

LUMINATO

PAINTING THE CANVAS OF A CITY



SURPRISED BY ART

Robert VanderBerg, associate producer, visual arts and public installations, gives a short answer when asked about Luminato's visual arts program. "Your path to work will be interrupted." Certainly, anyone walking to work through Trinity-Bellwoods Park during Luminato 2010 would have been surprised to find a thirty-foot Chinese junk—Janet Cardiff's and George Bures Miller's installation, *Ship O' Fools*—suddenly part of Toronto's scenery.

VanderBerg's not-quite-so short answer is, "you will see art in places you never thought you'd see it. Luminato's visual arts program is committed to going beyond gallery walls and finding ways to place art in public spaces. We want to offer artists—both emerging and established—new opportunities to exhibit, to get them thinking about how to engage with the city and to push their work beyond the confines of traditional exhibit space."

From its first year, Luminato has made the visual arts central to the festival experience. Lozano-Hemmer's interactive light sculpture *Pulse Front*, Max Streiger's *QUADRIGA*, along with a variety of other works exhibited at various sites in the downtown core, established free, unexpected encounters with art as a Luminato signature. "Art in public spaces," says Alexander Neef, the General Director of the Canadian Opera Company, "is the most amazing thing about Luminato."

David Michalek's *Slow Dancing*, the multimedia *StreetScape*, conceived in association with Bruce Ferguson on behalf of the Art Gallery of Ontario, and Pierre Maraval's *Mille Femmes*, portraits of 1,000 creative and inspiring women of Toronto, produced in partnership with Lancôme and exhibited at Brookfield Place, delighted Torontonians. "It's about appropriating spaces," says Atom Egoyan, whose video work *Auroras*, shown together with Kutlug Ataman's *Testimony*, transformed a Distillery District space in Luminato 2007. "In a city such as Toronto, this is a kind of magical act."

Then, after stops in Chicago and Barcelona, came Kurt Perschke's *RedBall Project Toronto* in 2009. "The ball creates permission to play," explains the artist. Toronto's citizens happily took up his offer and hundreds photographed themselves with *RedBall*, which reappeared in a surprising new location each day. David Rokeby's *long wave* fascinated passersby in Brookfield Place. "My young daughter started skipping when she first saw it," Rokeby recalls. "And that was a good sign. And I think a lot of people got the same kind of giddy joy from it that she did."

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's interactive light installation *Homographies, Subsculpture 7* (2007; Toronto-Dominion Centre) was purchased by Founding Luminary Jim Fleck and donated to the AGO.

[RLH]