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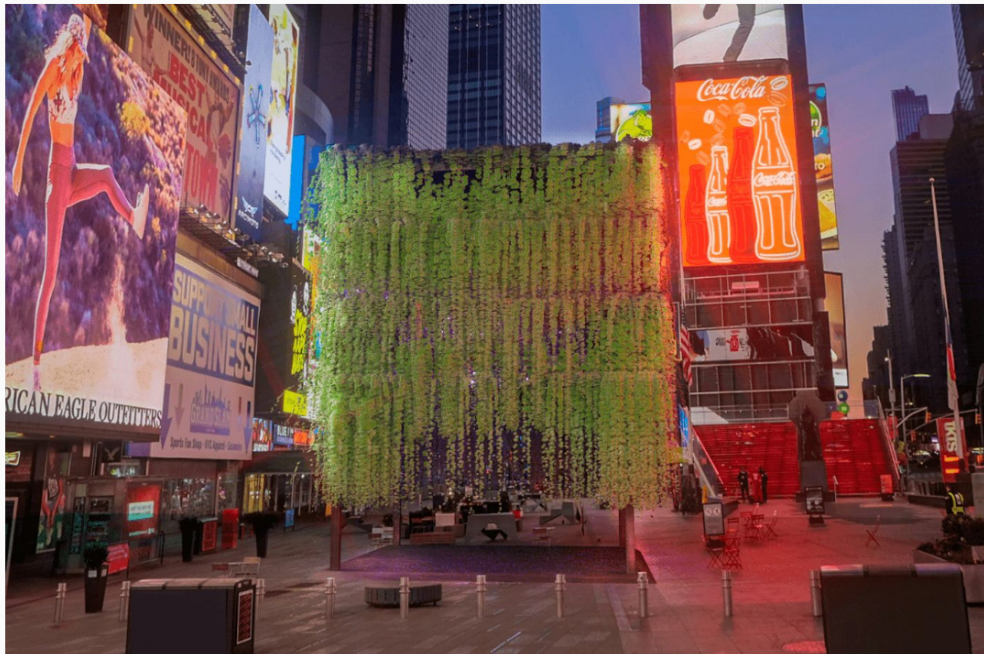


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Great Outdoors Please

Daily digest: Raúl Cordero's Times Square oasis, Kengo Kuma to design auditorium for Portland Japanese Garden, and more

By The Editors • April 11, 2022 • Architecture, Art, Daily News, Landscape Architecture, National



Rendering of *THE POEM* (Courtesy Raúl Cordero and Times Square Arts)

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Happy Monday, y'all. We've taken the weekend to appreciate the fact that the days are longer, the weather is warmer, and consequently, the targeted ads this editor receives are now all garden-oriented. In honor of the changing season, we're bringing you news from the great outdoors.

Here's what you need to know today:

New York's latest temporary art installation is a calm oasis in the middle of Times Square

A just-debuted installation called *THE POEM* by Cuban artist Raúl Cordero, with text by poet Barry Schwabsky, invites passerbys inside to take a little breather from the chaos of Times Square. To draw a contrast between city and county, the installation's boxy exterior is festooned with a 20-foot-tall curtain made from live mountain laurel, while inside, visitors can recharge by reading one of Schwabsky's haikus.

"It's difficult to create meaningful art for people in an era when their attention is scattered across so many mediums and technologies simultaneously," Cordero explained in a statement. "*THE POEM* seeks to stop time, reminding us that humans also have the capacity to invest in one thing at a time—like listen to 'the secret dialogue of trees' (as put poetically by Reinaldo Arenas) and read a haiku, even when standing in the center of Times Square."

Times Square Alliance's public art program [Times Square Arts](#) curated the exhibition, which runs through May 4.

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Kengo Kuma to design auditorium for Portland Japanese Garden

Oregon's [Portland Japanese Garden](#) is partnering with architect [Kengo Kuma](#) to redesign portions of its newly-purchased campus for a forthcoming Japan Institute campus. The site, just three miles from the garden, was previously owned by the Salvation Army and features four buildings from the 1910s through 1960s from Portland architect A.E. Doyle. Kuma will collaborate with Portland's Bullseye Glass Company to retool an onsite chapel into a performing arts center and auditorium. Local landscape architect Walker Macy will take the lead on the campus design.

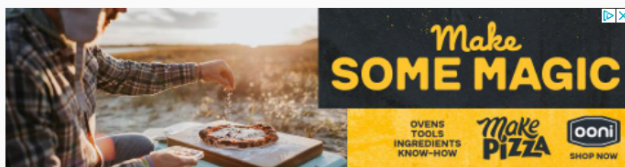
"Kengo Kuma & Associates have been such good friends to Portland Japanese Garden" said CEO Steve Bloom in a release. "Kuma-san's designs masterfully intersect nature and architecture which both complement and showcase our programming. We are thrilled to welcome him and his talented team back to create the 'jewel' of the new Japan Institute campus!"

According to a Portland Japanese Garden press release, the Japan Institute will offer "innovative programs, global collaborations, and experiential education for students of all ages."

This is the second time Kuma will be working with the organization. Five years ago, the Japanese architect designed the garden's [Cultural Crossing](#), an expansion that brought three buildings and three new gardens to the site. According to the garden, their project with Kuma was the firm's first public commission in the United States.

A vintage fruit forest is coming to Governors Island

Today The Trust for [Governors Island](#) announced that it will be hosting over 100 heirloom and rare trees as part of an exhibition by artist [Sam Van Aken](#).



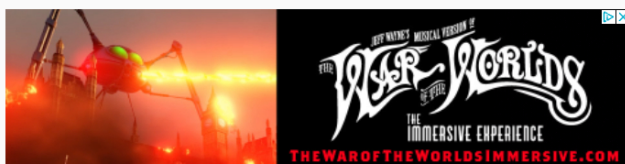
The Open Orchard will feature fruit trees that were common in New York 400 years ago but are now rare thanks to colonization, industrialization, and climate change.

Van Aken grafted multiple varieties onto single trees, so each specimen will resemble a live bouquet of different leaves, buds, and flowers.

"*The Open Orchard* on Governors Island, and the expansive orchard taking place across the entire city in community gardens in all five boroughs, wouldn't have been possible without the time, energy, and generosity of so many invested in art, biodiversity and revisiting this forgotten history of New York," said Van Aken in a statement. "After eight years in development and five years of the project growing at Governors Island, I remain indebted to all those involved and humbled to find a place and community with the shared vision of rethinking not just agriculture but the culture that surrounds it."

Meanwhile, an additional 100 trees that have been growing on the island's nursery will be distributed to community gardens citywide through a partnership with the Parks Department's GreenThumb program.

The Open Orchard opens on Arbor Day (April 29).



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AN DIGITAL EDITION

The Met has invited artist [Hew Locke](#) to make a work for its Fifth Avenue facade.

Locke's piece, *Gilt*, will feature four sculptures that reference the encyclopedic museum's colonialist and imperialist practices. The work is part of the Met's Facade Commission series, a program that invites artists to fill spaces on the facade left unfinished by museum architect Richard Morris Hunt.

"Hew Locke uses a delirious aesthetic of abundance and excess to reflect themes of deep urgency in the past and present, including wealth, imperial power, and prestige, astutely critiquing their visual iconography through reclamation," The Met's Modern and Contemporary Art chair Sheena Wagstaff said in a statement. "Locke's work deftly interweaves the fine lines between theatricality, visual beauty, and critical insight."

The piece debuts September 16th and runs until May 22, 2023.

H/t to [Architect](#)



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