Video and photos from the Voice Tunnel art installation in the Park Avenue tunnel

Aug. 19, 2013

In case you missed it, we shot some photos and video of the Voice Tunnel art installation in the Park Avenue tunnel (entrance on 33rd Street) that became an interactive art installation for 3 Saturdays in conjunction with Summer Streets.

Artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer created the exhibit, which let people walk into the tunnel, which was closed to cars, and say something into an intercom which then translated that into sound and light waves that moved out of the tunnel via 300 theatrical spotlights and 150 loudspeakers. The intensity of the light waves was determined by how loud, and what pitch, the original words were spoken.
It was a pretty intense experience, which started with an hour-long line to enter. Once inside, the tunnel went from an eerily pitch black darkness to a loud space illuminated by pulses of light and sound. It’s difficult to capture the feelings it generated in photos and video, as the juxtapositions encountered walking through it were unique (darkness and light, chaos and peace, calm and insanity, high tech and nothingness, togetherness and solitude, thrill and terror, guided and lost).

In terms of its scale and public response, it was reminiscent of the Gates installation in Central Park. If you were not able to experience it, unfortunately there are no plans to bring it back, but watch the video to get some idea about what it was like.

We thought the photos looked coolest in black and white.