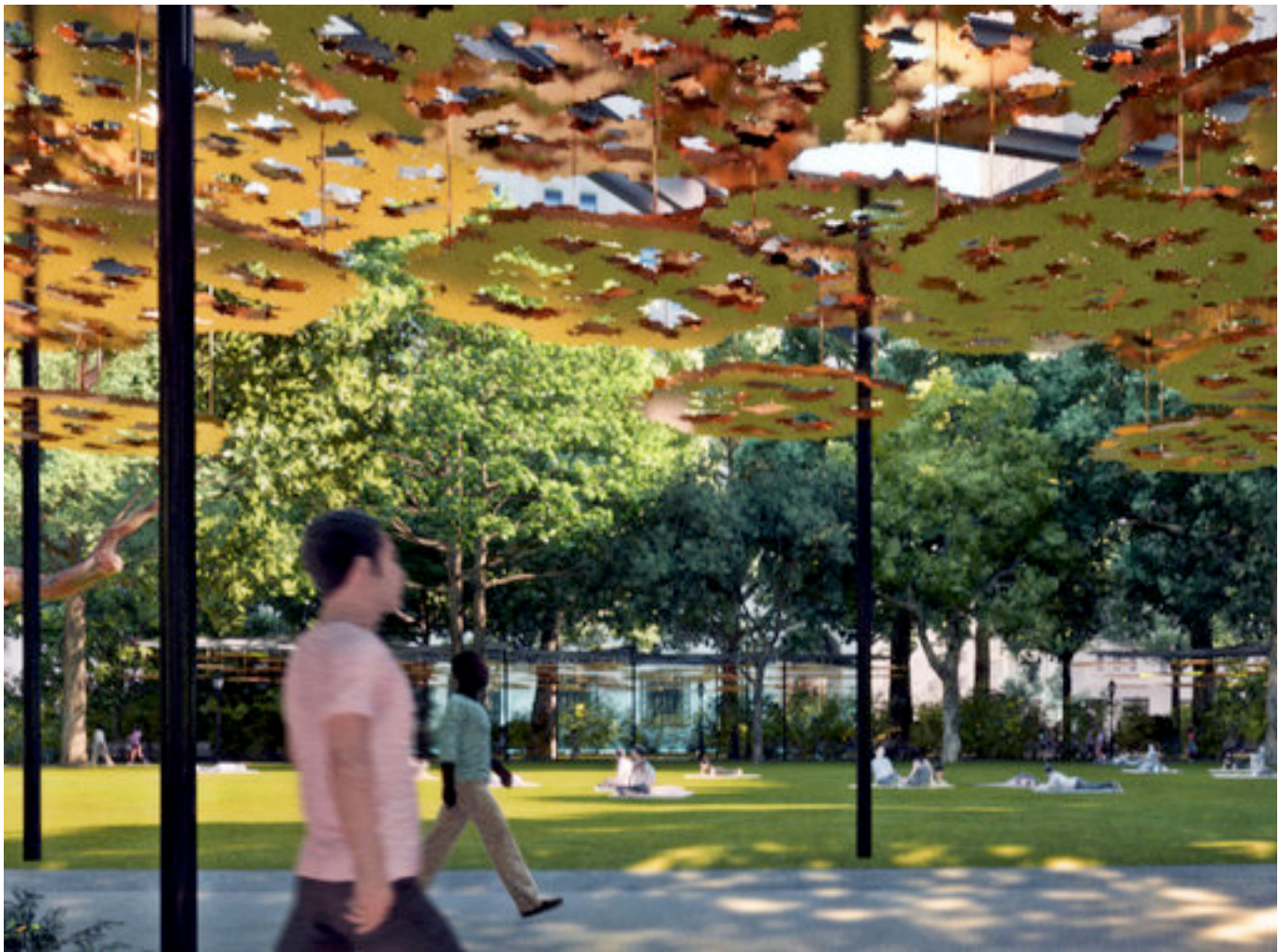


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The Glow Coming to Madison Square

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A digital rendering of Teresita Fernández's "Fata Morgana," which is to be installed next spring in Madison Square Park. Credit Lehmann Maupin, New York and Hong Kong, and Anthony Meier Fine Arts, San Francisco

By [CAROL VOGEL](#)

Public art projects in Madison Square Park — the urban oasis between Madison and Fifth Avenues from 23rd to 26th Streets — have been beautiful, bemusing and sometimes even a tad creepy. One of the most outrageous took place in 2009, when 31 slightly different sculptures of a naked man dotted the park's grounds, were perched along rooftops on neighboring buildings and scattered around the sidewalks of the Flatiron district. The figure, cast by the British sculptor [Antony Gormley](#) from his own body, caused quite a stir. One passer-by called 911, having mistaken a sculpture perched on the ledge of the [Empire State Building](#) for a jumper.

Now, another ambitious and dramatic — though far more benign — installation is set to take up residence at the park from April 30, 2015, through Jan. 10, 2016, casting a luminous golden glow that will be visible from blocks away. It's the work of the New York conceptual artist Teresita Fernández. Rather than simply erecting a sculpture in the park, her mission is to challenge the traditional notion of outdoor art, creating an experiential installation.

Called "Fata Morgana," an Italian phrase meaning mirage (after the Latin name for Morgan le Fay, King Arthur's legendary half sister), it is a 500-foot-long sculpture in six sections. Hundreds of polished metal discs perforated with intricate patterns, in organic shapes that are reminiscent of natural foliage, will be suspended over the pathways, creating a kind of canopy visitors will walk under.

"I see the park as a system of arteries reflecting and distorting urban life," Ms. Fernández said. "It will reflect the landscape on a grand scale, as your own reflections are seen from above and are shaped by other people and by the environment. It takes the whole park and unifies it." Like a horizontal band, she added, the site-specific project "becomes a ghostlike installation that both alters the landscape and radiates golden light." It also will be a visual barometer of what changes around it during different seasons and times of day.

This isn't Ms. Fernández's first foray in Madison Square Park. In 2001, she created "[Bamboo Cinema](#)," a labyrinth of hollow plastic tubes, as part of a group show.

Brooke Kamin Rapaport, senior curator of the Madison Square Park Conservancy, said she has been following Ms. Fernández's work for years. "She's interested in the question of ephemerality and mirage; perception, light and space — all of which is particularly suited for outdoor projects," Ms. Rapaport said. "The installation will change significantly over time and with the park's population."

Calling it one of the conservancy's most ambitious installations, she estimated that "Fata Morgana" would be experienced by 50,000 park visitors daily.