



PARTIES

Nick Cave Hosts an Art World Bash at the Park Avenue Armory

BY NOOR BRARA
June 8, 2018



1 / 6

Photos: Da Ping Luo
Nick Cave and Beth Rudin DeWoody.

In 1991, a black taxi driver in Los Angeles named Rodney King was brutally beaten by a group of white police officers following a high-speed car chase. When footage from the incident was released—as it so happened, someone had filmed the entire episode from atop a balcony nearby—it quickly picked up media attention worldwide. The officers were tried on charges of excessive force and nearly all were totally acquitted; Los Angeles, in turn, exploded in a six-day period of civil unrest and violence that left thousands of people injured or dead.

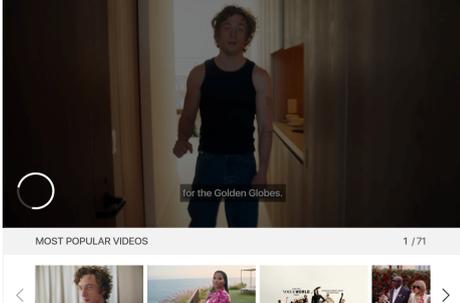


Somewhere in Chicago, the artist Nick Cave, was rattled to the core when he became aware of what had happened to King, the subsequent riots, and the fact that most of the officers had gotten off scot-free. "I remember thinking that my identity is really only protected in the privacy of my own home," he said. "That the moment I leave this space, I could be just another profile." In response, he created the first of what would become his claim to fame: a wearable sculpture he called a "soundsuit" that served as a sort of body armor or protection from the outside world. When donned, the wearer was totally concealed, and any physical indicators of race, gender, class, and sexuality were erased from view. Within this second skin, one was, essentially, freed.

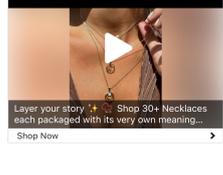
ADVERTISEMENT

It comes as little surprise in 2018, then, that the Park Avenue Armory selected Cave as their artist-in-residence this season, and on Wednesday evening, the art world gathered there to ring in his new show, "The Let Go." Comprised of two parts, the first is a viewing of Cave's new series of soundsuits made from his signature color-laden materials of raffia, synthetic human hair, pipe cleaners, and other brightly toned, fuzzy fabrics, while in the second part, the suits are donned by dancers who invite viewers to take part in a performance set to music and a collective a town hall-style dance party. Cave's premiere performance took place in the Wade Thompson Drill Hall and filled the dark space with a 40-foot, rainbow-color Mylar sculpture that dazzled the audience beneath it as it swooped by on rods encircling the crowd. Here, a group of young vocalists from the Sing Harlem Choir—lead by Jorell Williams and Vy Higginsen—sang songs in gospel-style harmonies before a transfixed audience. Their reprise belted out the words "a change has come over me" as the dance performers assumed their soundsuits, and after about 20 minutes of what felt like a religious experience of calm—intended by Cave to create a moment of cathartic transfiguration in the mind and to, essentially, "let go"—the performers, singers, and space itself erupted into a full-on dance frenzy, culminating in a celebration of the collective differences of all who were there. The event opened for the audience to take part, turning, thereafter, into an '80s-inspired disco scene as a DJ took over for the singers. "Back in the day, the clubs felt like the only place I was truly safe and celebrated for being who I was born to be," noted Cave. "I am using 'The Let Go' as a way to share that feeling."

After the festivities and a special dinner, attendees—including artists Dustin Yellin, Hank Willis Thomas, and Rachel Rose, designer James de Givenchy, and playwright Lynn Nottage—made their way out into the summer night.



Beyoncé's Fans Understood the Assignment for the Renaissance Tour



Layer your story | Shop 90+ Necklaces each packaged with its very own meaning... | Shop Now



Layer your story | Shop 90+ Necklaces each packaged with its very own meaning... | Shop Now

Vogue Daily

The latest in top fashion stories, editor's picks, and celebrity style.

 [SIGN UP NOW](#)

By signing up you agree to our [User Agreement](#) (including the class action waiver and arbitration provisions), our [Privacy Policy & Cookie Statement](#) and to receive marketing and account-related emails from Architectural Digest. You can unsubscribe at any time. This site is protected by reCAPTCHA and the Google [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Service](#) apply.

READ MORE

CELEBRITY STYLE

TV & MOVIES

All the Winners at the 2024 Critics Choice Awards

BY VOGUE

BEAUTY

The Best Beauty Instagrams of the Week: SZA, Jo Baker, and More

BY ELISE TAYLOR

ROYALS

ROYALS

The Royal Romance of Queen Mary and King Frederik of Denmark

BY ELISE TAYLOR

MAKEUP

At Fendi, Blush is For the Boys, Too

BY MARGAUX ANBOUBA

Sponsored Links by Taboola

Doctor Says Slimming Down After 60 Comes Down To This

Dr. Kellyann Wellborn

Learn More

Skin Doctor: 1 Essential Vitamin That Tightens "Crepey" Skin

Dr. Kellyann

Learn More

Target Shoppers Say This Drugstore Wrinkle Cream Sold Out At Target (In 2 Days)

Super C Serum

Sparse Lashes? Women over 40 are Loving this Mascara

Prime Promotics

Heart Surgeon: If You Eat Avocado Everyday, This Is What Happens

Gundry MD

Watch Now

This Drugstore Wrinkle Cream Sold Out At Target (In 2 Days)

Super C Serum



VOGUE

The latest fashion news, beauty coverage, celebrity style, fashion week updates, culture reviews, and videos on Vogue.com.



MORE FROM VOGUE

NEWSLETTER

CUSTOMER CARE

VERIFY SUBSCRIPTION

CONTACT US

ABOUT VOGUE

CAREERS

PROJECTS

VOGUE ARCHIVE

FORCES OF FASHION

SEE MORE STORIES

FASHION

BEAUTY

CULTURE

LIVING

RUNWAY

SHOPPING

MAGAZINE

GIFT GUIDES