

Public art blossoms around New York

From the High Line to Brooklyn Bridge Park, artists are thinking big across the five boroughs



In the Public Art Fund-supported *First Sun*, situated at the south-east entrance to Central Park, Monira Al Qadiri has reimagined the ancient Egyptian deity Khepri as a contemporary monument
Photo: Nicholas Knight; Courtesy of the artist and Public Art Fund, NY

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12 May 2026

Gotham's galleries and museums are rolling out their big spring shows this month, but do not overlook the city's parks and streets. Anyone headed to Frieze New York at the Shed would do well to stroll along the High Line, taking in works including Derek Fordjour's buoyant mural *Backbreaker Double* (2025) at West 22nd Street and Raven Halfmoon's monumental ceramic bust *West Side Warrior* (2025) at Little West 12th Street. In Midtown, Monira Al Qadiri offers her own startling take on a traditional bust with her giant purple *First Sun* (2025) beside the Plaza, while in Stuyvesant Square, Judith Modrak turns the stump of the historic Mother Elm Tree into a pedestal for an otherworldly sapling. Across the East River, Woody De Othello has taken over Brooklyn Bridge Park with totemic hybrids. And up in the Bronx, Shellyne Rodriguez's *Phoenix Ladder: Monument to the People of the Bronx* (2025) celebrates the borough's residents, while Graciela Cassel's pair of sculptural kaleidoscopes offer dazzling views of Pelham Bay Park.



Derek Fordjour's *Backbreaker Double*, on the High Line at West 22nd Street, shows two marching-band drum majors performing the titular dance move

Photo: Timothy Schenck; courtesy of the High Line