

artnet®



Zachary Landsberg's Face of Liberty (2012), part of Governor's Island Figment Interactive Sculpture Garden. Photo: Sarah Cascone.

## Governor's Island Expands Its Proud Public Art Tradition for 2014

-Sarah Cascone

Every summer since 2010, picturesque Governor's Island—the one-time Army and Coast Guard base and former home to military prisons—has become a weekend playground for New Yorkers. Each year, new cultural events, historical exhibits, and art installations (like FIGMENT) spring up, offering extra incentive to hop on the ferry for a visit. On May 24, the city will unveil a new 30-acre park on the island's southern end, which will host an ambitious public art program.

As if the spectacular views of the Statue of Liberty and Lower Manhattan weren't enough to take in, visitors will also be treated to site-specific installations by Susan Philipsz, Mark Handforth, and, in 2015, Rachel Whiteread. The new park will also feature ball fields, the highly anticipated Hammock Grove, a planted garden area and playgrounds with water features.

The art initiative is organized by Tom Eccles, the executive director of Bard College's Center for Curatorial Studies, in Annandale-on-Hudson, New York. Philipsz's contribution is a sound installation, *Day Is Done*, that will sound every evening at 6 p.m. The haunting melody, which Eccles described to the *New York Times* as "like the ghost of the former military base," is based on "Taps," the familiar and mournful bugle call.

**Handforth's exhibition, a group of four tall, surreal sculptures titled "Sidewalk Island," will include Yankee Hanger, a monumental wire hanger near the Yankee Pier, and a dramatic 30-foot-tall bronze tree with a blue phone nestled in its sawed-off branches, simply titled Painted Phone. While Philipsz's musical piece is permanent, the Handforth sculptures will be on view for two years.**

Great Britain's Rachel Whiteread will have her Governor's Island debut next summer. Her abandoned-looking cast concrete of a New England-style shed will become a permanent structure on Discovery Hill, one of four hills 25 to 80 feet tall currently under construction. The final stage of the Island's development, the hills promise to provide even more stunning views of New York Harbor.

As the public art initiative takes shape, Eccles hopes to imbue the new park with "a sense of journey and discovery which is uniquely suitable to finding works of art in the landscape."

Governor's Island will be open 7 days a week for the 2014 season, which will run through September 28. For the first time, roundtrip ferry tickets will cost \$2, except for on Saturday and Sunday mornings, when they will be free.