

Idea Tree

Artist: Soo-in Yang

September 2013

San Jose McEnery Convention Center / San Jose, CA 95113 / Citywide

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Idea Tree, artist Soo-in Yang's landmark sculpture for the Convention Center's entry plaza, reflects the bold thinking and vision that characterizes San Jose's place as the Capital of Silicon Valley and the world's leading region for innovation. *Idea Tree* is an energetic and layered architectural-scale sculpture providing 1) a point of interaction between the Convention Center and public; 2) a shade structure; and 3) an audio soundscape that the artist describes as a "self sustaining ecology of ideas."



Soo-in Yang *Idea Tree* Day time Concept Rendering

The central element of the sculpture is a 40' diameter canopy, supported by three groups of columns, creating a transitional space between the street and the building's entrance. The canopy is created with six interlocking steel rings. Lightly covering the canopy are translucent polycarbonates 'leaves' providing shade while maintaining a transparency to the building entrance.

Critical to Yang's concept is the gathering of spoken ideas. Adjacent to the sculpture main structure is a freestanding 'sound booth' where the public can leave short voice messages that are wirelessly transmitted to interactive sound equipment housed at the center of the canopy. Audio messages are deconstructed and reassembled to create unexpected whispers. While some of these whispers remain in play over time, others fall away through a 'composting' process that mixes the content into an ambient soundscape audible from underneath the sculpture. Determining the fate of each whisper is the time spent by the public lingering and listening under the tree. At night the central element of the sculpture that the artist calls 'the Fruit' is internally lit with a soothing pulse of light that changes rhythm signaling the active mixing of sound.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Soo-in Yang is an architect and public artist based in South San Francisco and Seoul, South Korea. His works range from buildings to palm-size devices. His projects engage the built environment, local character, public dialogue and digital media as integral. Yang earned Bachelor of Architectural Engineering from Yonsei University, Korea, and Master of Architecture



Soo-in Yang *Idea Tree* Nighttime Concept Rendering

from Columbia University, where he is an Adjunct Assistant Professor and Founding Co-Director of the Living Architecture Lab. He directs Lifethings/삶것, a multi-disciplinary design office based in Seoul, Korea. More about Soo-in Yang's work may be seen at www.lifethings.in.

ABOUT THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM

The City of San José Public Art Program seeks to build community identity by initiating artworks and exhibitions that enhance the civic landscape. Through active community engagement, public art strives to reflect the City's diversity, historic richness, and envision its present and future.

The Public Art Program is part of the City's Office of Cultural Affairs, a division of the Office of Economic Development. The Public Art Program was established by a 1992 municipal ordinance that provides public art through funding from City capital improvement projects. For further information and photos, please contact the San José Public Art Program.