



Joined an Avalanche, Never to be Alone Again by Carlos Irijalba



This newly commissioned public artwork by Spanish artist Carlos Irijalba is a three-part installation examining how humans have accelerated a global environmental crisis, and makes visible how New York City is building resiliency into its survival.

Commissioned by The NYC Department of Design and Construction along with the Department of Cultural Affairs, the piece located on the East River Promenade collapses starkly different time scales projecting an imminent future, while unearthing centuries of geological cycles.

Harvesting materials from the city's infrastructure, Irijalba manifests a 1:1 scale low-tide wave made of 100% recycled asphalt, a sprawling geotechnical core sample sculpture, and salvaged fencing from the FDR Drive.

Joined an Avalanche, Never to be Alone Again is presented in three adjacent areas just west of the Corlears Hook Park Ferry Terminal on Manhattan's Lower East Side:

1. *The Wave* (2023) is a 30 by 7-foot low tidal wave sculpted with 100% recycled asphalt rising over the East River seawall.
2. *The Fence* (2023) repurposes approximately 70 feet of fencing material from the FDR Drive. Adorned with images of aquatic and land animals, *The Fence* points to interspecies coexistence in the coastal habitat. Unexpected specimen, such as seahorses, can survive in urban waters alongside the beaver who, similar to humans, engineer their environment.
3. The third part titled *Pannotia* (2023) is an extension of Irijalba's ongoing exploration of geotechnical drillings commonly called core samples. As a routine part of New York City's urban planning, these samples are extracted from the ground to understand bedrock composition, and can, for

URBAN CULTURE
NEW YORK

Wed, October 04–
Wed, November 15, 2023

Venue

East River Promenade, Corlears Hook
Ferry Terminal, 397 FDR Drive New
York, NY 10002

[View map](#)

Admission

Free, [RSVP required for the walkthroughs](#). Please note that the artwork sits on the border between a construction zone and the public space where large gatherings are not permitted. There is limited space available. While this art installation is open to the public at all times, the artist has set aside several dates for public engagement. A limited number of timed-entry tickets are available.

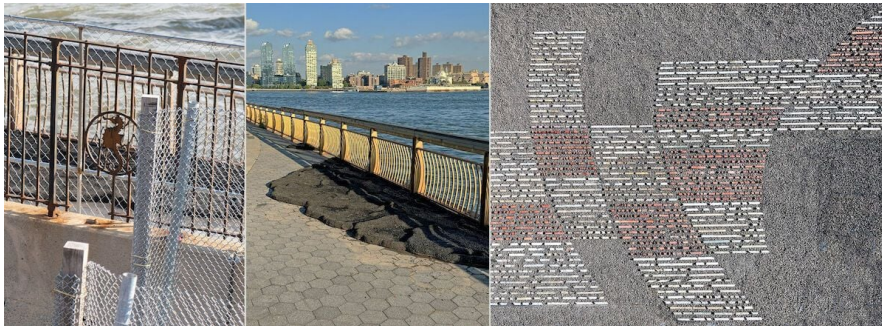
Credits

Commissioned by the NYC Department of Design and Construction in partnership with the Department of Cultural Affairs and Department of Parks & Recreation.



example, determine height limitations for skyscraper construction. Each *Pannotia* sculpture is site-specific and displayed within the area where the drillings are sourced.

This commission marks Irijalba's largest of these sculptures, spanning 45 feet across. Viewing the variety and layers of bedrock enables us to understand this seemingly inert material as living, dynamic, and part of a process of continual change. Together, the three works that comprise *Joined an Avalanche, Never to be Alone Again* make visible how the City of New York is building resiliency into its survival by looking decades and centuries into the future.



Irijalba created the installation while in residence with DDC, where he has been working since last fall as part of DCLA's [Public Artists in Residence \(PAIR\)](#) program.

A tidal asphalt wave pushes across the East River's barrier like a preserved lava spill, reminding us of what was here before and what this same place might become. But this wave is made of 100% recycled asphalt that is regularly collected from broken streets, then refreshed and reused in the city's need for road maintenance, like a relentless digestive system. Sustainability isn't always aesthetically satisfying, but it's a necessary commitment to citizenship in the 21st century. Asphalt, discarded fencing, and core sample drillings are the raw materials of the city. My practice catalyzes such existing materials and strategies within the constructed space, and eventually allows those same materials to be reabsorbed by the site. Through a one-year-long residency with the DDC, I've understood how they operate on small and large scales, as an invisible, ever-present organism, to improve the city's functionality without disrupting its core capabilities. The efforts being made by the department rise above generational, metabolic, and electoral cycles to confront our new climate reality.

—Carlos Irijalba

ABOUT CARLOS IRIJALBA

[Carlos Irijalba](#)'s work moves by the principle of pertinence and is responsive to context. Using installation, sculpture, film and existing materials from industrial



processes, his work reflects upon the collective construction of territory and the relative experience of time, while always questioning the dominance of the anthropocentric perspective.

Irijalba (Pamplona, 1979) was a resident at the Rijksacademie Van Beeldende Kunsten (Amsterdam) from 2013-2014 and graduated at the Basque Country University and UDK Berlin in 2004. Awards include Mondriaan Fonds 2022, Shifting Foundation 2015, Marcelino Botin 2007-2008. International exhibitions include *The Shanghai Biennial 2021*, CAB Art Center Brussels 2017, *Guangzhou Triennale 2017*, MUMA Museum Melbourne 2014. His work is in the collections of the Museo Nacional Reina Sofia, Sammlung Wemhoener Foundation, and the Taviloglu Art Collection in Istanbul among others.

ABOUT THE NYC DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA) is dedicated to supporting and strengthening New York City's vibrant cultural life. DCLA works to promote and advocate for quality arts programming and to articulate the contribution made by the cultural community to the City's vitality. The Department represents and serves non-profit cultural organizations involved in the visual, literary, and performing arts; public-oriented science and humanities institutions including zoos, botanical gardens, and historic and preservation societies; and creative artists at all skill levels who live and work within the City's five boroughs. DCLA also provides donated materials for arts programs offered by the public schools and cultural and social service groups, and commissions permanent works of public art at City-funded construction projects throughout the five boroughs.

ABOUT THE NYC DEPARTMENT OF DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

The Department of Design and Construction is the City's primary capital construction project manager. In supporting Mayor Adams' vision of growth, sustainability, resiliency, equity and healthy living, DDC provides communities with new or renovated public buildings such as firehouses, libraries, police precincts, and new or upgraded roads, sewers and water mains in all five boroughs. To manage this \$24 billion portfolio, DDC partners with other City agencies, architects and consultants, whose experience bring efficient, innovative and environmentally-conscious design and construction strategies to City projects.