


Rafael Lozano-Hemmer Takes Your Pulse

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Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, Pulse Topology, 2021

Artist [Rafael Lozano-Hemmer](#) (b. 1967, Mexico City) presents a dazzling interactive exhibition at [Pace Gallery](#) in New York that broadcasts and records every visitor's heartbeat across 3,000 suspended light bulbs. [Common Measures](#) is on view at the gallery's 510 W 25th Street location through October 22nd.



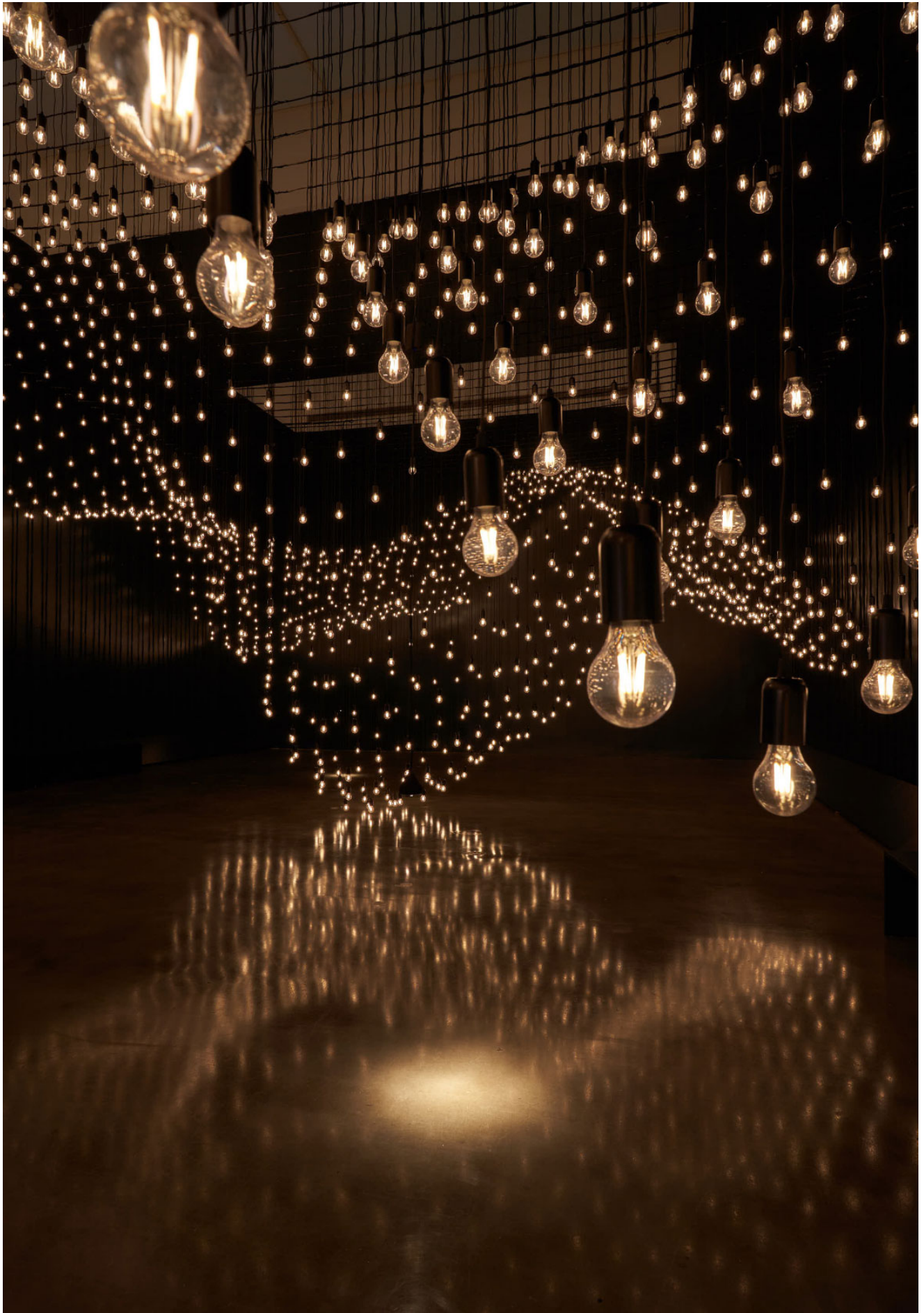
Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, *Pulse Topology*, 2021


The centerpiece of the exhibition is the room-filling *Pulse Topology* (2021). Resembling an upside-down landscape made of twinkling stars, the work comprises 3,000 suspended light bulbs that each pulse with the individual heartbeat rhythms of the most recent visitors to the piece.



The work is activated by approaching one of the three spot-lit “pulse sensors” throughout the room. Visitors are encouraged to place their hand under a sensor that can sense a pulse from several inches away. After 10 seconds, your real-time heartbeat will be synchronized simultaneously on 1,000 light bulbs across one third of the space, broadcasting your pulse for everyone to experience in bright lights and a gut-vibrating sound.

As the work senses and projects your pulse, it is also recording you. When you take your hand away, your heartbeat remains on one bulb, joining the 2,999 previous heartbeats of everyone who experienced the artwork before you. You do not exist eternally however, as each new recorded pulse replaces the oldest on view, constantly cycling and refreshing with every new visitor.





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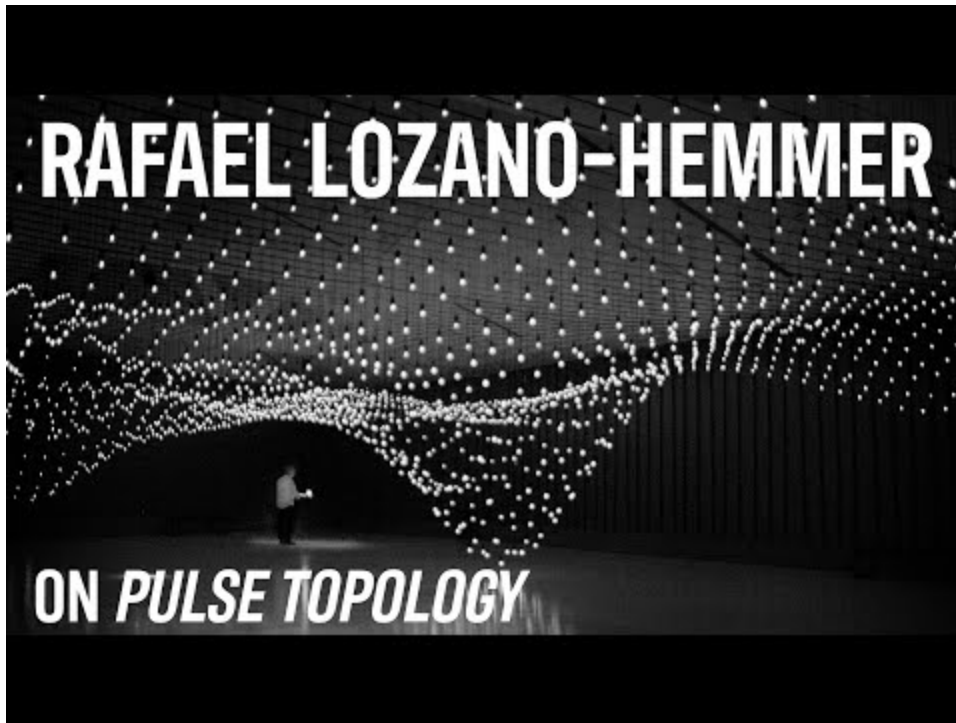
The piece was inspired by the Mexican classic movie *Macario*, in which the protagonist has a hunger-induced hallucination that shows each person on the planet represented by a frail, flickering candle.

The secret of the exhibition are the 3 black benches against the walls near each of the pulse sensors. Sitting on them provides a tangible experience of the sound, vibrating your body with the heartbeat of someone else. I sat down and took my own pulse the old fashioned way (2 fingers to neck) to compare the rhythm to a few strangers using the sensor – one slower, and one that must have literally jogged into the gallery. If it sounds extremely intimate and strange – it is. Beyond the visual spectacle and joy of the interactive experience, *Pulse Topology* is about human connection beyond our vision and self-presentation. I recommend staying, watching, and listening even more than you contribute and play.



Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, Pulse Topology, 2021

To see and hear the work in action with Rafael's own words, watch these two 30-second videos produced by the [Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art](#) on the occasion of his exhibition last year.



Watch Video At: <https://youtu.be/gNNTN0vpFAM>



Watch Video At: https://youtu.be/S1fr_Vj18WI

An adjacent room presents two smaller works that also merge technology and humanity. **Call on Water** (2016) is a stand out, offering a high-tech visual treat of science and poetry.



Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, Call on Water, 2016

The work features a low bed of cloud-like cold water vapor that forms words every so often using “hundreds of computer-controlled ultrasonic atomizers” to raise letters above the surface for a blink of time.



Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, Call on Water, 2016

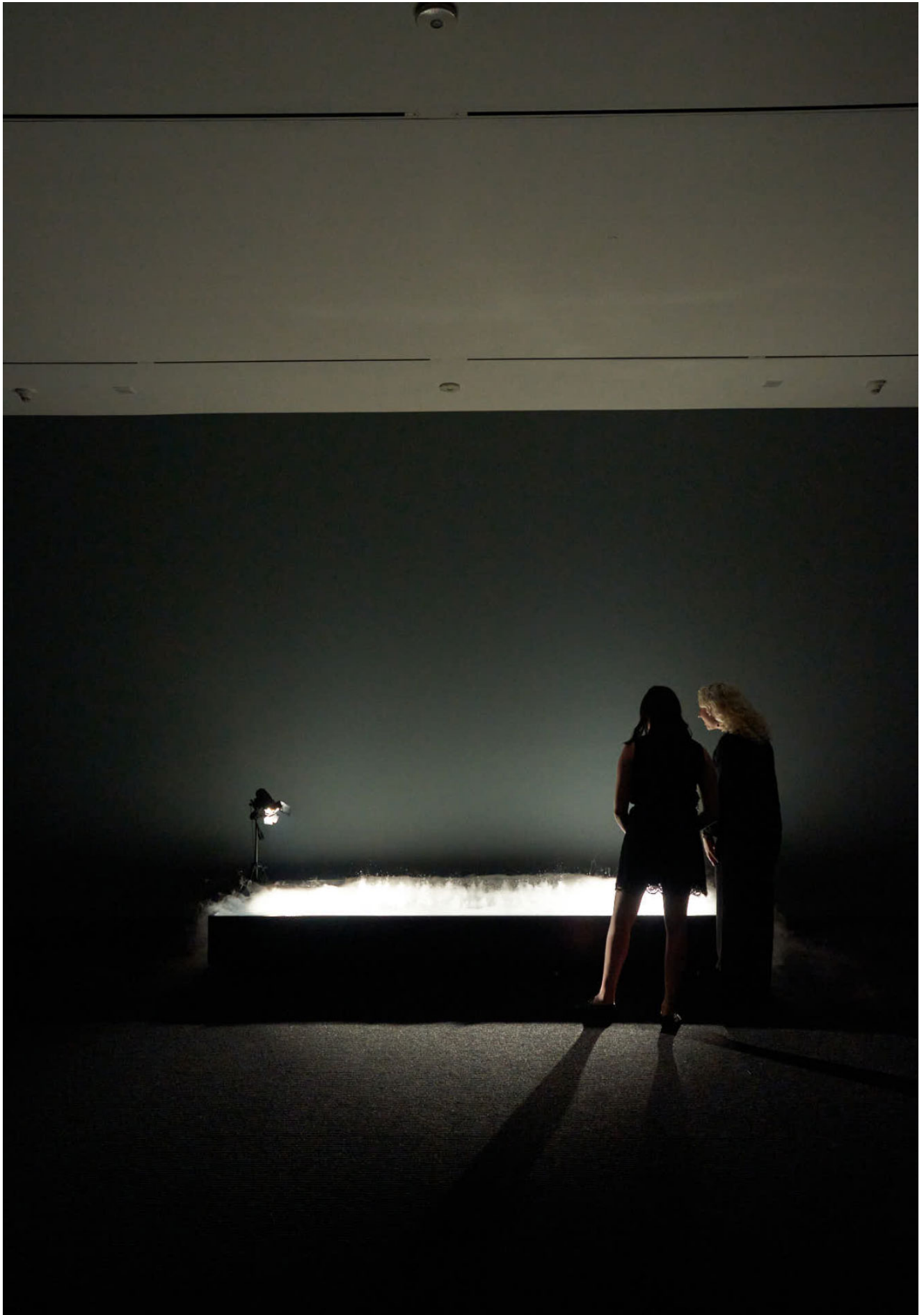


Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, Call on Water, 2016



Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, Call on Water, 2016

The words appear for only a second in whips of smoke, producing an experience that feels like viewing memory. The work invites patience, mystery, and interpretation as the words are lyrical and the letters are abstracted in the air currents. Don't be surprised if a fellow viewer initiates a conversation, curious if you saw the same thing.



Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, Call on Water, 2016

Lozano-Hemmer's *Common Measures* ultimately delivers a human and high-tech experience that sparks interaction, empathy, fascination, play, and a reminder of how magical it is to be alive together.

What: [Rafael Lozano-Hemmer: Common Measures](#)

Where: [Pace Gallery](#), 510 W 25th St, New York, NY

When: September 9 – October 22nd, 2022

Photography courtesy [Pace Gallery](#).



David Behringer visits over 200 galleries every month to uncover and share the most exciting contemporary art in New York today. Subscribe to his exclusive weekly newsletter at www.thetwopercent.com and learn about his [private gallery tours](#). And be sure to check out his [YouTube](#).

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