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Studio Gang's colossal "Hive" makes its debut at the National Building Museum

Justine Testado | July 10, 2017



National Building Museum: Hive Construction Time-Lapse. Video by [Work Zone Cam](#).

Step inside the National Building Museum's Great Hall and you will find the Hive, a mountainous sound chamber designed by Studio Gang Architects for the Museum's 2017 Summer Block Party. The interactive installation comprises three interconnected domed structures made from over 2,500 wound paper tubes, with the tallest dome reaching 56.5 feet. The project marks Studio Gang's latest collaboration with the Museum, following the 2003 "Masonry Variations" exhibition and the 2009 "Transforming Skylines and Communities" series.

Built over a period of three weeks in the Great Hall, the Hive invites visitors to explore each of its chambers, which are scaled to reflect different sound signatures. Despite its colossal scale, the Hive also offers a cozier interior environment for people to gather. The 10-foot oculus of the main chamber filters natural light to create intricate patterns that morph throughout the day.

Weighing 72,961 pounds, the Hive is made from 2,551 wounded paper tubes, which show off a reflective silver exterior and a vibrant magenta interior. The stacked, interlocked tubes can balance structural forces and support their own weight.

Studio Gang teamed up with acoustic engineer John Tewksbury and percussionist Steve Bloom for setting up the Hive's tubular instruments and chimes. "Acoustically, the structure resembles a forest clearing: some sounds reflect off the tubes as if they were trees, while other sounds pass through."

Open now until September 4, the Hive will host a jam-packed series of concerts, tours, talks, and other public programs — so don't miss out!