

GAGOSIAN



Lights out: professional mourners in London for Taryn Simon's study of grief



Mourners from Azerbaijan courtesy Taryn Simon

Why and how do people grieve? The US artist Taryn Simon, in partnership with the UK public art body Artangel and New York's Park Avenue Armory, is bringing her performance piece, *An Occupation of Loss*, to London. For her new work, the artist has invited professional mourners from 11 countries, including Azerbaijan, China, Russia and Venezuela, to enact rituals of grief and lamentation in a venue beneath Islington Green in the north of the capital (17-28 April). Simon says in a statement: "Loss yields an emotional space and a vulnerability in which individuals seem to operate without artifice. I wanted to look at the potential of this space, and the mechanics of it, even the ways it can be programmed or performed." The artist examines how religion and government underpins mourning as part of her quest to unravel "the anatomy of grief".