

# The New York Times

**Weekend** FINE ARTS  
LEISURE

INSIDE ART *Carol Vogel* FRIDAY, JUNE 27, 2003



Cai Guo-Qiang

A rendering by the artist Cai Guo-Qiang of what his halo of light will look like over Manhattan on Sept. 15.

## A Big Bang For Central Park

The Chinese-born artist Cai Guo-Qiang is gaining an international reputation for using fireworks as an artistic medium. Last summer he created a 20-second rainbow over the East River along Manhattan for the opening of the Museum of Modern Art's temporary exhibition space in Long Island City, Queens. For Sept. 15, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Central Park, Mr. Cai is creating "Light Cycle," a three-part pyrotechnic experience that will illuminate the sky over the park.

Creative Time, the New York public arts organization, is presenting the project in cooperation with the Central Park Conservancy. Häagen-Dazs is sponsoring the project, developed with Fireworks by Grucci, the oldest American fireworks company.

"It's been created as a blessing for New York," said Peter Eleey, Creative Time's project director.

"Light Cycle" will begin at 7:45

p.m. and last about five minutes, Mr. Eleey said. The first stage — "Signal Towers," referring to ancient methods of communication — will consist of five pillars of fire, each extending 600 feet into the sky at locations between 64th and 100th Streets. Each will be 30 feet in diameter. The towers will overlap in timing and at one point will all be visible simultaneously.

The second stage, "Light Cycle," will be a sequence of halos 350 feet in diameter floating above the trees in the same locations as the pillars in "Signal Towers." The final halo, 1,000 feet in diameter, will be over the Reservoir, creating an effect that Mr. Cai intends as a metaphor for "renewal, timelessness, benediction and wholeness."

The final stage of the event, "White Night," will consist of hundreds of exploding shells that will resemble signal flares, illuminating the sky and highlighting Central Park as the heart of New York City. "The park is always dark at night, and Cai will be making it the brightest point," Mr. Eleey said.