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Cai Guo-Qiang: light cycle
Central Park
Gunpowder drawings
The Asia Society

Chinese artist Cai Guo-Qiang has a dazzling display of pyrotechnic art in store for New York City. According to the hype, it will rival the city's 4 July firework display—both in terms of wattage and beauty. To make "Light cycle" Guo-Qiang enlisted the aid of Grucci, the US's oldest firework company, which helped him develop computer-programmable fireworks with which he will be able to draw shapes in the sky. The project, estimated to cost over \$100,000, is sponsored by the Haagen-Dazs ice cream company, and produced in cooperation with the City of New York Parks Department and the Central Park Conservancy. It will take place above Central Park on the evening of 15 September, as part of the city's commemoration of the Park's 150th anniversary. At a total duration of 4-5 minutes, this project is even more ambitious than Cai Guo-Qiang's firework display to honour the opening of MoMA QNS in June 2002. "Light cycle" will unfold in three stages, with five 600-foot pillars of light extending from the ground, followed by the main event, a series of halos in the sky. The finale will turn the park into the brightest spot in Manhattan, using canopies of light formed by hundreds of flare-like shells. Let us hope that Guo-Qiang's pyrotechnics are more successful in New York than in London recently, when his dancing dragon, supposed to light up the sky above Tate Modern, fizzled to a damp squib. A less explosive viewing experience is at the Asia Society, which is showing his large-scale gunpowder drawings (9 September-14 December). S.D.