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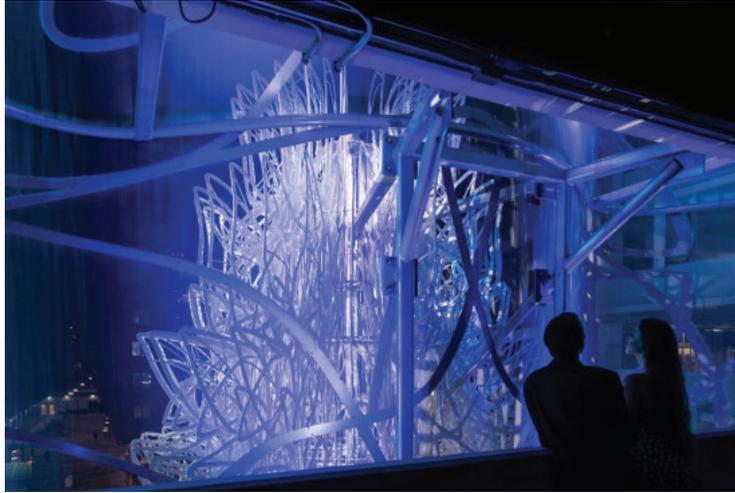
Artist Cliff Garten lights up this "loud" sculpture covering a Los Angeles parking garage
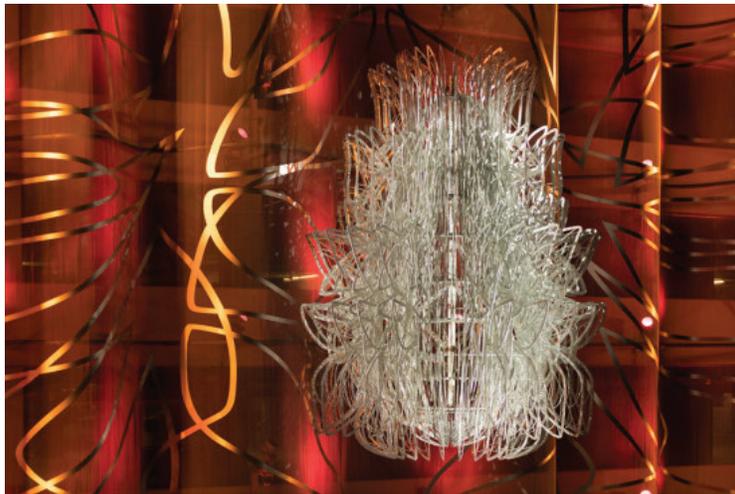
By SAM LUBELL • March 3, 2015

Cliff Garten's Heart of Compassion, at night (Jeremy Green)

Jerde Partnership's The Vermont, consisting of glassy 23 and 29-story mixed-use towers on the corner of Wilshire Boulevard and Vermont Avenue in Los Angeles' Koreatown, opened last summer. But one of its most memorable features, *LA's Heart of Compassion,* a sculpture by Cliff Garten covering the bulk of its above-ground parking structure, is only now officially open.

View from behind the undulating screen. (Jeremy Green)

The 20-foot-tall, suspended sculpture is made up of 100 laser cut aluminum lotus "petals" radiating from a steel armature and framed by a 175-foot-long and 45-foot-high undulating metallic screen. The $1.6 million project, which decomposes into curving aluminum line drawings attached to the screen on both sides, is front, side, and backlit via multi-colored LED lights, creating an active light show.

Close up of the project's "lotus" element. (Jeremy Green)

"I wanted to make a loud piece because it's a loud urban situation," said Garten, who added that his intention was to combine "the traditional roots of Koreatown and the essence of Los Angeles in its changing urban form."

In addition to being a major intersection for cars, buses, and light rail, the corner also contains another "loud" work, April Greiman's *Hand Holding a Bowl of Rice*, which covers (from ground to roof) the front edges of Arquitectonica's Wilshire Vermont mixed use building right across from The Vermont. "It's a reading of the city," summed up Garten of his piece. "It's letting everything come together through it."

(Jeremy Green)

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