

## An Artist Set Up An Installation At The US-Mexico Border Allowing People To Communicate Freely

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LOZANOHEMME / INSTAGRAM

The President of the United States is still working on building the great big wall to divide Mexico from the U.S. Even though the wall has yet to be completed (**and it looks like it never will actually be totally completed**), the issue of the wall itself has already divided so many. The division is not just physical, but emotional, and, of course political. Believe it or not, there has been so much positivity that has also come with our painful division. Not only are people rising up to demand the rights of immigrants, and fighting for asylum seekers, but there's also **incredible art that has been erected in the name of justice**.

**Rafael Lozano-Hemmer is a Mexican-Canadian installation artist that has created a way for people to talk to each other on opposite sides of the border.**



Lozano-Hemmer has built a massive light installation — both on U.S. land and Mexico land. The project, while complicated, appears to be several spotlights that project to one side of the border and then intersects with the spotlights from the other side. There are, as the website states, “three interactive stations on each side of the border will control powerful searchlight beams using a small dial wheel. When lights from any two stations are directed at each other, microphones and speakers automatically switch-on to allow participants to talk with one another, creating cross-border conversations.”

**When one person speaks into the microphone, the person on the other side can hear and talk to them as well. People in El Paso, Texas, were able to communicate with those in Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua.**

On opening night, which happened on Nov. 13, a slew of special guests was invited to speak to people on the other side of the border. It wasn't a natural result either. As the [website](#) states, “These conversations have been curated through a series of public meetings over the course of the past year and include a diverse cross-section of participants. Community leaders selected to coordinate various topics have committed to reaching out to their existing networks on both sides of the border for these topic-specific conversations in addition to the spontaneous conversations generated by the general public each night.”



**While the light installation was only up for a few days and is now over, the result is one of the most magical things we have ever seen.**

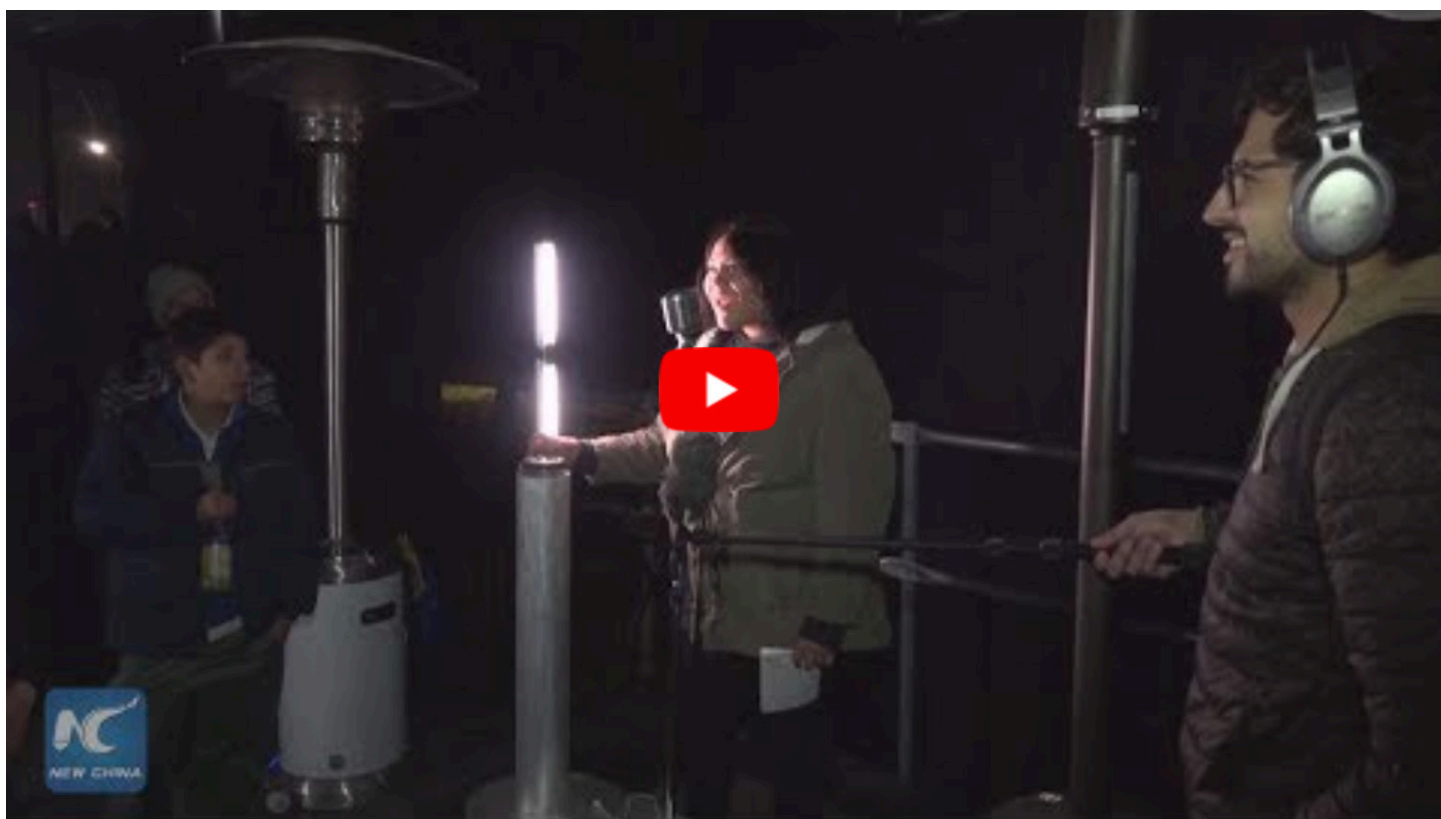




In one clip, we see a woman speaking to a little boy. She asks him his name and how old he is, how he likes school, etc. It's so hard to believe that the two people speaking are actually miles away from each other, with only a border that separates them. Their voices sound so loud and clear as if they were talking to each other face to face.

"I'm not creating bridges of communication. Those bridges are already existing," Lozano-Hemmer said in an interview, according to CBC News. "I'm just highlighting that they exist." He added, "The computer modulates the bridge so that you can see that there is this kind of tangible aspect to our conversation that is very visible." In the video above, former presidential candidate Beto O'Rourke also took part in the installation and spoke to kids in Mexico.

**Everyone obviously couldn't experience this lovely installation in person, however, people on social media have been very moved by it.**



One woman on Instagram said, "this made me sob, which is hard when you've had your breath taken away moments before. This is what art was created for, telling complex stories in a visually stunning manner, to help people understand. I believe in giving away our skills/free education. Imagine how stunning it would be to see the whole globe illuminated with Lights of Hope along every "border." It's possible. Give your blessing or blueprints to artist revolutionaries online, and let's see how long it takes to light this rock up. #nobordersnonations #artisrevolution #makeartnotwar." Another said, "Bless you.

Bless your work. Bless your collaborative partners. I hope the children in our shameful American Detainment Camps for CHILDREN (those nearby) can see your Light. I pray that People crossing the border in the dark of the night see your Lights and it leads them Home. I Hope it soothes their souls and lets them know we have not forgotten them. America is and always will be a respite for the weary and down-trodden. We welcome ALL with open arms as WE would want to be welcomed in our most needy of times. I don't care what negative people say, I believe in Hope, Righteousness, and the inherent Good in Everyone."