

CREATIVETIME | MTA Arts for Transit

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ARTIST NICK CAVE'S *HEARD•NY* TO TRANSFORM GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL WITH THIRTY MULTI-COLORED HORSES

*Major installation-and-performance project
presented by Creative Time and MTA Arts for Transit*

March 25–31, 2013

PRESS VIEWING: MARCH 25, 9:30–11:30 AM



Photograph by Travis Magee

New York, NY—February 25, 2013—From March 25–31, 2013, a major project by Chicago-based artist **Nick Cave** will transform Grand Central Terminal with 30 life-size, multi-colored horses, peacefully “grazing” and periodically breaking into choreographed movement to the accompaniment of live music. Titled ***HEARD•NY***, the installation-and-performance piece is presented by Creative Time and MTA Arts for Transit on the occasion of the centennial of Grand Central Terminal. It is **Cave’s first public art project in New York City**, introducing locals and visitors alike to his wearable mixed-medium sculptures, or “Soundsuits,” and turning the busy railway station into a place of surprise and awe.

For ***HEARD•NY***, sixty dancers from **The Ailey School**, the official school of the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, will don Cave’s Soundsuits and perform specially choreographed movements, or “crossings,” at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. every day. The horses may perform together as a herd in Vanderbilt Hall, or in smaller groups within the Main Concourse and throughout Grand Central. When they are not being worn, the Soundsuits will be displayed in Vanderbilt Hall, enabling visitors to look more closely at the meticulously crafted horses and providing a behind-the-scenes glimpse of the “backstage” of the performance.

Creative Time Chief Curator Nato Thompson notes, “One of the things that makes ***HEARD•NY*** so compelling is that it catches people off guard. Coming across these horses is in itself an unusual experience, but it is all the more so in a place as majestic as Grand Central Terminal.”

Anne Pasternak, the organization’s president and artistic director, adds, “Creative Time has always enabled artists to create trailblazing projects that expand their practice while enlivening public places. We are thrilled to be working with our wonderful partners at MTA Arts for Transit to present this multifaceted, magical project. This is our third collaboration with Arts for Transit, following landmark exhibitions by Takashi Murakami and Rudolf Stingel. Happy hundredth birthday Grand Central!”

Sandra Bloodworth, director, MTA Arts for Transit and Urban Design, notes, “We are excited to partner with Creative Time to bring to the Centennial the work of Nick Cave, an artist we have long admired. Along with the Ailey School dancers, Nick is creating an ephemeral experience that will be remembered by its audience as an enchanting moment in New York City’s history.”

SOUNDSUITS

Cave’s extravagant, richly textured Soundsuits, a hallmark of his *oeuvre*, draw on his extensive knowledge of traditional and modern fiber arts, combined with his familiarity with performance and choreography, to create a multisensory experience for the viewer.



Photograph by Travis Magee

When simply displayed, as they will be in Vanderbilt Hall, they are visually compelling art objects; when occupied by human beings, as for the “crossings,” they are transformed into stunning vehicles for movement and sound, blurring the boundaries between visual art and performance. The Soundsuits have been described as part of a costume tradition stretching from African tribal ritual to Renaissance pageantry, to African-American Mardi Gras Indians in New Orleans, to drag queens and performance artists of the London Underground.

Cave’s first Soundsuit, dating to 1991, was made of twigs. Since then, materials have included colorfully dyed human hair, sisal, plastic buttons, beads, sequins, feathers, and other flea market and thrift store finds. Made of colorful raffia, the horse Soundsuits in *HEARD•NY* wear facemasks embellished with patterns from India, Tibet, Morocco, and elsewhere, creating a peaceful herd that embraces a variety of racial and cultural identities.

CROSSINGS

Situated within the context of what is perhaps America’s most iconic transportation hub, visited by more than 750,000 people each day, the mysterious presence of the horses will act as a powerful dislocating force. Slowly and majestically weaving through the bustling crowds, they will invite commuters, tourists, and passersby to stop in their tracks as they encounter these otherworldly figures. As the artist says, “We used to be dreamers, thinking ‘What would I like to be?’ But under the stresses of contemporary life, we seem to have lost that capacity. With works like *HEARD•NY*, I try to create a moment that brings us back to dreaming and fantasy, to a state of mind where we can think about alternative ways of being.”

Collaboration is an essential component of Cave’s practice, and the artist often opts to work with local dancers on site-specific productions. For *HEARD•NY* he will work with Chicago-based choreographer William Gill to create a piece for the Ailey School dancers that incorporates both choreographed and improvised movement.

SUPPORT

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ABOUT NICK CAVE

Drawing on his training as both a visual artist and dancer, Nick Cave works in a wide range of mediums, including sculpture, installation, performance, and video. Cave’s Soundsuits—highlights of the artist’s *oeuvre*—are meticulously handcrafted from found objects, recycled remnants, and discarded materials. Existing as both sculptures in themselves and, when occupied by the body, activated forms, they reference dress and ritual attire from around the world, responding to the globalization of cultural identity. “My ability to make objects sing lies within the multiple readings of each work,” says the artist.

Cave's exhibition *Meet Me at the Center of the Earth* (2009–2012), was presented at arts institutions throughout the country, and met with wide acclaim. His most recent solo exhibition, *Triple-Ripple, FANTASTIC Lille3000* (2012), Lille, France, will travel to the Trapholt Museum of Modern Art, in Kolding, Denmark, where it opens on March 13, 2013. A new exhibition opens at the Denver Art Museum on June 9, 2013.

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 thousands of 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 MTA ARTS FOR TRANSIT AND URBAN DESIGN

MTA Arts for Transit and Urban Design (AFT) encourages the use of mass transit in the metropolitan New York area by presenting visual and performing arts in the transit environment. The permanent art program is one of the largest and most diverse collections of site-specific public art in the world, with more than 300 works by world famous, mid-career and emerging artists. AFT also produces art posters, art cards, photography installations and live musical performances in stations, and has re-launched the Poetry in Motion program in collaboration the Poetry Society of America. AFT serves the nearly eight million people who ride MTA subways and commuter trains daily and strives to create meaningful connections between sites, neighborhoods, and people.

HEARD•NY joins Arts for Transit's Centennial programming, which includes *On Time/Grand Central at 100*, an exhibition featuring the work of more than a dozen contemporary artists who reimagine the passage of time during Grand Central's first 100 years (March 6 - July 7, 2013 at the New York Transit Museum Gallery at Grand Central) and *Keeping Time/Poets and Musicians Honor Grand Central* (April 10, 2013, at Grand Central Vanderbilt Hall). For more information visit www.mta.info/art.

ABOUT THE AILEY SCHOOL

In 1969, Alvin Ailey founded the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center in Brooklyn, New York, with an initial enrollment of 125 students. Guided by the belief that dance instruction should be made available to everyone, Mr. Ailey joined forces with Pearl Lang in 1970 to establish the American Dance Center in Manhattan. In 1982, The Ailey School and its programs received accreditation from the National Association of Schools of Dance and flourished under the direction of Denise Jefferson until her passing in 2010. Since then, Co-directors Tracy Inman and Melanie Person have led the prestigious faculty of more than 75 dance professionals, training over 3,500 students annually in the School's full-time Professional Division and Junior Division Programs for aspiring dance students.

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For more information on *HEARD•NY*, including a video and curatorial statement, visit creativetime.org.

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