

## THE BURNHAM BLOG

[Vision & Theme](#)

[About the Logo](#)

[Centennial Committee and Staff](#)

[Sponsors](#)

[Newsroom](#)

[News Coverage](#)

[Press Releases](#)

[E-News & Social Media](#)

[The Burnham Blog](#)

[Get Involved](#)

[Contact Us](#)

### Let the nicknaming begin

By Patrick T. Reardon on Thu., 06/18/2009 –4:27 am.

Millennium Park’s “Cloud Gate” is better known as The Bean. So what nickname will we give to Ben van Berkel’s new pavilion in the park?

The gleaming white structure of sharp planes and sinuous curves --- a mix of hard and soft --- opens on Friday at the south end of the park’s Chase Promenade.



It’s one of two temporary pavilions serving as the centerpiece of this year’s celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Plan of Chicago.

Which is nicknamed The Burnham Plan.

Chicagoans like nicknames. Wrigley Field is the Friendly Confines. The Eisenhower Expressway is the Ike. Michigan Avenue, the Magnificent Mile.

This summer, we’ll have two opportunities for nicknaming.

In addition to the van Berkel work, the Burnham Plan Centennial also commissioned a pavilion designed by noted London-based architect Zaha Hadid. But that

### THE BURNHAM BLOG

Urban planning touches every part of your day to day life. Join the conversation that is shaping the region for the next 100 years.

→ Register or Login to comment

### SUBSCRIBE VIA RSS



Use our RSS feed to track new blog posts.

### ABOUT THIS BLOG

This blog is about history, planning and the future. It’s rooted in the recognition that we live in a world that is created by plans – and by the failure to make plans. [\[MORE\]](#)

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

[Patrick T. Reardon](#) is a Chicagoan, born and bred. He has been writing about the city, its region and planning issues, mainly in the Chicago Tribune, for nearly 40 years. [\[MORE\]](#)

structure, which involves fabric stretched just so over a frame of 7,000 pieces of aluminum tubing, won't be finished at least until the middle of July. Both pavilions come down after Oct. 31.

For now, there's only the van Berkel work for us to consider.



In his review in Thursday's Chicago Tribune, architecture critic Blair Kamin wrote that the pavilion "is at once thoughtful and delightful, packing just enough bling to stand up to the park's star attractions." That's a nice description, but a bit too long for a nickname.

He also wrote that the floor slab and roof canopy create a "sandwich." That has possibilities, but it doesn't seem to capture the work as a whole.

The Aircraft Carrier? The Biplane? The Piper Cub?

There is definitely something about the pavilion that seems to evoke the idea of flight. From above, the floor slab can be seen as a runway while the roof canopy serves as the wings of an airplane.

Van Berkel and Hadid were asked to come up with innovative designs that would inspire the people of the Chicago metropolitan region to dream bold dreams as Daniel Burnham did a century ago.

The Bold? The Dream?

As potential nicknames, those words are short and punchy, but, really, too wonky.

The Space Ship? The Peek-a-boo?

Those were ideas that were offered by onlookers just before the start of Thursday's news conference to show the van Berkel pavilion and the sparkling aluminum frame of the Hadid structure to reporters and camera

people. Peek-a-boo is actually pretty good.

During his remarks at the news conference, van Berkel suggested that the roof might call to mind a bridge while the skyline vistas that are visible at an angle by those walking through the pavilion could echo the diagonal streets in the Burnham Plan.

Later, I asked him if the pavilion had a name.



“No name,” he said. “Other people like to give names. The more different names, the better. The more interpretations, the better.”

So maybe the pavilion will be the Peek-a-boo, and the Biplane, and the Bold.

Or, perhaps, Chicagoans will fall back on a naming technique we’ve used in the past.

When that 50-foot sculpture, designed by Pablo Picasso, was unveiled on Aug. 15, 1967 in what’s now called Daley Plaza, no one knew what to make of it. It had no official name.

Today, everyone calls it The Picasso.

Will the new pavilion become The van Berkel? What do you think?