



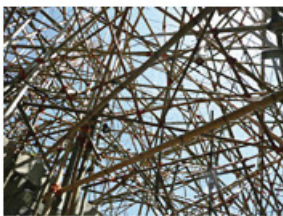
Doug and Mike Starn's *Big Bambú* on opening day, in the rain, on the roof of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, April 2010



The Starn twins with *Big Bambú*



One of the ways up in Doug and Mike Starn's *Big Bambú*, on the roof of the Metropolitan Museum of Art



Doug and Mike Starn's *Big Bambú* on the roof of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, May 2010

THE ULTIMATE METAPHOR

by Charlie Finch

Through my friends at the Garrison Arts Center (Bill Burbach, Carinda Swann, Dolores Strebler and Lee Balter), that picturesque haven of arts activism across the Hudson from the fortified cliffs of West Point, I have been hearing about the Doug and Mike Starns' Big Bambú project since it was first erected at Lee Balter's old Tallix foundry space in Beacon, N.Y. The Garrison gang, whose galleries and studio rest cozily next to the dead-end street at the Garrison MetroNorth station where Barbra Streisand and Walter Matthau filmed the movie version of *Hello Dolly!* in 1965, have been intimately involved in all aspects of the BB project and perhaps feel a bit wistful that it has moved to the roof of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

In my view, Big Bambú should keep moving to every capital and off-road arts venue in the world, for it is the perfect symbol of the crazy digitalized universe which now inhabits us, what the Temptations once characterized as *The Ball of Confusion*. Big Bambú evokes the crazy quilt of wires connecting servers in secret locations for Google, while nodding to the backlands of poverty where bamboo itself still remains as the only server. It mocks the clean political evocations of globalization as the solution for everything, for global connections often lead to new ways that those affected can trip, stumble and fall.

For those, like the Garrison gang, who last February endured downed power lines, thousands of collapsed trees and a week without electricity during the worst storm to hit northern Westchester in half a century, Big Bambú is an accurate line drawing of the landscape hearty Westchesters gaze at each morning. In fact, a giant oak crashed just north of the Met across Fifth Avenue a month ago, wiping out some vehicles, but thankfully killing no one.

Then, as there must be in a postmodern consciousness parametered by genome sequencing and the red shift of the light spectrum expanding the universe, there is the inner world of Big Bambú. It is the notion that all this visual dissonance is actually order if only we deprived individuals could mentally sort it out! I invite you to see Big Bambú and try. The more you experience this ragged jumble of metaphorical perfection the more it will cover everything around you, deep into your dreams.

CHARLIE FINCH is co-author of *Most Art Sucks: Five Years of Coagula* (Smart Art Press).