

News / Art

See this art installation transform a Times Square lobby into a garden party

By Howard Halle

Posted: Tuesday March 3 2020, 5:42pm



Photograph: Zdravko Cota

If there's one thing you could say about **Times Square**, it's that it's stimulating—maybe a little *too stimulating*. Everywhere, **giant flagship stores** lure shoppers with visual theatrics, while five-story high digital billboards bombard you with ads for everything from **Broadway musicals** to Asian news agencies (though why **tourists** would be interested in the latter is anyone's guess). But it has ever been thus: Almost from the beginning, Times Square has been dominated by noise, traffic—and especially by flashing, repeated messaging. Now, a new installation by artist and architect Aaron Pexa promises to provide a break from all that sensory overload.



Taking up the lobby of 10 Times Square, Pexa's work is called *Garden Party* and combines floral wallpaper inspired by the building's Art Deco interior with neon and back-lit sculptures. But *Garden Party's* main attraction is a mesmerizing, 20-minute video titled, *I Wander the Forest in Search of Mystery*. A surreal sequence that looks like it's been shot through gauze, *I Wander the Forest* features a crystal chandelier sparkling in the midday sun as it lazily twirls above a clearing by a lake. Every now and then, billowing clouds of colored smoke pass through the frame, obscuring the dreamlike mise-én-scene.



Photograph: Zdravko Cota

Pexa describes his effort as an escape from the strobing, quick-cut editing of the signage environment outside, and indeed, the installation title and its 1920s-style touches evoke nothing so much as a romantic retreat to Gatsby's fictional Long Island Sound, where swanky society types gathered to drink on rolling verdant lawns. You, too, can join the party starting on Thursday through May 25.

ADVERTISING

ADVERTISING

Staff
Writer



By Howard H 409 Posts

Howard Halle is the Editor-at-large for Time Out New York as well as Chief Art Critic and Editor of the Art section. He joined TONY on August 1, 1995 as part of the staff at the launch of the magazine and has worked here since.

He taught 20th-century art history at the Corcoran Gallery School of Art in Washington D.C. before moving to NYC in 1981 to serve as the Curator for the The Gallery and Performance Art program at The Kitchen, one of the city's oldest non-profit arts centers. Additionally, he organized exhibitions at galleries and other institutional venues, including the Centre George Pompidou in Paris. Before coming to Time Out, he was Assistant Art Editor at Grand Street, an arts and literary quarterly.

Reach him at howard.halle@timeout.com and follow him on Twitter at [@HowardHalle](https://twitter.com/HowardHalle).