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Kristin Jones and Andrew Ginzel

CITY HALL PARK

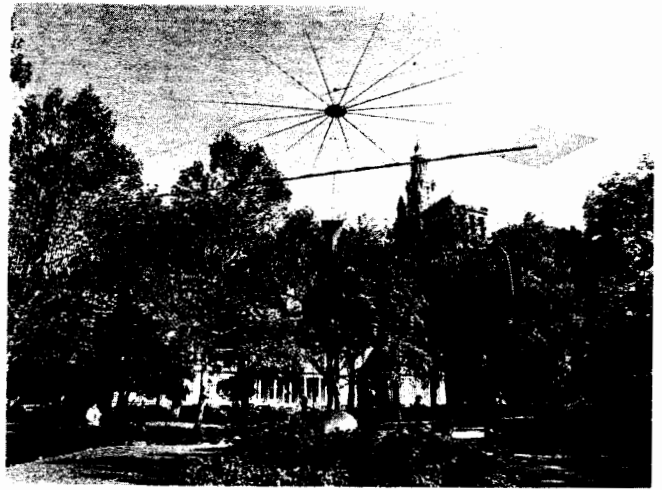
All of the work by Kristin Jones and Andrew Ginzel that I have seen up to now has been in spatial contexts that were defined and enclosed. Whether in small spaces, such as the display windows of the New Museum, or large ones, such as the Brooklyn Bridge Anchorage, their complex but spare compositions always had a concentrated impact. The clearly perceptible limits inherent in such spaces enhanced the basic forms and kinetic elements used by these artists and their wonderful sense of materials as catalytic ingredients. I was curious to see how they would work without the restrictions of a contained space, in an open, outdoor area that was relatively formless in comparison to their earlier installation sites.

Their latest work is an installation, *Pananemone*, 1987, sponsored by the Public Art Fund Inc., in City Hall Park in downtown Manhattan, a small park landscaped with trees, shrubs, and curving paths and surrounded by office buildings and heavily trafficked streets. It consists of 21 anemometers (wind sensors)—20 small ones and 1 large one—suspended from the trees, and 45 spheres scattered in random arrangements on the ground. The wind sensors look like upended weather vanes, with two spearlike forms that cross at right angles. The black-and-white-striped horizontal shaft supports a large, diamond-shaped blade that catches the breeze like an open sail, and the vertical shaft acts like a plumb bob. Some of these constructions have flat, circular elements that have been bisected and whose halves rotate in the wind. The spheres on the ground are of several sizes, ranging from 1 to 3 feet in diameter, and their surfaces are completely covered with copper leaf. The large wind sensor, which has a sunburst of 16 gold spokes radiating out from the top of its vertical shaft, hangs directly above the 3-foot-wide sphere that rests in the foliage of the park's largest formal parterre. Because

of its size and position, it acts as a centering device that focuses attention and establishes a theme for the entire work, generating a centrifugal force that makes this subtle and intelligent project legible.

A lot of art in public settings is disappointing because it seems too precious and its impact and readings too limiting. *Pananemone* is public art that includes both change and chance. The wind sensors draw people into the site and get them to break away from the conventional patterns set by the pedestrian paths. Although it has a central focus, the overall design is decentralized, with its component parts distributed throughout the site. As in a scavenger hunt, the acts of searching for and discovering these components are equally compelling. The elements of change that transform the work are both short- and long-term. I saw *Pananemone* on a still day and on a windy day, and the experiences were quite different. The installation will be in place until April 1, and thus also observable through three seasonal changes. At the time I saw it, while the leaves were still on the trees, much of it was obscured; but late in the fall and throughout the winter it will all be clearly visible.

In fact, it is the capricious, fleeting quality of these conditions that gives the work its vitality. In contrast to their earlier projects, in which kineticism was achieved through mechanical design elements that performed entirely according to the artists' specifications, here it is a more quixotic dynamic, generated and determined by



Kristin Jones and Andrew Ginzel, *Pananemone*, 1987. Installation view.
Photo: T. Charles Erickson.

forces of nature. These real forces have replaced fictive events. Although the sense of theater and narrative evoked by the earlier pieces is diminished, *Pananemone* provides equally strong ideas and sensations. The character of the installation is affected not only by the changing, often unpredictable site conditions but also by viewers' subjective responses, both visceral and cerebral. With this project, the artists have moved from closed systems to open-ended conjecture and have demonstrated that they are up to the challenge presented by an open urban space.
Reviewed by Patricia C. Phillips.