



**HONOURABLE MENTION
URBAN INSTALLATION,
VANCOUVER, CANADA**
ARCHITECT
**SATOSHI MATSUOKA &
YUKI TAMURA**

Entitled *Balloon Caught*, this ingenious urban installation by Tokyo-based architects Satoshi Matsuoka and Yuki Tamura was the outcome of an initiative to re-think and re-animate public space in Vancouver. Participants were asked to explore the spatial and urban potential of an alleyway in Gastown, the city's oldest district, through an intervention that would allow different forms of occupation through the day. Proposals were also intended as a generator of activity, attracting the public and offering new readings of the city.

From such a solemn programme comes a delightfully whimsical riposte. Translucent, glowing orbs 5m to 9m in diameter are wedged between the buildings in the alley, like runaway balloons or delicate paper lampshades. Festive and seductive, the superscale spheres heighten the spatial experience of the narrow alley. The installation is also efficient, designed to be installed and dismantled in under a day. Lit from within, the inflatable nylon orbs change character from day to night, as the city centre site was constantly accessible and inhabited.

Although only in place for three days in the summer, the urban balloons created a buzz in downtown Vancouver. The opening night party drew a crowd of 700 and subsequent events attracted a mix of designers, artists, planners, tourists, families and *flâneurs*. Light in touch and spirit, these charming inflatables also gained an honourable mention from the Jury. C. S.

Architect
Satoshi Matsuoka & Yuki Tamura, Tokyo

delight