

BILL FONTANA

William Fontana is an American composer and artist who has developed an international reputation for his pioneering experiments in sound. Since the early 1970s, Fontana has used sound as a sculptural medium to interact with and transform our perceptions of visual and architectural spaces. His work has been exhibited at the Whitney Museum of American Art; the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; the Museum Ludwig and the Kolumba Museum, both in Cologne, Germany; the Tate Modern and Tate Britain museums in London; and the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne. He also has produced major radio sound art projects for the BBC, National Public Radio, Swedish Radio, Radio France, among others.

Design Concept

Bill Fontana has proposed a matrix of 34 small loudspeakers to be distributed among the planters on the arena plaza, and on the two Living Wall sections that face these planters. The configuration will enable the presence of the sound sculpture to be spatially dynamic, with non-linear movement patterns. The movement of sound along the pole-mounted planter speakers will create an immersive listening experience in relation to the green walls and at other times will either be a linear sonic progression or random and non-linear. The musical form of these mixes will always emerge from and return to silence.

Currently the artist is proposing sound mixes that reflect the building itself. The Living Walls of Plants evoke the agricultural landscapes of the Sacramento Valley, suggestive of birds, insects and movement of the plants. Other abstracted sounds are recorded from the game of basketball itself. Occasionally the natural sounds will mix with the basketball sounds. Other ideas for sound mixes will be developed in the future.