



For Immediate Release



Ruth Ewan, *Silent Agitator*, 2019. Photo by Timothy Schenck.

RUTH EWAN *Silent Agitator*

Ruth Ewan's first public art installation in the United States

Through March 2020
On the High Line at 24th St.

New York, NY (April 2, 2019) — High Line Art announces *Silent Agitator*, a commissioned installation by Scottish artist Ruth Ewan. The installation, a double-sided clock, is located on the High Line at 24th Street through March 2020. Presented by the High Line, *Silent Agitator* is curated by Cecilia Alemani, Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art. The installation is Ruth Ewan's first public artwork in the United States.

For the High Line, Ewan presents a monumental-scale clock on the park at 24th Street, also visible from street level. The clock is based on an illustration originally produced for the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) labor union by the North American writer and labor activist Ralph Chaplin that reads "What time is it? Time to organize!" The illustration was one of



many images that appeared on “stickerettes,” known as “silent agitators,” millions of which were printed in red and black on gummed paper and distributed by union members traveling from job to job. The stickers were advertised through publications such as *Solidarity* and the union’s newspaper *Industrial Worker*, and through events such as national “Stickerette Day” on April 29, 1917 and May Day of the same year. The clock nods to the round-the-clock organizing work of the IWW, and the ubiquity of the clock in labor struggles: both the ways that factory owners separated private and public time and the fights for the now-diminishing labor rights we have today, such as the five-day work week and eight-hour workday. Ewan intends for her clock to provide a gathering space on the High Line, evoking the private vs. public separation of space and time we experience in capitalism, and a possible future where people gather together for their reclamation.

In her artistic practice, Ruth Ewan researches communities, organizations, and individuals from the history of activism and alternative educational models. She then presents this research in a variety of interactive and experiential formats, ranging from a jukebox of political songs, to the development of socially-engaged magic tricks, to an installation of 10 decimal clocks that reference the short-lived time system of the French Republic. In both subject matter and approach, Ewan’s projects reveal the dignity and accessible reality of these discrete but profound social movements. She reminds us that revolution is here—and always has been here. Often it appears in humble yet thriving communities and circumstances—in Sunday schools, gatherings of workers, or collections of songs. Her understated style offers opportunities for learning about beautiful moments in the history of social resistance and the potential offered by alternative ways of thinking and organizing.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Ruth Ewan (b. 1980, Aberdeen, Scotland) lives and works in Glasgow, Scotland. Ewan’s work has been presented in solo exhibitions at institutions including Camden Arts Centre, London, England (2015); Tate Britain, London, England (2014 – 2018); and Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark (2012). She has been featured in group exhibitions including *Future Design*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England (2018); *Incerteza viva*, Bienal de São Paulo, São Paulo, Brazil (2016); and *Station to Station*, Barbican Art Gallery, London, England (2015). She has created public commissions for Edinburgh Art Festival, Edinburgh, Scotland (2018); Flood House and Focal Point Gallery, Southend-on-Sea, England (2016); and Artangel, London, England (2013/2007).

ABOUT HIGH LINE ART

Founded in 2009, High Line Art commissions and produces a wide array of artwork, including site-specific commissions, exhibitions, performances, video programs, and a series of billboard interventions. Led by Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art Cecilia Alemani, and presented by the High Line, the art program invites artists to think of creative ways to engage with the unique architecture, history, and design of the park, and to foster a productive dialogue with the surrounding neighborhood and urban landscape.

For further information about High Line Art, please visit thehighline.org/art.

ABOUT THE HIGH LINE

Owned by the City of New York, the High Line works with its communities, neighborhoods, and city to reimagine public space. We raise nearly 100% of our own annual budget for



programming, maintenance, and operations, in partnership with NYC Parks.

Through excellence in operations, stewardship, innovative programming, and world-class design, we seek to engage the vibrant and diverse community on and around the High Line, to raise the essential private funding to help complete the High Line's construction, and to create an endowment for its future operations.

SUPPORT

Lead support for High Line Art comes from Amanda and Don Mullen. Major support for High Line Art is provided by Shelley Fox Aarons and Philip E. Aarons, The Brown Foundation, Inc. of Houston, and the Charina Endowment Fund. High Line Art is supported, in part, with public funds from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature, and from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the New York City Council, under the leadership of Speaker Corey Johnson.

SOCIAL MEDIA

@HighLineArtNYC #RuthEwan

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