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John Luther Adams' "Sila: The Breath of the World" at Lincoln Center Out of Doors



Pulitzer Prize winning composer [John Luther Adams](#), who moved from Alaska to NYC earlier this year, made a ritualistic offering to his new hometown Friday night in the form of a new site specific work for Lincoln Center's Hearst Plaza, a co-presentation of Lincoln Center Out of Doors and the Mostly Mozart Festival. In a [preparatory note](#), Adams says that "Sila: The Breath of the World" - which was directed by Doug Perkins - was inspired by the Inuit term for wind, weather and other forces of nature. "It's our awareness of the world around us," he says, "and the world's awareness of us."

The performance, which lasted a little over an hour, featured 80 odd musicians situated in and around the plaza in between Lincoln Center Theater and Avery Fisher Hall. There were brass players on the grassy slope above Lincoln Restaurant, string players in the tree-covered rectangle next to the Met, and black-clad singers with megaphones wading through the Millstein Pool. The music was meandering and atmospheric rather than rigidly programmatic, encouraging a sort of trancelike listening where the instruments, wind, and the distinctive din of NYC all combined to create a hazy melange of sound. It was sacred and profane, spiritual and secular, quiet and majestic, all at once. I can't imagine experiencing it anywhere else.

More pics on the [photo page](#).

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