



For Immediate Release

THE SPUR

The newest section of the High Line to open on June 5, 2019, with the debut of Simone Leigh's *Brick House* on the High Line Plinth and a new sound installation by Claudia Rankine

New York, NY (May 6, 2019) – On June 5, 2019, the High Line will open its newest section, the Spur, which includes the High Line Plinth with Simone Leigh's *Brick House*. Extending east along West 30th Street and terminating above 10th Avenue, the Spur is the last section of the original rail structure to be converted into public space. The Plinth is the first site on the High Line dedicated solely to a rotating series of new, monumental, contemporary art commissions.

To celebrate the opening of the Spur, the High Line has also commissioned, *We Are Here*, a series of text-based sound installations that span several locations of the High Line. Claudia Rankine wrote the text with Garnette Cadogan, Helga Davis, and LaTasha N. Diggs, with sound by Jeremy Toussaint-Baptiste. On the morning of June 4, 2019, an opening celebration will bring together the elected officials, artists, advocates, supporters, community members, and architects who made this project a reality.

The Spur is designed by James Corner Field Operations (Project Lead), Diller Scofidio + Renfro, and Planting Designer Piet Oudolf—the same design team behind the other sections of the High Line.

New commissions

***Brick House*, the High Line Plinth**

The Plinth is the focal point of the Spur, the largest open space on the High Line that provides sweeping city views. Artworks selected for the Plinth will thus become part of the cityscape itself, remaining on display for 18 months. The Plinth is the first space on the park designed for art to be in *concert* with the unique design of the park, whereas the rest of the art program is installed in *response* to the High Line's plantings and architecture. The Plinth offers visitors a chance to witness large-scale sculptures in the round and to experience the work from the ground, as well as on the Plinth itself.



Simone Leigh's *Brick House*, a 16-foot-tall bronze bust of a Black woman, initiates the series of rotating Plinth commissions. In this space, Leigh's tribute to Black female beauty challenges us to think more immediately about the architecture around us, and how it reflects customs, values, priorities, and society as a whole.

"I thought: 'What better place to put a Black female figure?'" says Simone Leigh, describing *Brick House* in the *New York Times*. "Not in defiance of the space, exactly, but to have a different idea of beauty there."

We Are Here

We Are Here is conceived by award-winning poet Claudia Rankine, who also co-wrote the text for *The Mile-Long Opera*, which was presented on the High Line in 2018. This new audio experience engages and recognizes the presence of people seen and unseen in the movement of time. The High Line is a place of passage—through time, through encounters. *We Are Here* celebrates what it means to be in relation to time, with all its pleasures of serendipity, and all the change, destruction, and renewal that accompanies the construction of modernity.

The etymology of the word "here" (Old English for "in the place where one puts oneself") reminds us how we inhabit time. *We Are Here* explores the meaning of urban presence, and asks: What does it mean to recognize "here" and all its related states: heretofore, hereabout, hereafter, hence?

Audiences can experience *We Are Here* in four locations on the High Line: two balconies in the Coach Passage along 30th Street, in the 23rd Street Seating Steps, and in the Sunken Overlook. The soundscape can be heard during park hours. *We Are Here* closes on July 5, 2019.

Spur features

The flow of the Spur was designed to create moments of interactions—both between people and with the surroundings. The Spur unfolds in three parts—the Coach Passage, a planted threshold, and a large open piazza. With cathedral-like 60-foot-tall ceilings, the Coach Passage crosses through Coach's global headquarters at 10 Hudson Yards. The Passage is named in recognition of the Coach Foundation's generous gift to the High Line's capital campaign. Here a series of planted balconies stretch out from under the building to provide visitors views of the sky, the surrounding buildings, and the other sections of the High Line over 30th Street.

Once through the Passage, visitors are greeted by two dramatic raised planters, the largest beds on the High Line. These provide a lush wall of greenery after coming through the Coach Passage or from the streets of Midtown below.

Finally, visitors arrive to an open piazza with panoramic views up and down 10th Avenue and



30th Street. The piazza retains the existing rail tracks that once led to the post office, reminding visitors of the history of the structure. Thanks to a series of cascading wooden seating steps on the east and west sides of the Spur, this new section provides critical space for visitors.

The Spur is the widest area on the High Line. Its open-air programming space will allow the High Line to expand the scope of its programs and number of attendees; create a permanent home for our shop; additional options for food vendors; new restrooms; and the Plinth.

Plantings

The Spur's garden design engages with the surrounding urban context with a "less is more" approach, emphasizing natural plantings reminiscent of the original self-sown landscape and the rough allure of the High Line structure and rail tracks.

With a Northeastern woodland palette as inspiration, the Spur plantings comprise 8,500 perennials, 69 trees and shrubs, and the largest planting beds on the High Line.

Hanging gardens at the balconies along the Coach Passage include grasses, perennials, and a mix of clematis and wisteria vines.

The American woodland in the raised planters at the threshold includes hackberry, sweetgum, black tupelo, strawberry bush, sassafras, and orangebark stewartia trees, with a broad-leaf, shade-tolerant understory including groundcovers, grasses, ferns, bulbs and perennials, and vines.

The flowering beds at the piazza edges include a mix of grasses and perennials punctuated by dwarf fothergilla shrubs. And yellow lady's slipper, a species of bog orchid, will attract native and wild bees, contributing to the complex ecosystem of the park.

ABOUT THE HIGH LINE

Built on a historic, elevated freight line, we reimagine public space with our communities, neighborhoods, and city, in partnership with NYC Parks. The High Line is a park where visitors can view art, walk through gardens, experience a performance, or connect with friends and neighbors—all while enjoying a unique perspective of New York City. We raise nearly 100% of the annual budget for our programming, maintenance, and operations.

For more information, visit thehighline.org and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#).

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