

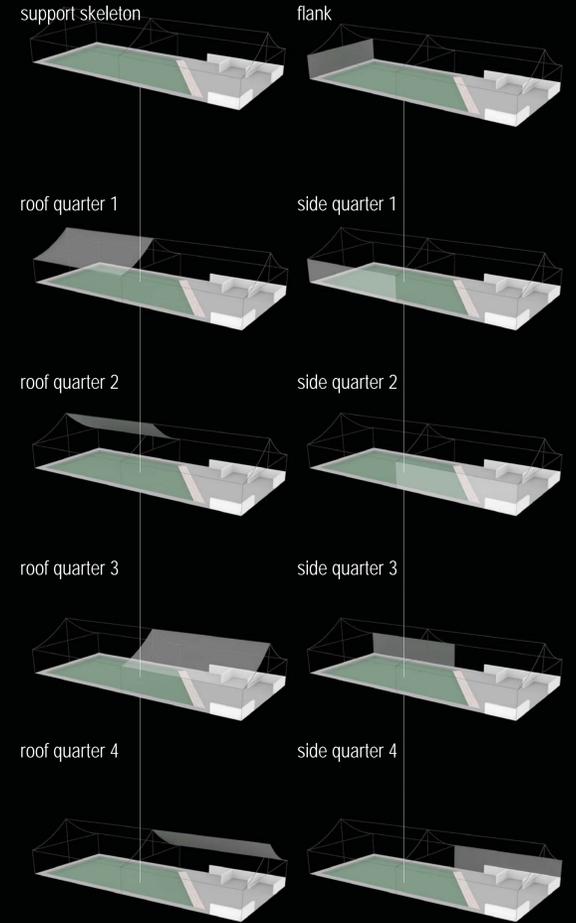
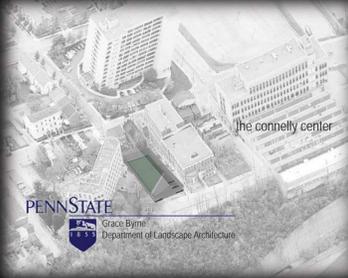
# the connelly center eco-art gallery. imagination powered by technology

The Connelly Center, like many places in the Pittsburgh area, is a place that is currently between two worlds. Built upon a time of industry, the former Connelly School took pride in educating the people of Pittsburgh in the trades of graphic arts, metal working, building, and electrical as well as automotive trades. Today, the Pittsburgh Green Innovators are shifting the program of the site towards a more modern set of uses such as businesses, non-profits, and universities. While the intended use for the site has changed dramatically, its multi-disciplinary point of view remains constant.

The multidisciplinary aspect of this historic site became the framework of the Eco-Art Gallery's design. While Pittsburgh's Eco-Art scene is certainly no longer under wraps, the art produced by these designers has the potential to triple in strength with the help of new friends and a little healthy competition. Every December teams of three may enter to compete for the chance to win an exhibition space in the newly constructed Connelly Center Eco-Art Gallery. However, each team must have the following: one person trained in an architecturally related discipline (landscape architect, architect, or architectural engineer), one artist, and one who practices a past trade taught at the Connelly School (graphic arts, metal working, building, and electrical/automotive trades).

The terms of design are nearly limitless except for the following: 75% of the materials used must be recycled or repurposed materials, the design must be a commentary on an environmental issue, and it must be available for interaction so that the public may engage with and learn from the eco-art. The space chosen is located in the enclosed parking lot to the east of the Connelly Center. Measuring approximately 80' wide and 185' deep, this space is divided into two parts. The first is a series of galleries that can accommodate small scale works of art while the second can accommodate a large scale installation piece. While the installation gallery will be staged on the lower floor of the site, a small out-cove gallery will be provided as a miniature information station to expand upon the meaning of the design. All designs may utilize electricity as it will be available from the design's solar-flex material, but are encouraged to otherwise strive to be environmentally conscious in terms of energy consumption. Depending upon the number of submissions and their scales, the number of winners, which are revealed during the first week of January, will vary from year to year.

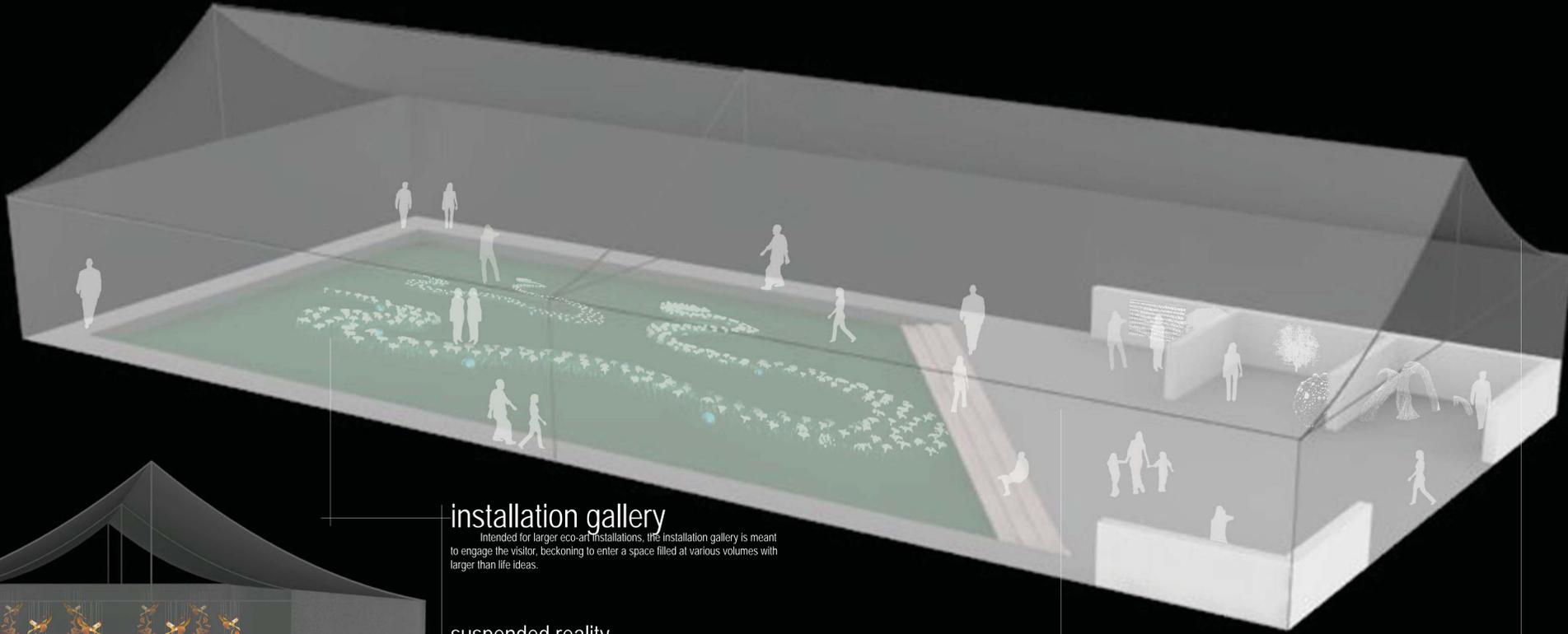
This Eco-Art Gallery intends to engage the public not only through the exhibition space competition, but also through guests. The Gallery will be open to the public from 9:00am through 5:00pm (may stay open later in the event of a night exhibit) every day of the week with the exception of Mondays (for maintenance purposes) and holidays. It will be free of charge to guests; however, it is accepting of donations. The Gallery aims to demonstrate how green technologies, such as the solar-flex material, can help make the smallest of spaces into more eco-friendly environments. Finally, the Gallery aims to teach through its ever-changing exhibits. By providing the public of Pittsburgh and visitors from all over with fresh takes on environmental issues, this design aims to spark ideas of innovation and environmental consciousness that in turn will positively affect of communities near and far.



## solar-flex technology

Initially conceived as an "open air" gallery, the design evolved to include a material that offers not only shelter, visibility, and versatility but also the driving source of power for the site. Recently, John Badding, a professor at Penn State led an international team comprised of chemists, physicists and engineers to develop the next step in solar technology. A silicon-based optical fiber with solar-cell capabilities has been developed to harness solar radiation and translate it directly into electronic currents. The critical difference between this new material and other established solar technologies is that this new fiber is pliable, able to flex into amorphous forms. Additionally, the solar radiation can be absorbed by several angles as opposed to solar panels which can only absorb on one plane. This solar-flex material will generate the electricity needed for all gallery pieces; however, the Installation Gallery is expected to need the most power due to the scale of its potential exhibit pieces. The remainder of the energy will be transferred for use in the Connelly Center itself.

A perk of this material is that it is translucent to an extent, providing a sense of connection between the site and its surroundings. To supplement this effect, the material is divided into sections, each of which can be manually retracted into the beams which support the structure. This is particularly advantageous because no two pieces of art are the same; therefore, the spatial quality of the site can conform to the needs of the present galleries.



## installation gallery

Intended for larger eco-art installations, the installation gallery is meant to engage the visitor, beckoning to enter a space filled at various volumes with larger than life ideas.

## suspended reality

As a requirement for solar-flex material, steel structural supports act as the skeleton of the site. As a gallery for large installations of eco-art, these supports have the potential to act as rafters to accommodate suspended art pieces. This offers the opportunity for participants to think outside the "gallery-wall" box by taking their work to the skies. This iteration displays the work of Talley Fisher and is titled "Desert Sunrise."

## a line of communication

As a space intended for a number of volumes, it is important to remember that guests are one of them! Being able to interact with these works of art provides a silent yet strong line of communication between the art, which exists as a visual tool for green education, and the guests, who have the power to spread the knowledge they gain from their experience. The greater the strength of a design, the more powerful the lesson will be instilled in its guests. This iteration displays the work of Bruce Munro and is titled "Water-Towers."

## designer intent

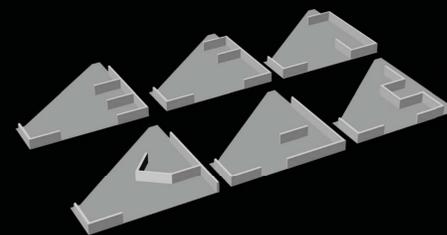
Although the entire volume of the space is available for use by participants (including beyond the structural beams if the roof is retracted!), one aspect of the freedom available to the eco-artists have in this space is also the choice to use a minimal amount of spatial volume. In this case, the hundreds of CDs in place are placed only on the ground plane and yet use their reflective properties to display a larger space. Guests are welcome to peruse the floor of the installation gallery unless specified by the artist. For instance, this iteration displays the work of Bruce Munro who has defined a singular intended path for users so as not to alter the state of the work. The work is titled "CD Sea."

## individual galleries

The individual galleries invite an abundance of eco-art pieces, as well as a variety of spaces to properly accommodate them. Intended as a temporary home to eco-art in scales smaller than that of the installation gallery, forms of nearly any kind can occupy this make shift spaces. The white panels, intended as a blank slate so as not to detract from the art itself, are mobile and therefore able to be moved to create nearly an infinite number of spatial experiences.

Adjacent to the individual galleries is a set of stairs with a consistent rise and run of 6' x 2' respectively. Beyond the traditional use of stairs as a transitional space, these stairs are also intended to be used for lectures. Scheduled guest speakers will come to the site to give talks on topics such as green technologies, eco-art, and other environmentally significant concerns. All winners are required to give a talk on their work at least once during the time of their exhibition. These lectures will be the only periods of time where guests must schedule their visits ahead of time to ensure that the site does not become over-crowded. However, they are still free to the public.

## mobile galleries



## individual galleries and lecture space

