African American Art
Princeton University Art Museum, Princeton, NJ
- 2004** *Open House: Working in Brooklyn*
Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, NY

Material Pleasures
Green on Red Gallery, Dublin

Assemblage
Saint Louis Art Museum
- 2003** *Hands On, Hands Down*
The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York

From Modernism to the Contemporary, 1958–1999
Allen Memorial Art Museum, Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH

- 2001** *Brooklyn!*
Palm Beach Institute of Contemporary Art, Lake Worth, FL
- 2000** *Vanitas: Meditations on Life and Death in Contemporary Art*
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond
- 1998** *Passages: Contemporary Art in Transition*
The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York
Bill Jensen / Leonardo Drew
Mary Boone Gallery, New York
- 1997** *New Work: Words & Images*
Miami Art Museum
- 1996** *Leonardo Drew / Mark Francis / Oliver Herring*
Mary Boone Gallery, New York
- 1995** *About Place: Recent Art of the Americas*
Art Institute of Chicago
1995 Carnegie International
Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh
- 1994** *Promising Suspects*
The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, CT
- 1993** *Markets of Resistance*
White Columns, New York
- 1992** Dak'Art, Biennale de l'Art Africain Contemporain, Dakar, Senegal
Three Sculptors: Leonardo Drew, Lisa Hoke, Brad Kahlhamer
Thread Waxing Space, New York
- 1991** *From the Studio: Artists in Residence, 1990-1991*
The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York



FIG. 25

Acknowledgments

For their continued commitment to the art program, Madison Square Park Conservancy thanks Megan Ardery, Aine Brazil, John Barry, Manhattan Borough Parks Commissioner William Castro, John Hunt, Anna Jardine, Jonathan Kuhn, Jennifer Lantzas, Elizabeth Masella, Juliet Sorce, and Christopher Ward at Thornton Tomasetti.

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Madison Square Park Conservancy

Madison Square Park Conservancy is the not-for-profit organization whose mission is to protect, nurture, and enhance Madison Square Park, a dynamic seven-acre public green space, creating an environment that fosters moments of inspiration. The Conservancy is committed to engaging the community through its public art program, beautiful gardens, inviting amenities, and world-class programming. Madison Square Park Conservancy is licensed by the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation to manage Madison Square Park and is responsible for raising 100% of the funds necessary to operate the Park, including the brilliant horticulture, park maintenance, sanitation, security, and free cultural programs for Park visitors of all ages.

For more information on the Conservancy and its programs, please visit madisonsquarepark.org.

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FIG. 26

Photography and Figure Credits



FIG. 1
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Photo by Yasunori Matsui



FIG. 2
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Photo by Rashmi Gill



FIG. 7
The Dash Ensemble
performs on *City in the
Grass*, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Photo by Zui Gomez



FIG. 8
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Photo by Rashmi Gill



FIG. 3
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet



FIG. 4
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Studio view

Photo by Hunter Canning



FIG. 9
Number 8, 1988
Animal carcasses, animal
hides, feathers, paint,
paper, rope, and wood
108 × 120 × 4 inches
Collection of the artist

Photo by Frank Stewart



FIG. 10
Number 49, 1995
Compressed paper, fabric,
oxidized metal, plastic,
rope, rust, and wood
138 × 288 × 12 inches
Collection of Hirshhorn
Museum and Sculpture
Garden, Smithsonian
Institution, Gift in Loving
Memory of Paul W.
Hoffman, 1996

Photo by Lee Stalsworth



FIG. 5
Artist with *City in the
Grass*, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Photo by Rashmi Gill



FIG. 6
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Photo by Yasunori Matsui



FIG. 11
Number 51, 1996
Oxidized metal, plastic,
rust, string, and wood
90 × 105 inches
Private Collection

Photo by Allen
Zimmerman



FIG. 12
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Photo by Rashmi Gill



FIG. 13
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Photo by Julian Raiford



FIG. 14
The Dash Ensemble
performs on *City in the
Grass*, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Photo by Zui Gomez



FIG. 21
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Studio view with artist
Photo by Hunter Canning



FIG. 22
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Installation with artist
Photo by Hunter Canning



FIG. 15
Number 197, 2017
Wood, paint, and mixed
media
Variable dimensions

Site-specific installation at
de Young Museum, San
Francisco

Photo by Randy Dodson
© The Fine Arts Museums
of San Francisco



FIG. 16
Number 184T (detail), 2017
Wood, paint, and mixed
media
Variable dimensions
Collection of Crystal Bridges
Museum of American Art

Installation view at Crystal
Bridges Museum of American
Art, Bentonville, Arkansas

Photo by Edward C. Robison III



FIG. 23
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Photo by Rashmi Gill



FIG. 24
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet



FIG. 17
Number 184T, 2017
Wood, paint, and mixed
media
Variable dimensions
Collection of Crystal Bridges
Museum of American Art

Installation view at Crystal
Bridges Museum of American
Art, Bentonville, Arkansas

Photo by Edward C. Robison III



FIG. 18
Number 184T (detail), 2017
Wood, paint, and mixed
media
Variable dimensions
Collection of Crystal Bridges
Museum of American Art

Installation view at Crystal
Bridges Museum of American
Art, Bentonville, Arkansas

Photo by Edward C. Robison III



FIG. 25
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Photo by Julian Raiford



FIG. 26
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Studio view with artist
Photo by Hunter Canning



FIG. 19
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet



FIG. 20
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Studio view with artist
Photo by Hunter Canning



COVER
City in the Grass, 2019
Aluminum, sand, wood,
cotton, and mastic
102 × 32 feet

Photo by Julia Ma

Previous Mad. Sq. Art Exhibitions

- | | | | |
|-------------|--|-------------|--|
| 2018 | Arlene Shechet <i>Full Steam Ahead</i> Diana Al-Hadid <i>Delirious Matter</i> | 2008 | Olia Lialina & Dragan Espenschied <i>Online Newspapers: New York Edition</i> Richard Deacon <i>Assembly</i> Tadashi Kawamata <i>Tree Huts</i> Rafael Lozano-Hemmer <i>Pulse Park</i> |
| 2017 | Erwin Redl <i>Whiteout</i> Josiah McElheny <i>Prismatic Park</i> | 2007 | Bill Fontana <i>Panoramic Echoes</i> Roxy Paine <i>Conjoined, Defunct, Erratic</i> William Wegman <i>Around the Park</i> |
| 2016 | Martin Puryear <i>Big Bling</i> | 2006 | Ursula von Rydingsvard <i>Bowl with Fins, Czara z Babelkami, Damski Czepek, Ted's Desert Reigns</i> |
| 2015 | Teresita Fernández <i>Fata Morgana</i> Paula Hayes <i>Gazing Globes</i> | 2005 | Jene Highstein <i>Eleven Works</i> Sol LeWitt <i>Circle with Towers, Curved Wall with Towers</i> |
| 2014 | Tony Cragg <i>Walks of Life</i> Rachel Feinstein <i>Folly</i> Iván Navarro <i>This Land Is Your Land</i> | 2004 | Mark di Suvero <i>Aesop's Fables, Double Tetrahedron, Beyond</i> |
| 2013 | Giuseppe Penone <i>Ideas of Stone (Idee di pietra)</i> Orly Genger <i>Red, Yellow and Blue</i> Sandra Gibson and Luis Recoder <i>Topsy-Turvy: A Camera Obscura Installation</i> | 2003 | Wim Delvoye <i>Gothic</i> |
| 2012 | Leo Villareal <i>BUCKYBALL</i> Charles Long <i>Pet Sounds</i> | 2002 | Dan Graham <i>Bisected Triangle, Interior Curve</i> Mark Dion <i>Urban Wildlife Observation Unit</i> Dalziel + Scullion <i>Voyager</i> |
| 2011 | Jacco Olivier <i>Stumble, Hide, Rabbit Hole, Bird, Deer, Home</i> Alison Saar <i>Feallan and Fallow</i> Jaume Plensa <i>Echo</i> Kota Ezawa <i>City of Nature</i> | 2001 | Navin Rawanchaikul <i>I ♥ Taxi</i> Teresita Fernández <i>Bamboo Cinema</i> Tobias Rehberger <i>Tsutsumu N.Y.</i> |
| 2010 | Jim Campbell <i>Scattered Light</i> Antony Gormley <i>Event Horizon</i> Ernie Gehr <i>Surveillance</i> | 2000 | Tony Oursler <i>The Influence Machine</i> |
| 2009 | Shannon Plumb <i>The Park</i> Jessica Stockholder <i>Flooded Chambers Maid</i> Mel Kendrick <i>Markers</i> Bill Beirne <i>Madison Square Trapezoids, with Performances by the Vigilant Groundsman</i> | | |

From 2000 to 2003, exhibitions were presented by the Public Art Fund on behalf of the Campaign for the New Madison Square Park.

