

Pendel(a)utom@t

for 4-channel electroacoustic music and abstract animated video
Projected with the installation **Ton-Pendel(a)utom@t**
(a device of six suspended, sonic, robotic and interactive pendular objects)

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(15'00)

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Residences at **SCRIME** (Bordeaux), **ART ZOYD STUDIOS** (Valenciennes), **GRAME-CNCM** (Lyon)

and at the **STUDIO FÜR ELEKTROAKUSTISCHE MUSIK** of the **AKADEMIE DER KÜNSTE** (Berlin)

Music composition and realisation of the animated video,

Pendel(a)utom@t is an audiovisual work for 4-channel electroacoustic music and an abstract animated video. It is projected at the background of the robotic installation *Ton-Pendel(a)utom@t*. It is part of the series *(a)utom@ton*.

The series includes three parts: a first work, *(a)utom@ton* (music and animated video, 10'00), a second audiovisual work, *Pendel(a)utom@t* for quadraphonic music and abstract animated video, projected with the robotic installation, *Ton-Pendel(a)utom@t*, and its six suspended, sonic, robotic, and interactive pendular objects, whose swinging motion and production of sound sequences vary according to the actions of the audience

Each title of the various parts of the series refers to the Greek word "automaton" which names a being-machine that acts on its own account and moves spontaneously.

Both signs *(a)* and *@* inserted in the spelling of the titles emphasize the distinction between what drives a human being and a robot.

(a) alludes to the *little a* object conceptualised by psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan, the elusive and unidentifiable object of desire which can take very various shapes for each individual.

@ evokes the robotic objects that are connected via WiFi or Ethernet.

By combining two German words, "Pendel" ("pendulum") and "Automat" ("automaton"), *Pendel(a)utom@t* suggests a pendular automaton.

The animated video is projected onto a very large screen at the background of the installation and is also reflected on the objects.

The objects of the installation are hanged from the ceiling and painted with a mirror-finish silver chrome colour. Their neuron-like shape and their swinging motion generate a distortion of the projected images. The images thus appear to be diffracted into six colourful and moving micro-surfaces of reflection.

The sound sequences played and amplified by their embedded MP3 mini-players and mini-loudspeakers merge with the electroacoustic work played through four loudspeakers arranged around the audience.

The video explores the hybridisation and metamorphic pathways of a visual material composed of images of neurons, brain connections, robotic circuits, an Arduino board and mechanical gearwheels, as well as fragments of the programming code for the suspended objects.

The process of superimposition, merging, distortion, fake 3D at times, create a fluid matter that shifts between proliferation and dissolution.

The soundtrack of the video has been developed from the work *(a)utom@ton* whose sonic figures and timbres are both reminiscent of mechanisms in motion, with sometimes a repetitive quality, and hoarse or strident sonorities akin to a scream or a death rattle.

I layered the musical work on around ten audio tracks, applying specific sound processing to each track (granulation, reverb, various kinds of filters), removing any rhythmic dimension or dynamic accentuation from the mix, in order to achieve a highly elastic temporality, a texture that alternates between rough and grainy timbres and very pure and poignantly sad high-pitched sounds.

At the intersection of a mechanical system that seems alive, organic, deforming under the pressure of forces, and a ramified organism whose connective and proliferating potentiality is constrained by a rigid and limited framework, the work questions the notion of automatism, whether machinic or psychic.

Clara Maïda, November 2025