



## 1.26

Denver Art Museum to Civic Center Park over 14th St  
Biennial of the Americas  
July 2010 - Denver, Colorado

### Description:

Janet Echelman's 230-foot-long aerial sculpture "1.26" suspends from the roof of the 7-story Denver Art Museum above downtown street traffic to commemorate the inaugural Biennial of the Americas.

The City of Denver asked the artist to create a monumental yet temporary work exploring the theme of the interconnectedness of the 35 nations that make up the Western Hemisphere. She drew inspiration from the NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory's announcement that the February 2010 Chile earthquake shortened the length of the earth's day by 1.26 microseconds by slightly redistributing the earth's mass. Exploring further, Echelman drew on a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) simulation of the earthquake's ensuing tsunami, using the 3-dimensional form of the tsunami's amplitude rippling across the Pacific as the basis for her sculptural form.

The temporary nature of the Biennial and its accelerated timeline precluded the artist's use of a permanent steel armature, as employed in the artist's previous monumental permanent commissions. Instead, "1.26" pioneers a tensile support matrix of Spectra® fiber, a material 15 times stronger than steel by weight. This low-impact, super-lightweight design made it possible to temporarily attach the sculpture directly to the façade of the Denver Art Museum, and this structural system opens up a new trajectory for the artist's work in urban airspace.

Because this monumental sculpture is made entirely of soft materials, it is animated by the wind. Its fluidly moving form contrasts with the rigid surfaces of the surrounding urban architecture. At night, colored lighting transforms the work into a floating, luminous form while darkness conceals the support cables.

"1.26" was commissioned by the Denver Office of Cultural Affairs Public Art Program for the inaugural Biennial of the Americas and realized through the artist's collaboration with a team of award winning engineers, architects, artists, fabricators, and installers.

A book about "1.26" includes an essay by Sanford Kwinter, Professor of Architectural Theory and Criticism at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, cofounder of the journal *Zone* and *Zone Books*, and author of *Architectures of Time: Towards a Theory of the Event in Modernist Culture*.

**Materials:** Spectra fiber, high-tenacity polyester fiber, lighting.

**Size:** 230 ft. long x 63 ft. x 30 ft., suspended 93 ft. in the air.

### Team:

Sponsoring Agency: Denver Office of Cultural Affairs

City Project Coordinator: Kendall Peterson, DOCA; Chris Jahn, Fuse Studio Architects

Artist: Janet Echelman, Janet Echelman, Inc.

Art Project Manager: Mark Drummond Davis, Janet Echelman, Inc.

Engineer of Record: Charles Keyes & Shane McCormick, Martin/Martin

Design Engineer: Peter Heppel, Peter Heppel Associates

NASA Scientist: Richard Gross, Jet Propulsion Laboratory

NOAA Scientist: Christopher Moore, Center for Tsunami Research

Installation Management: Mike Mancarella, Junoworks

Lighting Designer: Joseph Gann, Richter Scale Productions

Spectra® Fiber: Honeywell