



## ANN HAMILTON COMMISSIONED TO CREATE MAJOR MULTIMEDIA INSTALLATION FOR PARK AVENUE ARMORY'S SOARING DRILL HALL DECEMBER 2012

### Hamilton's First Large-Scale Installation in New York City in Over a Decade Incorporates Time-Based Performance into Immersive Multi-Sensory Environment

New York, NY - June 27, 2012 - Park Avenue Armory has commissioned artist Ann Hamilton to create a new installation, her first large-scale project in New York City in more than ten years. On view from December 7, 2012, through January 6, 2013, *the event of a thread* weaves together Hamilton's exploration of time-based performance, the act of public speaking, and the poetic accumulation of material for which she is best known. Responding to the architecture and social history of the Armory, the participatory installation will feature a field of swings, suspended like pendulums from the drill hall trusses, and incorporate readings, sound, and other live elements that will animate the 55,000-square-foot Wade Thompson Drill Hall.

*the event of a thread* draws inspiration from the act of reading aloud and its relation to the varied experiences of speaking, listening, and recording. Over the duration of the exhibition, a succession of attendant readers, two at a time, will read aloud while seated at a table near the drill hall's entrance. Their live voices will become a constant presence broadcast throughout the installation on a radio bandwidth designed to occupy a single city block, the physical footprint of Park Avenue Armory. Visitors will be provided with radio receivers, enabling them to "carry" the voices as they traverse the installation. On the opposite end of the expansive drill hall, an attendant writer—a quiet presence and visual counterpoint to the readers—will inscribe a response to the radio transmissions, the reading voices, and the room behind them as seen in a mirror reflection.

At the center of the installation, a field of over 40 swings suspended from the hall's elliptical wrought iron structural trusses will connect via ropes and pulleys to a massive cloth that bisects the space and will be animated by the movement of the swings. The shifting constellations of people gathered and invited to use the swings will create a complex kinetic system and an experience of communal connectivity.

"Ann Hamilton's installation will tie together the Armory's architectural presence and its social history to create a visceral and resonant experience for our visitors," stated Rebecca Robertson, President and Executive Producer of Park Avenue Armory. "As the swings are connected to the drill hall's structural trusses, *the event of a thread* will connect visitors to the building's architecture within an environment of moving references that respond to the rich history and range of epic events that have taken place in the hall."

"Hamilton's installation will draw together human actions—including speaking, singing, reading and writing—with the poetic potential of physical forces, such as velocity, time, and sound," stated Kristy Edmunds, Consulting Artistic Director at the Armory. "Weaving together these threads of activity and spatial exploration, Hamilton's work will envelop the visitor with a demonstration of collective identity and interconnectedness."

#### **About Ann Hamilton**

Ann Hamilton is a visual artist internationally recognized for her large scale, multi-media installations. Responsive to the sites where they are made, her installations—which often include texts spoken and written, and participants who are suspended or in motion—immerse viewers in a poetic that is both visceral and literary.

Born in Lima, Ohio, in 1956, Hamilton received a BFA in textile design from the University of Kansas in 1979 and an MFA in Sculpture from the Yale University School of Art in 1985. Hamilton has received a MacArthur Fellowship,

Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship, NEA Visual Arts Fellowship, United States Artists Fellowship, the Heinz Award, and was chosen to represent the United States at the 1991 Sao Paulo Bienal and the 1999 Venice Biennale. In 1992, she established her home and practice in Columbus, Ohio. She is currently a Distinguished University Professor of Art at The Ohio State University.

### **Exhibition Organization and Sponsors**

Citi is Park Avenue Armory's official sponsor for the 2012 season. *the event of a thread* is sponsored, in part, by Lincolnshire Management, and public funds are provided by the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

Support for Park Avenue Armory's artistic season has been generously provided by The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Rockefeller Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, The Peter Jay Sharp Foundation, the Shubert Foundation, the Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, and the Marc Haas Foundation. Park Avenue Armory is supported, in part, by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

### **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, and the public to experience, unconventional work that could not otherwise 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 array of exuberant period rooms, the Armory invites artists to draw upon its grand scale and distinctive character to both inspire and inform their work.

Since its first production in September 2007—Aaron Young's *Greeting Card*, a 9,216-square-foot "action" painting created by the burned-out tire marks of ten choreographed motorcycles presented with Art Production Fund—the Armory has organized a series of immersive performances, installations, and works of art that have drawn critical and popular attention. 2011 marked the Armory's first full season of artistic programming, and upcoming programs in 2012 include an immersive sonic installation by Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller and the *Under Construction* performance series featuring works in development by a diverse roster of critically acclaimed artists including Meredith Monk, Bora Yoon, and Lauren Flanigan.

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