The bifurcations of the trees that appear so intimately human to us . . . The bifurcations of the fingers, by their movement through space, form the branches, the roots, and by the succession of actions in the same points, construct the branches and trunk of the plant. The woodland landscape is the action of sculpture.
—Giuseppe Penone

Golden Gate National Recreation Area and the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy have partnered with Gagosian to present a yearlong outdoor installation by Giuseppe Penone through the Art in the Parks program. Fort Mason is a historic site within Golden Gate National Recreation Area where hundreds of trees were planted by the military between fifty and one hundred years ago. The National Park Service (NPS) stewards the site’s cultural landscape.
Bringing art into the context of our national parks not only allows us to share these spectacular and inspirational works with park visitors; Giuseppe Penone at Fort Mason invites us to take a closer look at our parks’ relationship with nature through the site’s history and at the ongoing stewardship of preservation and conservation.

—Charles Strickfaden, Chief of Communications, Golden Gate National Recreation Area

From his earliest site-specific sculptures made in the forests around his hometown in Piedmont, Italy, Penone has adapted elements from the natural world, exploring the deep evolutionary interdependence between sculpture and nature across geological time. The dramatic installation in the Great Meadow at Fort Mason is Penone’s first public work on the West Coast. In *Idee di pietra (Ideas of Stone)* (2004), large river stones nestle in the high branches of a bronze sculpture cast from a tree, as if weighing down the natural reach of the tree towards the light. The tree stands tall and straight; its narrow silhouette supporting the stones high into the air suggests a force resisting the planetary burden of gravity.

A second cast bronze tree, *La logica del vegetale (The Logic of the Vegetal)* (2012), lies on its side, its gnarled root system fully exposed. Five living saplings native to California (valley oak, coast live oak, bigleaf maple, and two California bay laurels) will be planted at the tips of the sculpture’s bare branches, allowing exuberant growth to sprout up around their bronze counterpart.

The mission of Art in the Parks is to provide programs that are transformative, unexpected, and inspirational. We’re delighted that Giuseppe Penone’s work will be on public display at Fort Mason and related works are being exhibited this fall at Gagosian downtown. Our hope is that these concurrent exhibits further illuminate how Golden Gate National Recreation Area serves as a backdrop to all kinds of beauty and meaningful visitor experiences.

—Kate Bickert, Senior Director, Parks Conservancy

The areas protected by the National Park Service have long provided inspiration for artists; in return, the park sites have used art to deepen the public’s enjoyment, appreciation, and understanding of these precious natural resources. Thus Penone’s compelling sculptural investigation of the perpetual give-and-take between humans and nature offers a poetic analogy to the evolution of the park itself.

**Giuseppe Penone** was born in 1947 in Garessio, Italy, and currently lives and works in Paris and Turin, Italy. His career began in the 1960s with the Arte Povera movement in his native Italy. This radical group of artists employed “poor,” unconventional elements and raw materials to question cultural assumptions and evoke a preindustrial age, critiquing dehumanizing systems of industrialization and mechanization, as well as contemporaneous art movements. Penone’s earliest works made in the forests around his hometown in Piedmont marked the beginning of an enduring fascination with the arboreal realm that is still prevalent in his work today. Collections include the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York; Tate, London; Centre Pompidou, Paris; and the Louvre Abu Dhabi. Exhibitions include Musée des Arts Contemporains du Grand-Hornu, Belgium (2010); *Drawings and Sculptures*, De Pont Museum, Netherlands (2010); 22 Opere a Versailles, Chateau de Versailles, France (2013); *Idee di Stone (Idee di Pietra)*, Madison Square Park, New York (2013-14); *Being the River, Repeating the Forest*, Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas (2015); Anafora, Reggia di Venaria Reale, Italy (2016); and *Matrice / Matrix*, Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana, Rome (2017). In 2017, *Germination*, Penone’s permanent, site-specific installation for the Louvre Abu Dhabi, was presented at the inauguration of the museum. Penone has received numerous accolades, including the Praemium Imperiale, Japan Arts Association (2014).

**About Gagosian**

Larry Gagosian opened his first gallery in Los Angeles in 1980, expanding his reach to New York five years later. Since then, Gagosian has evolved into a global network of seventeen exhibition spaces in North America, Europe, and Asia. In addition to its vibrant contemporary art program featuring leading international artists, Gagosian also presents unparalleled historical exhibitions, including a series of groundbreaking, popular surveys on the art of Pablo Picasso. The gallery publishes scholarly exhibition catalogues, artist monographs, catalogues raisonnés, and the
About Art in the Parks

Giuseppe Penone at Fort Mason is a presentation of Art in the Parks—a cooperative effort of the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the Presidio Trust, and the Headlands Center for the Arts—and Gagosian. The mission of Art in the Parks is to provide programs that introduce visitors to creative experiences that are transformative, unexpected, and inspirational. Recent programming such as @Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz, the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Big Blue Whale at Crissy Field, and PianFrancisco at Fort Point helps visitors connect with the history and stories of national parks. Learn more at parksconservancy.org/art.

About the Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy

The Golden Gate National Parks Conservancy is the nonprofit membership organization that supports the Golden Gate National Parks. Since 1981, the Parks Conservancy has provided over $550 million in aid for transformations, habitat restorations, research and conservation, volunteer and youth engagement, and interpretive and educational programs. Learn more at parksconservancy.org.

About Golden Gate National Recreation Area

Golden Gate National Recreation Area, situated in and around San Francisco, is the most visited park site in the National Park Service, hosting more than 15 million visitors in 2018. A diverse park with abundant recreational opportunities, as well as natural, cultural, and scenic resources, it encompasses more than 82,000 acres across three counties. The park also administers two other NPS areas: Fort Point National Historic Site, a Civil War-era fortress built on the northernmost point of land in San Francisco, and Muir Woods National Monument, which comprises an impressive stand of old-growth coastal redwoods in Marin County. For more information, visit nps.gov/goga.

#PenoneSF