

## Never Can Say Goodbye

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By [Melissa Stern](#)

If you're strolling past the corner of East Fourth Street and Broadway, site of the old Tower Records store, you're likely to hear an unlikely sound coming from the building: music. Through Feb. 13, a scrappy and wonderful new not-for-profit group called No Longer Empty has commandeered the building and filled it with site-specific artwork—part of a show called Never Can Say Goodbye—that is all informed by that wonderful old-media phenomenon, the record store.

Walking into the space, you're immediately greeted by Ryan Brennan's "Bling Box Orchestra," eight customized, 1980s-style boom boxes blasting the synchronized history of hip-hop music. It's big, has lights flashing, and is really, really cool.

Ted Riederer has set up a fake record company called Never Records, and as you paw through the records bins you notice that each album cover is black except for a single word. Putting the words together, each bin spells a snippet of poetry. Like a surrealist parlor game, the results are both amusing and touching.

Paul Villinski has contributed another poetic and beautiful piece. "Diaspora" starts on the floor, a pile of old LPs, topped by a vintage record player. On the turntable a vinyl record has spun into the shape of a bird about to take flight. The entire wall above is covered with LP birds and the music soars into flight.

Deep in the back of the store, appropriately nestled into the former classical music section, is one of the most stunning video pieces I have ever seen. Joe Diebes has filmed a cellist playing a scherzo (the piece is not identified) with 10 cameras. The original piece is played very fast. He then deconstructed the film clips and reconstructed them in slightly "off" sequences into a new piece of film and audio that is thrilling in both image and sound.

***Through Feb. 13. East 4th Street and Broadway, [No Longer Empty](#).***

