

Harvard Art Museums

Fogg Museum
Busch-Reisinger Museum
Arthur M. Sackler Museum

Press Release

New Commission by Carlos Amorales, *Triangle Constellation*, is Installed in Harvard Art Museums' Calderwood Courtyard

Large-scale mobile sculpture joins other works on view in the museums' art in public spaces initiative



Carlos Amorales, *Triangle Constellation*, 2015. Painted steel, chrome-plated steel, and rope. Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Gift of Leslie Cheek, Jr., 2015.14. © Carlos Amorales. Photo: Harvard Art Museums, © President and Fellows of Harvard College.

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Cambridge, MA

The Harvard Art Museums' iconic Calderwood Courtyard is now home to a new large-scale steel and rope mobile sculpture by Mexican-born artist Carlos Amorales (b. 1970). The special commission, *Triangle Constellation* (2015), was hung over the courtyard last week, beneath the new glass and steel roof designed by Renzo Piano Building Workshop. The roughly 550-pound sculpture is suspended from the specially designed kingposts, or steel trusses, that are part of the rafters under the roof. The

kingposts were designed to be load-bearing, with each having the capacity to hold 1,000 pounds. The sculpture, which officially went on view April 17, 2015, will be on long-term display. The commission is a gift from Leslie Cheek, Jr.

“This work is very important for the Harvard Art Museums because it’s a visual reminder that, as an institution, we are continually evolving,” said Mary Schneider Enriquez, the museums’ Houghton Associate Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art. Schneider Enriquez, who oversaw the commission, continued: “We wanted to bring in a contemporary artist to activate the museums in a way that will remind people that we are more than we were before. This new work invites you to see the space in a completely different way.”

The mobile sculpture consists of 16 chrome-plated steel triangles of graduated shape and scale attached to a spine of 15 interconnected matte-black painted steel bars. The triangles decrease in size progressively, from top to bottom. At the tip is a playable triangle, suspended 10 feet above the courtyard floor. The work creates a visual idea of sound, but it can also be physically activated: on special occasions, the sculpture will be played by using a long stick, or striker. Amorales conceived of the sculpture as a means of creating a collective experience for visitors to the museums. Through the work’s suspended forms, the museums’ interior spaces are tied together.

“This piece has to coexist in a public space; it has a certain transparency, so you can visually connect it to the collections in the museums,” said Amorales. “It is a social musical piece, based on a triangle, but it is also like a drawing, or a composition of lines.”

The artist was inspired by the expansion of the Harvard Art Museums, as well as by the ideas of openness and transparency. Other works of art on view in the courtyard and in the surrounding arcade galleries can be seen through the forms of the sculpture. As it moves, the mobile can seem either organic or abstract, depending on the point of view.

“This piece is a sculpture and an experience; there are many ideas beyond it,” said Amorales.

Triangle Constellation was played for the first time on Thursday, April 16, 2015, during a nighttime Harvard freshman study break organized by the Harvard First Year Social Committee (FYSC), in partnership with the Harvard President’s Office. At the event, Carlos Amorales gave a short speech and invited Harvard Dean of Freshman Thomas Dingman ’67 and FYSC member Rob Hopkirk ’18 to join

him in activating the sculpture. After marking the occasion, students were invited to explore the galleries.

Triangle Constellation is part of the museums' art in public spaces initiative, which includes other major works of art from the collections of the Fogg, Busch-Reisinger, and Arthur M. Sackler Museums that have been installed around the courtyard. The placement of these works gives visitors an opportunity to contemplate original works of art from the moment they enter the courtyard, which is accessible without the purchase of gallery admission. Other works that are part of this initiative include Ai Weiwei's *258 Fake* (2011), Rebecca Horn's *Flying Books under Black Rain Painting* (2014), Ernst Barlach's *Crippled Beggar* (1930), a Chinese *Head from a Column Support in the Form of a Beast* (550–77), and a series of eight 12th-century French and Spanish capitals.

Short videos that show aspects of the installation process are available on the museums' YouTube channel: <http://hvr.d.me/M2hxn>.

About the Harvard Art Museums

The Harvard Art Museums, among the world's leading art institutions, comprise three museums (the Fogg, Busch-Reisinger, and Arthur M. Sackler Museums) and four research centers (the Straus Center for Conservation and Technical Studies, the Center for the Technical Study of Modern Art, the Harvard Art Museums Archives, and the Archaeological Exploration of Sardis). The Fogg Museum includes Western art from the Middle Ages to the present; the Busch-Reisinger Museum, unique among North American museums, is dedicated to the study of all modes and periods of art from central and northern Europe, with an emphasis on German-speaking countries; and the Arthur M. Sackler Museum is focused on Asian, ancient, and Islamic and later Indian art. Together, the collections include approximately 250,000 objects in all media. The Harvard Art Museums are distinguished by the range and depth of their collections, their groundbreaking exhibitions, and the original research of their staff. Integral to Harvard University and the wider community, the museums and research centers serve as resources for students, scholars, and the public. For more than a century they have been the nation's premier training ground for museum professionals and are renowned for their seminal role in developing the discipline of art history in the United States.

The Harvard Art Museums' recent renovation and expansion builds on the legacies of the three museums and unites their remarkable collections under one roof for the first time. Renzo Piano Building Workshop's responsive design preserved the Fogg Museum's landmark 1927 facility, while transforming the space to accommodate 21st-century needs. Following a six-year building project, the

museums now feature 40 percent more gallery space, an expanded Art Study Center, conservation labs, and classrooms, and a striking new glass roof that bridges the facility's historic and contemporary architecture. The new Harvard Art Museums' building is more functional, accessible, spacious, and above all, more transparent. The three constituent museums retain their distinct identities in this new facility, yet their close proximity provides exciting opportunities to experience works of art in a broader context. www.harvardartmuseums.org

Hours and Admission

Daily, 10am–5pm. Closed major holidays. Admission: \$15 adults, \$13 seniors (65+), \$10 non-Harvard students (18+). Free for members; youth under 18; Cambridge residents; and Harvard students, faculty, and staff (plus one guest). On Saturdays, from 10am–noon, Massachusetts residents receive free admission. Visit our website for information about other discounts and policies.

www.harvardartmuseums.org/plan-your-visit

Exhibitions, Events, and News

Our Special Exhibitions Gallery presents important new research on artists and artistic practice, and our University Galleries are programmed in consultation with Harvard faculty to support coursework.

www.harvardartmuseums.org/visit/exhibitions

Lectures, workshops, films, performances, special events, and other programs are held throughout the year at the museums. www.harvardartmuseums.org/visit/calendar

Check out *Index*, our multimedia magazine, to keep up with what's happening at the Harvard Art Museums. <http://magazine.harvardartmuseums.org>

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