



A Secret New York Tunnel Opens Up...To Free Speech

ARTIST RAFAEL LOZANO-HEMMER'S UNDERGROUND INSTALLATION IS LIKE GRAFFITI, MADE FROM LIGHT AND SOUND.

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This summer, art in New York has totally abandoned the conventional frame: The Museum of Modern Art's Rain Room turned bad weather into a scintillating sensory experience (inducing wait times of up to six hours), and James Turrell used the entire interior of the Guggenheim as a canvas for his light projections. Both deliver an otherworldly sensation--like staying perfectly dry in a downpour.

Likewise, artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer is making the typically

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DEPUTY EDITOR: Belinda Lanks

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TWO THOUSAND
AND THIRTEEN

Now, as part of the city's Summer Street art series, for three Saturdays in August (the show opened last weekend) anyone can take a stroll through the ephemerally interactive passage. Lozano-Hemmer, whose artwork often uses surveillance technology to discuss free speech, has rigged a microphone in the center. Visitors can say anything they want into the intercom, and reverberations of each voice will sync with 3,000 theatrical lights to create a cascading effect of light and sound throughout the tunnel.



But *Voice Tunnel* isn't just a sensory stunner. When the police requested a six-second delay for the audio--to preemptively silence any profanity--Lozano-Hemmer refused. In [The New York Times](#), the artist explains:

"In authoritarian regimes, that can work. But not here. This is the place for people to express their views. That's what this project is about. And if you want to censor it--I've never in my life censored a work, and I won't do it."

This kind of unfiltered, crowdsourced activity is a Lozano-Hemmer signature. A year ago, [his shows *Last Breath* and *Voice Array*](#) transformed visitors' words into bursts of light.

The beauty of *Voice Tunnel* is its ability to give even more control to anyone who chooses to speak. At any civilian's command is unprecedented access to a part of Manhattan's infrastructure, an audience of strangers, and individualized waves of light and sound. For one moment, everyone gets to tag the city.

Visit the third and final day of *Voice Tunnel* in New York City on August 17, from 7 am to 1 pm.

[h/t [The New York Times](#)]