

Major Site-Specific Works Land at San Francisco International Airport

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2-D collection focuses on Bay Area artists with new commissions by Miguel Arzabe and David Wilson

SAN FRANCISCO, September 16, 2019 – Following on the heels of the successful opening of phase one of Harvey Milk Terminal 1 in July, the San Francisco Arts Commission will add five new site-specific installations and fifteen two-dimensional works to San Francisco International Airport’s unparalleled collection of public art. The artworks were commissioned for the new AirTrain Station and Grand Hyatt Hotel through the City’s 2%-percent-for-art program, a 50-year-old program that ensures that exceptional public artwork is integrated into publically funded capital projects.

According to Director of Cultural Affairs Tom DeCaigny, “From Sarah Cain’s stunning installation for the new AirTrain Station to Kohei Nawa’s sleek futuristic sculpture and a two-dimensional collection that showcases the best contemporary artists in the Bay Area, the latest wave of public artworks at San Francisco International Airport encapsulate the creativity, innovation and diversity that is the hallmark of our region. I want to thank the leadership at the airport and the Hyatt for being such great partners as we work together to make the airport experience unlike any other.”

“The Grand Hyatt at SFO takes our airport to a new level of hospitality,” said Airport Director Ivar C. Satero. “At the same time, it complements our airport experience as a whole, by showcasing themes that resonate throughout our facilities: seamless access, sustainable

design, and works of public art that surprise, delight, and inspire. Our thanks go out to the San Francisco Arts Commission for contributing these amazing works of art to our newest facility.”

With the extension of the Blue Line AirTrain from the Rental Car Center to the new Grand Hyatt at SFO, the Arts Commission had the opportunity to work with Sarah Cain, a painter and multi-media artist whose practice is characterized by immersive site-specific installations awash in bold color. Her work references illuminated manuscripts, prisms and cascading rainbows, all of which lend themselves perfectly to glass and light. Extending 150 feet along the AirTrain platform, *We Will Walk Right Up To The Sun* is a show-stopping stained glass installation comprised of 37 panels with 270 colors framed in soldered zinc and arranged so no two adjoining fragments are the same shade.

According to Cain, “*We Will Walk Right Up To The Sun* is my first time working in the medium glass. I found it to be a great way to reference many sides of my practice with the colorful washy fused panels looking like sections of my paintings. This two-year-long process has involved so many people and has taught me how to take an idea and create it into something wonderful for many of people to experience for a long time.”

Stepping off the AirTrain platform, travelers will enter the lobby of the new Grand Hyatt at SFO. According to General Manager Henning Nopper, “Impactful, artful elements are key to creating a one of a kind experience for hotel guests and local visitors. We are fortunate to work with the San Francisco Arts Commission to bring immersive public art crafted by world-renowned artists into Grand Hyatt at SFO. These works of art are built into the fabric of the property and each piece provides a unique storytelling opportunity that connects us to both the city and our guests.”

Suspended above the lobby’s reception desk is an ethereal and delicate sculpture by Tahiti Pehrson. With paper and X-ACTO blades, Pehrson hand-cuts intricately patterned forms that speak to universal traditions of pattern making found throughout history. For this installation, *Circadian Transit*, Pehrson digitally scanned his original cut paper artwork so that it could be fabricated using laser jet cut aluminum. Using moiré patterns that reference the realms of mathematics, arts, and crafts, the installation explores the interplay between light, shadow and architectural space. Perception of volume and structure shift as the light changes throughout the day, and as the viewer moves around the work.

“My intention was to create something that would feel light and float and that would preserve the natural light in the room. I’ve been working in monochromatic white for over 15 years because of its optimal interaction with light and shadow and I think it feels very subtle in the room,” shared Pehrson.

Comprised of over 3,500 individual, kite-like ellipses, Jacob Hashimoto's immersive sculpture floats between two floors above the restaurant dining area in an undulating, interwoven canopy. *This Infinite Gateway of Time and Circumstance* transforms as images of earth, sea, and various graphics give way to a gradient of translucent whites, revealing what the artist envisioned as "a cloud of kites, and a landscape of air and earth, painted at the edge of the sky." The work creates the impression of a landscape drifting in and out of visibility through clouds, or slowly becoming subsumed by a descending marine layer. Other references include video games, virtual environments, cosmology, systems and languages of representation, nature, art, technology and architecture.

"It's a huge honor to be able to participate with the city of San Francisco to create a site specific sculpture for the Grand Hyatt at SFO," says Hashimoto. "This cloud-like sculpture is a kind of visual bridge, binding the airport, tarmac, and sky, hopefully providing a quiet, peaceful moment for travelers and visitors. It's great to be part of the gateway to the city."

The new Grand Hyatt features several state-of-the-art meeting rooms and ballroom spaces on its second floor. Adorning the hallways are several 2-dimensional artworks by some of the Bay Area's most celebrated artists. The collection includes works by Miya Ando, Natalya Burd, John Chiara, James Chronister, Richard Diebenkorn, Michael Dvortcsak, Crystal Liu, Terri Loewenthal, Klea McKenna, and Richard Misrach.

Also included in the 2-dimensional collection are two newly commissioned works by Bay Area artists Miguel Arzabe and David Wilson. In *Cultural Fabric (Bay Area)*, Arzabe created a digital collage of collected images from Bay Area art exhibitions featuring artists with whom he has a personal relationship. The images were then printed on paper, cut into strips, and woven together by hand to form a tapestry. An homage to the textile tradition of the artist's Andean heritage (Bolivia), Arzabe's woven patterns reference motifs that describe the environment and mythology of a particular region.

"The source material for my piece comes from promotional material I gathered from various Bay Area art exhibitions," says Arzabe. "For me it is such a great honor to have my work in the collection at SFO on view for an international audience, and I wanted to extend that honor to these artists by weaving their work together."

Wilson spends a lot of time outdoors, exploring the landscape around his Oakland home. For his epic series of plein air drawings, the artist created a mobile work surface in Claremont Canyon where over the course of several months he created 40 individual works from direct observation. *Winter/Spring, Standing in Claremont Canyon* offers a panoramic view stretching from South San Francisco to San Francisco, including the area where the San Francisco Airport is located.

"For this piece, I walked each day to a site nestled in the Oakland Hills above my neighborhood to stand and draw while looking at the expanse of the bay. I think of the drawing as a time capsule for this moment in the life of this place, and it is an honor to have made something that will live with the city as it continues to change and expand, stated Wilson."

In the ground floor lobby, visitors are greeted by a large hand-cut glass and stone mosaic by Ellen Harvey. *Green Map* inverts the traditional idea of a map to highlight the region's green space. Instead of focusing on cities, towns and roads, this map features places like the Marin Headlands, Mount Tamalpais and Point Reyes National Seashore. In doing so, the dazzling artwork celebrates the beautiful parks and open space that characterize the Bay Area. A small gold circle indicates the location of the Grand Hyatt Hotel and San Francisco International Airport. Visitors are encouraged to explore the surrounding natural wonders.

According to Harvey, "Visitors at the airport are generally rushing from one place to another. I wanted to make something that would make people slow down and think about where they actually are and by inverting the traditional map to prioritize the natural over the man-made, I wanted to call attention to the magically protected green spaces of the San Francisco Bay Area."

Located at the exterior of the hotel facing the airport runway, fronting South McDonnell Road, is a 35-foot sculpture by Japanese artist Kohei Nawa. *Ether* is the artist's first permanent public artwork in the United States. Referencing the movement of airplanes, the sculpture explores the concept of gravity, defied during takeoff, but used during landing. The form of the sculpture visualizes a droplet of liquid falling from sky to earth. It changes shape as gravity propels it downward, but encounters an equal counter force thrusting skyward. The resulting form is a symmetrical and potentially infinite column created within a space of zero gravity.

"My latest sculpture "Ether" installed at the San Francisco International Airport discovers and symbolizes the persistence of the relationship among water, gravity and life," says Nawa. "I want to evoke new sensibilities and a sense of the coming space era for people who come and go in this globalized international society, and I would provoke them to consider "What is life?""

The San Francisco Arts Commission is the City agency that champions the arts as essential to daily life by investing in a vibrant arts community, enlivening the urban environment and shaping innovative cultural policy.