

# sculpture

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**Cuba, Switzerland,  
Finland, and Iran**



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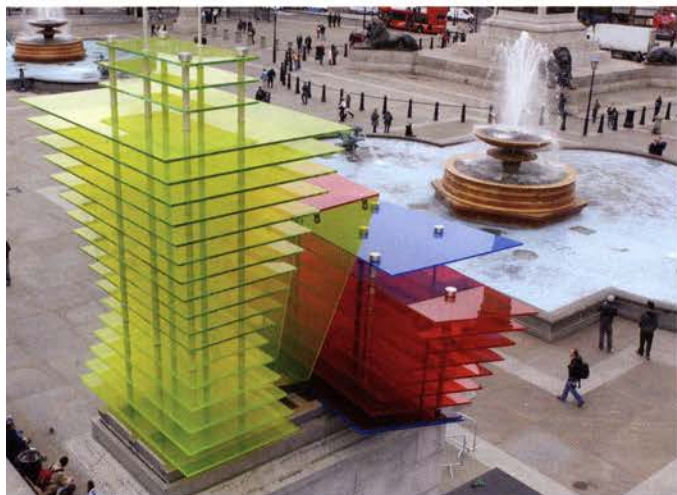




## Reprieve for Echelman Work in Phoenix

A groundswell of community support has given new life to Janet Echelman's planned public sculpture for Phoenix, Arizona, saving it from municipal cold feet. Back in April 2007, a city-appointed panel selected Echelman from among 178 artists to create a work for a new downtown park. Her proposal consists of a 65-foot-tall funnel of steel netting that hovers over the city like an apparition, anchored to three steel tow-

ers in Civic Space Park. Moving with the wind and changing with the light, the work promises the kind of dramatic destination experience that the City of Phoenix said it wanted and for which Echelman is known. But in December, when time came to allocate the final funds for the \$2.4 million work (Echelman had already received \$104,000), the City Manager's Office, faced with a budget crunch, suddenly found reasons to reject the commissioned sculpture—possible delays to park construction, questions about the appropriateness of the materials, and the specter of controversy. Killing the project, however, would not have balanced the budget (as the artist's supporters pointed out) since the money came from nontransferable percent-for-art funds. After about a week of debate, public discussion, and intermediate subcommittee votes in favor of the sculpture, the city council approved Echelman's sculpture on December 18. It is scheduled for completion in November 2008. Echelman has also been chosen to create a work for the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver.



## On Now and Coming to Fourth Plinth

Unveiled in November 2007 to general acclaim, Thomas Schütte's dazzlingly colorful *Model for a Hotel*, is the most recent sculpture to be installed on Trafalgar Square's Fourth Plinth. Specially engineered red, yellow, and blue glass panels supported by steel and aluminum create a vibrant rendering of a 21-story building that belies its colossal 8-ton weight. Schütte's work will remain on view for 18 months—enough time for the next occupant to be selected and created. Six shortlisted artists for the next commission—Jeremy Deller, Tracey Emin, Antony Gormley, Anish Kapoor, Yinka Shonibare, and Bob & Roberta Smith (Patrick Brill)—have already created models of their proposed works, and the Mayor of London will announce the winner later this year. The models are on view at the Annenberg Court of the National Gallery in London through March 30, 2008, and images of the proposed works are available at [www.london.gov.uk/fourthplinth](http://www.london.gov.uk/fourthplinth).



## Otterness Donates Play Sculpture

The Lower East Side's ABC Playground recently dedicated *Large Coqui*, a new bronze sculpture donated by Tom Otterness. The work portrays a larger-than-life Puerto Rican tree frog with its offspring. According to Otterness, the subject testifies to the neighborhood's diversity and attempts to bridge cultural differences. "I've lived around the corner...for 30 years," he said. "Now I'll see the kids climbing the mom coqui and hugging the baby every morning when I leave the house—how great is that?"



Clockwise from top: Thomas Schütte, *Model for a Hotel*, 2007. Anish Kapoor, model for *Sky Plinth* proposal. Tracey Emin, model for *Something for the Future* proposal. Bob & Roberta Smith, model for *Faites L'Art, pas la Guerre* (*Make Art, Not War*) proposal.



skin. This multi-perspective composition created a complex Escheresque space, with the dislocated viewer wondering where to stand.

The exhibition also premiered the “Trophies from the Pièce Montée” series. Inspired by antique sculpture, the luscious drapery fragments had the look of porcelain yet consisted of sugar paste, giving a new twist to the dialogue between artifice and reality. Rivas’s unusual collaboration with his wife, pastry chef Macarena Urzúa, involved much trial and error before obtaining the successful formula of confectioner’s sugar, cornstarch, and gelatin. Because sugar dries quickly, they fashioned the desired shapes on mannequins. Some of the completed works were slightly shriveled like old flesh; others had the feel of pie dough. Placed on two rows of clear shelving, they seemed to float in a no man’s land, eerily suggesting catacombs, on one hand, and cannibalism, on the other. In this way, the series became a memento mori, its haunting beauty evoking decay and recalling the body fragments found at Pompeii and Herculaneum. Sugar itself contributed additional references. While it was used here to create a negative cast of an absent body, it generally represents a positive source of energy. As such, its consumption pattern has socioeconomic repercussions. From its origins as a product for the rich, it has evolved into a main nutrient (and health hazard) for the poor.

Rivas emerges as a master of the resonant fragment. His work is fundamentally about craft and labor, and how the hand has formed an invisible yet vital lineage from classical antiquity to the present day. Traversing time and place, his contemporary relics demonstrate that the fragment must be taken on its own terms as the linchpin between destruction and regeneration.

—Sarah Tanguy

## TAMPA, FLORIDA

### Janet Echelman

#### Poe Parking Garage

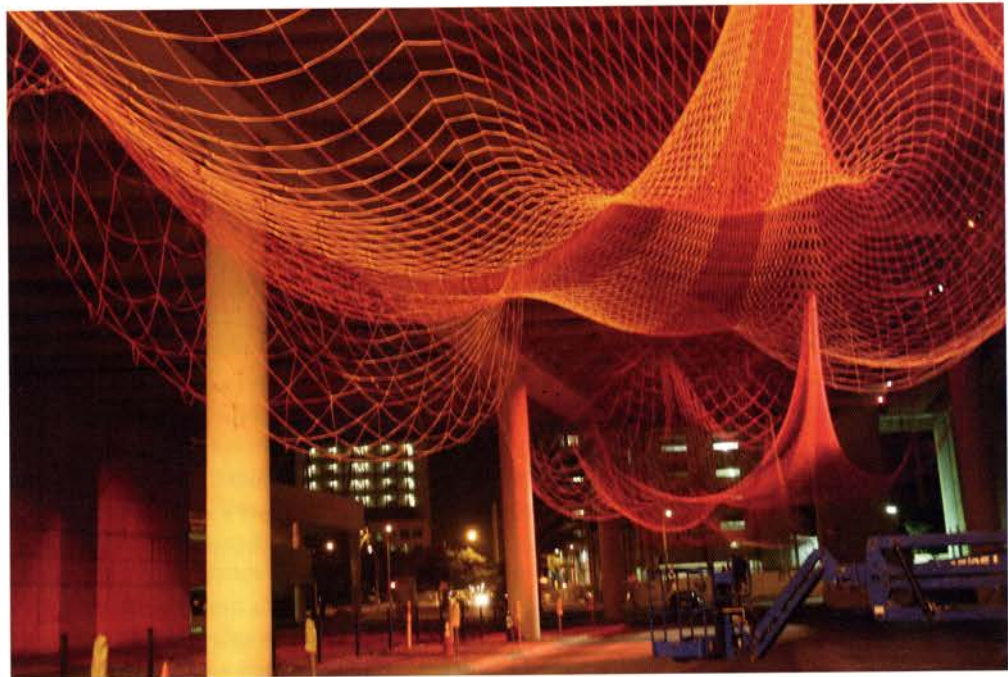
Janet Echelman’s *Line Drawing*, composed of draped red nets hanging in the William R. Poe parking garage in downtown Tampa, transformed an otherwise bland, concrete space into a magical one. The work was part of the “Lights on Tampa” Public Art Project, which lights up the city’s night landscape. Echelman noted that “the site called for an

sion to the work with their moving forms.

Echelman likened her installation to Plato’s allegory of the cave, with the “urban infrastructure as a modern-day cave wall.” While most viewers drove through the installation, pedestrians gained more from their experience as they moved through and interacted with the accompanying shadows and overhanging netting. Red, the chosen color of the nets, also attracted viewers and drew

and intricate netting bestowed something of the baroque on the utilitarian concrete space.

Robin Nigh, Arts Program Manager of the City of Tampa, noted that “‘Lights on Tampa’ provides a great introductory experience to new media art for the general public, making it fun and accessible while at the same time being of significance in terms of critically sophisticated art.” Public artworks in Tampa, and in other cities around



Janet Echelman, *Line Drawing*, 2006–07. High-tenacity multi-filament polypropylene, 36 ellipsoidal spotlights, and colored dichroic glass filters, 408 x 56 x 33 ft.

infusion of warmth and color sufficient to draw people inside and through the space.” Although the parking lot is located in the center of downtown, its gray tonality and stretches of concrete were justifiably ignored by users. By placing the large draped nets in the outer corridor facing a busy street and lighting them dramatically at night, Echelman called attention to the space. Complementing the hanging nets, shifting shadows around the space formed part of the installation and added another dimen-

the driver’s or pedestrian’s eye. Red can signal both anger and romance: in certain cultures, it is used for wedding ceremonies, and in others, for mourning. Its use in this large neutral space offered viewers the opportunity to bring their own emotions and ideas to that ordinary space.

At the opening of the installation, the crowd moved easily from an adjacent park to the parking garage, and at the illumination of the red nets, gasps were audible. Caravaggio’s dramatic chiaroscuro spaces came to mind, while the brilliant red lights

the world, offer viewers the possibility of using the imagination and dialogue to become more involved with contemporary art.

—Ann Albritton

## LONG ISLAND CITY, NY

### Christian Tomaszewski

#### SculptureCenter

In the cavernous basement of the SculptureCenter’s former trolley repair shop, Christian Tomaszewski created an isolated world of twisting and turning chambers and hallways. *On Chapels, Caves and Erotic*