



ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

MET MUSEUM EXHIBIT STIRS EMOTIONS WITH SPONTANEOUS SONG

Lauren Glassberg has the details.

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By Lauren Glassberg

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NEW YORK (WABC) -- You normally think of museums as quiet places, but right now at the Met, you might be seeing and hearing something else. But it comes with a question.

Visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and you might hear this query: "May I give you the gift of song today?"

For those who say yes, an intimate and unexpected experience unfolds. The music is by Schubert, and the installation is called Sonic Blossom. A singer roams through a particular gallery and offers the gift of song.

"He sat me down, and it was like, wow," one museum visitor said following the experience. "What came out of his mouth and what he sounded like totally did not match what I expected. So it was really great."

Sonic Blossom is by the artist Mingwei Lee, who has always found comfort in the music of Schubert. But his installation makes you wonder who really benefits from the song.

"Most of the time, the singer thought they are the giver of the gift," Lee said. "But very quickly you realize the gift is coming back to the singer because the singer sees the emotional response of the receiver...it's a very powerful experience."

And the performers reflect that sentiment.

"As a singer, we're very used to singing to big houses of people," tenor Dominick Corbacio said. "And this gives us a chance to really connect with someone on a more personal level, and a stranger, no less. So it's quite interesting to me."

There are plenty of people who don't accept the gift, but those who do become part of the art.

"The whole world just melts away," the Met's Limor Tomer said. "The gallery melts away, the other people, the tourists, the cameras, the selfies all disappear, and you're in that moment."

The singers are all recent grads or current students at the Manhattan School of Music. Sonic Blossom runs through Sunday. For more information, visit MetMuseum.org/events/programs/met-live-arts/sonic-blossom

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