

'My work strives to make tangible the invisible': Rafael Lozano-Hemmer

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National Gallery of Canada (NGC) would reportedly celebrate Mexico's gift to the Canadians, Listen to the World, Volute 2 by Mexican-Canadian artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer at a public event on May 8, 2025 at 6:30 PM .

"My work strives to make tangible the invisible, materializing natural, turbulent phenomena in a sculptural format...unrepeatable capture of the human voice, an homage to the great R. Murray Schafer , invites us to think about the atmosphere as something that is ever-changing and never neutral," said artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer . "

The extraordinary gift, now on view, was made to the people of Canada on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Confederation

Being made on the occasion of Canada's sesquicentennial and commemorates over 80 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries, this gift of the artwork donated by the Fundación Jumex Arte Contemporáneo is currently on view in the NGC's Rotunda.

Created by the Montreal-based artist known for his complex and often interactive media installations and digital artworks, this unprecedented project of the first cast sculpture is the first of its kind in materializing the spoken word through a scan and rendering of speech bubbles, images of which appear in a didactic video next to the piece.

As a three-dimensional model of a laser-tomography scan, Lozano-Hemmer's second work in the NGC collection, Listen to the World, Volute 2 represents the air exhaled from a person's mouth when saying the words "listen to the world."

Acknowledging Canada, Lozano-Hemmer's adoptive country, Listen to the World, Volute 2 takes its title from a musical composition by the late Canadian composer R. Murray Schafer, best known for his concepts of acoustic ecology and soundscapes.

"We are grateful for this gift from Mexico, and on behalf of all Canadians...Our countries share diplomatic relations since 1944, characterized by deep people-to-people ties, rich cultural connections and growing trade and investment; Rafael Lozano-Hemmer is the perfect artist to embody this fruitful bilateral relationship...these unprecedented divisive times, Canada and Mexico come together to recognize the strong relations between the two countries with the unifying and transformative power of art," said Jean-François Bélisle, Director & CEO, National Gallery of Canada.

"In honour of Canada's 150th celebration and to commemorate the longstanding 81-year-old bilateral relation between Canada and Mexico, this donation...binds both nations and an enduring reminder of our common values and our mutual understanding through art and innovation," added Carlos Manuel Joaquín González, Ambassador of Mexico to Canada.

Public Programming

On Thursday, May 8, 2025, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. ET, the public is invited to a lecture by Rafael Lozano-Hemmer about his artistic practice, with a special focus on his work Listen to the World, Volute 2, in the NGC's Auditorium.

The free event is presented by the NGC in collaboration with the Embassy of Mexico in Canada and the Fundación Jumex Arte Contemporáneo. Visitors are encouraged to reserve their seats due to considerable interest.

About the National Gallery of Canada

Among the world's most respected art institutions, the National Gallery of Canada was founded in 1880 as a national museum to serve all Canadians, no matter where they live.

By sharing our collection, exhibitions and public programming widely, we create dynamic experiences facilitating new ways of seeing ourselves and each other through the visual arts, while centering Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

With a mandate to develop, preserve and present a collection for the learning and enjoyment of all – now and for generations to come, we are home to more than 90,000 works , including one of the finest collections of Indigenous and Canadian art, major works from the 14th to the 21st century and extensive library and archival holdings.