

FASTITOCALON (THE WHALE):

"He who floats on ancient streams. His look is like rough stone, clothed in sand dunes so that seafarers think they are looking at some island."

- *The Exeter Book*

(Translated from the Old English by Hana Videen)

PREMISE:

Fastitocalon uses a new material to give garden visitors a surreal experience.

NEW MATERIALS / NEW EXPERIENCES:

This playful garden uses floating concrete vessels and floating concrete rocks to create a delightful and surreal experience for garden visitors. The designers have invented and patented a new type of buoyant concrete. Possessing an average density of .5 g/cc, this concrete is buoyant enough to support a growing sapling while remaining porous to the water around it. Our hypothesis is that hydric trees grown in such vessels may eventually be useful for helping to create habitat and reduce nutrient pollution in compromised bodies of water. Three prototype vessels have been successfully launched and planted with willow cuttings. A prototype vessel won a major international ideas competition in the summer of 2017 and will be featured in a scholarly publication in the Spring of 2018.

Like *Fastitocalon* of old, the garden relies on the inherent delight of improbability. The slightest breeze, catching in the leaves of the willow trees, causes the vessel to spin and dance in the water. Because the new material looks like normal concrete, it appears too heavy to float. The surreal quality of this effect is heightened when the floating object takes the form of something doubly improbable, like a boulder.

Our proposal creates four, 8 foot diameter pools using standard circular horse troughs. Each pool contains four floating concrete vessels that are planted with black willow (*Salix nigra*), and a small armada of floating boulders. Visitors are invited to touch, push and spin the elements. Each pool is planted with minute duckweed (*Lemna perpusilla*) and stocked with native blue gill (*Lepomis macrochirus*) to aid in its health and maintenance. Two earthen humps, planted in grass and left unmown, shield the pools from immediate view, creating a sense of mystery while also allowing visitors to view the pools from above and below.

MATERIALS:

- 8 Steel horse troughs (8' diameter)
- 16 Buoyant Concrete Vessels.
- 24 Buoyant Concrete Boulders.
- 70 cubic meter earth.
- 16 *Salix nigra* cuttings.
- *Lemna perpusilla*
- *Lepomis macrochirus*





