

SARGASSO

LUMINATO FESTIVAL
TORONTO, CANADA - 2011

Philip Beesley
Living Architecture Systems Group



I Sargasso: Luminato Festival - Toronto,
Canada - 2011

First edition

Published by Philip Beesley

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INTRODUCTION

Commissioned by the Luminato festival, *Sargasso* refers to the vast, tangled floating masses of living matter and cast-off material that drifts at the centre of the Atlantic. The environment within the sweeping atrium of the Santiago Caltrava's Allen Lambert Galleria made a canopy that slowly shifted and floated above the city. The canopy formed a forest-like hovering field, kin to primitive life-forms within dense jungles and ocean reefs.

The outer canopy layer was formed from a hexagonal meshwork of acrylic and mylar fronds that stretched east and west into the heights of the public hall. This surface met the ground at the centre of the installation. The sloping and curving membrane framed a pool of space that functioned as an open room for public gathering. An inner canopy layer was suspended over this central area, containing an aerial grotto of kinetic bladders and glasswork.

In this expanded aerial soil, embedded machine intelligence triggered breathing and swallowing motions, accompanied by waves of overlapping faint recorded voices housed within an array of embedded miniature speakers. Empathic motions rippled out from hives of kinetic valves and pores, creating a diffuse pumping that pulled moist air and stray organic matter through the filtering membranes. Glands containing synthetic digestive liquids and salts were clustered throughout the system. Engineered protocells, which are liquid-supported artificial cells that share some of the characteristics of natural living cells, were arranged in a series of embedded flasks.

EXHIBITION CREDITS

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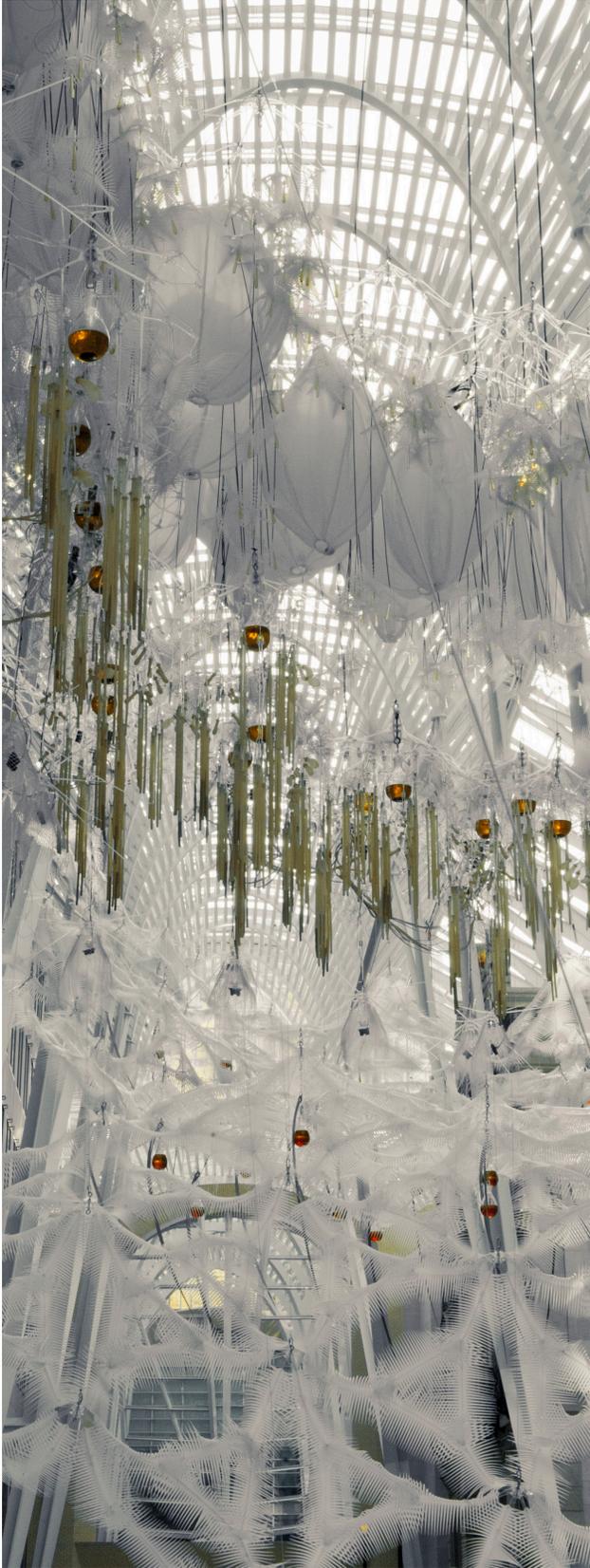
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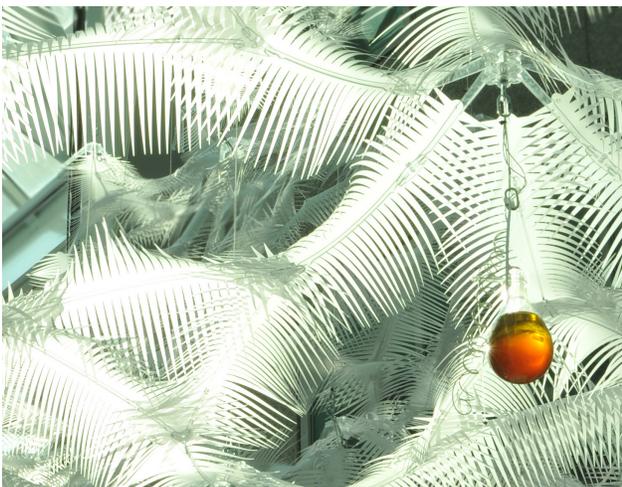




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