

Doug & Mike Starn

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## **Doug + Mike Starn: biographical elements**

Doug and Mike Starn, American artists, identical twins, born 1961. First receiving international attention at the 1987 Whitney Biennial, the Starns are primarily known for working conceptually with photography for the past two and a half decades. Concerned largely with chaos, interconnection and interdependence, time, and physics. They continue defying categorization, effectively combining traditionally separate disciplines such as photography, sculpture, architecture and site-specific projects.

Their recent installation *Big Bambú: You Can't, You Don't, and You Won't Stop*, at The Metropolitan Museum of Art ranked 4th in the world in 2010 for total attendance of contemporary art exhibitions and was the 9th most attended exhibition in the museum's history, with a total of 631,000. Throughout the 6-month exhibit, the Starns and their crew of 10-16 rock climbers continuously lashed and sculpted over 7,000 bamboo poles, a performative architecture of randomly interconnected vectors forming a section of a seascape with a 70-foot cresting wave above Central Park. *Big Bambú* suggests the complexity and energy of an ever-growing and changing living organism. In 2011 *Big Bambú* continued above the Grand Canal as an official collateral exhibition of the 54th Venice Biennale, spiraling over 70 feet high. Several new iterations of the series are being developed internationally.

In the spring of 2009, the Starns completed their first permanently installed public commission for the New York City Metropolitan Transit Authority. *See it split, see it change*, a 250-foot long artwork, up to 14 feet in height, presents the artists' iconic tree photographs and a leaf transposed into fused glass, marble mosaics and a water jet cut stainless steel fence punctuate the South Ferry subway terminal. It is the recipient of the 2009 Brendan Gill Prize.

The Starns were represented by Leo Castelli from 1989 until his death in 1999. Their art has been the object of numerous solo and group exhibitions in museums and galleries worldwide. The Starns have received many honors including two National Endowment for the Arts Grants in 1987 and 1995; The International Center for Photography's Infinity Award for Fine Art Photography in 1992; and, artists in residency at NASA in the mid-nineties. They have received critical acclaim in *The New York Times*, *Corriere della Sera*, *Le Figaro*, *The Times (London)*, *Art in America*, and *Artforum*, amongst many other notable media. Major artworks by the Starns are represented in public and private collections including: The Museum of Modern Art (NYC); San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SF); Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, (NYC); The Jewish Museum, (NYC); The Metropolitan Museum of Art (NYC); The National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; Whitney Museum of American Art (NYC); Yokohama Museum of Art, Japan; La Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; La Maison Européenne de la Photographie, Paris; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, amongst many others.