



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 12.18.09**

**PARK AVENUE ARMORY SELECTS CHRISTIAN BOLTANSKI  
TO CREATE MONUMENTAL INSTALLATION  
FOR WADE THOMPSON DRILL HALL**

**Second Annual Commission to be on View from May 12 – June 14, 2010  
To Fill 55,000-sq. ft. Drill Hall and Encompass Period Rooms and Grand Corridors**

New York, NY, December 18, 2009 -- Rebecca Robertson, President of Park Avenue Armory today announced that Christian Boltanski has been selected to create a monumental new work for its annual commissioning program, which it launched in May 2009 with Ernesto Neto's critically acclaimed *anthropodino*. The Boltanski work, *No Man's Land*, will be created for the Armory's Wade Thompson Drill Hall and will be on view from May 12 through June 14, 2010.

In *No Man's Land*, the Armory's 55,000 square-foot Drill Hall will be piled with thousands of pieces of used clothing, creating an undulating sea and a 40-foot-high mountain. A five-story crane with a large construction claw, commonly used for dredging, will grab clumps of clothing from the mountain, hoist and then drop them so that the individual pieces will flutter down back into the mass on the floor. Industrial conveyer belts will snake through the sea of clothing, continuously feeding the mountain which will be dredged, once again, in a never-ending cycle. In addition to the mechanical noises of the crane, claw and conveyer belts, the work will be further animated by the pounding sound of human heartbeats. Boltanski is also creating a series of installations throughout the Armory's grand corridors and historic rooms.

Tom Eccles, Executive Director of the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College, is the curator of the exhibition. Park Avenue Armory's annual commissioning program is supported by a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation *NYC Cultural Innovation Fund*, with additional support for *No Man's Land* from Daniel and Estrellita Brodsky and The Lauder Foundation/Leonard and Evelyn Lauder Fund.

"The goal of our commissioning program is to enable different artists to use the Armory's dramatic scale and unique character to both catalyze and inform their work –and to be part of these works, not just a container for them," stated Ms. Robertson. "*No Man's Land* builds upon Boltanski's explorations of the tension between the majestic and the infernal, individuality and anonymity, and memory and loss. In contrast to the

exuberance and playfulness of the Neto installation, the Boltanski work will provide a contemplative, emotive and visceral experience.”

“*No Man’s Land* is a vision reminiscent of Gustav Doré’s famous illustrations of Dante’s Inferno that continues Boltanski’s exploration of humanity’s capacity for evil,” stated Mr. Eccles. “Boltanski himself compares the claw to ‘chance’ or life ‘as a game of dice.’”

*No Man’s Land* is a second iteration of an ongoing series that includes *Personnes*, an installation at the Grand Palais in Paris that will open in January 2010, as part of Monumenta, an annual series supported by the Ministère de la Culture et communication and co-produced with the Centre national des arts plastiques and the Réunion des musées nationaux. Park Avenue Armory and the Grand Palais have been working together since 2006 to identify a collaborative project and with Christian Boltanski the two organizations will be presenting one artist creating two similar works in very different contexts. Both installations will draw upon a vocabulary and materials that Boltanski has been using in other recent large-scale installations, yet will take on much of their meaning from the specific building and city within which each is created.

### **About Christian Boltanski**

Christian Boltanski was born in occupied Paris in 1944 and currently lives and works in Malakoff, France. Boltanski has had major exhibitions at the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (1984); Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; MOCA, LA (1988); New Museum, NY (1988); and Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (1990). He has recently had solo exhibitions the Kunstmuseum Liechtenstein (2009); Magasin 3, Stockholm (2008); and La Maison Rouge, Paris (2008).

Boltanski’s recent works include “Memory’s Flight” (2008), a permanent installation in Bologna, Italy; an installation for the 2009 Echigo-Tsumari Triennial exhibition in Niigata, Japan; and a sound installation for the 2008 Folkestone Triennial in southeast England. His work has been featured in Documenta V (1972), VI (1977), and VIII (1987).

Boltanski’s work is in the permanent collections of major museums around the world, including the Museum of Modern Art, NY; Guggenheim Museum; Museum of Contemporary Art, LA; Walker Art Center; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden; Tate Modern; and San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. In New York and Paris, Boltanski is represented by Marian Goodman Gallery.

### **About Park Avenue Armory**

Part palace, part industrial shed, Park Avenue Armory was listed in 2000 by World Monuments Fund as one of the 100 Most Endangered Historic Sites in the world. Today, it is being given new life as a center for performing and visual art that cannot be mounted in traditional performance halls and museums. With its soaring 55,000 square foot drill hall and its array of its exuberant period rooms, Park Avenue Armory fills a critical void in the cultural ecology of the city by enabling artists to create—and the public to experience—unconventional work that could not otherwise be presented in New

York. The Armory's first commission, *anthropodino*, was launched in May of 2009. This site specific installation by artist Ernesto Neto was described as "spectacular ...a magical destination" by the *New York Times*.

In 2007, the Armory presented its first production, Aaron Young's *Greeting Card*. Produced in collaboration with Art Production Fund, this large-scale "action painting" was created by a choreographed group of motorcyclists within the Armory's Wade Thomson Drill Hall. Since then, the Armory has partnered with New York institutions to present many other extraordinary works, among them, Bernd Zimmermans's opera *Die Soldaten*, Ariane Mnouchkine's *les Ephemeres* and Declan Donnellans's *Boris Godunov* (as part of the 2008 and 2009 Lincoln Center Festivals); the 2008 Whitney Biennial with site-specific installations and performances by 37 artists; and an evening of Stravinsky's *Sacred Masterpieces* presented in association with Columbia University's Miller Theatre that drew rave critical reviews for the Armory's unique sound.

###

**For more information or for images, please contact:**

Julia Kirchhausen, Resnicow Schroeder Associates  
212-671-5161  
[jkirchhausen@resnicowschroeder.com](mailto:jkirchhausen@resnicowschroeder.com)

Kira Garcia, Resnicow Schroeder Associates  
212-671-5155  
[kgarcia@resnicowschroeder.com](mailto:kgarcia@resnicowschroeder.com)