

MADISON SQUARE PARK CONSERVANCY

BROOKE KAMIN RAPAPORT TO STEP DOWN AS ARTISTIC DIRECTOR CULMINATING MORE THAN A DECADE OF SERVICE AT MADISON SQUARE PARK CONSERVANCY

During Rapaport's Tenure, the Conservancy Has Expanded its Ambitious Public Art Commissioning Program, Bringing a Range of Celebrated Artist Voices to the Park

New York, NY | October 30, 2024—Madison Square Park Conservancy announced today that Brooke Kamin Rapaport is stepping down from her position as Artistic Director and Martin Friedman Chief Curator, culminating a prolific eleven-year tenure at the helm of the Conservancy's celebrated public art program. An advocate for art in the public realm and for contemporary artistic practice in all its forms, Rapaport will remain at the Conservancy through December 31, 2024, and will be advancing a new body of research as a Visiting Scholar at the American Academy in Rome this winter. A committee organized by the Conservancy's Board of Trustees is conducting a comprehensive search for a new chief curator who will lead the public art program into its next chapter.

Since joining in 2013, Rapaport has diversified and expanded the Conservancy's public art program, raising its profile to new levels of national and international recognition with site-responsive projects and exhibitions by artists including Leonardo Drew, Nicole Eisenman, Maya Lin, Martin Puryear, and Shahzia Sikander, among many others. With a commissioning practice that encourages artists to expand their creative visions, often in new media and at ambitious new scales, Rapaport has given several artists their first experience working in the public realm with new installations specifically created for the 6.2-acre Manhattan park. Most recently, in honor of the twentieth anniversary season of the Conservancy's public art program, Rapaport conceived a series of commissions that animated the park throughout the year and extended the program beyond the park's borders through a processional performance throughout Manhattan by María Magdalena Campos-Pons and a joint project in Madison Square Park and Inwood Hill Park by Rose B. Simpson.

"Brooke has brought artistic diversity and curatorial rigor to Madison Square Park, establishing our public art program as a leading force in the cultural landscape here in New York and internationally," stated Sheila Kearney Davidson, Chair of the Conservancy's Board of Trustees. Added Trustee Ronald A. Pizzuti, who chairs the Conservancy's Art Committee, "Brooke's collaborative spirit and indelible impact have been all the more evident during this year's twentieth anniversary of the art program, as we've reflected on our growth and gathered many of the incredible artists with whom we have worked over the years."

"It has been a true pleasure to work with Brooke to increase public access to art within our own park as well as in other parks and communities throughout New York City," said Executive Director Holly Leicht. "She imparts an impactful legacy that we look forward to continuing."

Rapaport stated, "It has been the honor of a lifetime to work with magnificent artists in Madison Square Park. I am so grateful for the generosity of our communities, supporters, Board, Art Committee, and Art Council, and to my colleagues who have been outstanding partners."

Through her work at the Conservancy, Rapaport has collaborated with more than twenty leading contemporary artists to realize innovative public art commissions across a range of media, from bronze and video to ceramic, yarn, timber, and tulle. In recognition of this path-breaking work in public art, Rapaport was selected as Commissioner and Curator of the United

States Pavilion at the 58th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia, with a presentation of new work by Martin Puryear in 2019. The exhibition marked the first time that a public art organization, rather than a museum, served as the commissioning institution of the U.S. Pavilion.

In addition to the Biennale, Rapaport has amplified the Conservancy's traveling exhibition program, bringing its public art projects to art organizations around the country. She has also advanced thought leadership and exchange in the field with the establishment of the Public Art Consortium, a national network of curators across museums, public art programs and sculpture parks. Launched in 2017, the Consortium has hosted an annual symposium as part of the Conservancy's art program, convening artists, curators, and cultural leaders to discuss critical issues in public and contemporary art.

Prior to joining the Conservancy, Rapaport worked both at museums and independently as a curator. She served as a contemporary art curator of the Brooklyn Museum for more than thirteen years, where among other initiatives she collaborated with artists on the installations for the museum's Grand Lobby series, and as a guest curator of the Jewish Museum, curating the acclaimed retrospective *Louise Nevelson: Constructing a Legend*. A regular lecturer and essayist on contemporary art and public art, she sits on the boards of three artist-endowed foundations and is Vice President of the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation and the Al Held Foundation. She is a former Board member of Socrates Sculpture Park and chaired the Board of Amherst College's Mead Art Museum. She received an honorary doctorate from Amherst in 2022.

About Madison Square Park Conservancy

Madison Square Park Conservancy is the nonprofit entrusted by the City of New York to operate Madison Square Park, a 6.2-acre public space in the heart of Manhattan. Our mission is to conserve, maintain, and program this ever-evolving, historic green space, including raising 100% of the park's operating budget. Our dedicated team takes great pride in caring for and shaping an urban oasis for all to enjoy. Anchoring a diverse and vibrant live-work community, Madison Square Park is both an intimate neighborhood park and an international destination for 60,000 daily visitors. Since 2004, Madison Square Park Conservancy has commissioned and presented projects by visionary artists ranging in practice and media through its public art program.

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