



Manchester
International
Festival
2019 4 – 21 July
mif.co.uk

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images, quotes and
interview requests
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Press Release – Embargoed until 12.30pm, Thursday 7 March 2019

ARTIST RAFAEL LOZANO-HEMMER CREATES THEATRICAL IMMERSIVE INSTALLATION FOR MANCHESTER INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL

***Atmospheric Memory* – a major new commission by Mexican-Canadian artist Rafael Lozano-Hemmer – will be unveiled at the Science and Industry Museum on 6 July as part of Manchester International Festival.**

At once a daring artwork and a sensory performance that immerses visitors in an ever-changing audio-visual environment, Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's breathtaking installation scours the atmosphere for the voices of our past. Inspired by computing pioneer Charles Babbage's 180-year-old proposal that the air is a 'vast library' holding every word ever spoken, *Atmospheric Memory* asks: was Babbage right? Can we rewind the movement of the air to recreate long-lost voices? And if so, whose would we want to hear?

Harnessing both state-of-the-art technology and classic phantasmagorical effects, Lozano-Hemmer's 'Atmospheric Machines' mine the air for turbulence caused by speech, then transform it into something we can see, hear and even touch: trails of vapour, ripples on water, epic 360-degree projections.

Works include a polyphonic tunnel featuring thousands of separate sound channels, a weathervane table controlled by computerized fans, an endoscopic film, a voice-controlled light beacon and the world's first 3D printed speech bubble.

These new artworks are presented alongside rare pieces from the Science Museum Group's collections. Staged in an extraordinary custom-built structure made with shipping containers next to the museum's 1830 Warehouse, *Atmospheric Memory* explores the beautiful tumult of the air we breathe – and ultimately celebrates the transience of the sounds that fleetingly live within it.

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer's interactive installations sit at the intersection of architecture and performance art. His work creates critical and poetic platforms for public participation, by adopting, developing and misusing technologies of control such as computerized surveillance, biometrics or automation. He works with a team that includes programmers, designers, scientists and architects.

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer said: "*Atmospheric Memory* is a project 5 years in the making and possibly the most ambitious I have ever undertaken. It is the result of research on disparate fields from robotics to fluid dynamics. Babbage's obsession is now my own, if we could hear any voice from the past, whose would we want to hear? Loved ones long gone? Languages and songs now extinct? Oral histories never written? Perhaps we could send old injustices for a retrial? My team in Canada is thrilled to collaborate with MIF, FutureEverything and SIM in the conception of the work and look forward to taking the project to Arsenal/Elektra and other festivals".

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MIF Artistic Director and CEO, **John McGrath**, said: "*Rafael Lozano-Hemmer has been an artist at the forefront of testing the boundaries between art and technology – creating exciting and spectacular manifestations of those ideas over many years. In Atmospheric Memory, Rafael creates a dramatic immersive installation that is truly performed by machines and the public.*"



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Director of the Science and Industry Museum, **Sally MacDonald** said: *“We are delighted to welcome Rafael Lozano-Hemmer to our site as part of this year’s Manchester International Festival. To have an artist of such standing working with our Science Museum Group collection is a real privilege, and I can’t wait to experience the world premiere of Atmospheric Memory in the surroundings of our historic site.”*

Irini Papadimitriou, Creative Director of FutureEverything, said: *“FutureEverything are thrilled to be working with Manchester International Festival, Science and Industry Museum, ELEKTRA and The Arsenal on such an ambitious and exciting project. Rafael Lozano-Hemmer is creating a unique experience that brings together ground-breaking, early engineering and scientific work with emerging technologies and contemporary art, engaging with current societal and technological questions. We are looking forward to exploring and expanding on these ideas with audiences in Greater Manchester and beyond.”*

Accompanying the installation will be an education programme featuring an Atmospheric Memory kit created by the artist. The programme devised by MIF and SIM engagement teams will deliver a programme to partner schools drawn from all Manchester boroughs and a Young Guide initiative as well as online resources and free tickets for school groups.

MIF19 runs from 4–21 July 2019 with artists from across the globe premiering a variety of new work in spaces throughout the city. For more details about this year’s programme, please visit mif.co.uk.

Images can be downloaded here: <http://press.mif.co.uk/mif19/>

NOTES TO EDITORS

About Manchester International Festival

Manchester International Festival (MIF) is the world’s first festival of original, new work and special events, staged every two years in Manchester, UK. MIF launched in 2007 as an artist-led festival presenting new works from across the spectrum of performing arts, visual arts and popular culture. The next Festival takes place from 4 – 21 July 2019.

MIF has commissioned, produced and presented world premieres by artists including **Marina Abramović, Damon Albarn, Björk, Boris Charmatz, Jeremy Deller, Elbow, Wayne McGregor, Steve McQueen, Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy, Thomas Ostermeier, Maxine Peake, Punchdrunk, The xx, Robert Wilson** and **Zaha Hadid Architects**.

MIF brings together world-renowned artists from different art forms and backgrounds to create dynamic, innovative and forward-thinking new work, staged in venues across Greater Manchester – from theatres, galleries and concert halls to railway depots, churches and car parks. MIF works closely with venues, festivals and other cultural organisations globally, whose financial and creative input helps to make many of these projects possible and ensures that work made at MIF goes on to be seen around the world.

MIF’s year-round **Creative Community** programme also works widely within Manchester with a community of creative people from all backgrounds, ages and corners of the city who are forging closer connections with the Festival.

MIF’s Artistic Director and CEO is **John McGrath**. MIF will also be the operator for The Factory, a new world-class cultural space being developed in Manchester, which will



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commission, present and produce new work from the world's greatest artists, offering a space to make, explore and experiment.

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Rafael Lozano-Hemmer

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer (b. 1967, Mexico City) creates media art using technologies such as robotic lights, digital fountains, computerized surveillance, interactive walls and telematic networks.

He was the first artist to represent Mexico at the Venice Biennale with an exhibition at Palazzo Van Axel in 2007. He has also shown at Biennials in Cuenca, Havana, Istanbul, Kochi, Liverpool, Melbourne NGV, Moscow, New Orleans, New York ICP, Seoul, Seville, Shanghai, Singapore and Sydney.

His public art has been commissioned for events such as the Millennium Celebrations in Mexico City (1999), the Expansion of the European Union in Dublin (2004), the Student Massacre Memorial in Tlatelolco (2008), the Vancouver Olympics (2010) the pre-opening exhibition of the Guggenheim in Abu Dhabi (2015) and the Augusta Raurica Roman Theatre in Basel (2018).

Collections holding his work include MoMA, Guggenheim and Museo del Barrio in New York, TATE and Science Museum in London, Jumex and MUAC in Mexico City, DAROS in Zurich, MONA in Hobart, MAG in Manchester, ZKM in Karlsruhe, NGV in Melbourne, SAM in Singapore, and many others.

He has received two BAFTA British Academy Awards for Interactive Art in London, a Golden Nica at the Prix Ars Electronica in Austria, "Artist of the year" Rave Award from Wired Magazine, a Rockefeller fellowship, the Trophée des Lumières in Lyon, an International Bauhaus Award in Dessau, the Governor General's Award in Canada and was named Compagnon des arts et des lettres in Québec.

In 2018 Lozano-Hemmer was the subject of 7 solo exhibitions worldwide, including a major show at the Hirshhorn Museum in Washington DC and a touring mid-career retrospective co-produced by the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal and SFMOMA.

For more information see <http://lozano-hemmer.com/>

FutureEverything

Established in Manchester in 1995, FutureEverything is an award-winning innovation lab and cultural agency that has helped shape the emergence of digital culture in Europe. Together with an international community of artists, technologists and collaborators, FutureEverything explore the intersection of art, technology and society through bold new art commissions, living labs, participatory design and public events. Taking an artist-led and human-centred approach, FutureEverything is passionate about bringing people together to discover, share and experience new ideas for the future, creating opportunities for people to consider, challenge and test the use of technology in creative and unexpected ways.

Jose Luis de Vicente is a cultural researcher and curator working in the space between the arts, technology and innovation. Since 2012 he has been an associated curator for FutureEverything. He is the curator of Sónar +D, the digital culture and creative



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technologies conference, and exhibition part of Barcelona's acclaimed Sónar Festival. In the last 15 years he has developed multiple exhibition projects, including the internationally touring show "Big Bang Data" (CCCB Barcelona, Somerset House London, Art Science Museum Singapore, MIT Museum, Cambridge) and more recently, "After the End of the World" (CCCB Barcelona, FACT-Bluecoat-Riba Liverpool). Recent projects include Tentacular, a brand new festival of Critical Tech and Digital Adventures for Matadero (Madrid), and the curation of the 2019 edition of Llum BCN, Barcelona's light festival. He was a founder of the Visualizar Program for Data Culture (Medialab Prado, Madrid) and is a faculty member at IaaC (Catalonia's Institute for Advanced Architecture).

[@FutureEverything](https://twitter.com/FutureEverything)
<http://futureeverything.org>

The Science and Industry Museum

The Science and Industry Museum tells the story of where science met industry and the modern world began. Manchester was one of the first global, industrial cities, and its epic rise, decline and resurrection has been echoed in countless other cities around the world. From textiles to computers, the objects and documents held in the museum's collection tell stories of everyday life over the last 200 years, from light bulbs to locomotives. The museum's mission is to inspire all its visitors, including future scientists and inventors, with the story of how ideas can change the world, from the industrial revolution to today and beyond.

The Science and Industry Museum is part of the Science Museum Group, a family of museums which also includes the Science Museum in London; the National Railway Museum in York and Shildon; and the Science and Media Museum in Bradford. The Science Museum Group is devoted to the history and contemporary practice of science, medicine, technology, industry and media. With five million visitors each year and an unrivalled collection, it is the most significant group of museums of science and innovation worldwide.

www.scienceandindustrymuseum.org.uk

VENUE DETAILS

Atmospheric Memory Rafael Lozano-Hemmer Science and Industry Museum

The Atmospheric Memory Chamber
Saturday 6 – Sunday 21 July 2019
10am – 5pm daily, except 10am – 9pm Thursdays
£8. Concessions £5. Under 18s £1. School Groups Free.

Commissioned by Manchester International Festival, Science and Industry Museum, FutureEverything, ELEKTRA / Arsenal, Montreal. Produced by Manchester International Festival and curated with FutureEverything and Science and Industry Museum.

Supported by Wellcome.

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