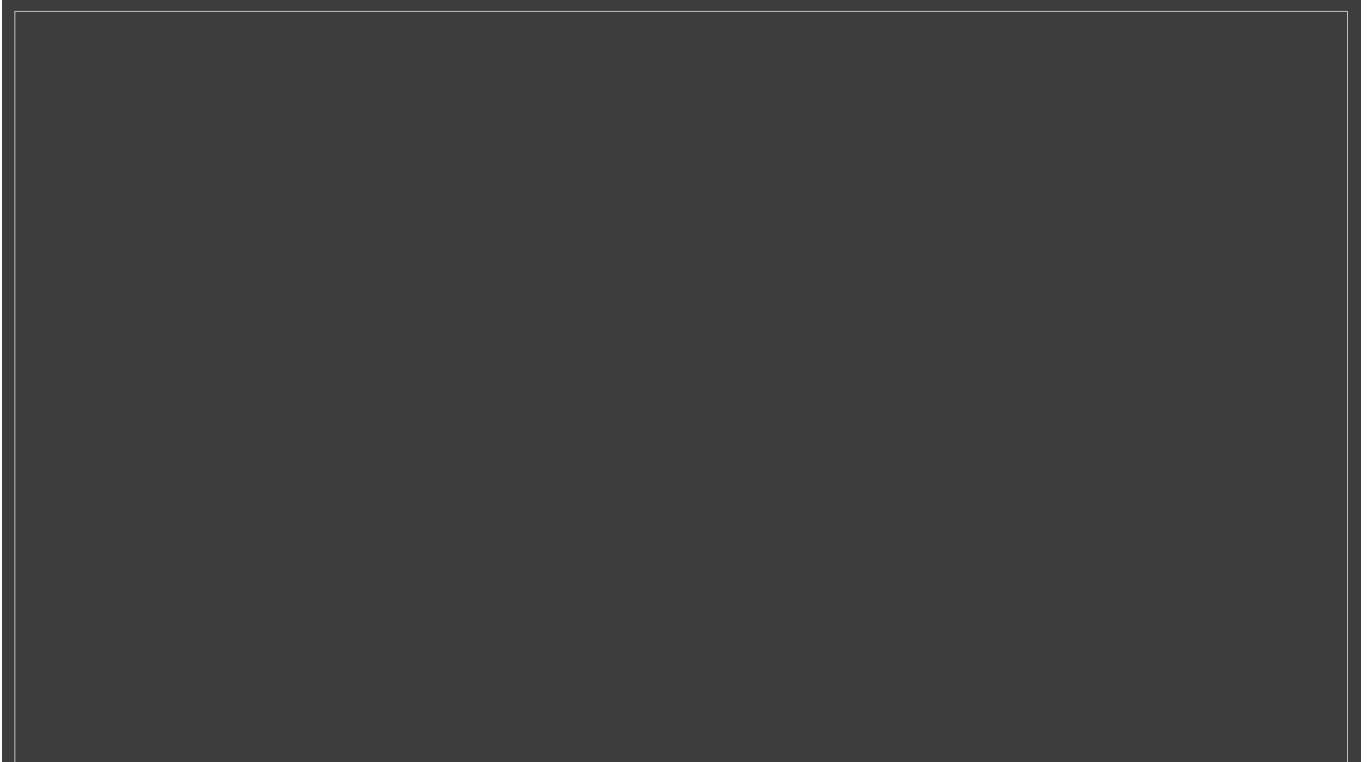


# Sound installation turns ecosystem into symphony

Artists create simulation of forest plot's web of life and turn it into soundscape.

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Thetford Forest, a large woodland in southern England, often hosts live music, with artists from around the world coming to perform among its trees. But last week, the forest offered a different kind of auditory experience — music that is not just live but living, a symphony ‘conducted’ by the forest itself.

This is the aim of Living Symphonies, a sound installation that interprets the forest ecosystem as an ever-changing soundscape — reflecting, in real time, the interactions of the natural world.

The artists, Daniel Jones and James Bulley, started by surveying a 600-square-metre area of forest and painstakingly cataloguing its flora and fauna. They used the data to build a computer model that simulates the interactions of the organisms on the basis of real-time meteorological data and time of day. The simulation is then transformed into sound to generate a musical piece from thousands of sounds recorded by musicians on more than 100 instruments, each representing different organisms and their various activities.

Living Symphonies is played through a network of 24 speakers embedded in the forest, some on the ground, others hung 35 metres high in the canopy. Deep gongs reverberate from the pine trees, and a chattering snare drum flits, squirrel-like, across the canopy above.

Living Symphonies will tour three other forest locations across the United Kingdom throughout the summer.

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