



Waveform: Pan American Blues

Public art by Shan Shan Sheng

Nashville International Airport Ticket Lobby

The sculpture is 85 feet wide and has 82 glass panels ranging in length from 7.5 feet to 14.5 feet.

The suspension sculpture is inspired by a soundwave from the song Pan American Blues performed by Country Music Hall of Fame member DeFord Bailey, the first African American performer on the Grand Ole Opry radio show. Coincidentally, he performed this song the night the name “Grand Ole Opry” was coined.

The glass is created with a cold cast process and is similar to bullet-proof glass.



FUNDING

Funding for this project is provided for by the Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority’s one percent-for-art-policy.

For more information about Arts at the Airport, visit www.flynashville.com/arts.

PHOTO CREDITS (left to right):

Karen Edgin, headshot provided by artist, Savino Cancellara, Savino Cancellara, John Guider, John Guider

Meaning, History and Inspiration

In 2008, the Arts at the Airport Board along with the Metropolitan Nashville Airport Authority Board of Commissioners, commissioned artist Shan Shan Sheng to create a significant piece of art that would impress passengers and visitors with a sense of Nashville’s warmth, hospitality and growing cosmopolitan feel, while speaking to our history and heritage.

Shan Shan Sheng’s suspension sculpture was chosen because it encompassed all of these goals. Its floating beauty, lyrical movement and sheer size draw the viewer in with a sense of awe and wonder. Without being overly literal, the piece is about music and the history of Music City, and most impressively, the viewer experiences a different perspective from wherever it is viewed in the Ticketing Lobby. It also invokes the excitement of a journey begun with its vibrant blues, reds and purples.

Artist Statement

“My intention was to integrate artwork into the architecture of the Nashville International Airport lobby, complement and enrich it and at the same time provide a focal point for the lobby. The artwork creates a recognizable and memorable symbol for the Airport. It echoes the feeling of the building and is an interplay of themes with shape, color and light.”

“I work with cold casting glass, a contemporary sculpture medium, which reflects an innovative approach to public art material. The piece combines elements of color, form and movement to create a unique visual experience which uplifts the spirits and draws on the imagination.”

– Shan Shan Sheng

Shan Shan Sheng

With artworks installed in three of the world’s tallest buildings, as well as other major works of architecture, Shan Shan Sheng is truly an artist of great accomplishment. From the city where she was born, Shanghai, to an American city known for its architecture, Chicago, to the bicultural city of Hong Kong, Sheng is an artist whose universal messages can be appreciated anywhere in the world.

In 1982, Shan Shan Sheng came to the United States to pursue her academic and artistic interests by attending Mount Holyoke College and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, where she earned her master of Fine Arts degree. Later she went to Harvard University as an artist-in-residence for two years. She now lives and works in San Francisco.

In her 20 years as a professional artist, she has spent the past 12 years working in the public art field. She has completed large-scale projects in California, Arizona, Massachusetts, Florida, Texas, Chicago, Denver, Shanghai, Beijing, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Shan Shan Sheng has held more than 30 one-woman shows in Europe, Asia and America. She recently was the first Chinese artist invited to collaborate with the Venetian glass masters of Murano, Italy, the island renowned for a glass art tradition that extends back more than 1,000 years. A result of this collaboration, her Open Wall project is a large-scale glass installation re-interpreting a section of the Great Wall of China for the 2009 Venice Biennale.

about the artist