

JAUME PLENSA

NEST

October 29 - December 23, 2021

Opening Friday, October 29, 2021, 6:00pm - 8:00pm



Jaume Plensa, *HORTENSIA (nest)*, 2021.

Galerie Lelong & Co., New York, is pleased to present our solo exhibition with Jaume Plensa, featuring new sculptures by the artist, including the debut of the new *nest* series, that explore the innovation of figurative forms in his depictions of contemporary portraiture. The exhibition coincides with the opening of two monumental public-facing commissions: Plensa's tallest sculpture to-date, *Water's Soul*, at Newport Pier Park, Jersey City, and *UTOPIA*, a lobby of white marble relief located in the new welcome center for the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Plensa is internationally recognized as one of today's leading contemporary portrait artists; harnessing the power of this approach to convey our relationship to the world and each other by emphasizing our shared humanity through portraits of individuals. In the *nest* series, reliefs of contemplative or dreaming faces emerge from alabaster, bridging the classical precept that the sculpture is already contained in the stone with a contemporary use of photography in their production. Plensa is known for seeking out the perfect material and technology for each individual work. In addition to the alabaster sculptures, a grouping of monumental sculptures rendered in stainless steel and marble is also on view. The marble sculpture, *MARIA WHISPERING* (2021) is divided in layers with lead interspersed, another reference to classical sculpture and architecture. Of particular note is *LAMIN* (2021), a rare portrait of a young man, among Plensa's models.

Plensa's portraits reveal a reflective inner world through the models' expressions—eyes closed and face at ease—a thread of inquiry the artist continues in new and recent works. Historically, the depiction of faces as a point of contemplation has a long lineage in Eastern and Western iconography, from Buddhism to Catholicism, where devotees are invited to gaze upon the face of a figure to reach an emotional understanding and epiphany. Plensa expands that enquiry to the everyday, memorializing the people we encounter in our daily lives to highlight our lived, universal connection.

Underlining Plensa's practice is an ongoing pursuit to evoke the beauty in simplicity, encouraging points of convergence for viewers of the work, which range from architectural landmarks bridging local communities to intimate sculptures. Plensa's long career with public-facing artworks—seen all over the world from Seoul to Dubai—originates from his belief in the ability of art in public spaces to create inclusive, transformative experiences for a diverse and extensive audience.

For press enquiries, please contact Grace Hong, 212.315.0470 or grace@galerielelong.com.

This exhibition coincides with the unveiling of two public-facing commissions. Opening October 21, the artist has been commissioned for a monumental white resin head sculpture, *Water's Soul*, Plensa's tallest public sculpture to date measuring at 80 feet, to be installed in Newport Pier Park, New Jersey right across from Downtown Manhattan. On November 29, Plensa's largest indoor work to date, *UTOPIA*, will be opened to the public, a lobby of white marble relief located in the new welcome center for the Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Recently, on September 29, a permanent sculptural commission, *WE* (2021), was unveiled at The Shard, London, UK, marking the artist's first public-facing sculpture in the city. [See Appendix A for images.]

About the artist

Jaume Plensa creates sculptures and installations that unify individuals through connections of spirituality, the body, and collective memory. Literature, psychology, biology, language, and history have been key guiding elements throughout his career. Using a wide range of materials including steel, cast iron, resin, paraffin wax, glass, light, water, and sound, Plensa lends physical weight and volume to components of the human condition and the ephemeral.

Plensa is highly active in projects in public space; his celebrated works can be seen at Bonaventure Gateway, Montreal, Canada; Millennium Park, Illinois; Olympic Sculpture Park, Washington; Burj Khalifa, United Arab Emirates; BBC Broadcasting Tower and St. Helens, England; Pearson International Airport, Canada; Daikanyama, Toranomon Hills, and Ogijima Japan; Shanghai IFC Mall, China; Albright Knox Art Gallery, New York; Rice University, Texas; Bastion Saint-Jaume, France; Pérez Art Museum Miami, Florida; among many other sites worldwide. The artist has presented solo exhibitions at prestigious institutions around the globe most recently at the MACBA-Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Spain and at Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid in 2018 which travelled to the Moscow Museum of Modern Art, Russia in 2019. Other solo museum exhibitions include Musée d'art moderne et contemporain de Saint-Étienne Métropole, Saint-Étienne, France; Institut Valencia d'Art Moderne, Spain; Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, Texas; Musée Picasso, France; Yorkshire Sculpture Park, England; and the Espoo Museum of Modern Art, Finland. *Jaume Plensa: Together* was presented at the Basilica San Giorgio Maggiore in Italy as a collateral event of the 56th Venice Biennale. The artist was honored at the Hirshhorn New York Gala in 2019 and received the Velázquez Prize for Plastic Arts from the Ministry of Education and Culture, Madrid, Spain, in 2013, among other accolades. A documentary feature of the artist's life and work *Jaume Plensa: Can You Hear Me?* (2020), directed by Pedro Ballesteros, was released last year.

The artist was born in Barcelona, Spain in 1955, where he currently lives and works.

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Join in the conversation with Galerie Lelong & Co. (@GalerieLelongNY), Facebook (Galerie Lelong & Co., New York), Instagram (@galerielelong) and via the hashtag #JaumePlensaGLNY

APPENDIX A



Jaume Plensa, *Water's Soul*, 2020. Photo: Reena Rose Sibayan for *The Jersey Journal*.

Jaume Plensa, *Water's Soul*, 2020

Ellipse Pier, 25 Park Lane South, Jersey City, New Jersey

Opening ceremony on October 21, 2021

[View press release](#)



Image still from interview *Welcoming the World: Honoring a Legacy of Love - Creating Utopia*.

Jaume Plensa, *UTOPIA*, 2021

New welcome center for Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Opening November 29, 2021

[Watch interview between the artist and David Hooker, President & CEO](#)



Jaume Plensa, *WE*, 2021. Jonty Wilde Photography Ltd 2021.

Jaume Plensa, *WE*, 2021
The Shard Quarter, London, UK
Unveiled September 29, 2021
[View details](#)



Jaume Plensa, *Carlota (oak)*, *Julia (oak)*, *Laura Asia (oak)*, and *Wilsis (oak)*, 2019. Cast in bronze, dimensions variable, edition 1 of 5. Courtesy of Gray, Chicago/New York and Galerie Lelong & Co., New York. Photo: Timothy Schenck.

Jaume Plensa, Group exhibition: *Field of Dreams*
Parrish Art Museum, Water Mill, New York
On view through November 2021
[View details](#)