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A match made in heaven: The Armory Show brings large scale sculptures to the US Open

The sculptures, which will be placed on the grounds of the Billie Jean King National Tennis Center during the tournament, will all be by artists from underrepresented backgrounds

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The US Open, 2019.
Photo, Wikimedia Commons

Of all the tennis Grand Slam tournaments, the US Open holds a special place in the heart of professional tennis players. Like The Armory Show, it's a global event, while being a decidedly New York affair. It makes so much sense then, that New York's art fair has partnered with the United States Tennis Association (USTA) to serve up large-scale outdoor sculptures at the tournament grounds.

The sculptures, all created by artists from underrepresented backgrounds, will be right at home in Queens, New York's biggest, most populated and most diverse borough, which is home to over 100 nationalities who speak 138 different languages.

The partnership is an extension and continuation of The Armory Off-Site programme that began last year, and the USTA's Be Open campaign, which began in 2020. The programme will feature works by the Nigerian artist Gerald Chukwuma, the Mexican artist Jose Dávila and the Indigenous artist Luzene Hill, among others.

"This is an exciting step in the US Open's continuing integration of the arts," says Nicole Kankam, managing director of pro tennis marketing for the USTA. "The Be Open campaign has been a platform for tennis and the US Open to champion diverse, creative voices, and a partnership with the Armory Show, one of New York's long standing cultural institutions, will only expand the US Open's commitment to embodying those values."

The Armory Show, which runs from 9-11 September, will coincide with the US Open's finals (the tournament runs 23 August-11 September).

"This joint venture brings a piece of The Armory Show to the tournament, promising to spark important conversations around the dynamic works on view," says Nicole Berry, executive director of the fair. "Armory Off-Site further elevates September as the pivotal cultural moment for international audiences to be in New York City."

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