



NYC Parks

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Press Release

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PUBLIC ARTWORK IN QUEENS RAISES AWARENESS ABOUT HOMELESSNESS

A Bench for the Night by Fanny Allié on View through November 15, 2015

Artist Fanny Allié raises awareness about homelessness in her public art installation *A Bench for the Night*, located at the NYC Parks Greenstreet on Jackson Avenue and 46th Avenue in Long Island City, Queens. Allié's new piece, her second artwork with NYC Parks, is both a sculpture and functional bench that will be on view through November 15, 2015.

Allié's wooden bench is shaped in the silhouette of a sleeping person, a reminder that a public bench is a potential bed for some New Yorkers. The dichotomous visual and emotional transformations that take place in an urban setting – how an object becomes a person, and how a person can become an invisible, ignored object – are embodied by the bench, which offers a critical view of how those who live on the street can become dehumanized.

A Bench for the Night is a continuation of Allié's focus on the issue of homelessness. In 2014 she took part in the Engaging Artists Residency organized by [More Art](#) in collaboration with the [Artist Volunteer Center](#), which primarily focused on homelessness. Engaging Artists encourages local artists to deepen their understanding of socially engaged art through volunteer opportunities and interactive workshops with professionals in the fields of fine art and activism. During this six-week program, participants were required to volunteer at least a half a day per week at a local charitable organization.

In 2013, Allié also exhibited the public artwork *Serendipity* in Tompkins Square Park. The sculpture was a life-size steel silhouette of a formerly homeless man who spent much of his time in the park. *A Bench for the Night* is also a continuation of her earlier neon sculpture *The Glowing Homeless* created in 2011 for Bring to Light NYC: *Nuit Blanche* in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. *The Glowing Homeless* was a neon outline of a human form that rested on a park bench. By rendering the homeless person in neon light asleep amongst the park's crowds she created an alluring object using an attractive material that reversed the normal reaction of avoidance and instead drew people towards the form on the bench. Allié's new *A Bench for the Night* will invite the audience to sit on the bench, an interaction between the public and the artwork that was not possible with *The Glowing Homeless*.

While *A Bench for a Night* primarily alludes to homelessness, the piece also reflects one's desire to seek an isolated place to rest and remove oneself from the continuous movement of the city. When preparing for this exhibit, Allié noticed a lack of seating in the immediate vicinity. By placing the bench-sculpture in this small plaza, she has created a new social space that simultaneously raises awareness on homelessness among the general public, as well as artists and art-lovers visiting MoMA PS1 located across the street.

Fanny Allié (b. 1981) graduated from the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de la Photographie (The National School of Photography) in Arles, France, in 2005. She was a selected artist for Artist in the Marketplace (AIM) at the Bronx Museum of the Arts in 2006-07. Allié has exhibited her work in New York at the Chashama Window Space, Eye Level BQE in Brooklyn, Bronx Blue Bedroom, Bronx Museum of the Arts, BRIC Rotunda Gallery, Freight and Volume, Envoy Gallery, and Bring to

Light NYC (*Nuit Blanche*), among other international exhibitions. In 2014, she participated in the Engaging Artists Residency organized by Artist Volunteer Center and More Art, NY. She has been accepted into the 2015-16 A.I.R. Fellowship Program, Brooklyn, NY. Fanny Allié lives and works in Brooklyn, NY.

NYC Parks' Art in the Parks program has consistently fostered the creation and installation of temporary public art in parks throughout the five boroughs. Since 1967, collaborations with arts organizations and artists have produced hundreds of public art projects in New York City parks. For more information visit www.nyc.gov/parks/art.

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IMAGE: Fanny Allié, *A Bench for the Night*, Photograph Courtesy of the Artist

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