



NUIT BLANCHE | SYMPHONY FOR ABSENT WILDLIFE

Dates: 20 September 2014

Venue: Olympic & Municipal Plaza, Calgary

Country: Canada

Type: Live audio performance

For [Calgary Nuit Blanche 2014](#), **Lucy + Jorge Orta** have been invited to create a majestic outdoor installation and performance in the Olympic Plaza. The artists have imagined a living monument for the late-night Canadian public art festival. Under the title **Symphony for Absent Wildlife [Spirits of Alberta]** the artists have created a true ode to wildlife, taking the form of a visual and audio installation, and which culminates in a major film in 2015.

In *Symphony for Absent Wildlife*, the stretcher-bed - an occurring metaphoric object in Orta's practice - marks a pathway to woodland clearing, composed of weathered tree trunks sourced from local forests, an essential zone for the maintenance of forestry biodiversity. The path is raised above the ground by the means of simple wooden trestles, the kind constructed for chopping wood. In the clearing, we encounter a masked orchestra of [Spirits](#).

Each musician dons a mask, in the form of a creature, and an iconic tailcoat tailored from reclaimed felt blankets, which bears the inscriptions of past warriors and homeless wanderers. These foreboding masked figures represent the spirits of the once abundant wildlife across the Albertan plains: bison, moose, wapiti, wolves, grizzly bears, and eagles.

On the evening of September 20 2014, the music stands illuminate a graphic score, the conductor guides the masked-animal musicians, and the performance commences. An amplified symphony of avian chatter - birdsong - resonates across the city. Man or beast? Just simple hand crafted bird whistles that replicate the remarkable sounds of nature.

[Symphony for Absent Wildlife](#) brings a fragment of the disappearing natural environment, its sounds and the diversity of its fauna, closer to the city.

[Nuit Blanche](#) live performances from 7pm to 1am [Map](#)

[The Banff Centre](#), February 2015