

CULTURED

ART

BEFORE SUMMER ENDS, SEE THESE FIVE TEMPORARY ART INSTALLATIONS IN NEW YORK

BEATRIZ COLÓN

07.20.2021



MELVIN EDWARDS, *SONG OF THE
BROKEN CHAINS*, 2020. COURTESY
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FUND AT CITY HALL PARK, NEW YORK
CITY, MAY 4 TO NOVEMBER 28, 2021.
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Brighter Days at City Hall Park by Melvin Edwards

Through November 28

Brighter Days is a collection of six sculptures created by artist Melvin Edwards between 1970 and 1996, and again in 2020. Despite the decades between them, they share a visual object in common: the artist's use of steel links, both broken or unbroken. Chains can either hold us together or hold us back, but the site of these artworks, an African burial ground as well as a frequent location for 2020's Black Lives Matter protests, reminds us of the consequences of the latter, in the prejudices caused by slavery that we still see in the United States today. At the same time, the symbolism of the broken chains and the collection's hopeful title are serve as a monument to liberation and optimism. Edwards's signature motif emphasizes a painful past but also serves as an emblem of unity.