

Art installations at the 2010 Voodoo Fest are fewer but brighter

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In addition to the three-day music festival, visitors to this years' Voodoo Experience will encounter a giant glow-in-the-dark paper airplane, Technicolor mushrooms that shine from within like Japanese lanterns, an illuminated hula-hoop activity area and a bottom-lit translucent tsunami wave bursting from a City Park lagoon.

The Voodoo Experience management is still committed to making avant-garde art part of the fall music festival -- though maybe not as committed as last year.

With the help of New Orleans' cutting-edge art exhibit producer, Kirsha Kaechele, the 2009 festival presented a suite of 25 engaging exhibits. This year, festival production architect Stefan Beese says that Voodoo will include an array of just 11 art installations.

"What we learned from last year is that 25 pieces is a lot to handle, " Beese said.

Read: [Voodoo Fest 2009 puts an emphasis on the visual, here.](#)

Despite the reduced number of installations, Beese promises a more focused experience this year. To take advantage of the darkness that bathes much of the festival grounds, Beese stipulated that all sculptures and installations be lit. But not with the sort of high-voltage lighting that sears the music stages.

Voodoo Experience Art

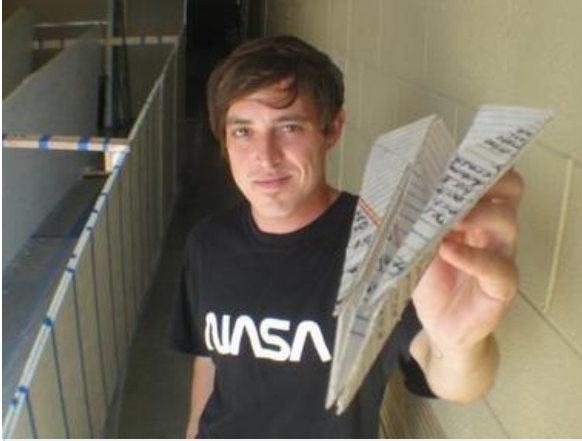
What: Eleven scattered art installations can be viewed by attendees of the music festival.

Where: On the festival site in City Park behind the New Orleans Museum of Art.

When: Friday and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 11 p.m., and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 9.

Instead, when possible, Beese strove for low-energy-consumption illumination. In many cases, the artworks are, in fact, meant to symbolize sustainability and recycling. The chairs in Susie Kim's miniature vaudeville theater, for instance are being constructed of rolled Times-Picayune newspapers and the floor will

is made of hundreds of recyclable plastic beverage bottles.



Doug MacCash / The Times-Picayune

Artist Dave Rhodes has created a conceptual monument to aviation pioneer John Moisant.

be made of reusable shipping palettes. New Orleans artist Thomas Rush's wave

Artist Dave Rhodes, who moved from Los Angeles to New Orleans a year ago, said he plans to work nonstop to complete his 27-foot, 1,200-pound sculpture in time for installation on the festival grounds. Shaped like a folded paper airplane, the wooden creation will be a monument to daredevil pilot John Moisant, who, 100 years ago, used City Park as an airfield in a demonstration race between an airplane and an automobile. Moisant lost the race with the horseless carriage in December 1910. Worse yet, he lost his life in an aerial accident in Kenner the next day — New Orleans' international airport was formerly named for him.

"It's the history of City Park New Orleans and aviation that I certainly never knew about and I don't think most people do," Rhodes said.

During a studio visit last week, Rhodes' plane was still in pieces. He explained that before it was assembled, he planned to apply thin blue stripes to the oversized wings and fuselage, imitating the lines on notebook paper. Then he would add a brief hand-written history of Moisant's City Park flight to the lined wings and fuselage, as if the giant plane had been folded from a school kid's essay on the aviation pioneer. At Voodoo fest, the plane would be positioned at an angle as if poised to float away into the sky. Rhodes said he planned to coat the plane with phosphorescent paint, so it would shine in the darkness.

"It should illuminate just enough to read the writing," Rhodes said. "It's not going to glow like a light bulb, but it should be this really cool effect."

Manuel Kretzer and Hans Sachs' crowd-pleasing lighted cone-shaped merry-go-round is back for a second year, as is the roving interactive "Hotshot" robot by Munz. Exhibits titled "Sousaphorescence," "Robotronia" and "The Galactivation Station" are also on the Voodoo fest art bill. For his part, Beese is helping create a 40-foot lighted web -- inspired by caffeinated spiders -- that will be strung carefully amidst the oaks.

Beese credits Kaechele with establishing the art element at Voodoo.

"Last year was a great success," he said. "The collaboration with Kirsha was a milestone. It was very well received." Though Kaechele is not selecting the art for the 2010 festival, he said, "she's still a part of the family and a part of what we're doing."

"Who knows," Beese said, "maybe next year we'll do something new and completely crazy together."

Read: Stefan Beese brings some surprises to 2009 Voodoo Fest art and music design, [here](#).

Kaechele said she left the Voodoo fest "with love." As reported earlier this month, Kaechele is busy in Sonoma County, Calif., these days, growing medicinal marijuana on a collective farm and artists retreat.

Read: Curator Kirsha Kaechele to fund art with medical marijuana farming, [here](#).

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