

For Immediate Release

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FEMINIST ARTISTS CELEBRATE WOMEN IN A MULTIDISCIPLINARY EVENT ON UPPER WEST SIDE

Restless

An open-air dance performance created by

Colleen Thomas

In connection with

Mundillo (Little World)

A public art sculpture by

Samantha Holmes

West 97th Street and Amsterdam Avenue

Sunday, October 24 1:00-3:00 pm

Performances at 1:00, 1:30, 2, and 2:30

*Presented by the New York City Department of Transportation's Art program
in partnership with the Columbus Amsterdam Business Improvement District
and the DOT Public Space Unit's Open Boulevards initiative*

For high-resolution photos, click [here](#)

Visual artist **Samantha Holmes**, known for her large-scale metal and stone works and public art projects (including *Hell Gate Cairns*, an installation in NYC's Randall's Island and Riverside Park) and dancer-choreographer **Colleen Thomas**, whose recent work *Light and Desire* was praised for delivering "an implicit answer for how to get around the forces that silence women" by *The New York Times*, join forces for a free public event featuring **RESTLESS**, a dance performance on and around the newly-relocated sculpture **MUNDILLO (LITTLE WORLD)** in a celebration of women and their work. The event, **free and open to the public**, will take place on **Sunday, October 24*, 1:00-3:00 pm** (with performances every 30 minutes starting at 1pm) at the northeast corner of West 97th Street and Amsterdam Avenue in Manhattan, where Holmes' monumental steel sculpture was recently installed. For more information, visit [\[website\]](#).

**Rain date: Sunday, October 31, 1:00pm*

Conceived of in collaboration between choreographer Colleen Thomas and visual artist Samantha Holmes, **Restless** is a structured dance improvisation performed by a feminist collective exploring the spaces in which women are anonymous or celebrated, seen or ignored. The dancers seek to highlight the physical labor and beauty of women's work and to explore notions of fragility and strength, femininity and masculinity, private and public value. The performance is an artistic conversation with **Mundillo (Little World)**, a monumental installation, originally displayed in West Farms Square in the Bronx and recently relocated to Manhattan Valley, where it will remain until the end of 2022. A monument to women's work and the cultural dynamism of NYC, Holmes' sculpture translates lacework patterns – inspired by Puerto Rican bobbin lace, or *mundillo* – from the intimacy of the home to the visibility of the city square, from the softness of cotton to the resilience of steel. As the dancers move around the artwork, the colors and forms of their bodies seem to fill the openings in the sculptural surface, at once framed and fragmented.

Holmes and Thomas, who first met at the workshop *Art & Science: Insights into Consciousness* at Robert Wilson's Watermill Center, share passion for feminism and belief in the power of creative collaboration at the intersection of various disciplines. "My contact improvisational practice and Samantha's sculptural sway and suspended fall was an interesting connection between us and our mediums," explains Thomas. "As feminist artists, we have wanted to ignite each others work for years. With this joint project, we seek to explore the strength and contributions of innumerable unnamed women to our society – especially now, in the wake of the COVID pandemic, when recognizing and appreciating women's work becomes especially vital."

Holmes adds: "It's shocking to realize how few statues of women exist in NYC's public art landscape: as of 2018, there were just five. While I am honored to be among the artists commissioned by the city's government to create new works of art that will enter into this public discourse, I want to speak to female identity and female contributions in a more contemporary way, rather than creating an explicit representation of a historical female figure. *Mundillo* takes a craft tradition we associate with femininity, with the home, with the older generations of women in our families, and places it in a public space to assert the strength behind that softness. In the days I spent installing this piece onsite, passersby began telling me about cousins, mothers, grandmothers who make lace, who knit, who sew. In these interactions, in the memories it stirs, the work becomes a monument not to a single famous woman, but to all those who raised us and clothed us and supported us, whose hands are always restless in acts of (uncelebrated) care."

Mundillo (Little World)

Samantha Holmes

2020

Steel, 14' x 8' x 9'8"

A NYC DOT Arts Community Commission

Restless

Directed by Colleen Thomas

Performed by dancers Colleen Thomas,

Nadia Halim, Morgen Littlejohn, Sadi

Mosko, and Kennedy Thomas, with cellist
Lily Gelfand

The project is co-sponsored by the Columbus Amsterdam BID and NYC DOT as part of the city's Open Boulevards initiative to reactivate the city's public spaces.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Samantha Holmes is a Bronx-based artist whose work introduces distortion to patterns sourced from religion, science, and history to explore the disparity between the certainties of ideology and the fractured nature of contemporary life. Her work has been exhibited internationally, including at the Palazzo Fortuny for the 2015 Venice Biennale, the Bronx Museum of the Arts, and the Sharjah Art Museum (UAE). Recent public art commissions include the NYC Parks Department, NYC Department of Transportation, ARTPLAY Design Center (Moscow), and Franconia Sculpture Park (Minnesota). She is recipient of the 2018 Meyer Award for Contemporary Art, 2013 RAM Prize (Italy) and 2011 International GAEM Award from the Ravenna Art Museum (Italy), which holds her work in its permanent collection. She has held numerous fellowships and residencies, including the Jerome Foundation, Bronx Museum of the Arts, Watermill Center, and Vermont Studio Center. She holds a BA from Harvard University in Visual Studies and an MFA in Experimental Mosaic from the Accademia di Belle Arti in Ravenna. She is also founder and designer of custom mosaic studio Motivo Mosaic.

www.samantha-holmes.com

Colleen Thomas is a New York-based choreographer, scholar, teacher, and performing artist. She is the director of Colleen Thomas Dance, co-director of Bill Young/Colleen Thomas Co., and co-curator for LIT (loft into theater). She began her professional career with the Miami Ballet and went on to work with renowned contemporary choreographers such as The Kevin Wynn Collection, Nina Wiener Dance Company, Donald Byrd/The Group, Bebe Miller Dance Company, and Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Dance Company, among others. Her work has been seen throughout the United States as well as in Europe, Asia, and South America and has been presented in NYC at Danspace Project, Movement Research at Judson Memorial Church, Dance Theatre Workshop/New York Live Arts, Miller Theatre at Columbia University, Triskelion Arts Center, Governor's Island, and the 92nd Street Y, to name just a few. In 2019, her work with artists from Poland, Ukraine, Belarus, and the USA premiered at La MaMa MOVES! Dance Festival. She is a co-author (with A. Goldman and P. Sajda) of a 2019 scientific study Contact improvisation dance practice predicts greater mu rhythm desynchronization during action observation, published in the *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* journal. Thomas received her BA in Psychology from SUNY Empire State College and her MFA in Dance from the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee. She has been an adjunct faculty member at Long Island University's Brooklyn Campus, The New School, Barnard College, Skidmore College, and Bates College. She is currently a Professor of Professional Practice at Barnard College of Columbia University. www.colleenthomasdance.com

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