

# GORILLA PROMOTES PEACE BETWEEN HUMANS IN DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD PLAZA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza will soon have a new resident—a bronze life-size gorilla. The sculpture is one of the most recent installations under the auspices of NYC Parks’ Art in the Parks program. Funding was made possible for the project in part by the Puffin Foundation.

Brooklyn-based artist Noa Bornstein created the original piece ten years ago out of sisal fiber and burlap in structolite and plaster over an armature of wire mesh and plumbing sections. It was cast this year at Bedi-Makky Art Foundry in Greenpoint, Brooklyn.

The installation this fall may be a timely one for its message of human peace and unity. *Peace Gorilla* will be on view from November 2020 through August 2021. **Install date: Sat. Nov 21; Raincheck: Sunday, November 22.**

The sculpture is mounted on a low concrete base inscribed with the word for ‘friend’ in 90 languages—beginning with the six official languages of the UN—all learned or verified with speakers of the languages over the last year.

“The gorilla extended her arm to me as I was making her,” Bornstein relates. I was able to interpret the gesture: ‘Shalom, Salaam, Tomodachi—Hello, Peace, Friend,’ --in Hebrew, Arabic, and Japanese” – languages Bornstein has been studying at ABC Languages in Manhattan. These words also appear on the gorilla’s base.

*Peace Gorilla* has been granted a fitting location. The plaza is located across from the United Nations Building at 47<sup>th</sup> street at 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue. It is named for the Second Secretary General of the UN who set the standard for mediation between countries in conflict. Dag Hammarskjöld died in a plane crash in un-clarified circumstances on the way to peace negotiations in Congo in 1961. The Friends of Dag Hammarskjöld Plaza oversee the care of the park and gave their approval for the gorilla’s tenure.

Bornstein’s previous public projects include the small bronze, *Live Well!* whose first installation was in TriBeCa Park with NYC Parks in 2000 and then traveled over 7 years to parks in several other states. Bornstein, a painter as well as sculptor describes her work as centering on human beings, “with the hope or belief in the human potential for intelligence and compassion—and the tension between these and other human propensities.” Her more recent public sculptures are of other fellow creatures who look for a connection with us, *Praying Mantis Seeks Friends* and *Pig Seeks Friends*— both temporary installations through NYC Parks and City Parks Foundation in 2017 and 2018.

Other public works include her noted large-scale murals, *Magritte in Los Angeles*, and *Striving Together, Mural at the Harlem Rehabilitation Center*. She has shown at the Walter Randel Gallery in Manhattan, at the Rotunda Gallery, Holland Tunnel, and P339 in Brooklyn. Her sculpture has representation with Sculpturesite Gallery. Her work has shown in *Hyperallergic* and featured in *Artnews*, *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *Le Soir*, in Brussels.

For over 50 years, NYC Parks’ Art in the Parks program has brought contemporary public artworks to the city’s parks, making New York City one of the world’s largest open-air galleries. The agency has consistently fostered the creation and installation of temporary public art in parks throughout the five boroughs. Since 1967, NYC Parks has collaborated with arts organizations and artists  
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to produce over 2,000 public artworks by 1,300 notable and emerging artists in over 200 parks.  
For more information about the program visit [www.nyc.gov/parks/art](http://www.nyc.gov/parks/art).

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Photos: *Peace Gorilla* on digital rendering of the concrete base with 'friend' in 90 languages;

Photo, NB

*Peace Gorilla* at Bedi-Makky Art Foundry, Greenpoint, Brooklyn, "on way"

to Dag Hammarskjold Plaza, Photo, NB