

For immediate release

Press Contact: Stewart Campbell, stewart@artistcommunications.com, +1 (917) 557-3857



KODA announces *Sari Carel: A More Perfect Circle*, a public art meditation on throw-away culture and the circular economy opening April 20, 2024

Brooklyn, NY, March 25, 2024—To celebrate Earth Day, KODA will present *Sari Carel: A More Perfect Circle*, a first public art commission at Lentol Garden in Greenpoint, Brooklyn. Artist and activist Sari Carel will present a series of ceramic sculptures inspired by the single-use coffee cup, a ubiquitous object that brings into focus people’s daily experience of interacting with trash. The installation connects our personal encounters with disposable objects to the wider systems that fill our lives with waste. *A More Perfect Circle* is curated by Jennifer McGregor. The project opens to the public on April 20, 2024 and will be on view through June 30, 2024. The Greenpoint Library and Environmental Education Center in Brooklyn will co-present the project, host selected programs, and present a behind the scenes look at the project in display cases.

A More Perfect Circle is informed by research the artist conducted in collaboration with Nicholas Hoynes, a PhD student in Environmental Sociology at NYU. Together, Carel and Hoynes surveyed employees and patrons of local coffee shops about their daily experience with single-use objects. Their research uncovered a sense of powerlessness and conflict about a choice at the center of a daily routine. What happens to that daily, single-use plastic-lined paper coffee cup when you toss it in the trash can, and why do we take it for granted?

For the artist, the dilemma of how to address the single-use issue intensified during the Covid-19 pandemic when local restrictions limited the use of reusable thermoses for the potential public health risk. Carel saved her own coffee cups, which became objects of study as they piled up in her studio. Her observations of this stackable form with its inherent intimacy, an object that is held, sipped from, possessed momentarily and then discarded, is the model for the collective objects that take center stage at Lentol Garden. *A More Perfect Circle* is conceived to give attention to the time we spend with the cup during its life cycle.



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The project at Lentol Garden will feature ceramic forms reminiscent of Brancusi's *Endless Columns*. Sculptures are modeled after disposable coffee cups stacked, alternatingly, end-to-end or rim-to-rim. Ceramic pieces in the shape of plastic cup covers—and glazed to evoke pie charts drawn from Carel and Hoynes' research—will hang from the interior fences of the garden. The handmade, intentional, and individualized quality of each unit contrasts with the mass-manufactured coffee cup that inspires this project. The artist's choice to work in clay evokes the industrial use of the material in landfills to mitigate the seepage of toxic sludge into clean soil and water. Carel developed the project concept at the Clay Space and is working at Powerhouse Arts to slip cast, fire, and glaze the sculptural elements.

Klaudia Ofwona Draber, Executive Director at KODA notes *"Sari Carel has a gift for bringing people together around environmental issues. We are delighted to commission this new research-driven public artwork, organize six public programs, and support Sari's experimental work and vision to locally raise the concern for the circular economy. This project affirms KODA's commitment to collaborative and participatory work aligned with the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals."*

Over the course of the exhibition, plants will grow to surround the sculptures, providing a green respite for Greenpoint residents and neighboring communities. Lentol Garden is a vital natural haven and connection to the land and offers a parallel message about care that was particularly important to this project. Lentol Garden members Randy Sandlin and Scott Meadows note *"We are thrilled to harbor A More Perfect Circle - the very first artistic project we host - as a way to welcome people to the Lentol Garden and recognize that we are all part of nature, and our actions make a difference."*

To provide a way to learn about how we can make a difference, a series of public programs for adults and families will take place at the Lentol Garden and the Greenpoint Library during the exhibition. As Nicholas Hoynes notes *"Confronting the sheer scale of our waste—even just when it comes to our daily to-go beverage—can be dispiriting. It is often easier to turn away. But the hope, through this installation and programming, is to help make visible the secret life of trash and, in so doing, perhaps direct some of the energy into collective action: the only viable solution to the ecological crisis."* This work strives to help turn anxiety into action and to rethink the single-use phenomenon we collectively face.

Open Hours

Tuesdays & Fridays: 10am-12pm

Thursdays: 5-7pm

Saturdays & Sundays: 10am-2pm



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Programming

- Opening Reception of Sari Carel: A More Perfect Circle**
 Saturday, April 20, 2024 at 2-5pm at Lentol Garden (178 Bayard St, Brooklyn)
- Listening Walk: Tonalities and Time Scales with Daniel Neumann and Sari Carel**
 Saturday, May 4 at 4-5pm at Greenpoint Library (107 Norman Ave), walk to Lentol Garden
Exercise your senses and experience the wide array of urban and natural sounds.
- Panel Discussion: The Secret Life of Trash**
 Thursday, May 30, 2024 at 6-7:30pm at Greenpoint Library (107 Norman Ave, Brooklyn)
How awareness about the relationship between production, consumerism & waste translate to action.
- Climate Action Playdate for Kids: with Climate Families NYC**
 Saturday, June 1 at 10:30am-12:30pm at Lentol Garden (178 Bayard St, Brooklyn)
- Activism Talk: Single Use No More with 350Brooklyn**
 Thursday, June 13, 2024 at 6-7:30pm at Greenpoint Library (107 Norman Ave, Brooklyn)
Shifting from a disposable to a reusable culture through legislation and local efforts.
- Workshop for Kids: Where Do Materials Come from, and Where Do They Go?
 Hands on Clay with Clay Space**
 Friday, June 21 at 3-4pm at Lentol Garden (178 Bayard St, Brooklyn)

Funding

Support for residencies, exhibitions, and programs at KODA is made possible by the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA), Humanities New York with support of New York Council on Humanities (NEH), Maurer Family Foundation, Brooklyn Arts Council, FiveMyles, TRUE Africa, along with major individual support. *Sari Carel: A More Perfect Circle* is supported, in part, by public funds from The New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council; The New York Community Trust, and the Foundation for Contemporary Arts Emergency Grant. KODA's program is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.

Organizer



Co-Presenters



Partners



Funding





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About the Artist

Sari Carel is a Brooklyn-based, interdisciplinary artist and environmental activist. Her projects consider interspecies communication, nature and the built environment, and how the senses inform perception. Sari Carel participated in a KODA Land + Environment artist residency in 2021. She was offered a studio space on Governors Island in partnership with Swale House, exhibited at FiveMyles and organized a tree-care and stewardship workshop with Trees NY in Brooklyn, NY. Recent exhibitions: *The Sun Is A Mouth Of Blue* at Melanie Flood Projects, Portland, OR; *The Shape Of Play*, a public art project in Boston's North End, and *Mud Songs For Anni* at The Schneider Museum of Art's Art Beyond in Ashland, OR. She has been awarded fellowships and residencies at Stundars Museum, Solf, Finland; Atelier Stipendium des Bundeskanzleramtes, Vienna, Austria; and Bundanon, Illaroo, Australia; Socrates Sculpture Park, Long Island City, NY; and LMCC Residency on Governors Island, NY, among others. She is a recent recipient of a commissions award for Korea Art Forum's 2024-2025 "Shared Dialogue, Shared Space" program. (www.saricarel.com)

About KODA

KODA is a New York-based nonprofit arts organization dedicated to mid-career artists of diverse backgrounds. Established in 2019, we are excited to celebrate our fifth anniversary this December. KODA grants residencies to allow for experimentation and facilitates creative projects through strategic partnerships with socially engaged partners. We are the go-to thinking spot and serve the community through exhibitions of contemporary art, events and outreach to strengthen art education. KODA works with mid-career conceptual artists who explore social justice related topics. They surface the world's economic and social challenges through their insightful research and concepts. Our work is designed around the needs of individual artists, with the main aim to provide them with due exposure and scholarship. KODA projects include residencies and survey exhibitions, community and education programs as well as partnerships with socially engaged businesses. Our work is aligned with the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals.