



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Francisca Benitez, *Son en Señas*, 2015. Performance view. La Habana Bienal. Photo by Mariella Sola. Courtesy the artist.

HIGH LINE ART PRESENTS

FRANCISCA BENITEZ *AS YOU LEAN ON ME AND I LEAN ON YOU, WE MOVE FORWARD*

A HIGH LINE PERFORMANCE

**TUESDAY, JULY 14, 2015 | 7:00 PM
ON THE HIGH LINE STARTING AT WEST 14TH STREET**

**WEDNESDAY, JULY 15, 2015 | 7:00 PM
ON THE HIGH LINE STARTING AT WEST 22ND STREET**

**FRIDAY, JULY 17, 2015 | 7:00 PM
ON THE HIGH LINE STARTING AT WEST 34TH STREET**

FREE ADMISSION | OPEN TO ALL AGES | NO RSVP REQUIRED

New York, NY (June 11, 2015) – Presented by Friends of the High Line, High Line Art is pleased to announce that artist Francisca Benitez will stage *As you lean on me and I lean on you, we move forward* (2015), a new work commissioned by High Line Art that merges sign language and contact improvisation. The performance will take place Tuesday, July 14 at 7:00 PM on the High Line starting at West 14th Street; Wednesday, July 15 at 7:00 PM on the High Line starting at West 22nd Street; and Friday, July 17 at 7:00 PM on the High Line starting at West 34th Street. *As you lean on me and I lean on you, we move forward* is part of High Line Performances, a series that





transforms the High Line into an open-air theater with performances on and around the park.

Francisca Benitez probes the visible and invisible boundaries that populate our urban space. In projects ranging from graphite rubbings of property line plaques found on the sidewalks of New York to photographs of over 1,000 Sukkahs – temporary huts constructed for the celebration of Sukkot – in Brooklyn, to the creation of a temporary sign language school, she explores the fluctuating delineations between public and private spaces. In each of her projects, Benitez identifies overlooked places whose uncertain borders she begins to tease apart, often through unconventional occupation and documentation. Using her own presence to push against and through these boundaries, Benitez reveals the frictions and meanings created by walls, be they social or architectural, linguistic or cultural.

For her High Line Performance, Benitez will engage park visitors in a series of three interrelated vignettes that weave through the park along paths choreographed in signs. The three chapters of her performance will unfold at three distinct locations in the park, reacting to each site individually. An extension of her previous work with both formal and informal sign languages, Benitez’s performance will bring together a new group of collaborators in a melding of sign languages and contact improvisation, including performers with a background in ASL jamming and deaf poetry circles.

“Francisca Benitez’s work will invite us all to broaden our understanding of the ways we use language and our bodies as tools of communication,” says Cecilia Alemani, the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art. “Especially on the High Line, a public place where you can hear many languages every day, it is important to upend our day to day understanding of gestures of communication.”

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Francisca Benitez (b. 1974, Chile) lives and works in New York. Recent solo exhibitions include Cuchifritos Gallery + Project Space, New York (2014); Museo de Artes Visuales, Santiago, Chile (2013); Die Ecke, Santiago, Chile (2011); and Nada.Lokal, Vienna, Austria (2009). Notable group exhibitions include *Mapping Brooklyn*, Brooklyn Historical Society and BRIC House, Brooklyn (2015); *Efemérides*, Museo Histórico Nacional, Santiago, Chile (2014); *Pier 54*, High Line Art, New York (2014); *One Minute Film Festival 2003 – 2012*, MASS MoCA, North Adams, Massachusetts (2013); *The Street Files*, El Museo del Barrio, New York (2011); and *Contaminaciones Contemporáneas*, Museu de Arte Contemporânea da USP, Sao Paulo, Brazil (2010). Her work has been featured in major international exhibitions including the Bienal de la Habana, Cuba (2015); Lisbon Architecture Triennale, Portugal (2013) the Beijing Biennale, China (2009); and the LA Frewaves 10th biennial of film, video and new media, Los Angeles (2006).

ABOUT HIGH LINE ART

Presented by Friends of the High Line, High Line Art commissions and produces public art projects on and around the High Line. Founded in 2009, High Line Art presents a wide array of artwork including site-specific commissions, exhibitions, performances, video programs, and a series of billboard interventions. Curated by Cecilia Alemani, the Donald R. Mullen, Jr. Director & Chief Curator of High Line Art, and produced by Friends of the High Line, High Line Art invites artists to think of creative ways to engage with the uniqueness of the architecture, history, and design of the High Line and to foster a productive dialogue with the surrounding neighborhood and urban landscape.

Major support for High Line Art comes from Donald R. Mullen, Jr. and The Brown Foundation, Inc. of Houston. High Line Art is supported, in part, with public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the New York City Council and from the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

ABOUT THE HIGH LINE AND FRIENDS OF THE HIGH LINE

The High Line is an elevated freight rail line transformed into a public park on Manhattan’s West Side. It is owned by the City of New York, and maintained and operated by Friends of the High Line. Founded in 1999 by community residents, Friends of the High Line fought for the High Line’s preservation and transformation at a time when the historic structure was under the threat of demolition. It is now the non-profit conservancy working with the New York City Department of Parks & Recreation to make sure the High Line is maintained as an extraordinary public space for all visitors to enjoy. In addition to overseeing maintenance, operations, and public programming for the park, Friends of the High Line works to raise the essential private funds to support more than 98 percent of the park’s annual operating budget, and to advocate for the transformation of the High Line at the Rail Yards, the third and final section of the historic structure, which runs between West 30th and West 34th Streets.





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

MEDIA CONTACT

Ashley Tickle | High Line Art Communications Manager | Friends of the High Line
(212) 206-9922 x2101 | ashley.tickle@thehighline.org

