

Aerial Cascade Public Art Project Fact Sheet



City of Tempe
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Photo: Craig Smith

Title: Aerial Cascade

Location: The sculptural canopy extends from the drop-off curb to the entrance doorway at the Escalante Community Center Senior Center

Artist: Geoffrey H. Bruce

Completion: 1998

Medium: Polyethylene fabric, concrete, steel and ceramic tile

Description: The work consists of three, four-pointed panels of knitted, fire-retardant polyethylene fabric, which interlock and create one tapered, sculptural canopy leading to the Senior Center doorway. The highest point of the canopy begins at the curb and raises 18 feet. The sculptural fabric, which gradually diminishes in height as it extends towards the entrance, travels more than 30 yards and dips below the bordering trees. The fabric of the canopy blocks 80 percent of ultra violet rays and can lower the temperature by 10 to 20 percent.

Funding: This project was funded through city of Tempe Capital Improvement Project Percent for Art funds.

Artist biography: Geoffrey Bruce was born in Boston. He received a BFA in Industrial Design from the Rhode Island School of Design and has attended Instituto de Allende in San Miguel, Mexico, and Scottsdale Community College. Bruce has extensive experience with solving challenging shade problems for residential and commercial clients. He had the opportunity to work with renowned tension structure artist, Bill Moss, translating Moss's concepts into reality and supervising the manufacture and installation of many pieces.

Artist statement: Soft, curved lines of poles and canopies are purposeful counterpoint to the boldly expressive geometry of the buildings. Nearest the entrance, participants are in closest proximity to the work...space becomes more intimate and details more tangible. The sun will cause abstract patterns to appear on surrounding surfaces, and filtered light will be soothing. When breezes play within the sculpture, the fabric planes will undulate silently, gently. Shadow graphics will dance to nature's rhythms. And overlapping spaces where panels adjoin will offer clear views of the sky, while still providing requisite shade. The sculpture is intended to celebrate the act of arriving and departing the center. It presents itself as a punctuating statement to the already spatially rich, visually expressive environment.