



Tishman Environment
and Design Center



TISHMAN CENTER · AUGUST 23, 2018

LISTENing to Earth Sounds

THE
NEW
SCHOOLTISHMAN ENVIRONMENT
AND DESIGN CENTER

SPEAK-EZ:

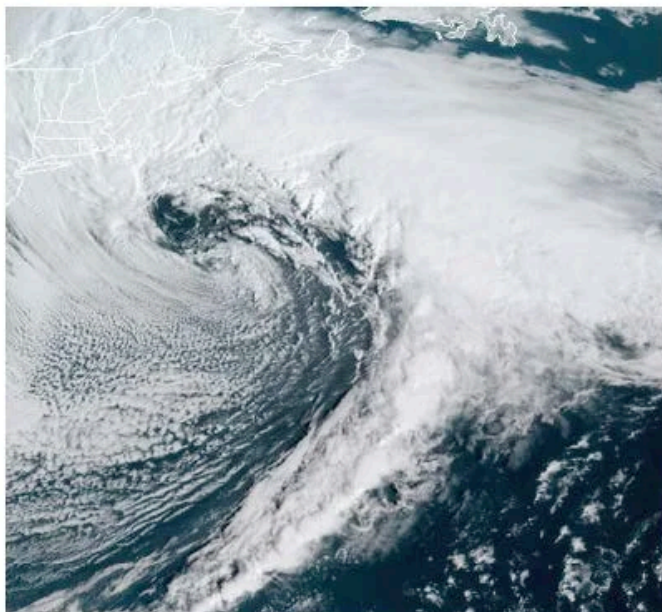
HARMONIZE THE ELEMENTS

Experience and Align with the Sounds of the Elements

Wednesday, April 18, 2018

11:00am - 4:00pm

University Center, Lobby
63 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY



March 18th Nor'Easter as seen from Space -- Courtesy Vox.com



Firefighters reporting to the Fire at 2 West 13th

What are the Elements saying to Us? Injustice? Disaster? It becomes increasingly apparent that we need to reconnect with the prime elements in the wake of ongoing extreme Climate Chaos and recent destruction on our own campus. Experience the elements through a series of interactive sound installations throughout the UC Lobby. Hear the voices of those who experienced the devastation of Climate Change. Realign yourself with live performances of healing singing bowls. Immerse yourself in the sound of gentle rain while making a rain stick. Hear the elements interpreted through song. Join in the communal experience of dance set against the beat of a talented drummer. We cannot ignore the power of the elements, so come to a place where The Elements can Speak-EZ to and through you.





By William Eatough, Dual Degree Graduate. School of Constructed

Environments, Parsons

A central concern of The Tishman Environment and Design Center is Disrupting Climate Injustice. Celebrating Earth Week on April 25, 2018, The Tishman Environment and Design Center and students from Parsons School of Design coordinated sounds for *Harmonizing the Elements* in the University Center Lobby. Graduate Students of SCE Associate Professor Jean Gardner, myself included, created opportunities for all entering the lobby to participate in Elemental Earth events. LISTEN Unexpected signs on the main 5th Avenue lobby doors welcomed us to LISTEN as we entered. We were immediately met with the sounds of the primal elements mixed into rhythmic cross-cultural music. This threshold emphasized the change the moment we left the cacophony of New York's streets to enter into a transformed and transformative environment. LISTEN. As we continued past the turnstiles, we found ourselves next to a table where seminar students were crafting rain-sticks, an instrument from a long tradition of conjuring the familiarity of a spring storm even deep within a building where the noise of a thunderclap might not penetrate. LISTEN. Beyond, mossy green carpeting where seminar students played and invited others to play Tibetan Singing Bowls. These

instruments produce resonant frequencies that envelop us so that we can actively meditate even in as populated an environment as the UC Lobby. LISTEN. After you passed through these organized aural events and reached the elevators, you were in the presence of curated selections from the Voices of Experience, which made up the Parsons Speak-EZ. LISTEN. The zenith of the day's events was when we were joined by drummer Kweku Sumbry studying at the New School. Kweku performed as we danced into the afternoon Harmonizing the Elements. When the seminar students and I had dreamt and planned these Earth Day installations, the archetype of The Flood inundated our imaginations. The Flood resonated differently among us but came back to the feeling of surrendering oneself, especially before the power of sound. Sound became our focus, both for its water-like ability to immerse us into a new experience of place, but because of the impact sound had on our memories of the Earth. The roaring of fire, the rushing of waves, the cracking of the earth, and din of wind blowing past all became alive within us as we recounted in our seminar on personal moments of great connection to the Elements of the Earth. I have felt the intense change that a few minutes of sitting with a singing bowl can have

after feeling worn out by the events of the day. The way listening to a Glenn Branca composition has put me into a trance that disconnected me, even if only for a moment, from the anxieties that increasingly preoccupy me. Sound has an indelible affect upon us and reaches beyond our conscious ability to react to it. It is this quality of sound as a medium that drew us to it: how better to awaken people from the walking dreams we live in than something to which we spontaneously respond. I found myself connecting with people in ways uncommon for a transitory space like the lobby. Sound infiltrated into the consciousness of even the students wearing earbuds and headphones. Our *Harmonizing the Elements* helped to break the everyday reverie we use to protect ourselves and got people to LISTEN. Some listened to the sounds we performed, some listened to us by engaging with the questions and stories we were sharing, and some listened to the powerful *Voices of Experience* even if it meant missing their elevator. It becomes less easy to remain detached when confronted with the power of something like the flood of sounds that reawaken us to connections we have lost. The New School has a history deeply connected to celebrating Earth Day. The university was one of the first to

declare Earth Day a holiday from classes for students to protest, march, and deepen our relationship to the Earth. These celebrations originated with the publishing of an image of the Earth taken from the Apollo 11 rocket. It shows the planet suspended in space as a delicate blue marble. Having grown up with that photograph, I was unaware of the original power it held. Though I could never experience it as people did in 1969, I was able to experience the power of Earth Sounds through its multifaceted properties in our 2018 celebration.

[Follow this link](#) to see a 360 video of the drumming that can be viewed in a Google Cardboard Headset. Viewing this 360 video on a computer allows you to click around and view a 360 degree capture of the drumming. By clicking and dragging the video, or using the top left-hand arrows, you can change the direction of the camera to see the entire surroundings during the video. Accessing the link on your smartphone, when inserted in a Google Cardboard VR Viewing will allow you to experience the space as though you were standing in it. As you turn and move your head, so will the view of the experience follow. Try it!

More in this series:

Lower East Side & New School-
Parsons Community Members Meet
to Prep4TodaySpeak-EZ for
Disrupting Climate Injustice**William**
Eatough came to Parsons to study
the interaction between architecture
and light, and how they affect their
inhabitants. He spent the later half
of his time at the New School
researching Virtual Reality as the
design tool rooted in empathetic
storytelling as architectural praxis.
He graduated in 2018 with a Master
of Architecture and Masters of Fine
Arts in Lighting Design and currently
works as a Lighting Designer in
Philadelphia.



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