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**GOVERNORS ISLAND ARTS PRESENTS THE NEW YORK CITY PREMIERE OF TOUKI  
DELPHINE'S HYPNOTIC *FIREBIRD***

*The genre-defying open-air performance from the Amsterdam-based collective seamlessly blends large-scale visual displays and music inspired by Stravinsky's Firebird Suite*

***"An immersive experience, a phenomenal experiment in form, a pagan ritual."***  
– *The Theaterkrant*

***"As if God were video-gaming on stained glass windows from the scrapyard."***  
– *The Volkskrant*

**NEW YORK, NY (August 18, 2025)** – Governors Island Arts announced today the New York City premiere of *FIREBIRD*, the hypnotic, genre-defying visual arts performance from Amsterdam-based artist collective Touki Delphine. Featuring an orchestra of light made from more than 500 recycled car taillights, *FIREBIRD* will be performed on October 3-4, 2025, at the Island's Parade Ground. The performance, which originated in The Netherlands in 2019, has been touring throughout Europe since and has been previously presented in the United States at MASS MoCA, Utah's Center for the Arts at Kayenta, and at the W.O.W. festival in San Diego.

"We're thrilled to bring Touki Delphine's *FIREBIRD* to New York City during this milestone moment for Governors Island," said **Juan Pablo Siles, Associate Curator and Producer at the Trust for Governors Island and curator of the *INTERVENTIONS* performance series.** "This work is a luminous ode to reinvention and rebirth that will dazzle the senses and provide an unforgettable experience, as well as a fitting celebration of transformation as we mark the Island's 20<sup>th</sup> year open to the public."

"When we first considered where we would like to present the new American version of *FIREBIRD*, Governors Island was at the top of the list of locations in the United States. We make art using recycled materials, not only the taillights are recycled, but we've taken Stravinsky's rhythms and melodies and warped and recycled them, giving the piece new life. Governors Island not only has an inspiring zero-waste initiative, but the island itself was created partly from landfill materials, making it seem an excellent match for our artistic wall of trash. Additionally, part of the creative vision of the piece is offering the audience the experiential aspect of shedding or cloaking one's individual identity for the length of the performance, and as a uniform group encountering and reflecting this musical monolith. Governors Island, and its specific atmosphere; secluded and serene yet in direct proximity to the bustling boroughs of New York, we think will offer an ideal setting for *FIREBIRD*, creating a special experience unique to this location," said **Chris Doyle, co-artistic director of Touki Delphine.**

Inspired by composer Igor Stravinsky's 1919 *Firebird Suite*, *FIREBIRD* pays homage to his musical creations with a performance centered around a massive wall of light designed to illuminate the dance of the firebird. The unique sensory journey allows visitors to revel in the glowing celebration and hypnotic display that will transform the Parade Ground.

The audience experience begins upon arrival, where all ticketholders will receive shimmering metallic capes to don once they disembark, kickstarting the spectacle en route to the show.

Guided by the artists themselves, this glittering collective will make its way to the Parade Ground—set against the dramatic Lower Manhattan skyline—where *FIREBIRD* bursts to life in a hypnotic dance of synchronized light, courtesy of 500 recycled car taillights that have been salvaged from scrapyards in the Northeastern United States, all set to Touki Delphine’s contemporary composition. Visitors will also be able to enjoy food and drinks available from Island vendors and a post-show gathering with the artists after each performance.

Touki Delphine is an Amsterdam-based artist collective featuring artists Bo Koek, Rik Elstgeest, Chris Doyle, and John van Oostrum. The collective is a boundary-pushing group of musicians, performers, and visual artists making waves nationally and internationally with monumental light and sound installations, all created from recycled materials. Touki Delphine’s work creates poetic encounters between humans and machines and is inspired by natural phenomena, the climate crisis and the idea of nature as a living whole.

The concept, music and visuals for *FIREBIRD* are by Bo Koek, Rik Elstgeest, Chris Doyle and John van Oostrum. The installation concept is by John van Oostrum and it is designed by Touki Delphine with assistance from Theun Mosk. Tickets to all performances are now available online at [www.govisland.org](http://www.govisland.org).

The performance was originally created in The Netherlands in 2019 and has been touring throughout Europe since. In 2024, in collaboration with MASS MoCA, Touki Delphine built this American version of *FIREBIRD* using locally salvaged parts, and following its premier at MASS MoCA, it has been shown at Center for the Arts at Kayenta in Utah and at the W.O.W. Festival in San Diego. Prior to the group’s NYC debut on Governors Island, the piece will be shown at Dartmouth College, and afterwards it will head to the Momentary Contemporary Art Museum in Arkansas. *FIREBIRD* was created in collaboration with MASS MoCA and supported by the Performing Arts Fund NL. Additional support by Dutch Culture USA at the Consulate General of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

*FIREBIRD* is part of a performance series on the Island titled *INTERVENTIONS* that is curated by Juan Pablo Siles, Associate Curator and Producer at the Trust for Governors Island, under the leadership of Lauren Haynes, Head Curator of Governors Island Arts and Vice President at the Trust for Governors Island. Previous performances presented as part of this series include works by Modesto “Flako” Jimenez, Indigenous Enterprise, Dance Heginbotham, Rena Anakwe, Inua Ellams, and Lenio Kaklea. An upcoming performance, *delicate people* by Ruth Childs and Cécile Bouffard, will be co-presented by L’Alliance New York’s Crossing The Line Festival and will make its North American Premiere on Governors Island on October 4, 2025.

Governors Island Arts presents its program with support from Bloomberg Philanthropies, Charina Endowment Fund, Stardust Fund, Surgo Foundation US, Donald A. Pels Charitable Trust, the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature, Carrie Denning Jackson and Dan Jackson, the Ripple Foundation, the Howard Gilman Foundation, the Jerome L. Greene Foundation, and the Cowles Charitable Trust.

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### **About Governors Island Arts**

Governors Island Arts, the public arts and cultural program presented by the Trust for Governors Island, creates transformative encounters with art for all New Yorkers, inviting artists and

audiences to engage with the issues of our time in the context of the Island's layered histories, environments, and architecture. Governors Island Arts achieves this mission through temporary and long-term public art installations and exhibitions, an annual Organizations in Residence program in the Island's historic houses, and the curated multidisciplinary *INTERVENTIONS* performance series. For more information, visit [www.govisland.org/arts](http://www.govisland.org/arts).