

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Thomas Houseago. *Untitled (Sprawling Octopus Man)*, 2009
Bronze. 101 x 84 x 60 inches. Courtesy the artist and Michael Werner
Gallery, New York. Photo by James Ewing

Public Art Fund
presents
Statuesque

City Hall Park
New York City
June 2 – December 3, 2010

An exhibition celebrating the reinvigoration of
figurative sculpture through the work of six
international artists

MARCH 29, 2010 – NEW YORK: Beginning Wednesday, June 2, 2010, Public Art Fund brings together a dynamic group of six international artists as they reinvent figurative sculpture for a new era. *Statuesque* features 10 major works of art by **Pawel Althamer, Huma Bhabha, Aaron Curry, Thomas Houseago, Matthew Monahan, and Rebecca Warren**. This is the first time these artists have been shown together, revealing a striking interest in the figure that transcends national boundaries. As the first project curated by Public Art Fund's new **Director and Chief Curator Nicholas Baume**, *Statuesque* also marks the New York debut of each work included. In conceiving *Statuesque*, Baume makes a persuasive argument for the renewed significance of the figure in contemporary sculpture.

"Long considered marginal in the contemporary art world, figurative sculpture has returned to center stage in the recent works of an international group of artists born in the 1960s and 1970s" said Baume. He continued, "Brought together in the historic setting of Lower Manhattan's City Hall Park and seen as a group for the first time, it is clear that despite their highly developed individual styles, these artists share striking affinities. By turns visually playful, formally experimental, and viscerally charged, their works reinvent and extend the language of figurative sculpture for the twenty-first century."

Statuesque celebrates the return of figurative sculpture, but not in the classical sense. Neither literal portraits nor traditional monuments, these works push the expressive potential of sculptural forms and materials. While the approaches and backgrounds of the artists are very different, their work shares a number of key characteristics. They tend towards abstraction over realism, assemblage over the readymade, construction of form over casting from life, and physicality and texture over refinement of finish. Conceptually sophisticated, historically informed, and expressively direct, *Statuesque* finds in the human figure a sculptural tradition ripe for experimentation.

“Public Art Fund has assembled an impressive group of young artists who are taking a fresh look at sculpture.” said **Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg**. “This exhibit adds to the great tradition we are building of engaging the public in works of art all over the City, including here at City Hall.”

Public Art Fund has organized exhibitions at City Hall Park for more than 30 years, but *Statuesque* demonstrates a new curatorial approach. Emphasizing public access and interaction, the installation features several works installed along the park’s pathways and on lawns that will be opened for visitors to experience works more directly. In another first, Public Art Fund has extended the exhibition’s reach through its spring *Talks* series, which shares the theme of contemporary figurative sculpture, with presentations by *Statuesque* artists Matthew Monahan (March 17), Huma Bhabha (April 14), and Thomas Houseago (May 12) at The New School’s Tishman Auditorium.

VISITING THE EXHIBITION

City Hall Park is located in Lower Manhattan, and is bordered by Broadway, Chambers Street, Centre Street, and Park Row.

Subways: A, C, E to Chambers Street; 4, 5, 6, J, M, Z to Brooklyn Bridge-City Hall; N, R to City Hall; 2, 3 to Park Place

City Hall visitor information is available by calling 311.

Once the exhibition opens, a free *Guide By Cell* audio tour will be available by calling 646.862.0945; a free iPhone app will also be available for download at www.publicartfund.org.

Statuesque is free and open to the public.

SPONSORSHIP

Major support for *Statuesque* is provided by Amalia Dayan and Adam Lindemann.

This installation is made possible through the cooperation of Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg; First Deputy Mayor Patricia E. Harris; Parks and Recreation Commissioner Adrian Benepe; and Cultural Affairs Commissioner Kate D. Levin.

Public Art Fund is a non-profit art organization supported by generous contributions from individuals, foundations, and corporations, and with funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs; New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency; and the National Endowment for the Arts.

ABOUT PUBLIC ART FUND

Public Art Fund is New York’s leading presenter of artists’ projects, new commissions, installations, and exhibitions in public spaces. Since 1977, the Public Art Fund has worked with over 500 emerging and established artists to produce innovative temporary exhibitions of contemporary art throughout New York City. By bringing artworks outside the traditional context of museums and galleries, the Public Art Fund provides a unique platform for an unparalleled encounter with the art of our time.

ABOUT NICHOLAS BAUME

Nicholas Baume was appointed Public Art Fund's sixth Director and Chief Curator in September 2009. Baume came to the Public Art Fund from the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, which he joined as Chief Curator in 2003. A native of Sydney, Australia, Baume has also held positions at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Sydney; and the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, Connecticut. His past exhibitions include *About Face: Andy Warhol Portraits*; *Sol LeWitt: Incomplete Open Cubes*; the Wadsworth Atheneum's *Matrix* series, which included first U.S. solo museum shows by Francis Alÿs, Sam Durant, Thomas Eggerer, Christian Jankowski, Catherine Sullivan, and Fiona Tan. For the ICA, Baume curated exhibitions by Kai Althoff, Kader Attia, Carol Bove, Gerard Byrne, Tara Donovan (with Jen Mergel), Thomas Hirschhorn (with Ralph Rugoff), Anish Kapoor, Lucy McKenzie, and Rodney McMillian, and the group exhibitions *Getting Emotional* and *Super Vision*, which launched the ICA's award-winning new building by Diller Scofidio + Renfro in December 2006.

For more information about Public Art Fund, please visit www.publicartfund.org.