
Park Avenue 'Voice Tunnel' By Artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer Is A Must-See (VIDEO)

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For anyone who missed out on the [MoMA's much-hyped "Rain Room"](#) this summer, a new installation set inside the Park Avenue tunnel is offering New Yorkers an impressive alternative.

Opening this Saturday, ["Voice Tunnel" by artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer](#) will temporarily shut down the tunnel to cars so that 75 pedestrians at a time can walk in and record messages into a intercom.

The resulting voices will be sent throughout the tunnel in waves of differing lights. The New York Times reports:

The intensity of each beam will be determined by the pitch and volume of the messenger's voice. And the messages will shoot out quickly, one after another, creating a seemingly endless, ever-changing cascade of sound and light. Worried the messages could offend visitors and even spark unnecessary fear, the [NYPD asked Lozano-Hemmer to consider incorporating](#) a regulation system in order to monitor what's being pulsed throughout the tunnel.

After initially refusing in the name of free speech, the artist compromised with officials citing public safety:

A bit more background to be fair: NYPD's main concern, as I found out later, was the possibility of some idiot shouting "bomb!" or "fire!" inside the tunnel and creating chaos. That's a pretty reasonable concern, obviously. So our solution was to put a button that allows a docent to immediately delete any such input and automatically replace it with a quote from García Lorca, Laurie Anderson, Kathy Acker, Walt Whitman, Langston Hughes and other interesting NYC-related poets or authors. The installation will run between 7a.m. and 1p.m. on August 3rd, 10th, and 17th.

Filed by Inae Oh |

