

# LA WEEKLY

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Credit: Photo courtesy of the artist

## WHAT DO THESE GIANT BALLOONS HAVE TO DO WITH GLOBAL WARMING?



EVA RECINOS ([HTTPS://WWW.LAWEEKLY.COM/GUEST-AUTHOR/EVA-RECINOS/](https://www.laweekly.com/guest-author/eva-recinos/)), x JANUARY 26, 2016



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In 1824, Michael Faraday created what would become the modern-day balloon. By the 1950s, the pliable, skinny balloon was well on its way to becoming a staple at kids' parties and carnivals.

More recently, L.A.-based Israeli artist and designer [Doron Gazit](https://dorongazit.com/) (<https://dorongazit.com/>) realized he had a talent for making balloon figures, so he started selling them on the streets. Eventually, Gazit was inspired to take his balloon shaping one step further. With a background in industrial design, he began to think of the balloon as something that could change a space at a large scale. This would one day lead to the design of a 500-foot-long air tube, a recurring object in his environmental art pieces. Wind plays a large role in many of Gazit's pieces, expanding the materials he uses and adding movement to his creations.

A natural landscape becomes the canvas and the wind becomes the medium. Gazit calls the process of creating more of a dialogue between himself as the maker and nature as a force. He simply gives wind "the conditions for visualizing itself."

Bringing his visions to life requires careful planning and an open mind. Working with nature and inflatables, Gazit strives to create some sort of harmony. But no one can easily command the natural elements, and that can create a challenge when he's creating his art. Gazit focuses more on creating a "collaboration" between himself, his materials and natural elements.





*Credit: Photo courtesy of the artist*

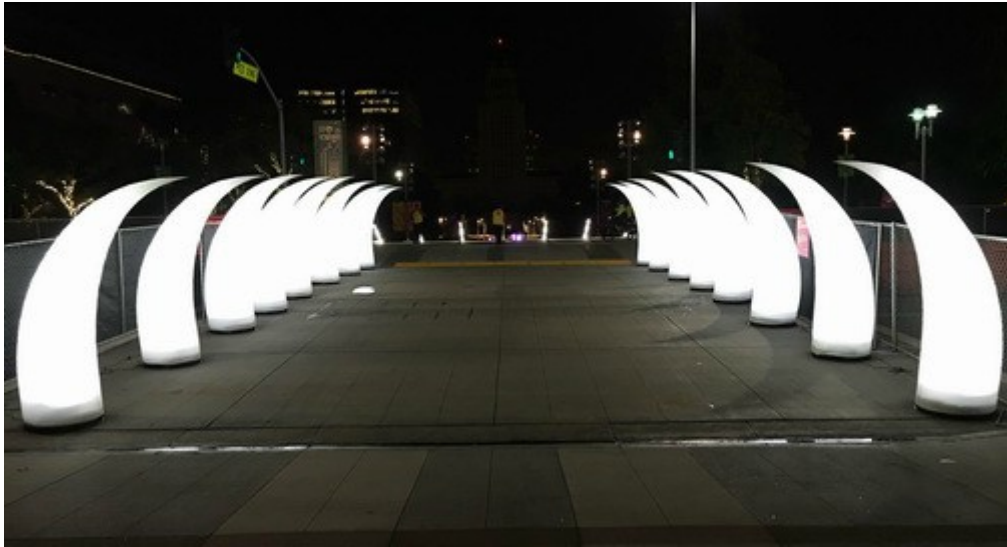
"I learned from day one that there's no way to disagree or have an argument with the wind or Mother Nature because it would be blown away within seconds," says Gazit. "It's like trying to hold a huge sail in the wind on the ocean."

Gazit also creates work for large-scale events. A graduate of the Bezalel Academy of Art in Jerusalem, the artist was invited from Israel to come to the United States to work on an installation for Los Angeles' Summer Olympic Games in 1984. In 1986, Gazit founded a company named [Air Dimensional Design](https://www.airdd.com/) (<https://www.airdd.com/>) for the purpose of working on more large-scale events. His trademarked inflatables, [the Fly Guys](https://dorongazit.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/In-C-at-the-Hammer-Muse-4-14-em_12.jpg) ([https://dorongazit.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/In-C-at-the-Hammer-Muse-4-14-em\\_12.jpg](https://dorongazit.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/In-C-at-the-Hammer-Muse-4-14-em_12.jpg)), appeared at the Olympics in Atlanta in 1996.

"In nature, I was working on visualizing the invisible, capturing the wind," Gazit says. "So the wind was inflating the tubes and animating them but it was always horizontal. I wanted to create a vertical work, and that was the beginning of the invention of the dancing inflatables."

He also has a few Super Bowl games under his belt. In 2013, Gazit created an installation of flowing fabric that looked like hair flowing from two giant heads (a task that might sound daunting, but he was “very happy to make it happen”). Lights and lasers burst out from the piece, surrounding Beyoncé in an ethereal radiance as she belted out “Halo.”

Air Dimensional Design also recently created installations for New Year’s Eve near downtown L.A.’s Grand Avenue and Grand Park. The project involved a number of inflatables in all sizes and shapes, as well as video mapping. The team wanted to use all parts of the environment, interacting with not only the streets but also the trees and the ground. One part of the installation featured two rows of glowing, inflatable tusks that framed the crowd of partygoers.



*Credit: Photo courtesy of the artist*

“Creating an avenue of tusks, inflatable tusks, we could create this beautiful effect of inviting the people to walk through and go up to the plaza,” Gazit says.

But even as he works with his team on events, Gazit maintains his focus on nature. His recent Red Line piece brings awareness to global warming's negative effects on the environment. So far, Gazit has installed this piece and its variations in locations such as the Dead Sea (specifically its sinkholes) and San Luis Obispo (at the dry Laguna Lake). He hopes to soon take the piece to other locations, including the Amazon rainforest and Alaska, where he'll bring awareness to melting glaciers. The project, Gazit explains, does not harm the environment; he makes sure not to leave any materials behind and to recycle everything that he uses.



*Credit: Photo courtesy of the artist*

The Red Line piece, both in its monumentality and aesthetic style, brings to mind the work of Christo and Jeanne-Claude, particularly their famous piece "Running Fence." With "Red Line," Gazit wants to make viewers more aware of global warming and "make them ask questions." The jarring color of the red material echoes a highlighter or a red pencil mark. With this gesture, Gazit says, as he puts it, "Enough is enough." Gazit will install a variation of this project at both the L.A. Art Show, happening Jan. 27-31, and the Fabrik Expo on Jan. 29-31.

When he's not involved in large-scale projects, Gazit often works with kids. He teaches them the concept of "Air-chitecture" and how engineering, inflatables and the environment can intersect. "I was inspired by the twisted balloon and so everything around them can be — they can use as inspiration for something bigger and exciting," Gazit says. "It can make their future much more exciting and beautiful."



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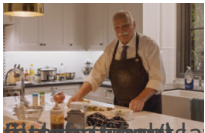


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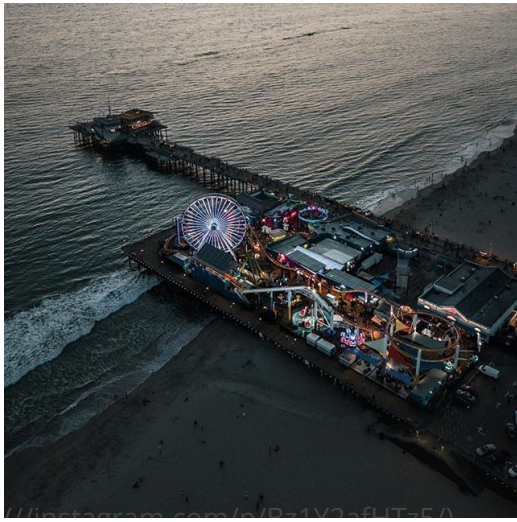


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