

“Clouds” by William Cannings

About the Artwork



“I am excited for the opportunity to put this project proposal together. The Houston Airport Collection has a world-class group of artworks and artists. I love the format of the airport to exhibit art providing a visual and mental respite on one’s journey. I have a romantic view of airplanes and racecars that has long influenced the forms that I make. I manipulate steel and aluminum with many of the same tools and processes that aeronautical engineers use to build airplanes. I transform cold, flat, raw steel into compound organic curves finished with slick, glossy surfaces.”

“My forms are made from steel, but they provide a sense of weightlessness and movement. The proposed cloud forms will create a fun, comforting, whimsical space for passengers and people moving through the area. I want to bring the outside indoors, make hard things look soft, and hang what normally floats. They will provide a moment of reflection and wonderment while also complementing the installation site within the airport.”

“I am proposing an installation of 30 puffy cloud forms. I will make these forms from sheet steel patterns, seam welded, and inflated using compressed air. Creating a visual form that looks soft and inviting while bearing the qualities of steel – hard, and long-wearing. The cloud forms will be made to a size of 36” at the width and 3 – 5 humps in the puffs. The proposal uses 3 variations referencing the classic iconic graphic cloud form. The cloud forms are very lightweight, 36" wide = 10lbs. So, a large installation of these forms will not overburden the structural integrity of the sites. The proposed installation would weigh approximately 300lbs., but the weight would be distributed over 30 individual hanging points.”

The cloud forms will be hung using stainless steel aircraft cable, visually minimal but strong to provide years of faultless service. The cable will be attached to the cloud forms internally and attached to the ceiling of the site using beam clamps and eyelets. These systems will blend with existing hanging structures and provide sturdy anchor points for the very lightweight cloud forms.



The puffy cloud forms will be finished using automotive-grade Acrylic Urethane paints with a clear coat designed to protect and gloss. The clear coat provides UV and fade resistance. I am proposing to use 3 colors that will be bright, fun, and inviting. The colors are, Snowwhite, Platinum, and Silverwhite. The overall installation becomes an atmospheric color field and takes advantage of the abundant natural light coming into the space from the west.

The installation footprint is approximately 40' x 30' with the cloud forms hung at 5' - 6' centers between each other. The cloud forms will hang at a minimum of 12' from the floor.

About the Artist



William Cannings is a native of Nantwich, England. He received his MFA from Syracuse University and his BFA from Virginia Commonwealth University. Cannings is an Associate Professor of Sculpture at Texas Tech University. His exhibitions include Scope – Basel, Art Basel – Switzerland; Cherry-Picked: 2007 Survey of Texas Art and Artists, Wichita Falls Museum of Art; Sculpture Now, Williams Tower Gallery, Houston; Southwest Biennial, Albuquerque Museum of Art and History; Art 212, Armory, NY; ArtScape public art exhibition, Baltimore, MD. Solo exhibitions include The Texas Biennial; Anya Tish Gallery, Houston, TX; Pan American Art Projects, Miami, FL; and Cris Worley Fine Arts, Dallas, TX. Cannings was included in the Texas Artists Today publication, and a review of Canning’s work appeared in ART LIES, an international arts journal.

Cannings is represented by Anya Tish Gallery in Houston, TX, Pan-American Art Projects in Miami, FL, and Cris Worley Fine Arts in Dallas, TX.

Collections include Corporate International Art Collection - Holt-Caterpillar; Texas Sculpture Walk – Dallas, TX; Texas Tech University Public Art Collection. Private collections in the USA, Jamaica, UK, France, Italy, Australia, and University of Texas Southwest Public Art Collection. It is through the pursuit of making that I define myself. I use process to connect with concept and concept to prove process. I am lured by the visceral quality of inflated objects: the look, feel and smell. It permits a tangible, physical awareness of self and environment.