

Westall, Mark, "Huma Bhabha's Newest Large-Scale Bronzes Unveiled In Nyc, "Before The End" Presented By Public Art Fund," *FadMagazine.com*, April 30, 2024

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HUMA BHABHA'S NEWEST LARGE-SCALE BRONZES UNVEILED IN NYC, "BEFORE THE END" PRESENTED BY PUBLIC ART FUND

By Mark Westall • 30 April 2024



Huma Bhabha: Before The End, Courtesy of the artist; David Zwirner; Kiran Nadar Museum of Art, New Delhi. Photo: Nicholas Knight, courtesy of Public Art Fund, NY. Presented by Public Art Fund at Brooklyn Bridge Park, New York City, Apr 30, 2024 – Mar 9, 2025.

Opening today April 30th, Public Art Fund will debut *Huma Bhabha: Before The End*, an exhibition featuring a series of four new large-scale bronze sculptures set against the verdant backdrop of Brooklyn Bridge Park. Drawing inspiration from a diverse array of influences, Bhabha's works blend aesthetic, cultural, and psychological elements, probing the intersections of art, science fiction, horror, and mythology.

Based in Poughkeepsie, New York, Bhabha creates sculptures, drawings, and installations that reimagine the figure. She made the four bronze sculptures featured in *Before The End* by casting carved cork and skull fragments. The mysterious figures recall ancient effigies cut into tombstones.

These expressive eight-foot-tall forms, titled *Feel the Hammer*, *Member*, *Mr. Stone*, and *Nothing Falls*, appear to be emerging from the depths of the earth, or perhaps returning to the underworld, their surfaces evoking centuries of eroded sediment and stone. The exhibition's title, *Before The End*, creates a sense of momentous intensity, theatricality, and subtle humor. Like the sculptures themselves, Bhabha's influences span across time and genre, including classic cult horror films like *Destroy All Monsters*, H.R. Giger's designs for the *Alien* franchise, and the work of artists including Giacometti, Marisol, and Basquiat.

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Huma Bhabha's eccentric characters captivate through contradiction, seemingly forged in geological time yet animated with a visceral sense of immediacy,

said Public Art Fund Executive & Artistic Director Nicholas Baume.

Before The End is set amidst the expansive landscape of Brooklyn Bridge Park, a site where natural and man-made elements converge, allowing the works to take on a profound sense of connection to the earth.

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Situated in staggered positions along the Pier 3 Uplands at Brooklyn Bridge Park, Bhabha's monumental sculptures conjure a sense of mystery and ambiguity. Surrounded by formidable landmarks, including the Statue of Liberty, One World Trade, and the waterways and bridges between boroughs, viewers are prompted to contemplate these totemic, larger-than-life forms. The park itself also serves as a significant setting, having undergone an evolution over time that conceals the rubble of centuries of history beneath its surface.

Before The End is Bhabha's second time presenting work with Public Art Fund, following the inclusion of her sculpture, *The Orientalist*, in the group exhibition *Statuesque* at City Hall Park in 2010. She continues to push the boundaries of contemporary sculpture with her unique visual language. Bhabha's hybrid forms seem to exist in their own parallel universe, offering visitors an opportunity to reflect upon their own time and place.

Huma Bhabha: Before The End is curated by Public Art Fund Executive & Artistic Director Nicholas Baume with support from Public Art Fund Assistant Curator Jenée-Daria Strand.



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Starting on April 30th, 2024, *Before The End* will be on view at the Pier 3 Uplands in Brooklyn Bridge Park.

The exhibition can be explored anytime, anywhere, on the free Bloomberg Connects app.

ABOUT THE ARTIST



Huma Bhabha, 2022 Photo by Daniel Dorsa. Courtesy of David Zwirner.

Since the 1990s, Huma Bhabha (b. 1962) has become known for layered and nuanced work that centers on reinvention of the figure and its expressive possibilities. Her formally inventive practice encompasses sculpture, drawings, and photography. Born in Karachi, Pakistan, Bhabha moved to the United States in 1981 to attend Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, from which she received her BFA in 1985. She later studied at the School of the Arts at Columbia University, New York, from which she received her MFA in 1989. The artist presently lives and works in Poughkeepsie, New York.

Bhabha has been the recipient of notable awards, such as The American Academy in Berlin's Berlin Prize, the Guna S. Mundheim Fellowship (2013), and the Emerging Artist Award from The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, Connecticut (2008). In 2022, Bhabha was elected as a National Academician by the The National Academy of Design, New York. In 2023, the artist was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters, New York.

In 2023, M Leuven, Belgium, presented the solo exhibition Huma Bhabha: *LIVIN' THINGS*. The show traveled to MO.CO., Montpellier, France, in November 2023, as *Huma Bhabha: A fly appeared, and disappeared*. A solo presentation of Bhabha's work curated by Nicholas Baume, Touching Earth, was on view at Fundación Casa Wabi, Puerto Escondido, Mexico, from 2022 to 2023. In 2020, the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, England, presented *Huma Bhabha: Against Time*. The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, organized *Huma Bhabha: They Live*, on view in 2019, and published an accompanying catalog. An installation of the artist's work, *Huma Bhabha: We Come in Peace*, was commissioned by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 2018 for their roof garden.

Previous solo exhibitions have taken place at prominent institutions such as The Contemporary Austin, Texas (2018); MoMA PS1, Long Island City, New York (2012); Collezione Maramotti, Reggio Emilia, Italy (2012); Aspen Art Museum, Colorado (2011); and The Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum, Ridgefield, Connecticut (2008), among others. Bhabha's work has also been included in numerous group exhibitions internationally, including the 2019 *Yorkshire Sculpture International*, Wakefield, United Kingdom; the 56th Venice Biennale, *All the World's Futures* (2015); and the 2010 Whitney Biennial.