



Rafael Lozano Hemmer's rendering of *Turbulence*, his proposed installation in the River Teifi, Cardigan, Wales.

Montreal-based Rafael Lozano-Hemmer has experienced firsthand the fallout from working on environmentally sensitive public art pieces. *Turbulence*, his proposed installation in an estuary in Cardigan, Wales, would consist of a cluster of 127 buoys floating in the River Teifi, which is used by boaters and fishermen and is home to otters, lampreys, and salmon. Equipped with loudspeakers, LED light sources, and movement-detecting sensors, the buoys would play back messages recorded by passersby.

Lozano-Hemmer consulted with city officials and wildlife experts. He eventually designed a movable sunken pontoon structure to support the buoys and opted for low-power lighting. But the public had already turned against him and, in a raucous open meeting in March, accused him of putting his project above the needs of wildlife, fishermen, and the community in general. Residents were afraid the buoys would impede navigation and attract vandals.

Impact assessments are being carried out in Cardigan. "If the project will affect the wildlife, we won't do it," the artist says. "I learned that the lamprey eel has three eyes and that it's a very light-sensitive animal—and this is part of what being an artist in public spaces is all about."