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**CREATIVETIME**



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**CREATIVE TIME ANNOUNCES DUKE RILEY'S  
*FLY BY NIGHT* AT THE BROOKLYN NAVY YARD**



Artist Duke Riley. Photo by Will Star. Courtesy of Creative Time.

***Thousands of birds illuminate historic site through  
unprecedented twilight performances.***

***Opens May 2016***

NEW YORK— (2/5)— **Creative Time** and the **Brooklyn Navy Yard** are pleased to announce *Fly By Night*, artist Duke Riley's largest project to date. Beginning in May, a

massive flock of pigeons will fly in elegant harmony above the East River as Riley orchestrates a series of performances occurring regularly throughout late spring. At the call of a whistle, thousands of birds will emerge from their home in a converted ship docked at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, a historic site now home to a vast creative community including numerous artist studios. The birds will circle above the river as the sun sets over Manhattan. Small leg bands, historically used to carry messages, will be replaced with tiny LED lights, illuminating the sky in a transcendent union of public art and nature. *Fly By Night* is free and open to the public, but space must be reserved in advance. Starting in March, spaces can be reserved at [www.creativetime.org](http://www.creativetime.org).

Duke Riley remarks, “The first time I flew birds, I looked up and forgot the rest of the world’s noise. Pigeon keeping is like a religion, and those who enter into this relationship find more peace in their birds than anything else. My hope is for the audience to look up at these beautiful creatures and experience that same rapture, a freedom like no other.”

*Fly By Night* pays homage to pigeon keeping, both in New York and farther afield. Pigeons have been domesticated for thousands of years and kept by people around the world for companionship, sport, and service. Locally, each neighborhood in New York once had a community of pigeon keepers (or fanciers, as they are commonly known); a dense network of rooftop pigeon lofts stretched across the five boroughs. While property development and population shifts have caused the practice to wane, *Fly By Night* reflects back on and makes visible this largely forgotten history.

“We are thrilled to partner with Creative Time to bring *Fly By Night* to the Yard,” says David Ehrenberg, President and CEO of the Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation. “This free public arts programming will provide an amazing opportunity to open our doors to the local community for a spectacular arts event, and to allow the public to get a first-hand look at our growing community of artists, manufacturing, innovation, and creative companies.”

Meredith Johnson, Creative Time curator, states, “Weaving together old New York and new, *Fly By Night* asks us to stop, watch, listen, and revere this extraordinary creature that has shared the triumphs and tragedies of the human experience—uniting individuals, cultures, and generations of fanciers in a tale of both the ancient and modern city.”

Duke Riley has a long history with pigeons, both professionally and personally. The Red Hook-based artist trained homing pigeons to smuggle cigars from Havana to Key West as part of *Trading With the Enemy* in 2013. He worked with pigeons again in the Havana Biennial in 2015. From 1992 to 1997, Riley lived and worked in a pigeon coop in Providence, Rhode Island that he shared with pigeons. He first bonded with the animals after rescuing one as a boy. “I let it go and it came back,” he told *The New York Times* in 2013. “You sort of feel connected to the animal after that.”

The Brooklyn Navy Yard is a fitting locale for *Fly By Night*. A century ago, the U.S. military’s largest pigeon coop was located at Cob Dock, an island in the center of the Yard. From there, homing pigeons were loaded onto naval vessels to serve as a vital military communications channel. *Fly By Night* will raise awareness not only of the Yard’s rich naval history but also its diverse artistic community of painters, photographers, sculptors, ceramists, installation artists, muralists, fine furniture makers, designers and visual artists. The Yard will also serve as a hub for ancillary educational programming and events presented by Creative Time.



Artist Duke Riley. Photo by Will Star. Courtesy of Creative Time.

## **ABOUT DUKE RILEY**

Duke Riley (b. 1972, Boston) explores the struggles of marginal communities who exist, perhaps forgotten, within larger encompassing societies, looking at such issues as the tension between individual and collective behavior, and conflict with institutional power. Riley is known for work that combines the seafarer's craft with nautical history through drawing, printmaking, mosaic, sculpture, performative interventions, and video structured as complex multimedia installations.

Riley has had solo exhibitions at Magnan Metz Gallery, New York City; the Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland; the Queens Museum of Art, Queens, NY; and the Havana Biennial, among other venues. He has received numerous awards and commissions, including a Percent for Art commission, a Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant, and the MTA Arts For Transit commission for the Beach 98th Street Station

renovation. Born in Boston, he received his BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design, in Providence, before moving to New York, settling in Brooklyn, and earning his M.F.A. from Pratt Institute.

## **ABOUT CREATIVE TIME**

Since 1974, Creative Time has presented the most innovative art in the public realm. The New York-based nonprofit has worked with over 2,000 artists to produce more than 335 groundbreaking public art projects that have ignited the public's imagination, explored ideas that shape society, and engaged millions of people around the globe. Creative Time seeks to convert the power of artists' ideas into works that inspire social change and stimulate public dialogue on timely issues, while initiating a dynamic conversation among artists, sites, and audiences.

A vanguard presenter of public art in New York, Creative Time recently began presenting national and global projects and initiatives, making it the only public arts organization with programs that have reached from New York to New Orleans, Haiti to Hanoi, and Dubai to Denver. These projects further Creative Time's belief in the importance of artists in society and the power of art to raise consciousness, expose injustices, and imagine a better world.

## **ABOUT THE BROOKLYN NAVY YARD**

The Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation (BNYDC) is the not-for-profit corporation that serves as the real estate developer and property manager of the Yard on behalf of its owner, the City of New York. The Yard is now home to over 300 businesses employing approximately 7,000 people and generating over \$2B per year in economic impact for the City. BNYDC's mission is to fuel New York City's economic vitality by creating and preserving quality jobs, growing the City's modern industrial sector and its businesses, and connecting the local community with the economic opportunity and resources of the Yard. BNYDC's vision is a vibrant and dense, modern manufacturing community where businesses are provided the stability needed to invest, grow, and thrive. BNYDC celebrates the past, present and future of the Yard through exhibits, tours, educational and cultural programs at the Brooklyn Navy Yard Center at BLDG 92.

## **PROJECT SUPPORT**

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