



CHARLES GADEKEN

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Charles Gadeken is a professional artist working in the Bay Area for over 25 years, dedicated to increasing the artistic community and public awareness of art through his sculptural practice.

AFFILIATIONS

Stanford University (Adjunct Lecturer, 2020 - Present) - co-teaching an electrical engineering class EE - 125 and 225 where we are building a large scale work of art to celebrate the 125th anniversary of the EE dept at Stanford.

Box Shop (Proprietor) - a communal shipping container-based art space in San Francisco that provides workspace and access to high quality tools for local artists and makers.

Flaming Lotus Girls (Founding member, LLC Board) - a volunteer artist collective dedicated to the empowerment of women and men through education and participation in the industrial arts.

Qbox (Proprietor) - 501c3 organization producing lectures and exhibitions focusing on art and technology.

AWARDS

2018 - Silicon Valley Business Journal's Public Art Project of the Year - TABULA

2017 - Americans for the Arts "Best New Public Artwork of the Year in Review" recognition - TABULA

2015 - Structural Engineers Association of Northern CA's (SEAONC) Excellence in Engineering Award of Merit for Special Use Structures – SQUARED

SELECTED COMMISSIONS

*Public Art Installations ^Permanent Installations

*ENTWINED HENDERSON (2025): 7 LED Entwined shrubs and over 1600 LEDs illuminate a local park in Henderson, NV, further activating public spaces and creating engaging nighttime activities for families and visitors in the area.

*ELDER MOTHER EDC (2025): Elder Mother is a 30' tall steel tree of light and magic. Displayed at EDCLV 2025.

*ENTWINED UN Plaza (2024): 9 LED flowering clusters ranging from 5-8 ft tall and up to 6 ft wide canopies create a magical, immersive experience of ever-changing light and color for San Francisco's United Nations Plaza.

*ENTWINED Napa (2024): Three steel and LED trees & 7 flowering clusters ranging from 5-20ft tall and up to 30ft wide canopies create a magical meadow of ever-changing light and color, and an immersive, adventurous experience for Napa's Lighted Art Festival.

*ENTWINED MEADOW 4.0 (2021-2024): Three steel and LED trees & 30 flowering clusters ranging from 3-30 feet tall and up to 30 foot wide canopies create a magical meadow of ever-changing light and color, and an immersive, adventurous experience. The 2023-24 installation also incorporates benches and speakers to allow deeper immersion with the installation and art that tells stories and tales in many different languages. First installed in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park for the 150th Anniversary celebration.

*^PASTORIA (2021-22): A permanent installation for DeAnza Properties, Pastoria property in Sunnyvale, CA. Illuminated Corten steel panels laser cut with detailed imagery that depict local flora and fauna with dynamic lighting. Panels beautify the lower frontage of the building.

*ENTWINED MEADOW CANAL (2021): Ten LED illuminated, metal sculpted flowering clusters for City of Scottsdale, AZ art event, Canal Convergence 2021.

*T2 (2021) A 12ft column of COR-TEN steel depicting a highly detailed illuminated blue heron for the City of Los Altos.

*Entwined Red (2021) One metal sculpted LED tree for Red Development (housing) in Reno, CA.

*T3 Red (2021) A 12ft column of COR-TEN steel depicting regional fauna and flora for Red Development (housing) in Reno, CA.

* ENTWINED HSB (2021): Four LED metal sculpted trees & 10 flowering clusters in a range of sizes. Installed for San Francisco's Hardly Strictly Bluegrass festival virtual event for their stage at Pier 70.

ENTWINED ARC (2021): Two LED metal sculpted trees & 10 flowering clusters in a range of sizes. Installed at Arc Music Festival in Chicago.

Fractal Flyer (2019-2020): 25' x 200' Interactive mechanical and LED light Installation containing 76 "Fractal Flyers" installed for 5 years in the David Packard Electrical Engineering Building Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA. Commissioned by the Engineering Department of Stanford University.

*SQUAREDNV (2019-2021): One 50ft interactive LED tree installed for two years in Downtown Reno's Neon Line. Commissioned by Jacobs Entertainment.

CROWN (2018): Four kinetic 3-jointed towers of light undulate and wave in response to participant control via giant hydraulic arms. Commissioned by Burning Man, it was featured as the Center Camp artwork.

*SQUAREDSE (2018-2019): One 50ft interactive LED tree installed for one year in Patricia's Green of Hayes Valley, San Francisco, CA. Commissioned by the San Francisco Art Commission.

*T1 (2017): A 12ft column of COR-TEN steel depicting detailed, illuminated red-tail hawks for Calabasas, CA



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Annotated Image List - City of Sunnyvale Plaza Del Sol RFP

1. ENTWINED MEADOW (2020-2024) - Steel & LEDs. Dimensions vary.

Entwined is composed of over 70 unique pieces, from giant steel and LED trees to small steel LED Shrubs and logs. Entwined is a magical meadow of ever-changing light and color, and an immersive, interactive, adventurous experience.



2. TABULA (2016) - Steel Fins, Custom Extruded Plastics, LEDs. 160' long.

A permanent architectural lightwork at 385 Sherman Ave in Palo Alto depicting historical and real-time seismic data on a scrolling global map.



Entwined Cloud

Illuminated Plaza

For Plaza Del Sol
in Sunnyvale, CA

Charles Gadeken

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Concept



Entwined Cloud envisions a captivating display by constructing a steel cable superstructure and suspending over 2,200 four-inch plastic LED cubes at varying lengths. This innovative design will craft the mesmerizing illusion of an undulating surface

Entwined Cloud



Entwined Cloud —derived from a parametric, wave-like surface— creates a sense of motion even when still. The gradation of cube heights produces a gentle topography overhead, encouraging people to gather, linger, and look upward

Canopy



During the day, the suspended field of translucent cubes presents a gentle, sculptural form that softly reflects light and shadow.

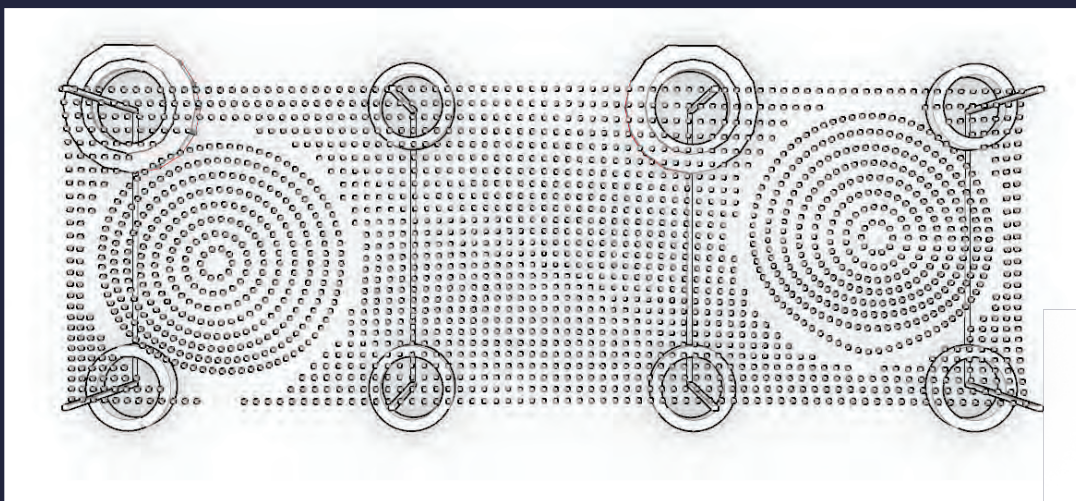
At night, it transforms into a lively, animated setting, with each cube serving as a programmable pixel capable of displaying billions of colors and continuously changing patterns

Interactivity



A key strength of Entwined Cloud is its interactivity. Through a simple QR interface, visitors can directly influence the lighting within two circular zones in the canopy, turning the installation into a shared, participatory experience rather than a static object

Plan View

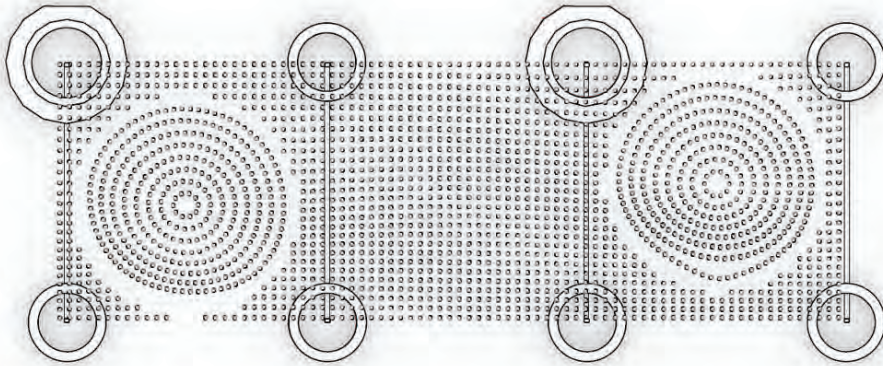


The work balances spectacle with restraint, combining high-energy animation and vivid color with elegance and clarity. This ensures longevity in materials, technology, and aesthetic relevance.

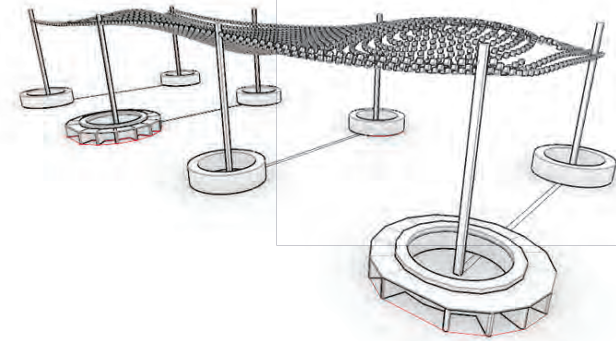
Overall, it's a sophisticated, ambitious proposal that evolves with the community it serves.

Plan View

Top | -



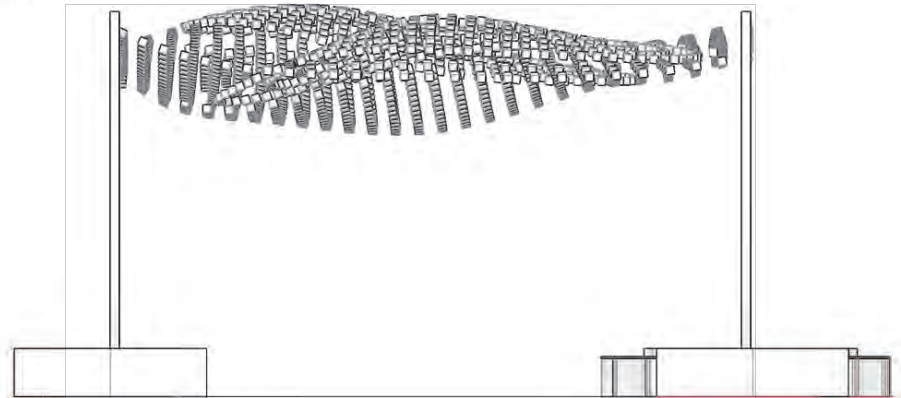
Perspective | -



Front | -



Right | -



Maintenance



The cubes are made from rotomolded plastic for strength and UV durability, with threaded inserts for secure installation. Each contains double-diffused LEDs for even, protected illumination.

This system has been used in outdoor installations for over 10 years and includes remote access, logging and monitoring. Additional replacement components will be provided to ensure long-term performance.

Light and the art of Charles Gadeken

Charles Gadeken's lighting is immersive, system-driven, and alive. He treats light as a dynamic material, where patterns evolve over time instead of simply changing colors. Individual LEDs operate like pixels, but together they form continuous waves, gradients, and flowing fields that move through space.

A defining quality is slow, layered complexity—subtle transitions, overlapping behaviors, and motion that feels organic, like wind or water rather than programmed effects. Even when interactive, the work doesn't hand over full control; instead, participants gently influence the system, keeping the piece balanced. Ultimately, his lighting creates not just an object, but an atmosphere—something you don't just see, but inhabit.

Charles has built a community of over 20 programmers who have been building his LED pattern custom library for over 15 years, and it is unrivaled in its complexity and nuance.