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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Jaume Plensa
Water's Soul

richardgraygallery.com

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Gray is pleased to announce the unveiling of *Water's Soul*, 2020, a new site-specific sculpture by internationally renowned artist Jaume Plensa. Standing 80 feet tall, *Water's Soul* is the artist's tallest public sculpture to-date and will be permanently installed in the Newport development on the Hudson River in Jersey City, New Jersey. The sculpture will be dedicated on site in a ceremony on Thursday, October 21, 2021.

Overlooking the Hudson River, *Water's Soul* depicts the serene face of a young subject holding a finger to her lips in a state of silent contemplation. The sculptural portrait, though monumental in scale, humbly gestures for quietude, a beckoning towards empathetic self-reflection. With great ethereal beauty, Plensa's site-specific installation serves as a tribute to the Hudson River, aligning with the artist's ongoing interest in bodies of water as proxies for humankind. "Water is a marvelous metaphor for humanity," Plensa reflects. "One drop of water is quite alone, like a single person, but many drops together can create a tidal wave, and form immense rivers and oceans; When individuals come together to exchange ideas and create community, we can build something incredibly powerful."

Water's Soul nods to the historic Hudson River waterfront pier on which it is situated, a locale that bore witness to much of the trade coming in and out of New York Harbor on ferries and rail barges during the 19th and early-20th centuries. Plensa's site-specific sculpture acknowledges this past while expressing the collective hope for humanity to build a better world. "As climate change already threatens to take hold of our beautiful planet, we must join together to protect water as one of the most precious elements in nature. It is not owned by anyone but belongs to all of us. Water is the source of life, and *Water's Soul* is a celebration of life."

The LeFrak and Simon families, developers of Newport's waterfront community, selected and commissioned Plensa to create a work for this site, recognizing the artist's ability to convey a message of hope for humanity's future. "Over the course of three decades, Newport has blossomed into a vibrant, diverse community. We are proud to welcome Jaume Plensa's breathtaking sculpture to this one-of-a-kind neighborhood as we continue to establish Newport within the growing art scene taking shape in Jersey City," states Richard LeFrak, Chairman and CEO of the LeFrak Organization. "After a generation of incredible

work, determination, and investment, this area has been truly transformed from what was once barren land into a vibrant, thriving community,” says David Simon, Chairman, Chief Executive Officer and President of Simon. “This magnificent Jaume Plensa sculpture is a phenomenal representation of the cultural sense of place that Newport embodies.”

“It is my wish for *Water’s Soul* to become an icon for Newport and a landmark that visually connects it with New York City across the Hudson River,” says Plensa. “Just as *Water’s Soul* acts to unite the city of Jersey City and New York City, we are reminded that water is the great public space that unites and embraces communities as well as people around the world.”

ABOUT JAUME PLENSA

Born in Barcelona where he currently lives and works, Jaume Plensa (b.1955) is one of the world’s foremost sculptors in the public realm with celebrated projects spanning the globe in such cities as Calgary, Chicago, San Diego, Montréal, Los Angeles, London, Dubai, Bangkok, Shanghai, and Tokyo. Recent public sculptures include *Laura* in Century City, Los Angeles, *Dreaming* in downtown Toronto, and *Voices* permanently installed at 30 Hudson Yards in New York City. Over the past 35 years, the artist has produced a multifaceted body of work creating sculpture that speaks to the capacity and beauty of humanity, often bringing people together through the activation of public spaces. Conventional sculptural materials like glass, steel, and bronze blend with unconventional media such as water, light, and sound to create hybrid works of intricate energy, psychological weight, and symbolic richness.

Exploring material and conceptual juxtapositions — interior and exterior, light and dark, earth and sky — Plensa’s practice ranges from intimate works on paper to monumental public projects such as the iconic *Crown Fountain* (2000-2005), a modern-day agora amidst the urban landscape of Chicago, and *Echo* (2011) at the Olympic Sculpture Park in Seattle. Plensa unites his diverse practice to evoke inward reflection, silence, and intellectual engagement, often relying upon the relationship between the viewer and the object to complete his works. Plensa is the recipient of numerous national and international awards including honorary doctorates from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2005 and Univeritat Aut’onoma de Barcelona in 2018, and the 2013 Velazquez Prize awarded by the Spanish Cultural Ministry. His solo museum exhibitions include those at MACBA: Museu d’Art Contemporani de Barcelona, Spain; Museo Nacional

Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid Spain; MAMC–Musée d’art moderne et contemporain Saint-Étienne Métropole, Saint-Étienne, France; Max Ernst Museum Brühl des LVR, Brühl, Germany; The Toledo Museum of Art, Toledo, Ohio; Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Yorkshire, England; and Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, Texas.

ABOUT LEFRAK

LeFrak is a preeminent, family-owned property company committed to community development and long-term ownership. LeFrak affiliates own and manage an extensive portfolio of real property concentrated in the New York/New Jersey metropolitan area, as well as South Florida, Los Angeles and throughout the West Coast. Through its affiliated companies, LeFrak has developed and built the majority of its real estate portfolio and is one of the world’s leading property firms. The firm is acclaimed around the globe for the quality of its projects and its properties, its financial strength and conservatism, its entrepreneurial business model and its commitment to long term ownership. Although primarily focused on the residential and office sectors, LeFrak affiliates also invest in numerous hospitality, retail assets, securities, private businesses and energy. www.lefrak.com.

ABOUT SIMON

Simon is a real estate investment trust engaged in the ownership of premier shopping, dining, entertainment and mixed- use destinations and an S&P 100 company, that has been around for more than half a century. Through strategic development, Simon properties across North America, Europe and Asia provide community gathering places for millions of people every day and generate billions in annual sales. As the largest retail real-estate developer in the world, Simon leads the industry in innovation and was an early champion of urban and suburban redevelopment. Simon and affiliates continue to focus on the needs of the communities in which they operate – from neighborhood shopping centers to Premium Outlet centers; they strive to offer a comprehensive retail and entertainment experience to everyone.

For press inquiries about Jaime Plensa, contact Rebecca Daniel, rdm@richardgraygallery.com. For press inquiries about The Waterfront Luxury Apartments or to learn more about living and working in Newport, contact info@lefrak.com. Connect with us on [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)