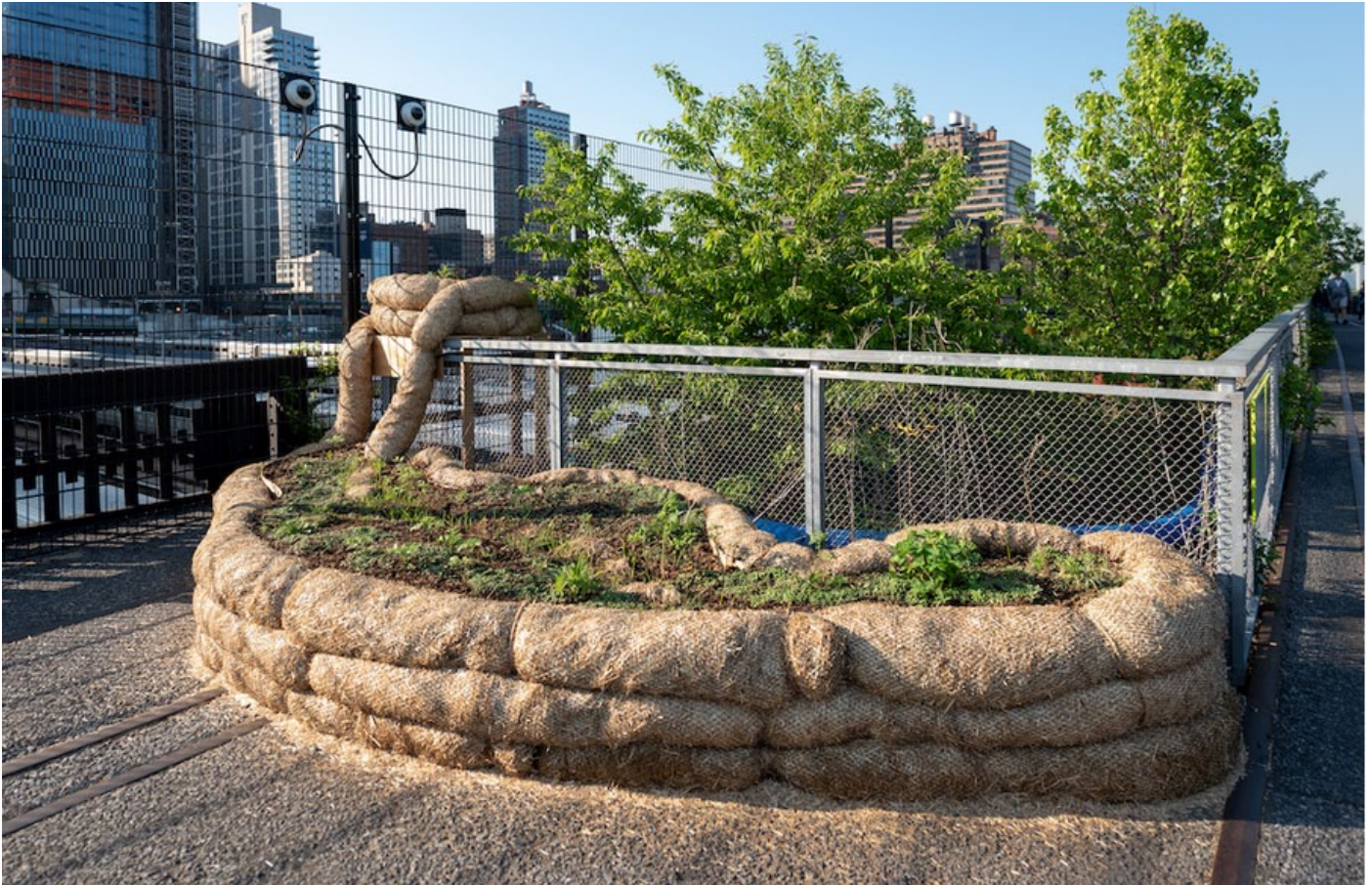


'Activating Public Space': A High Line Art Walk with Curator Cecilia Alemani

MARIA THEREZA ALVES



Maria Thereza Alves, *A Ballast Flora Garden: High Line*, 2018.

TIMOTHY SCHENCK/COURTESY HIGH LINE ART

Maria Thereza Alves, *A Ballast Flora Garden: High Line*

“Maria Thereza Alves is a Brazilian artist who lives in Berlin, and for many years she had been doing this work called *Seeds of Change*. She follows seeds’ migration due to man, not to nature, and she’s been doing a lot of studies in harbor cities like Bristol, England, and also New York, studying what’s called the ballast flora, which are dormant seeds that were brought with cargo ships from the 1700s onwards. Ballast was used as counterweight for the boats, and at the port they would dump it—mainly dirt or bricks or soil—in the harbor. But the ballast was actually carrying seeds, and so many of the seeds that we find here and on the High Line that we call native are actually not native of the United States at all—they come from West Africa or the U.K. or the Netherlands. Alves got the award from the Vera List Center for Arts and Politics two years ago, and so this is a collaboration with the Vera List Center and Pioneer Works and Weeksville Heritage Center. We all have a garden made of these seeds, which we consider native to New York City though they’re not native at all. She questions the notion of migration and what it means to be native.”