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**CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK**  
**GREEN THOUGHTS**

Earlier this month, a sound-art festival called "Ear to the Earth" stealthily occupied spaces around Lower Manhattan, creating exotic soundscapes and sending



out subliminal messages about the fragility of the environment. Endangered birds of Madagascar chirped and squawked inside the World Financial Center. Various species' songs and cries were electronically processed in installations at the multimedia space 3-Legged Dog, on Greenwich Street. And, in the Elevated Acre, the hidden rooftop park on Water Street, the sound artists Bruce Odland and Sam Auinger presented a project entitled "Elevated Harmonies," which offered a new way of hearing a denatured world. A sixteen-foot tube was suspended above the roadway, catching the rumble and clatter of cars, buses, helicopters, and passing boats. The sounds were broken down into fundamentals and overtones, then broadcast into the park from three cube-shaped loudspeakers made of cement. Aggravating noise metamorphosed into calming drones. On the last day of Indian summer, a few people sat on benches beside the cubes, listening to the city's secret song.

—Alex Ross

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