



**Laurie Anderson and Jason Moran to Premiere *Party in the Bardo*,
a Sonic Tribute to New York, at Park Avenue Armory in May,
Continuing Armory’s “Social Distance Hall” Commissioning Initiative**

**For Four Nights, Anderson and Moran will Perform at the Armory
Alongside Special Guests**

Performances run Wednesday, May 5 through Sunday, May 9

New York, NY – April 14, 2021 – Park Avenue Armory today announced dates for its premiere of *Party in the Bardo*, a collaboration between multidisciplinary artist and MacArthur “Genius” **Jason Moran**, who curates the Armory’s Artists Studio Series, and multi-Grammy Award–winning performance artist **Laurie Anderson**. For four performances from **May 5 through May 9**, Anderson and Moran will perform in the Armory’s 55,000-square-foot Wade Thompson Drill Hall, underpinned by the soundscape of **LOU REED: DRONES**, a sonic installation utilizing guitars from Reed’s collection and curated by his former guitar technician Stewart Hurwood. Each performance, Anderson and Moran will invite special guests to add their own layer of artistry over the Drones, joining them in these improvisational sonic meditations for the city of New York.

“The Armory is looking forward to continuing its Social Distance Hall season with another commission that unites a powerhouse group of artists in the creation of work that captures the spirit of our time, reflecting both its somber moments and the catharsis we’re all longing for. *Party in the Bardo* is a realm of improvisation led by two masters—Laurie and Jason—who each have a deep history with the Armory and a command of the space that allows them to transform the Drill Hall into an otherworldly soundstage,” said **Rebecca Robertson, Founding President and Executive Producer of Park Avenue Armory**. “The work is a moving testament to the power of art and music to bring together artists and audiences for safe, transcendent, and communal experiences.”

Party in the Bardo is part of the Armory’s [Social Distance Hall](#) commissioning initiative, which launched with [SOCIAL! the social distance dance club](#) (previews April 9-12; performances April 13-22) conceived by **Steven Hoggett, Christine Jones, and David Byrne**, and also includes [Afterwardsness](#) by **Bill T. Jones** (May 19-26). Social Distance Hall provides artists with the space and resources to create and present to in-person audiences new works devised for and reflective of a society grappling with COVID-19. The Armory, with its immense, 55,000-square-foot Wade Thompson Drill Hall and multiple airy rooms and entrances—featuring an air volume comparable to being outdoors—can provide an early pathway and model for the re-opening of the performing arts in New York and beyond.

Rigorous safety protocols for audiences that extend from arrival, entry, and seating to performance and departure have been developed, workshopped, and tested with invited audiences. Among these safety procedures are: masks worn properly at all times; a detailed and monitored system of audience flow to ensure artists, patrons, and staff are socially distanced at all times throughout their visit; contactless temperature-checks and ticket scanning outside at the door; no points of gathering in the building or on the sidewalk; no retail concessions, food and beverages, or ticket sales; restroom use

limited to one person at a time, with cleaning between each use; and refreshing of the Drill Hall air three times pre-show and post-show. Rapid Testing will be conducted on-site at the Armory.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

Park Avenue Armory has developed very strict [health and safety protocols](#) that include wearing masks at all times and rigorously enforced point-to-point choreography that ensures that no individuals are ever less than a six-foot distance from each other. The plan meets or exceeds applicable governmental standards. The protocols satisfy or exceed the recommendations of Federal, State, and City agencies overseeing the response to the health crisis.

TICKETING

All tickets will be electronic/mobile-only and are available for purchase at armoryonpark.org. There will be no tickets available to purchase on-site. By purchasing a ticket to *Party in the Bardo*, ticket buyers consent to being Rapid Tested for COVID-19 on-site at Park Avenue Armory. For entry to the Armory, all audience members will be required to fill out a COVID-19 Screening Questionnaire and provide contact tracing information. No exceptions will be made.

Party in the Bardo

By Laurie Anderson and Jason Moran

Performances: May 5 – May 9

Wednesday, May 5: 7:00 pm

Thursday, May 6: CLOSED

Friday, May 7: 7:00 pm

Saturday, May 8: 7:00 pm

Sunday, May 9: 4:00 pm

Tickets: \$45

A Park Avenue Armory Production

SPONSORSHIP

Bloomberg Philanthropies is the Armory's 2021 Season Sponsor.

The Social Distance Hall is supported in part by The Kaplen Brothers Fund.

Support for Park Avenue Armory's artistic season has been generously provided by the Charina Endowment Fund, The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust, the Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation, the Howard Gilman Foundation, the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, The Emma and Georgina Bloomberg Foundation, the Marc Haas Foundation, the Juliet Lea Hillman Simonds Foundation, the Leon Levy Foundation, the May and Samuel Rudin Family Foundation, the Richenthal Foundation, and the Isak and Rose Weinman Foundation. The artistic season is also made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature. Additional support has been provided by the Armory's Artistic Council.

ABOUT LAURIE ANDERSON

Laurie Anderson is one of America's most renowned and daring creative pioneers. Best known for her multimedia presentations, innovative use of technology, and first-person style, she is a writer, director, visual artist, and vocalist who has created groundbreaking works that span the worlds of art, theater, and experimental music. Her recording career, launched by *O Superman* in 1981, includes many records released by Warner Records. Those releases include *Big Science* (1982), *Homeland* (2008), and *Landfall* (2018) released on Nonesuch which won a Grammy Award for Best Chamber Music/Small Ensemble Performance. In 2002, Anderson was appointed the first artist-in-residence of NASA which culminated in her 2004 solo performance *The End of the Moon*. Anderson has published eight books. Her most recent release—*All The Things I Lost In The Flood* (Rizzoli)—is a series of essays about pictures, language, and codes. Anderson is also an acclaimed filmmaker who has made many films including the Arte-commissioned *Heart of a Dog* (2015), which was chosen as an official selection of the 2015 Venice and Toronto Film Festivals. In 2017 Anderson joined four other artists in MASS MoCA's Building 6 inaugurating a fifteen-year rotating exhibition of work. She is currently presenting a series of virtual lectures as the Charles Eliot Norton Professor of Poetry at Harvard University.

ABOUT JASON MORAN

Called “the most provocative thinker in current jazz” by *Rolling Stone*, pianist, composer, and artist Jason Moran was named a MacArthur Fellow and *Downbeat Magazine's* “Jazz Artist of the Year” in 2010. He is the longtime curator for Park Avenue Armory's *Artists Studio*, as well as Artistic Director for Jazz at The Kennedy Center. Moran currently teaches at the New England Conservatory.

Jason Moran's activity stretches beyond his 15 critically acclaimed solo recordings and performances with masters of the form including Charles Lloyd, Cassandra Wilson, and the late Sam Rivers. His 21-year relationship with his trio, The Bandwagon—with Nasheet Waits and Tarus Mateen—has resulted in a profound discography for Blue Note Records and Yes Records, a label he co-owns with his wife, singer and composer Alicia Hall Moran.

Moran keeps a close relationship with music and activism, culminating in his scoring work with film director Ava DuVernay on *Selma* and *13th*. He also created and played the score of the Apollo Theater's staged version and HBO's adaptation of Ta-Nehisi Coates' award-winning book *Between the World and Me*. Within jazz, his multimedia tributes to Thelonious Monk, Fats Waller, and James Reese Europe have shifted the jazz paradigm combining striking visuals, music, and history into evening-length works. Moran has also collaborated with such artists as Adrian Piper, Joan Jonas, Glenn Ligon, Stan Douglas, Adam Pendleton, Lorna Simpson, and Kara Walker. Commissioning institutions of Moran's work include the Walker Art Center, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Dia Art Foundation, Whitney Museum of American Art, Harlem Stage, and Jazz at Lincoln Center. In 2018, Moran had his first solo museum exhibition at the Walker Art Center, which traveled to the Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, MA; Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, OH; and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY.

ABOUT PARK AVENUE ARMORY

Part palace, part industrial shed, Park Avenue Armory fills a critical void in the cultural ecology of New York, supporting unconventional works in the performing and visual arts that cannot be fully realized in a traditional proscenium theater, concert hall, or white wall gallery. With its soaring 55,000-square-foot Wade Thompson Drill Hall and an array of exuberant period rooms, the Armory enables

a diverse range of artists to create, students to explore, and audiences to experience epic, adventurous, relevant work that cannot be done elsewhere in New York.

In its historic period rooms, the Armory presents more intimate performances and programs, including its acclaimed *Recital Series*, which showcases musical talent from across the globe within the intimate salon setting of the Board of Officers Room; the *Artists Studio* series curated by Jason Moran in the newly restored Veterans Room, which features a diverse array of innovative artists and artistic pairings that reflect the imaginative improvisation of the young designers and artists who originally conceived the space; and *Interrogations of Form*, a public talks program that brings diverse artists and thought-leaders together for discussion and performance around the important issues of our time. The Armory also offers creativity-based arts education programs at no cost to thousands of underserved New York City public school students, engaging them with the institution's artistic programming and outside-the-box creative processes.

Programmatic highlights from the Wade Thompson Drill Hall include Ernesto Neto's *anthropodino*, a large-scale, interactive sculpture and labyrinth extended across the Drill Hall; Bernd Alois Zimmermann's harrowing *Die Soldaten*, in which the audience moved "through the music"; *the event of a thread*, a site-specific installation by Ann Hamilton; the final performances of the Merce Cunningham Dance Company on three separate stages; an immersive *Macbeth* set in a Scottish heath with Kenneth Branagh; *WS* by Paul McCarthy, a monumental installation of fantasy, excess, and dystopia; a radically inclusive staging of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* staged by Peter Sellars and performed by Sir Simon Rattle and the Berliner Philharmoniker; *The Let Go*, a site-specific immersive dance celebration by Nick Cave; eight-time Drama Desk-nominated play *The Hairy Ape*, directed by Richard Jones and starring Bobby Cannavale; *Hansel & Gretel*, a new commission by Ai Weiwei, Jacques Herzog, and Pierre de Meuron that explored the meaning of publicly shared space in the era of surveillance; *FLEXN* and *FLEXN Evolution*, two Armory-commissioned presentations of the Brooklyn-born dance activists group the D.R.E.A.M. Ring, created by Reggie "Regg Roc" Gray and Director Peter Sellars; Simon Stone's heralded production of *Yerma* starring Billie Piper in her North American debut; Satoshi Miyagi's stunning production of *Antigone* set in a lake; Sam Mendes' critically acclaimed production of *The Lehman Trilogy*; and the *Black Artists Retreat* hosted by Theaster Gates, which included public talks and performances, private sessions for the 300 attending artists, and a roller skating rink.

Among the performers who have appeared in the *Recitals Series* and the *Artists Studio* in the Armory's restored Veterans Room or the Board of Officers Rooms are: Christian Gerhaher; Ian Bostridge; Jason Moran; Lawrence Brownlee; Barbara Hannigan; Lisette Oropesa; Roscoe Mitchell; Conrad Tao and Tyshawn Sorey; Rashaad Newsome; and Krecy Garcia ("El Prodigio").

Highlights from the public programs that generally occupy the historic rooms on both the first and the second floors include: symposiums such as Carrie Mae Weems' day-long event called *The Shape of Things*, whose participants included Elizabeth Alexander, Theaster Gates, Elizabeth Diller, and Nona Hendryx; a day-long Lenape Pow Wow and Standing Ground Symposium held in the Wade Thompson Drill Hall, the first congregation of Lenape Leaders on Manhattan Island since the 1700s; salons such as the Literature Salon hosted by Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, whose participants included Lynn Nottage, Suzan Lori-Parks, and Jeremy O. Harris, and a Spoken Word Salon co-hosted with the Nuyorican Poets Cafe; and most recently, *100 Years | 100 Women*, a multi-organization commissioning project that invited 100 women artists and cultural creators to respond to women's suffrage.

Current Artists-in-Residence at the Armory include two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Lynn Nottage; Obie winner and Pulitzer short-listed playwright Branden Jacobs-Jenkins and Carmelita Tropicana; Reggie “Regg Roc” Gray and the D.R.E.A.M. Ring; singer and composer Sara Serpa; Tony Award-winning set designer and director Christine Jones and choreographer Steven Hoggett; and Mimi Lien, the first set designer to receive a MacArthur Fellowship. The Armory also supports artists through an active commissioning program including Nick Cave, Bill T. Jones, Lynn Nottage, Carrie Mae Weems, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, and others.

The Armory has undertaken an ongoing \$215-million renovation and restoration of its historic building designed by architects Herzog & de Meuron, with Platt Byard Dovell and White as Executive Architects.

www.armoryonpark.org

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