

# Water's Soul: Bringing a sense of serenity to an 'incredibly noisy time'

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Water's Soul sculpture on Jersey City waterfront

By [Ron Zeitlinger](#) | [The Jersey Journal](#)

The 72-foot head of a woman on the Jersey City waterfront, with a finger to her pursed lips, is not a message to the big city across the river, said its creator, world-renowned sculptor Jaume Plensa.

No, he said, "It's paying homage to the water. And that silent position, that the piece has the finger to the lips, (it is) inviting people to be silent ... to try to listen to their own thoughts, their own dreams, their own ideas in this incredibly noisy time today in which we are living today."

The installation, called "Water's Soul," is a 72-foot-tall mix of resin, fiber glass and marble dust, weighing 30 tons. It was put together in roughly three weeks and consists of 15 sections that were carried on twenty-three 40-foot-long containers.

The work that Plensa calls the "most beautiful piece I did in my life" sits at the edge of the Ellipse Pier, at 25 Park Lane South, a LeFrak property. It will be officially unveiled on Oct. 21.

Plensa said he visited LeFrak CEO Richard LeFrak at the construction site and fell in love with the location on the Hudson River.

"I felt completely fascinated with the site, right in front of Manhattan," Plensa said. "It's a beautiful place because the view is amazing. Many times I am jealous of my sculptures because they are in an incredible position, an amazing view."



Jaume Plensa in his studio, 2019. (Photo: Inés Baucells, © Plensa Studio Barcelona. Courtesy Gray, Chicago/New York)

And for Jersey City, it's another part of the transformation into an "unparalleled cultural anchor and arts destination," Jersey City spokeswoman Kimberly Wallace-Scalcione said in a statement.

"...The Water's Soul sculpture standing 80-feet tall for all of Jersey City and New York City to see is a significant addition to our unparalleled arts portfolio," she said. "From announcing Centre Pompidou x Jersey City and restoring the iconic Loew's Theatre to launching our first-ever Mural Arts festival and implementing stable resources for our local artists and arts organizations, this has been a pivotal year for arts and culture in our community, and Water's Soul is a welcomed addition."

It's important to be near the water, the 66-year-old Spanish artist said.

"Water is one of the most important elements in our life," Plensa said. "I am always mentioning that water is the most important public space in the world, because it is a way to connect all cultures and all people all around."

And specific to this sculpture, Plensa wants people to see it and drown out the noise in their own heads.

"I think it's important right in front of the water, which has a beautiful sound when we have the capacity to listen," he said. "That was my dream. The name is Water's Soul. It's this idea that the soul of the water is asking a little bit to pay attention."

More striking than the size of the piece, perhaps, is the color, or lack of color — "pristine" white.

"I'm working a lot with that color, it's a color that does not exist at all in one city in our normal life," Plensa said. "Everything is a little gray, a little bit dark. It doesn't exist in a complete black or a complete white. But in the human context this kind of color, pristine, complete white, it's like a drawing in the space ... that is my intention. ... For people it's like a shock."