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Heated Architecture Competition Inspires Creative Solutions for Staying Cool

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NEW YORK -- Every year the P.S.1 Contemporary Arts Center in Long Island City hosts a series of summer music concerts called Warm Up. For 10 Saturdays, 5,000 partygoers converge on the museum's 15,000-square-foot courtyard to pump up the jams with bands like the Scissor Sisters and Afrika Bambaataa.

Shows happen during the blistering heat of the day, so P.S.1 creates a place where partygoers can drink and dance in the shade. Rather than put up humdrum tents, the arts center holds a competition for temporary structures in the courtyard. The center takes proposals from five, hand-picked designers, before choosing a winner. This year's finalists range from Yale and Harvard architecture professors to set designers for the *Matrix* movies. While each proposal has to address the same requirements to create a kind of urban beach environment -- shade, seating and a water element -- the solutions vary from high-tech plastics to water-jet in brass.

The winning design will be unveiled on June 21st at the opening of Warm Up. Six days later the MoMA will host an exhibit showcasing each of the proposals. Here's a look at all of them.

Left: Not So Lame Silver Lamé New York-based Mos designed a 60-foot square, inflatable roof that floats over the courtyard. Made from an aluminum fabric used in aerospace and military projects, the roof has 16 independent air cells sewn together. It is anchored to the ground with nylon straps and screws.

Image: Courtesy of mos



