



Summer in the City

The installation that Lindy Roy built for New York art centre P.S.1 provided a backdrop for weekend music sessions and, during the rest of the week, a place for urbanites to mix and mingle. [By Jan-Willem Poels.](#)

[Photography by E Costa, Philip Kelly and Gernot Riether.](#)

Finding a spot that invites you to chill out and relax is one of the challenges of summer, especially in a huge and humid metropolis like New York City. Last summer, however, a competition organised for the second time by contemporary art centre P.S.1 in collaboration with the MoMA Young Architects Program injected a welcome sigh of relief into the sweltering heat. The winner would have the opportunity to display his or her competition entry in P.S.1's outdoor courtyard and galleries.

The Museum of Modern Art's young, hip affiliate, P.S.1, is located in Long Island City, only a short train ride from Manhattan. During the summer months the outdoor space forms the temporary stage for Warm Up, a highly popular DJ series that brings live international music and art performances to New York audiences. This year's competition winner was ROY (headed by Lindy Roy), an outfit that submitted an installation called subWave, which was to provide an intriguing backdrop for the Warm Up sessions.

Erected completely outdoors, subWave's clever concept mixed hip club with relaxing spa – an experience accessible for a mere \$5.00. The competition called for a design geared to satisfy two separate requirements. On summer Saturdays the gallery environment hosts a crowd of up to 6,000 people, who flock to P.S.1 for Warm Up. During the week the winning installation gives urbanites a relaxing base for people-watching while transcending the tropical temperatures that stress out New Yorkers for a few months each year. ROY's subWave transformed the concrete and gravel courtyard into an urban oasis of microclimates cooled by artificial breezes, water

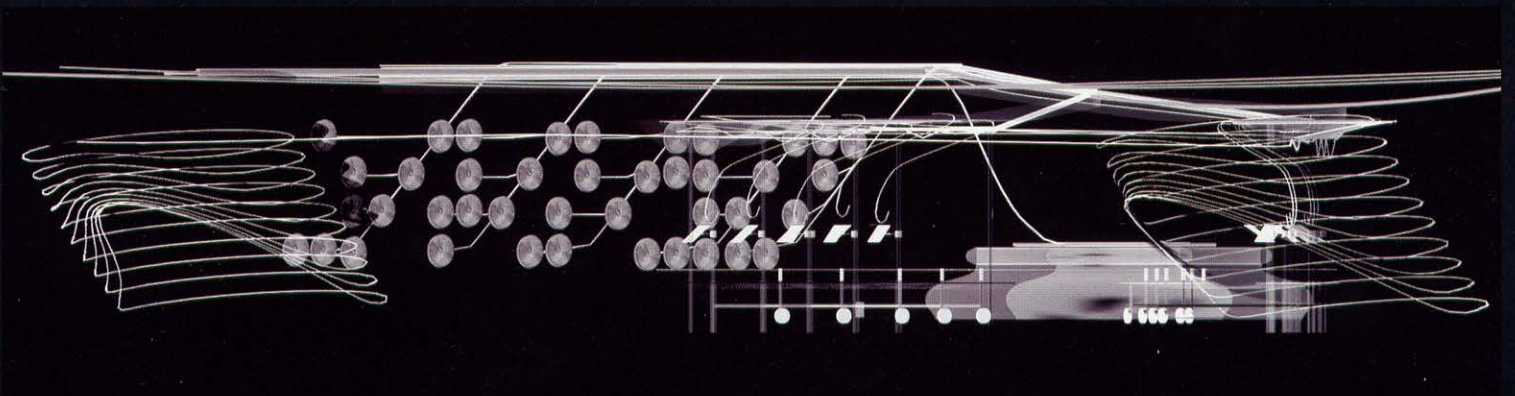
features and the solace of shade. Breezes of varying speeds came from 45 stainless-steel fans positioned on existing courtyard walls. Misting equipment located across the site distributed a fine spray of water. And 21 large-scale hammocks were designed to pivot, allowing users to opt for canopy protection if desired. These lounging facilities were also provided with personal atomisers, hydration packs and towels. Shoulder straps and hands-free drinking straws made it easy to use the hydration packs while dancing or moving around.

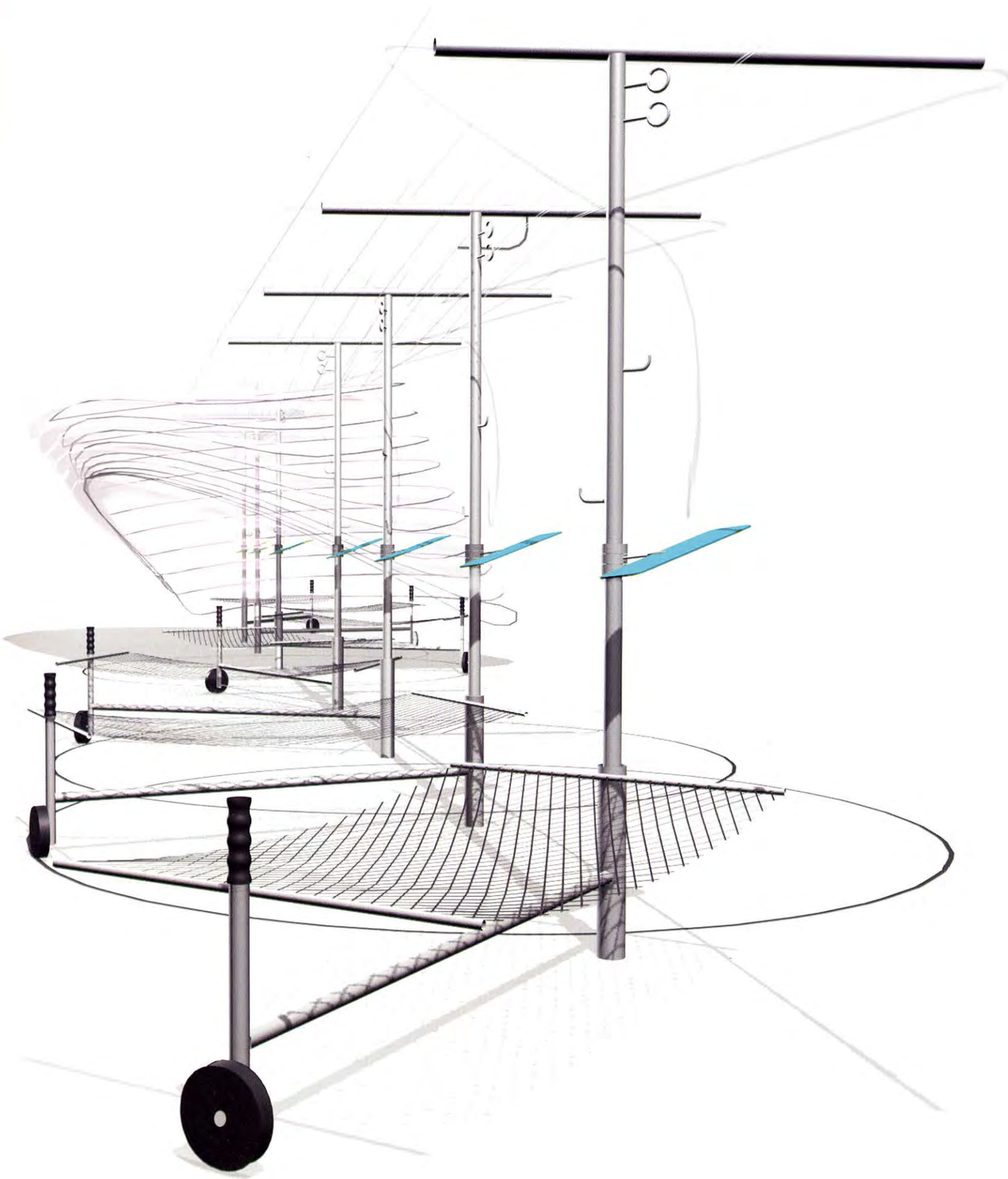
ROY hung flexible screens of iridescent fabric from tension cables to produce additional private spaces. A shower of water spattered into a circle of white pebbles. Visitors entering the building were greeted by two inflatable wading pools that fronted a two-storey-high, digital-graphic image of a parting sea. A deeper pool was subtly tucked into a small outdoor gallery. Open for business on Saturdays, a bar clad in reflective Plexiglas mirrored daily activities throughout the rest of the week.

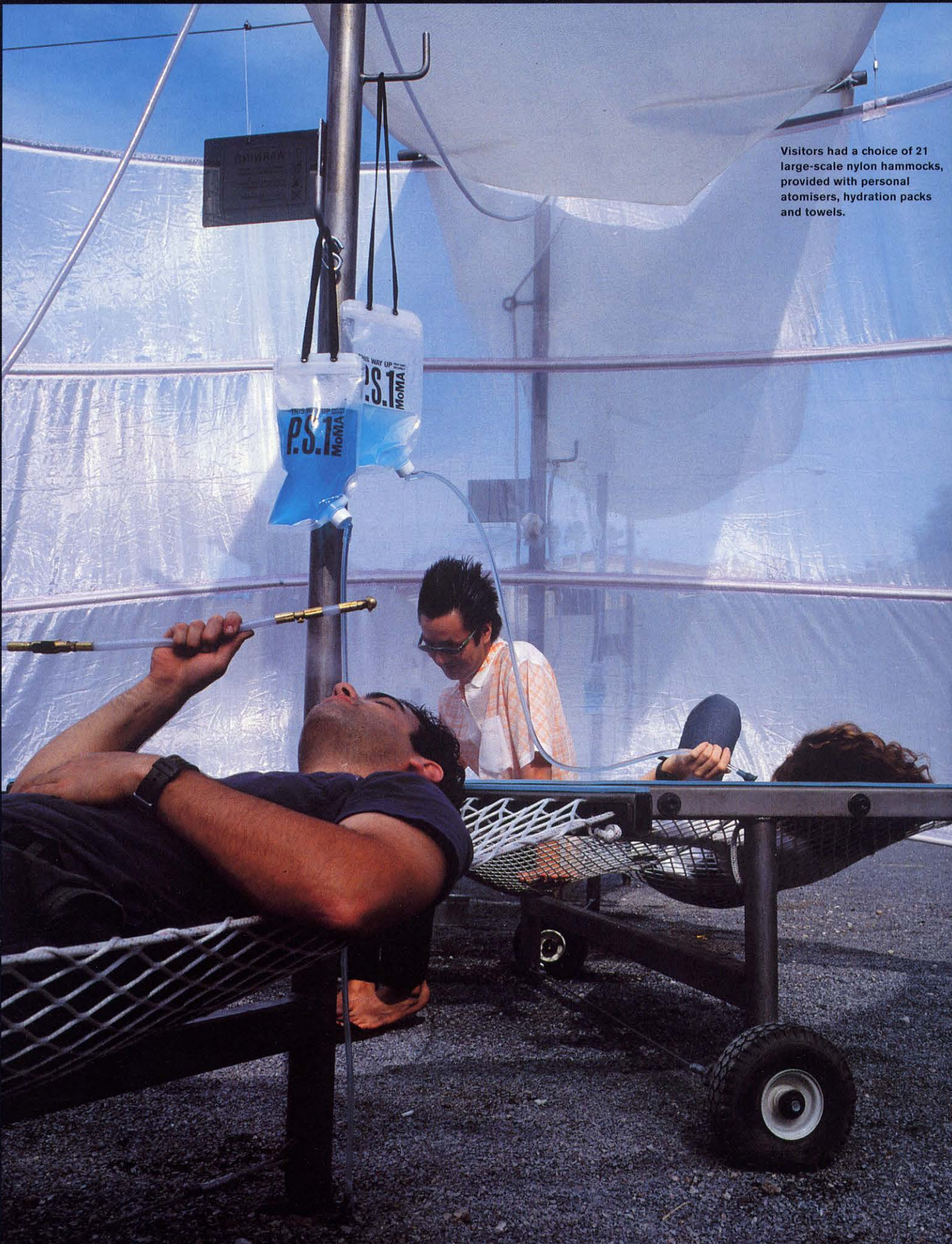
As the setting for Warm Up 2001, subWave was the cool place to be on hot summer Saturdays in New York. Although it emphasised the urban environment rather than denying it, ROY's installation nevertheless created a refuge within the city. The MoMA/P.S.1 programme challenges young architects while also supplying the city with an urban oasis accessible to a wide audience. Successful for two years running, the competition leads to an integration of ideas that surely looks forward to an exciting future of repeat performances.



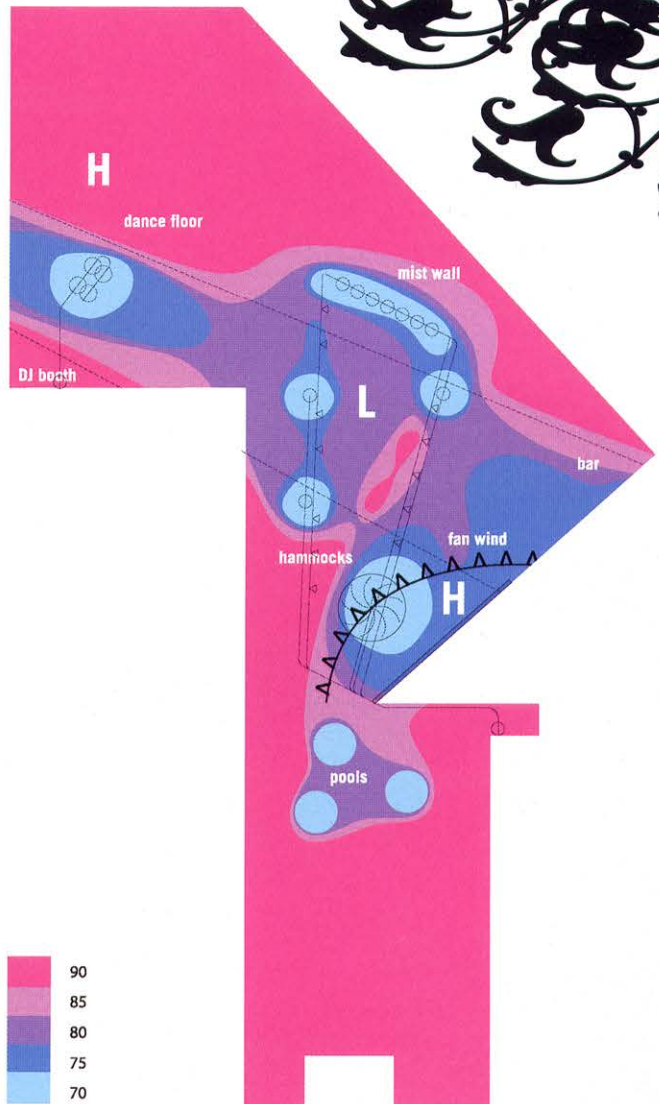
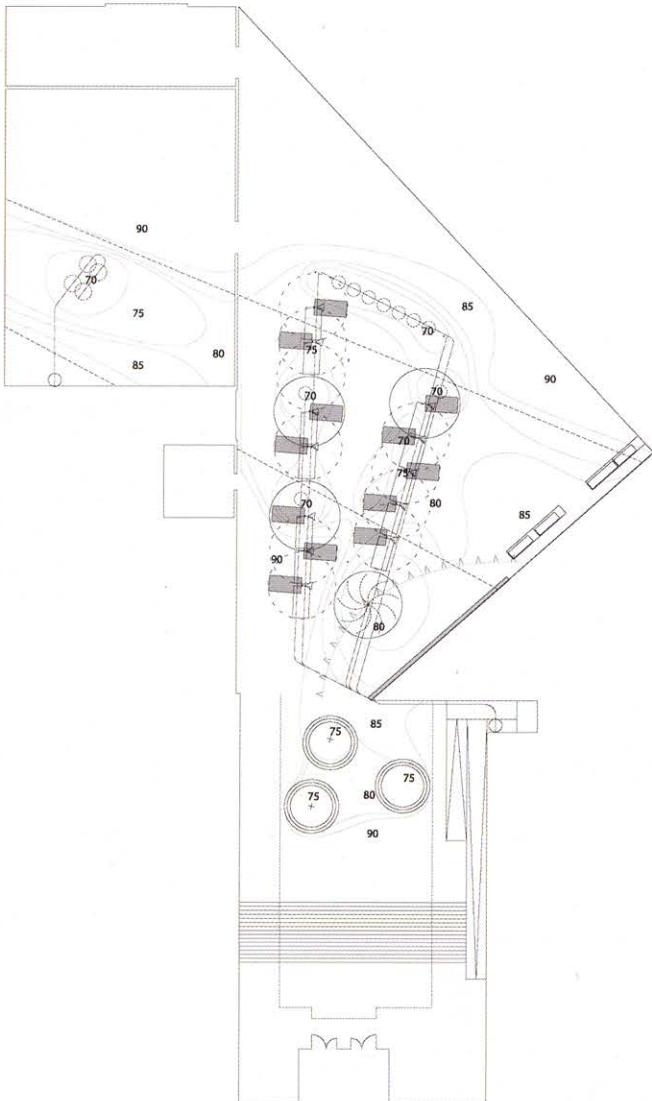
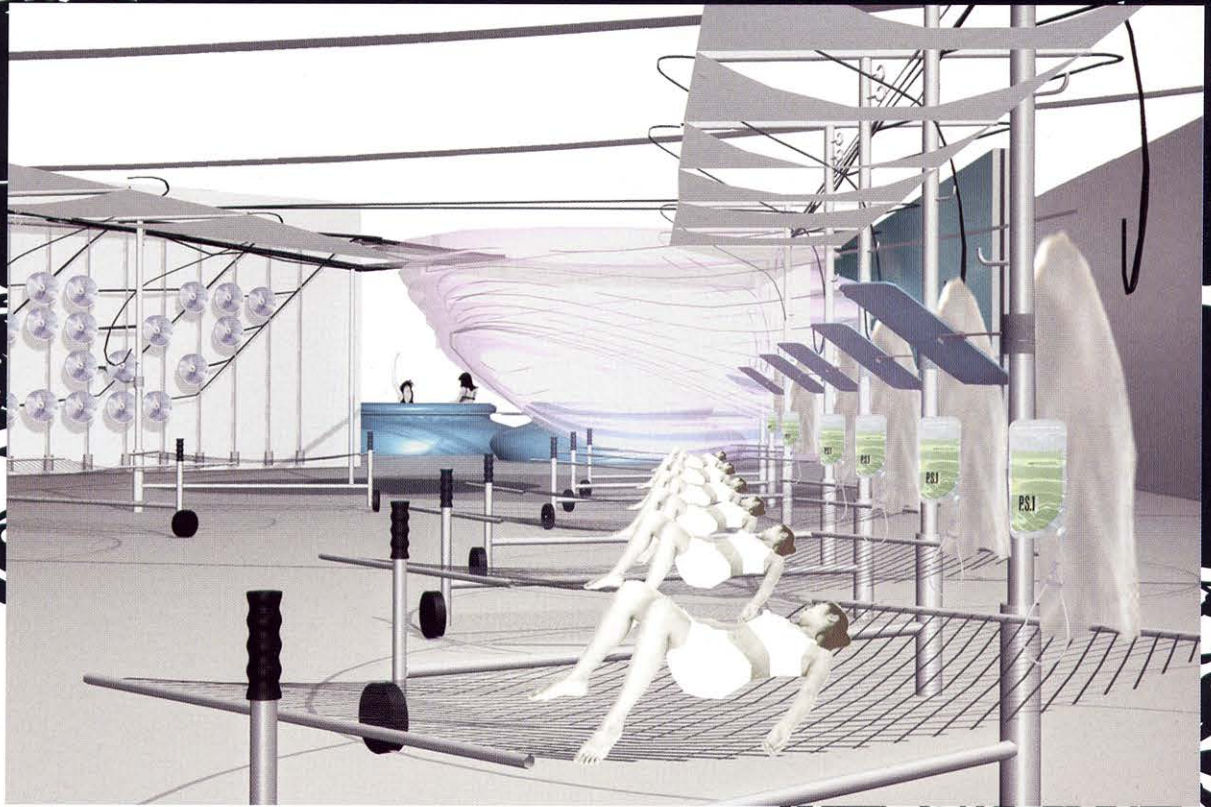
ROY transformed the courtyard of P.S.1 into an architectural landscape complete with pools, hammocks and walls of fans, creating a refuge for summer relaxation in the heart of New York City.







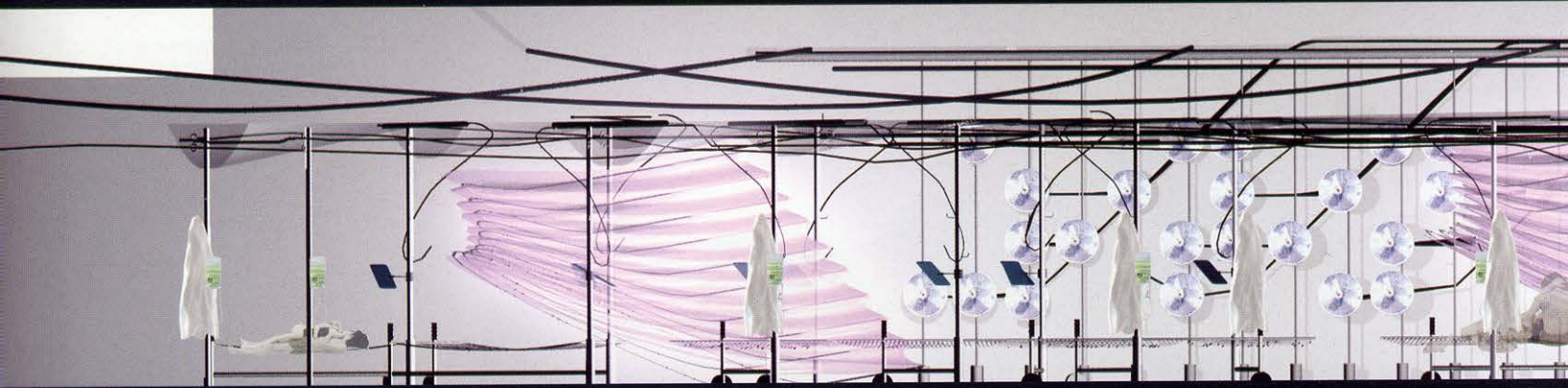
Visitors had a choice of 21 large-scale nylon hammocks, provided with personal atomisers, hydration packs and towels.



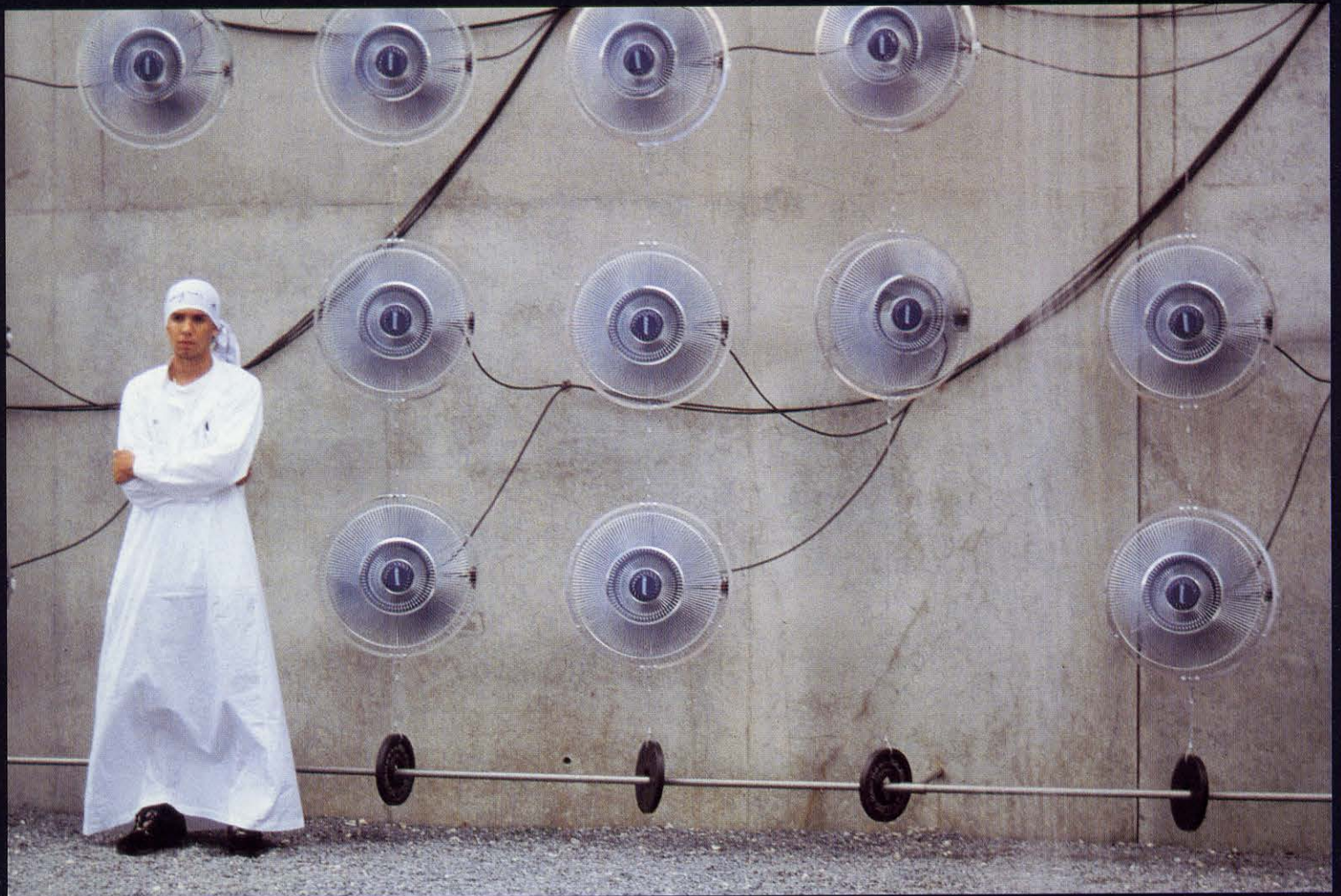
Hammock + Irrigation + Temperature + Water

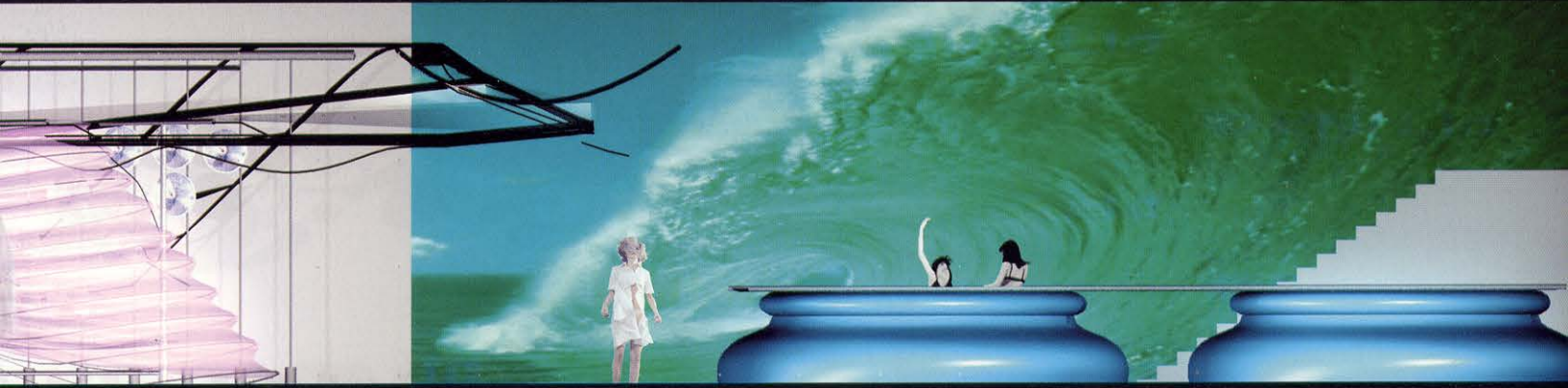
Hung from tension cables,
flexible fabric screens
produced additional private
spaces.





Although it emphasised the urban environment rather than denying it, ROY's installation nevertheless created a refuge within the city





Walking past a monumental photographic image of a parting sea, guests entered a tropical atmosphere enhanced by misting equipment and walls of fans set at varying speeds.