

Texas Tech School of Art faculty member to have work installed in Houston airport

Travelers from around the world will soon be able to appreciate art from one of Texas Tech University's very own.

William Cannings is an associate professor of sculpture in Texas Tech's School of Art, housed within the J.T. & Margaret Talkington College of Visual & Performing Arts.

The installation of 30 inflated steel clouds will be near gate 50 of the William P. Hobby Airport in Houston.

William Cannings, an associate professor of sculpture in Texas Tech's School of Art, will have his art installation of 30 inflated steel clouds installed near gate 50 of the William P. Hobby Airport in Houston.



“I’m fortunate enough to have known Professor Cannings for many years and I’m thrilled for this latest recognition of his stature as a contemporary art maker,” said Genevieve Durham DeCesaro, interim dean of the J.T. & Margaret Talkington College of Visual & Performing Arts.

“Professor Cannings demonstrates the rigor, courage and creative innovation demanded of professional artists. On behalf of our students, faculty and staff, I celebrate his selection by the city of Houston’s Airports Public Art Program and very much look forward to seeing his work installed as a part of the Houston Civic Art Collection.”

The art installation was spearheaded by the city of Houston to increase public art in specific sites throughout the city. Roughly 380 artists submitted proposals with Cannings selected as one of the finalists.

“I’m still a bit in shock,” Cannings said. “This accomplishment is a nice progression in my own trajectory as an artist and as a faculty member at Texas Tech. It’s yet another example I can pull into the classroom to show students what we can accomplish as artists.”

In addition to the installation at Hobby Airport, Cannings also has work displayed in other parts of Houston, Dallas and Miami.

The steel clouds are inflated by injecting compressed air heated to approximately 1,500 degrees. It is a process Cannings has been developing for more than 20 years.

“The clouds themselves were inspired by the Llano Estacado and all the beautiful clouds we see in the sky here,” Cannings said. “It was a simple idea, but I thought it fit well in the airport’s atmosphere. Airports by nature can be stressful places, so I wanted to create something whimsical that could transport people as they move about the concourse.”

The clouds will be installed in May of 2022 and will be a permanent fixture. The airport averages 14 million visitors per year, providing high visibility for the piece.