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work in progress

By Nari Ward

Landings is a hydraulic-operated sculptural installation developed specifically for Documenta. Made of metal piping, barrier cloth (landscaping fabric), stage lights, speakers, and several hundred wheels and casters, *Landings* is a theatrical object that performs an upward and downward movement every twelve minutes accompanied by light fades and sounds. A compilation of wheel and caster sounds and a slowed-down version of Blind Willie Johnson's early blues standard "Dark Was the Night" accent the movement of the form.

My work as an installation artist has always flirted with the theatrical, creating works for specific sites that inspire reflection and dialogue and bypass the trappings of the gallery white cube. In *Landings*, I use the language of the stage as a point of reference in order to make an alternate reality and define a moment for the audience. The physicality of the material and its transformation become the major protagonist in the work. In the down position, the form seems to be an aggressive artillery cannon. As it is raised, it turns into a landscape of wheels that appear to surround a metal and woven barrier cloth tree form. Movement and spiritual transcendence are both literally and symbolically manifested in this visual device. *Landings* dreams of flight and of being connected to nature, but this can only be realized in the mind and imagination of the viewer. Like any good performance, it is only completed when witnessed.