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PRESS RELEASE

New York City AIDS Memorial Announces Fall Arts & Cultural Programming

Free, public programs include events, multimedia commissions, and presentations by the Recollectors, Avram Finkelstein, Jim Hubbard, Arthur Russell, and more.

New York, NY – Wednesday, August 16 – The New York City AIDS Memorial presents a second season of free, public arts and cultural programming throughout September and October 2023, organized alongside artist, musician, and curator Nick Hallett.

This upcoming season’s programming examines how HIV/AIDS has shaped—and continues to shape—our current world, highlighting both contemporary and historical voices with a slate of artworks, performances, concerts, and film presentations. Including re-presentations of music by renowned avant-garde composer Arthur Russell; a commissioned film by experimental filmmaker Jim Hubbard examining death and memory; a new, site-specific by installation artist, activist, and founding member of Gran Fury and the Silence=Death collective, Avram Finkelstein, and a storytelling event by the Recollectors and The Generations Project, these events are led by artists and collectives whose lives and practices are rooted in response to the epidemic. The programs provide opportunities to mourn and remember, while simultaneously making space for community healing and joy. The Memorial’s fall schedule is grounded in its mission to serve as a platform for dialogue, advocacy, and remembrance.

“It is an honor to continue the cultural offerings at the New York City AIDS Memorial after an exciting and thought-provoking spring season, which included showcases of work by John Bernd with Ishmael Houston-Jones and Miguel Gutierrez, Peter Cramer and Jack Waters, Pamela Sneed, the Legends of Drag, and Jim Hodges,” says Dave Harper, Executive Director of the New York City AIDS Memorial. “We are grateful to this second cohort of contributing artists, musicians, and collectives, and we are once again excited to welcome new audiences to the Memorial this autumn. Our aim is not only to remember, but also to renew this living and breathing site with creative energy, and to reflect on the stories of our past to inspire our future.”

All events will take place at the New York City AIDS Memorial at St. Vincent’s Triangle, located at Greenwich Avenue and West 12th Street in New York City’s West Village. For additional information on programs and directions to the Memorial, please visit nycaidsmemorial.org/fall23.

Arthur Russell: *City Park*

With David Van Tieghem, Peter Zummo, Nat Baldwin, Lea Bertucci, Nick Hallett, Shawn O'Sullivan, and Alex Waterman

Saturday, September 30, 4 PM, Free

In this free, public, outdoor concert, maverick American composer, cellist, producer, and singer Arthur Russell's (1951–1992) controversial early concert work, *City Park*, will be performed live for the first time since 1973. Integrating chamber music, electronics, concrete poetry, turntablism, and modern rock, this new, site-specific version, created for the New York City AIDS Memorial, is directed by Nick Hallett. The performance features percussionist David Van Tieghem, who participated in the piece's premiere, and Peter Zummo, another primary Russell collaborator, in collaboration with a later generation of musicians invested in Russell's legacy, including Nat Baldwin, Lea Bertucci, Shawn O'Sullivan, and Alex Waterman. (Ensemble subject to change.)

Following his 1992 death from AIDS-related illness at age 40, the music of Arthur Russell has found new listeners and critical discourse. However, his radical 1973 concert work, *City Park*, has gone unheard for half a century. This new edition of the *City Park* score, arranged by Nick Hallett from archival materials, reconsiders the work as ahead of its time. The concert is presented in partnership with the Arthur Russell estate and the Music Department at Wesleyan University and as a part of the West Side Cultural Network's first annual West Side Fest.

Jim Hubbard: *Nostalgia*

With music by Chris Cochrane and Kevin Bud Jones, with Jim Pugliese

Saturday, October 7, 7:30 PM, Free

Nostalgia is a new collaboration between filmmaker Jim Hubbard (*United in Anger: A History of ACT UP*) and composers Chris Cochrane and Kevin Bud Jones. Hubbard has been commissioned by the NYC AIDS Memorial to create a new experimental film about death and memory, utilizing new and archival footage. Images of dead friends appear ghost-like in a window, overlooking the industrial and partially gentrified Bronx. Shots of Hubbard's deceased lover, Roger Jacoby, are intercut with footage filmed by Hubbard around the world, placing Jacoby's body in locations he was never able to visit during his lifetime. The film abstracts images of safe sex to explore its joys, frustrations, and strangeness. Hubbard's recollections of friends who have died restore an emotional connection to the devastation of the AIDS crisis, reminding the viewer that life persists despite loss and change. The music will be performed live by Chris Cochrane and Kevin Bud Jones, with Jim Pugliese.

Avram Finkelstein: *Dedications*

On view October 14–December 4, 2023

Artist's reception Saturday, October 14, 4 PM, featuring poet Irena Klepfisz, Free

Over the past four decades, Avram Finkelstein has been devoted to articulating political and social justice concerns, with a particular focus on the ongoing HIV/AIDS epidemic. Finkelstein is widely recognized for his early agitprop postering with the Silence=Death Collective and Gran Fury, of which he was a founding member. His more recent endeavors in drawing and sculpture examine the distinctions between the parallel acts of memory and witnessing.

In this newly commissioned installation, Finkelstein has designed six translucent panels to form a conceptual “sky” of memory that floats above the “earth” of the New York City AIDS Memorial’s granite pavers and the reflective waters of the fountain below. These panels layer loosely rendered, hand-drawn clouds—Finkelstein’s stylistic approach to documenting his reacquaintance with his own “disobedient body” after a stroke several years ago—and text taken from the 1982 poem “Bashert,” by Irena Klepfisz. The lines read, “These words are dedicated to those who died,” and “These words are dedicated to those who survived.” Seen through one another, these panels constitute a dialogue with the Memorial as a site, its emotional intentionality, and its usage of shadow and light. *Dedications* is presented in partnership with NYC Parks’ Art in the Parks program.

The Recollectors Storytelling

Presented with The Generations Project

Saturday, October 21, 4 PM, Free

On October 21, we will welcome the Recollectors, a digital community and storytelling forum dedicated to remembering parents lost to AIDS and supporting the children they left behind, to hold a live, on-site storytelling program. The event is organized in partnership with Caroline Falby and The Generations Project.

Since 2021, The Generations Project and the New York City AIDS Memorial have been collaborating to present exhibitions and storytelling programs with a focus on caretaking, surviving, and thriving through the AIDS epidemic. Past programs include the series *REVIVAL* (June–October 2021), which highlighted the experiences of long-term survivors, and *Meet Me On The Dance Floor* (June 2022).

Support

The New York City AIDS Memorial’s 2023 programs are made possible, in part, by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.



About the New York City AIDS Memorial

Founded as a grass-roots advocacy effort in early 2011, the New York City AIDS Memorial organization is now a 501(c)(3) corporation with an 18-person board.

The mission of the New York City AIDS Memorial is to honor the more than 100,000 New Yorkers who have died of AIDS and to acknowledge the contributions of caregivers and activists who mobilized to provide care for the ill, fight discrimination, lobby for medical research, and alter the drug approval process, ultimately changing the trajectory of the disease. The Memorial, dedicated on World AIDS Day, December 1, 2016, aims to inspire visitors to remember and reflect, and to empower current and future activists, health professionals, and people living with HIV in the continuing mission to end AIDS.

Today, the organization maintains the New York City AIDS Memorial as a highly visible and architecturally significant landmark and a community space for reflection and the recognition of men, women, and children lost to, as well as long-term survivors of, HIV/AIDS; bears witness to the lessons of the epidemic through engagement and accessible, public community-centered educational, arts, and cultural programming at the

Memorial site; and virtually extends the reach of the Memorial through digital content and interactivity. Previous programs have included Jenny Holzer's performative intervention *#LightTheFight* (2018); the exhibition *Visual Impact: On Art, AIDS, and Activism* (2019); the site-specific soundscape installation *Hear Me: Voices of the Epidemic* (2020); Steven Evans' commissioned installation *Songs for a Memorial* (2022); and Jim Hodges' sculpture *Craig's closet* (2023).

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