

PALABRAS CLAVE Fuegos artificiales, Parc de la Villete, Bernard Tschumi

KEYWORDS Fireworks, Parc de la Villete, Bernard Tschumi

Fuegos artificiales, Parc de la Villette, 1992.
© Bernard Tschumi



Fireworks

Bernard Tschumi

You have always been fascinated by fireworks. One day you are asked to design fireworks for a summer festival at the Parc de la Villette. You ask yourself: can one extend the concepts and themes of the park up into the air? Could architecture be turned into a kind of three-dimensional, ethereal piece of performance art? As you start to think about it you ask the fireworks contractors, “Please show me how you design fireworks. Do you have diagrams?”

And they say, “No, we don’t. We just—we just do it.” Of course, as an architect you feel that there ought to be some sort of plan. You have to find a mode of notation, just as your early work looked broadly at notation.

You want to find a way to express fireworks in perspectives, plans, and elevations, while also indicating things like color, intensity, and duration.

So you develop your own mode of notation. It indicates the folies, the movement vectors, and how they interact with one another. Each of the frames corresponds to a seven-second interval in the fireworks. That’s the time frame.

You think that both the scheme and the notation you developed are actually quite beautiful. So you go show the fireworks fabricators your plans.

The fabricator looks at you as if you are insane and says, “No, we don’t do it like that. Just tell us what you want; we don’t understand that kind of stuff. Take the drawings away. Just tell us in words. Do you want a big, noisy boom? A big blue, then a big red?”

So you patiently read the drawing aloud to him and say, “Yes, here we want this many rockets; a few red ones, then a white explosion, and then a series of little white ones that do...”

“Ah, now you’re talking,” he says.