

Artangel

Press Release

26 February 2018

ARTANGEL PRESENTS LANDMARK PERFORMANCE WORK BY TARYN SIMON EXPLORING RITUALS OF GRIEF AND MOURNING



Following its sell-out season in New York, internationally acclaimed artist Taryn Simon will present her first ever major performance work in London. *An Occupation of Loss*, co-commissioned by Artangel and New York's Park Avenue Armory, will be presented in a cavernous undiscovered space beneath Islington Green from **17 - 28 April 2018**.

For this major new work, the artist has invited professional mourners from 11 countries, including Azerbaijan, China, Russia and Venezuela to enact rituals of grief and lamentation. These rituals are orchestrated by the collective presence and movement of the audience around one of London's unexplored subterranean locations.

The mourners' recitations include: Albanian laments excavating "uncried words"; Venezuelan rituals safeguarding the soul's passage to the Milky Way; Greek laments binding the story of life with its afterlife; and Yezidi laments, which map a topography of displacement and exile. The resulting work blends architecture, sound and performance in a delicate exploration of the boundaries of grief between the living and the dead, past and present, performer and viewer. The professional status of these mourners — performing beyond their usual contexts - underscores the tension between authenticity and staged emotion, spontaneity and script.

Discontent is publicly performed in the act of lamentation. Throughout history, professional mourners have been granted the authority to occupy, negotiate and shape the experience of loss. Despite this authority, the mourners have often been marginalised by governments, economic systems and orthodoxy. *An Occupation of Loss* considers the anatomy of grief and the intricate systems we devise to manage the abstract certainty of death.

Taryn Simon said:

"Loss yields an emotional space and a vulnerability in which individuals seem to operate without artifice. I wanted to look at the potential of this space, and the mechanics of it - even the ways it can be programmed or performed. I started thinking about how we mourn individually, nationally, globally - how organised religion, government or civic leadership guides and shapes mourning and how citizens are mobilised in those moments of loss."

Michael Morris & James Lingwood, Co-Directors of Artangel, said:

"We warmly welcome Taryn Simon and her collaborating artists to the UK from a dozen different countries. The enactment of mourning in this ambitious new work for London sees Simon transcend photography and text, turning a found site into a sonic instrument for the performance of grief, measuring losses beyond language."

Taryn Simon (b. 1975) is a multidisciplinary artist working in photography, text, sculpture and performance. Her works have been the subject of exhibitions at the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen (2016-17); The Albertinum, Dresden (2016); Galerie Rudolfinum, Prague (2016); Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Moscow (2016); Jeu de Paume, Paris (2015); Ullens Center for Contemporary Art, Beijing (2013); Museum of Modern Art, New York (2012); Tate Modern, London (2011); Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin (2011); and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York (2007).

Permanent collections include Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Tate Modern, London; the Guggenheim Museum, New York; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles. Her work was included in the 56th Venice Biennale (2015). Simon's installation, *An Occupation of Loss* (2016), co-commissioned by Park Avenue Armory and Artangel, premiered in New York in 2016. She is a graduate of Brown University and a Guggenheim Fellow. She lives and works in New York.

Listings Information

An Occupation of Loss by Taryn Simon

17- 28 April 2018

Entrance on Essex Road at the corner of Islington Green, London N1 8AA

Performance times:

Monday – Thursday: 6pm, 7pm, 8pm, 9pm

Friday – Saturday: 5pm, 6pm, 7pm, 8pm, 9pm, 10pm

No performances on Sundays

Press preview: 18 April 2018

Length: 50 mins

Ticket price: £20 and £15 concessions

<https://www.artangel.org.uk/project/an-occupation-of-loss/visit>

Taryn Simon: In Conversation with Frances Morris

Taryn Simon discusses the ideas and research that inform her performance work, *An Occupation of Loss*, with Frances Morris, Director of Tate Modern. The conversation will be followed by the artist signing copies of a new 220-page book, published by Hatje Cantz to coincide.

Thursday 26 April 2018, 6.30pm

Anatomy Theatre, King's College, London, WC2R 2LS

Ticket price: £7.50 (£5 concessions)

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/taryn-simon-in-conversation-tickets-43403150993>

For further press information please contact Erica Bolton / Lara Delaney, Bolton & Quinn:

Email: erica@boltonquinn.com or lara@boltonquinn.com; Tel: +44 (0)20 7221 5000 or +44 (0)7711 698 186

Images can be downloaded at:

<http://bit.ly/TarynSimonimages>

Notes to Editors

Artangel produces and presents extraordinary art in unexpected places in London, the UK and beyond. For over 30 years Artangel has generated some of the most talked-about art of recent times, including projects with Clio Barnard, Jeremy Deller, PJ Harvey, Roger Hiorns, Michael Landy, Steve McQueen, Rachel Whiteread, and last year, Jorge Otero-Pailos's *The Ethics of Dust* at Westminster Hall, Houses of Parliament and *Inside – Artists and Writers in Reading Prison*. Appearing anywhere from empty prisons to underground vaults, daytime TV to the sky at night, Artangel produces art that surprises and inspires and wouldn't be possible within the confines of a gallery. www.artangel.org.uk

Artangel is generously supported by Arts Council England and the private patronage of Artangel International Circle, Special Angels, Guardian Angels, and The Company of Angels.