

commissions



MARCOS LUTYENS AND ALESSANDRO MARIANANTONI

CO2morrow

London and Seaton Delaval Hall, U.K.

The molecular form of *CO2morrow*, a color-shifting public artwork by Marcos Lutyens and Alessandro Marianantoni, signals its scientific foundation—the glowing lights respond to real-time atmospheric data. The artists developed the concept for “eARTH: Art of a changing world,” an exhibition sponsored by the National Trust. Additional funding from Siemens and Trust New Art (an Arts Council England and National Trust partnership) allowed them to make it modular, so it could be transported and installed in different locations. *CO2morrow* first appeared on the façade of the Royal Academy of Arts building in London and was later installed on the grounds of Seaton Delaval Hall, a National Trust site in Northumberland (July 2010 through February 2011; additional sites are yet to be determined).

The 28-foot-diameter rounded shell is constructed of carbon fiber, LED lights, and aluminum. Interlocking aluminum polygons recalling chemistry models are attached to the structure, hanging and winding through its openings. At night, it glows in a range of blue and violet tones (the blue end of the spectrum indicating stronger oxygen and the magenta showing CO₂) keyed to current U.K. data (generated at a site near Weybourne, Norfolk). Working with atmospheric and manufacturing specialists, Lutyens and Marianantoni needed five months to design *CO2morrow* and two months to fabricate it.

Lutyens says that he and Marianantoni want their work to reflect perception and consciousness—they developed *CO2morrow* out of an interest in “our social relationship with the landscape around us.” They have enjoyed watching viewers react to the work: “It is gratifying to see the response to the sculpture when visitors realize that it is not just a formal artwork of limited

Above, left and right: Marcos Lutyens and Alessandro Marianantoni, *CO2morrow*, 2009. Carbon fiber, LED lights, aluminum, and programming elements, 28 ft. diameter.

dimensions, but a kind of finger pointing toward a giant emergent sculpture we call the ‘atmosphere.’ It seems to open up their horizons, which is exactly what art should achieve.”

RAFAEL LOZANO-HEMMER

Solar Equation

Melbourne, Australia

For last year’s Light in Winter festival in Melbourne, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer suspended an enormous, burning sun over the city. The focal point of *Solar Equation* was a specially fabricated, 14-meter-diameter, stationary helium balloon that hovered over Federation Square. Five projectors (linked to motion sensors to correct for the balloon’s bobbing) worked in concert to create a seamless, constantly changing image that echoed the surface of the sun by using current NASA and Solar Dynamics Observatory data in combination with mathematical equations that simulated the appearance and frequency of solar flare-ups and storms. The brilliant red-orange imagery, punctuated with bursts of fiery swirling, was accompanied by sound—a continuous, low crackling and sputtering, reminiscent of a roaring fireplace.

Lozano-Hemmer says that his research led him to new facts about the sun—for example, he learned about solar seasons, which take place in 11-year cycles. He compressed that time frame in *Solar Equation*, so that it appeared every five minutes. He also intervened in the data by allowing viewers to interact with the installation. Free mobile device applications allowed viewers to learn more about the sun and the installation and to participate in the display—individuals could create patterns by touching the screens



Above and detail: Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, *Solar Equation*, 2010. Helium balloon, tethers and winches, 5 HD projectors, and 7 computers with custom software, 14 meters diameter. Right, top and bottom: Bruce Munro, *CDSea*, 2010. Donated CDs, 100 x 100 meters.

of their handheld devices and then watch the “sun” duplicate their designs. Lozano-Hemmer says that his main objective in creating public art installations—usually with projected light—is to turn public spaces into places where people can share experiences. *Solar Equation*'s engagement and interactivity, as well as its psychologically (if not physically) warming grandeur, gave the people of Melbourne a reason to get outside and enjoy the winter.

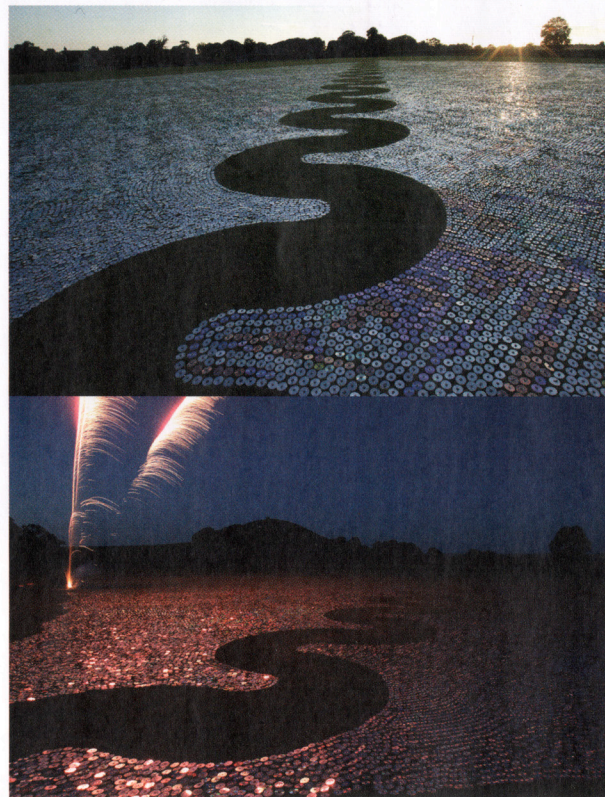
BRUCE MUNRO

CDSea

Kilmington, U.K.

In *CDSea*, Bruce Munro offered his vision of an inland sea, an idea first inspired by his visit to an Australian beach in 1985. Munro was stuck by light reflections on the water and initiated this project to re-create that transformative experience. He says that everything fell into place when he heard a story about the previous owners of his house on Long Knoll Field in Kilmington: “He had promised to buy his wife a house by the sea. She was really disappointed to find it was inland, and they sold it to us almost immediately. I thought how nice it would be to transform the field into an inland sea after all...[and] remembered that moment in Australia...when the light was silver on the ocean.” He decided to use the silvery, reflective sides of CDs as his light-creating medium and collected approximately 600,000 of them to arrange in the empty public field.

After the idea, he had to tackle the logistics: “When you think up these ideas, you don’t necessarily think through all the installation issues.” Munro received bags and carloads of donated CDs and “had to get volunteers to take thousands of [them] out of their cases. It was a lot of work that I had not anticipated.” In the end, he invited “friends and their families...and 140 of us spent the weekend laying the CDs. Everybody had a different technique or pattern. One older chap had a long stick, and he sent each CD flying down the stick from a standing position. Everybody else more or less got a bad back



from bending over for so many hours. But it was tremendous fun.” Once *CDSea* was installed, he says, “It seemed to make people—even adults—want to run along the wavy path as fast as they could.” Munro had hoped that the installation would last for two months, but “had not foreseen how fast the grass would grow.” Nor did he expect that “so many seagulls would be attracted to the ‘water’ and flip the CDs around.” In the end, *CDSea* lasted less than a month, but it added up to an evocative and powerful artwork.

—Elizabeth Lynch

Juries are convened each month to select works for Commissions. Information on recently completed commissions, along with quality 35mm slides/transparencies or high-resolution digital images (300 dpi at 4 x 5 in. minimum) and an SASE for return of slides, should be sent to: Commissions, Sculpture, 1633 Connecticut Avenue NW, 4th Floor, Washington, DC 20009.