

**PARK AVENUE
ARMORY**



**Nick Cave Convenes Immersive Dance Celebration
with Debut of Site-Specific Commission at Park Avenue Armory**

***The Let Go* Marks Premiere of New “Up Right” Performance
Presented in Dialogue with the Armory’s Historic Building**

New York, NY – February 12, 2018 – Animating Park Avenue Armory with the sights, sounds, and movement of renowned interdisciplinary artist Nick Cave, *The Let Go* will transform the Armory’s Wade Thompson Drill Hall into a dance-based town hall that brings together visitors to participate in a collective act of catharsis. The Armory’s 2018 visual arts commission builds on Cave’s hybrid, multisensory practice with an ambitious project—encompassing performance, installation, dance-based encounters, and soundtracks by New York’s leading DJs—that provides a backdrop for audiences to dispel negativity and uplift one another. On view June 7 through July 1, 2018, *The Let Go* will feature a series of soundsuits: wearable sculptures that create a second skin to conceal race, gender, and class, that will come to life in a new “Up Right” performance conceived for the Armory’s historic interiors.

“In today’s tumultuous world, Nick’s artistic vision and desire to build understanding through dance are more vital than ever,” said **Rebecca Robertson**, Founding President and Executive Producer of Park Avenue Armory. “By harnessing and cultivating the power of community, this commission serves as a spirited reminder of our shared humanity. We look forward to reconnecting audiences from across all five boroughs with the world of Nick Cave in his first major project to be mounted in the city since *HEARD•NY*.”

The Armory’s Drill Hall will take on a dance-hall atmosphere by immersing visitors within Cave’s newest installation, a monumental, 40-foot-tall, kinetic, multi-colored Mylar sculpture that expresses the sense of freedom and self-expression one gets when they “let go” on the dance floor. Through a series of daytime happenings, visitors and community organizations such as yoga practitioners, hula-hoopers, church choirs, and PTA groups will be invited to come together to express themselves through movement and work out frustrations to music curated by New York’s leading DJs. Participants will be engaged by dancers leading games of Twister, Soul Train lines, and other dance-based encounters as an ever-gliding curtain sweeps across the dance floor. Cave will also curate a group of artistic responses inspired by and performed within the installation. In the head house, a series of soundsuits—including a never-before-seen work—will be installed in the Armory’s historic period rooms. Composed of vintage objects including sequined garments and holiday decorations as well as synthetic hair, raffia, and hand-strung beads, the wearable sculptures evoke a multiplicity of meanings ranging from the spiritual to the carnivalesque.

On weekday evenings, Cave will orchestrate a cast of dancers in his signature Up Right performances that will activate the soundsuits. “Practitioners” will commence the ceremonies by dressing “initiates,” a ritual act of disassembling and resculpting the soundsuits on the body, piece by piece. This physical transformation represents a cleansing of mind, body, and spirit that empowers the initiate to assert their selfhood and forge their own path. In a grand procession from the head house into the Drill Hall, the initiates will come together to perform new site-situated choreography by Nick Cave that celebrates independence and self-determination.

“Throughout his career, Nick has challenged traditional conceptions of visual art to create new forms of expression that pervade the hearts and minds of audiences,” said **Pierre Audi**, Artistic Director of Park Avenue Armory. “As an

institution that embraces interdisciplinary concepts that defy expectations, it is fitting that we welcome Nick to our roster of artists who have drawn upon the unique setting of the Armory to develop new narratives in their work.”

“*The Let Go* is a testament to Nick’s unwavering commitment to uplifting communities and affecting change through art. His participatory performances have become some of the most beloved experiences to be found in the contemporary art landscape today,” said **Tom Eccles**, curator of *The Let Go*. “It is exciting to bring his energy and aesthetic to the Armory, creating a project that will include all New Yorkers in its realization.”

INSTALLATION DATES AND PERFORMANCE SCHEDULE

The Let Go is on view at Park Avenue Armory June 7 through July 1, 2018. Up Right performances will take place every Wednesday through Friday evening. On the weekends, the installation will be transformed into a dance-based town hall during the day time.

The Let Go

A New Commission by Park Avenue Armory

June 7 - July 1, 2018

Installation Hours:

Wednesday - Thursday: 6 - 10 pm

Friday: 6 - 11pm

Saturday: 11am - 11pm

Sunday: 11am - 6pm

Weeknight installation hours include a special Up Right performance at 8:00pm

Tickets: \$35

Weekend installation hours include activities and performances by various community groups.

Tickets: \$15; free for Armory members

Tickets may be purchased at armoryonpark.org or by calling (212) 933-5812. Tickets may be purchased now as part of an Armory season subscription.

Thompson Arts Center at Park Avenue Armory
643 Park Avenue at 67th Street, New York, NY

ARTIST TALK

Thursday, June 7 at 6:00pm

Tickets: \$15

Artist Nick Cave will discuss the inspiration, ideas, and creative process behind *The Let Go* with a range of artistic collaborators and responders.

ABOUT NICK CAVE

Nick Cave is an artist and educator working between the visual and performing arts through a wide range of mediums inclusive of sculpture, installation, video, sound, and performance. His solo exhibitions have toured globally from the United States through France, Africa, Denmark, Asia, South America, and the Caribbean. Cave also works as a professor at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago and received his MFA from Cranbrook Academy of Art and his BFA from the Kansas City Art Institute.

Two exhibitions related to *The Let Go* will be presented at Jack Shainman Gallery: *Weather or Not* in May 2018 and *If a Tree Falls* in November 2018. Recent exhibition and projects include *Nick Cave* (Telfair Museums, 2017); *Spotted by Nick Cave*, (artspace 2016); *Nick Cave: Here Hear* (Cranbrook Art Museum, 2015); *Currents 109*.

Nick Cave (Saint Louis Art Museum, 2014); *Nick Cave: Sojourn* (Denver Art Museum, 2013), and *HEARD•NY* in New York's Grand Central Terminal (2013).

EXHIBITION CREDITS

The Let Go is produced by the artist, Bob Faust, and Park Avenue Armory and curated by Tom Eccles.

ARMORY 2018 SEASON SPONSORSHIP

Citi and Bloomberg Philanthropies are the Armory's 2018 season sponsors.

Support for Park Avenue Armory's artistic programming has been generously provided by the Charina Endowment Fund the Altman Foundation, The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust, the Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, The Emma and Georgina Bloomberg Foundation, the Marc Haas Foundation, The Kaplen Brothers Fund, the Juliet Lea Hillman Simonds Foundation, the Leon Levy Foundation, the May and Samuel Rudin Family Foundation, and the Isak and Rose Weinman Foundation.

ABOUT PARK AVENUE ARMORY

Part palace, part industrial shed, Park Avenue Armory fills a critical void in the cultural ecology of New York by enabling artists to create, students to explore, and audiences to experience, unconventional work that cannot be mounted in traditional performance halls and museums. With its soaring 55,000-square-foot Wade Thompson Drill Hall—reminiscent of 19th-century European train stations—and an array of exuberant period rooms, the Armory offers a platform for creativity across all art forms. Together, these and other spaces within the historic building utilized for arts programming comprise the Thompson Arts Center at Park Avenue Armory, named in recognition of the Thompson family's ongoing support of the institution.

Since its first production in September 2007, the Armory has organized and commissioned immersive performances, installations, and cross-disciplinary collaborations in its vast Drill Hall that defy traditional categorization and challenge artists to push the boundaries of their practice. In its historic period rooms, the Armory presents small-scale performances and programs, including its acclaimed Recital Series, which showcases musical talent from across the globe within the intimate salon setting of the Board of Officers Room; and the new Artists Studio series in the newly restored Veterans Room, which features innovative artists and artistic pairings curated by Jason Moran that harken back to the imaginative improvisation of the original group of designers who conceived the space. The Armory also offers robust arts education programs at no cost to underserved New York City public school students, engaging them with the institution's artistic programming and the building's history and architecture.

Programmatic highlights from the Armory's first 10 years include Bernd Alois Zimmermann's harrowing *Die Soldaten*, in which the audience moved "through the music"; *the event of a thread*, a site-specific installation by Ann Hamilton; the final performances of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company across three separate stages; *WS* by Paul McCarthy, a monumental installation of fantasy, excess, and dystopia; an immersive *Macbeth* set in a Scottish heath and henge by Rob Ashford and Kenneth Branagh; a profound and radically inclusive staging of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* staged by Peter Sellars and performed by Sir Simon Rattle and the Berliner Philharmoniker; Louis Andriessen's *De Materie* in a highly imaginative staging by director Heiner Goebbels that included floating zeppelins and a flock of 100 sheep; *Circle Map*, two evenings of immersive spatial works by internationally acclaimed composer Kaija Saariaho performed by the New York Philharmonic with *mise-en-espace* by Armory Artistic Director Pierre Audi; and Taryn Simon's *An Occupation of Loss*, a monumental work with 30 professional mourners from around the world that blended sculpture, sound, architecture, and performance in an exploration of the boundaries of grief between living and dead, past and present, performer and viewer; Julian Rosefeldt's *Manifesto*, a multi-channel cinematic installation featuring Cate Blanchett; eight-time Drama Desk-nominated play *The Hairy Ape*, directed by Richard Jones and starring Bobby Cannavale; *Hansel & Gretel*, a new commission by Jacques Herzog, Pierre de Meuron, and Ai Weiwei that transformed and activated the Drill Hall to explore the meaning of publicly shared space in the era of surveillance; and Pierre Boulez's masterwork *Répons*, performed

twice each evening by Ensemble intercontemporain and IRCAM under the baton of Matthias Pintscher with the audience changing seats in between to get a new sonic perspective.

Concurrent with its artistic program, the Armory has undertaken an ongoing \$215-million revitalization of its historic building, designed by architects Herzog & de Meuron. www.armoryonpark.org.

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