"SONIC GROVE: The W.C."
An Interactive Sound/Light
Colored Glass Installation
by
Artist/Composer Christopher Janney

Rhythm is to intuition, emotion, and aesthetics, what scientific order and logic are to the intellect. One of the essential qualities of rhythm, if not the essential quality, is its power of conveying the presence of life.

Dalcroze, Emil-Jacques, Rhythm, Music and Education

Trained as an architect and jazz musician, I have been designing and building permanent interactive installations for the past thirty years. Titled "Urban Musical Instruments," these are a series of landmark works in public buildings, airports, libraries, parks and plazas. Many of these projects involve working with the building's architects, engineers and client to properly integrate the artwork into the overall design.

With respect to the Woman’s College Tribune UNC Public Art Commission, I would be most interested to create an outdoor seating area that speaks both to the scale of the site, the historical context and the student. My physical materials would include colored structural glass together with interactive light/sound elements. Centered around a 12-14 ft. diameter circular plan, the perimeter would be ringed with sheets of curved colored glass in between 9" columns of etched aluminum (see Sketches/Rendering.) Laminated into the colored glass would be images reflecting the life of the Women's College. Also, etched in the floor of the installation would be the moniker-"WC" surrounded by a timeline of the Women's College (see Plate 08- "FLOOR/PLAN SKETCH.")

Since my interactive elements are about a syn-aesthetic experience, there would be an accompanying multi-speaker sound-score. The specific sound-score would be composed of an ever-changing pattern of soothing melodic instruments mixed with environmental sounds indigenous to the Greensboro area during the time of the WC. Most importantly, there would also be sound/text elements in the score reflecting the history of the Woman's College from 1891 to when the college became co-ed in 1963. These would include excerpts from the DARLINNETES and other period music as well as readings from texts and speeches relevant to the history and development of the life at the WC (listen to Audio Sample" included.) These texts would be produced in consultation with both the University Archivist Erin Lawrimore, Associate Dean Lawrence Jenkins and members of the UNC-WC Tribute Committee, creating a "sonic portrait" of life at the WC. Over time, these texts could also be changed and varied, reflecting other perspectives of the WC. Other interactive media (tele-presence, web-based interaction, etc.) could also be integrated that reflect the information, activity and energy and history of the WC.

Due to the interactive nature of my artworks, I also often create “riddles” in the work. If a person deciphers the pattern and touches the interactive elements in a certain order, the artwork responds. I find these elements work very well both within a educational environment and places of reflection. These riddles would be composed around the theme of the history of women at the college and, under faculty supervision, could also be generated by interested students.

In conclusion, my interest is to generate a design that both creates an iconic environment of colored glass with a supporting structure as well as a “social foil;” an place that stimulates spontaneous creative interaction and raises awareness of history of the UNCG Woman's College (sic).
1743- Louis Bertrand Castel, Jesuit Priest, mathematician, a stringed instrument with moving transparent colored tapes. Seven colors to seven whole notes.

1893- COLOR ORGAN- Rimington
Gas Lamps- "Pyrophone"

1915- Scriabin,
Harmonic Color

1922- Thomas Wilfred-
Clavilux Concerts

1930- Moholy-Nagy Light-
Space Modulator

1939- Whitney Brothers-
Abstract Films

1952- First Son et Lumiere

1958 Poeme Electronique-
LeCorbusier/Varese/Xenakis

1962- LaMonte Young/Marian Zazeela-
'Dream House'

1968- Joshua Light Show-
Frank Zappa, Fillmore West

1969- Nam June Paik-
Inspired by Christopher Janney’s own experience waiting in airports, he created “Circling” - an interactive, labyrinth installation at the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport in Texas. The name reflects both the notion of planes circling overhead and the action of the passengers themselves as they circle through four concentric rings within the thirty-foot-diameter space.

“Circling” is based on a labyrinthine form. Its walls, constructed from over one hundred sheets of two-foot-wide colored glass, spiral at different heights, up to twelve feet, along the terrazzo floor. Twenty-eight sensors embedded in the floor trigger lights and loudspeakers to reinforce the idea of illumination and sounds coming up from the earth.

Janney refers to it as an “onion-like” icon that evokes the spiritual symbol of a circle: “It is more soothing to walk in a circle than in other shapes,” he says. Not that many people at the airport key into its spiritual side, but it provides a unique way to escape from the hectic pace of the airport.

The latest iteration of Christopher Janney’s series of “Urban Musical Instruments,” Sonic Forest ‘18 consists of 16 cylindrical aluminum columns, each 8 feet high. Each column contains a photo-sensor, audio speaker, LED cone-light and star-strobe. By strolling among the columns, people trigger the photo-sensor, which activates the light and an ever-changing “sound score” of melodic tones and environmental sounds. The entire installation will sound the time of day each hour. A “ghost in the machine” will trigger the installation at random moments, and the installation will “play by itself” for short intervals when no one has passed through it. Drum jams in the Sonic Forest are encouraged. “This version of Sonic Forest is one of my Urban Musical Instruments,” states Christopher Janney, “designed to create sound images. Everyone who walks through this instrument calls up their own musical oasis."

- “Sonic Forest” travels in a 20 ft. Rental Truck. The truck needs direct access to the installation site to drop off and pick up the elements of the installation. The installation typically sets up in a 4-column x 4-column grid, with the columns 10 feet apart.
"W.C."

1891- The North Carolina State Normal and Industrial School
1892- School Officially Opened
1897- State Normal and Industrial College

1919- North Carolina College for Women
1921- Accreditation
1932- Woman's College of the University of North Carolina
1949- Largest all-female institution in the United States.
With respect to the Woman’s College Tribute UNC Public Art Commission, I would be most interested to create an outdoor seating area that speaks both to the scale of the site, the historical context and the student. My physical materials would include colored structural glass together with interactive light/sound elements. Centered around a 12-14 ft. diameter circular plan, the perimeter would be ringed with sheets of curved colored glass in between 9" columns of etched aluminum. Laminated into the colored glass would be images reflecting the life of the Women’s College.
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“The W.C.”

Selma Webb is teaching the sixth grade in the Shelby
Graded School.
Belle Mott is now Mrs. Allen Mills, of Statesville.
Carrie Price is stenographer for the Cone Export
Company, Greensboro.
Emma Kelley is teaching the fifth grade in the Graham
Graded School.
Fannie Boddie is at her home, Louisburg.
Florence Campan is stenographer for the First National
Bank of High Point.
Grace Patterson is at home, Concord.
Corday Olive is teaching at Rausner’s Mill.
Sina Campan is spending the winter at Asheville.
Marjorie Fisher is at her home, Rutherfordton.
Allie G. Little is at her home, Paveme.

A Tradition of the “Cicely Rock”

On the steep bank of a small river in North Carolina, is
a huge rock which juts out over the bed of the stream.
One can easily walk out to the very edge of it and look
down into the whirling waters more than twenty feet below.
It is called the “Cicely Rock,” because, tradition has it,
that a man named Cicely once used a recess beneath it as a hiding
place during the Revolutionary War.

“...It was a dark, dreary night on October, 177---,” so the
story goes. Col. Cicely was at home on a short furlough and
the entire family was gathered around the open fire, listening
to an account of a daring deed lately performed by
Marion’s hand, of which Col. Cicely was a member. Suddenly
a horse dashed up to the door and after the rider had spoken

The school has seen many names over the years, changing from the "State Normal and Industrial School" to the State
Normal and Industrial College in 1896, and again in 1919 to North Carolina College for Women. In 1932, it changed to the
Woman’s College of the University of North Carolina, when it became one of the three charter institutions of the Consolidated
University of North Carolina, and changed again to the University of North Carolina at Greensboro when men were first
admitted to the school in 1963. It is remembered fondly by many graduates of the Woman's College simply as "the W.C."

Harriet Elliott came to the State Normal and Industrial College (now UNCG) as a faculty member in the Department of History and Political Science. During her time at the college, she would inspire generations of students to learn about government, democracy, and their responsibilities as citizens of the United States. When “Miss Elliott” joined the faculty of the State Normal, she brought fresh and sometimes controversial ideas to the Southern women’s college. Her students looked forward to her fiery lectures on history and politics, which introduced concepts such as “women’s rights, informed electorate, the democratic way, responsible freedom, and the dead weight of uniformity.” She encouraged independence of political thought and even helped her students form the Student Government Association in 1915.

ALSO REFER TO ATTACHED AUDIO FILE
The VANCEVA Colored interlayer Material

Vanceva is a product of SOLUTIA, Inc., a global manufacturer of performance materials, including thermoplastic polyurethane (TPU) interlayers for laminated glass. The company was acquired by EASTMAN Chemical Company in 2012.

Images laminated in the glass