**Brooklyn Greenway Initiative to Unveil 10’ Sculpture of Spanish artist, Pablo Picasso Mowing a Lawn; *The Spanish Gardener* on view June 1–July 15, 2018**

**Brooklyn, NY** - On June 1, 2018 Brooklyn Greenway Initiative (BGI) will unveil *The Spanish Gardener (10’ maquette)* by artist Elliott Arkin – a large scale mixed-media sculpture depicting Spanish artist, Pablo Picasso mowing a lawn. This temporary public exhibition at the corner of Degraw Street and Columbia Street in the Columbia Waterfront District highlights BGI’s role as both “artist” and “caretaker” of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway.

*The Spanish Gardener* is Elliott Arkin’s largest work to date and is a continuation in his series depicting historical figures as gardening lawn gnomes. The sculptures were the subject of *A Peaceable Kingdom,* a recent major solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art’s (MAMAC) roof-top garden in Nice, France. First sketched in 2004 and titled after the American painting by Edward Hicks, *A Peaceable Kingdom,* is derived from images Arkin created as cartoonist-in-residence (along with Nicole Eisenman) on what was the preeminent art world website, Artnet.com, in the late 1990s. Arkin developed his satires of art historical events into unique sculptural artworks adding broader conceptual implications that became very popular with fellow artists and collectors.

The sculpture of Picasso mowing the lawn is a visual poem presented in an accessible and inviting manner – layered in ideas and thoughts that are meant to foster a dialogue and contemplation. In overview, the piece can be seen as a salutation to the common man. A gardening lawn gnome also can have many other implications as it compares artists to caretakers, planting ideas and doing the work that shapes our space and world. It also playfully juxtaposes the artist/patron/viewer relationship and is a satire on the on the art world with political, environmental, and social commentary. Typical with many of Arkin’s works, *The Spanish Gardener* mixes and matches references to artists and artworks creating a quizzical journey with many paths and interpretations and is open to be engaged on many levels.

*The Spanish Gardener* will open at a reception for the artist on June 1, 2018 from 6:00 – 8:00pm at the installation site on the corner of Columbia and Degraw Streets in the Columbia Waterfront District in Brooklyn. The sculpture will be on view through July 15, 2018.

**About Elliott Arkin:**

Elliott Arkin is an American artist (born April 15, 1960). He began his career designing windows for [Tiffany & Co.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiffany_%26_Co.) in New York City while working with the legendary director Gene Moore. Moore is particularly known for selecting young artists, such as [Andy Warhol](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andy_Warhol), [James Rosenquist](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Rosenquist), and [Jasper Johns](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jasper_Johns), before they gained any recognition in the art world. Arkin also began sculpting for film and animation that further influenced his early career.

Elliott Arkin first gained wide recognition in the contemporary art world in the late 1990s as the original cartoonist-in-residence, along with Nicole Eisenman, for what was the preeminent art website Artnet.com. Arkin developed that series of satirical works into unique sculptural pieces whose metaphors and interpretations took on broader conceptual ideas and overtones and became popular among collectors. He has exhibited widely throughout the

U.S. and Europe, and is included in the permanent collections of museums such as the Louvre’s Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, MAMAC museum in Nice, the New York Public Library and the New York Historical Society in New York City, The Flint Institute of the Arts in Michigan, and the Mead Art Museum at Amherst College. In 2014, Arkin's work was the subject of a major solo exhibition at the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art (MAMAC) in Nice, France.

**About Brooklyn Greenway Initiative:**

[BROOKLYN GREENWAY INITIATIVE](http://www.brooklyngreenway.org/) (BGI) is the 501(c)(3) non-profit organization committed to the development, establishment and long-term stewardship of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway. When complete, this 14-mile, off-street, landscaped, cycling, running and pedestrian route will connect 200 acres of regional parks and numerous neighborhood parks and open spaces from Greenpoint to Bay Ridge. Founded in 2004, BGI works with community, non-profit, business, and governmental partners to create and fulfill a comprehensive vision for the Greenway, while at the same time building awareness and support among the 500,000+ residents who live along the route of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway.

Six miles of the Brooklyn Waterfront Greenway that has been completed to date and a 1.7-acre public space, the [Naval Cemetery Landscape](http://www.brooklyngreenway.org/naval-cemetery-landscape/) at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, are actively used by hundreds of thousands of people annually. The completed Greenway includes one of Brooklyn’s most heavily used bicycle commuter paths along Flushing Avenue. Planning and design are underway for four additional Greenway segments. New Greenway segments will incorporate design and engineering to support NYC’s goals for coastal resiliency and storm water mitigation.

BGI hosts numerous volunteer opportunities and public programs throughout the year, including *Yoga in the Grove* at the Naval Cemetery Landscape and the popular *Epic Ride* and *Brooklyn Greenway Half/5K* events along the Greenway. School groups help steward the Naval Cemetery Landscape while learning about urban ecology and horticulture. Corporate groups support BGI and local communities through BGI’s growing [Adopt-A-Greenway](http://www.brooklyngreenway.org/adopt-a-greenway/) program.

***The Spanish Gardener* at the Columbia Waterfront Space is made possible with generous support from:**

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