



ROBERT TURNER COLLECTIVE

PORTFOLIO

robertturnercollective.org

rtc@robertturnercollective.org

PRESENTATION

This is the first time I see digital art with a soul
– C.J.G.



The Robert Turner Collective was founded in 2019 by Louis-Hadrien Robert and Paul Turner.

Their artistic practice is based on two distinct, yet separate, ideas: firstly, a novel way to distill an image into abstract parts, referred to as *algorithmic abstraction*, and secondly, an investigation into the artistic uses of the spacetime concept as a way to represent the temporal in spatial terms and vice versa. Intent on creating works that, while often abstract, remain fundamentally human, the collective explores the relationship between the mathematics of digital images and aesthetic perception. Algorithms are used at an early stage of the process to create basic compositional elements for subsequent hand-crafting. The choice of elements, their relative weightings, and all aspects of colour, are put back into human hands to be blended into a final composition. For still works it is the physical piece that is considered final, rather than its electronic precursor. Such works are "digital" only in as much as a painter's canvases are "chemical" because of the prior mixing of the paints.

The collective is active in many domains – audiovisual installations, performances, moving and still images – often working in transdisciplinary projects involving music, sound art and dance.

C O N T E N T S

STILL WORKS

- ALGORITHMIC ABSTRACTION
- ROTATION
- WINDOWS

AUDIOVISUAL AND MOVING IMAGES

- LIVING STILLS
- INSTALLATIONS

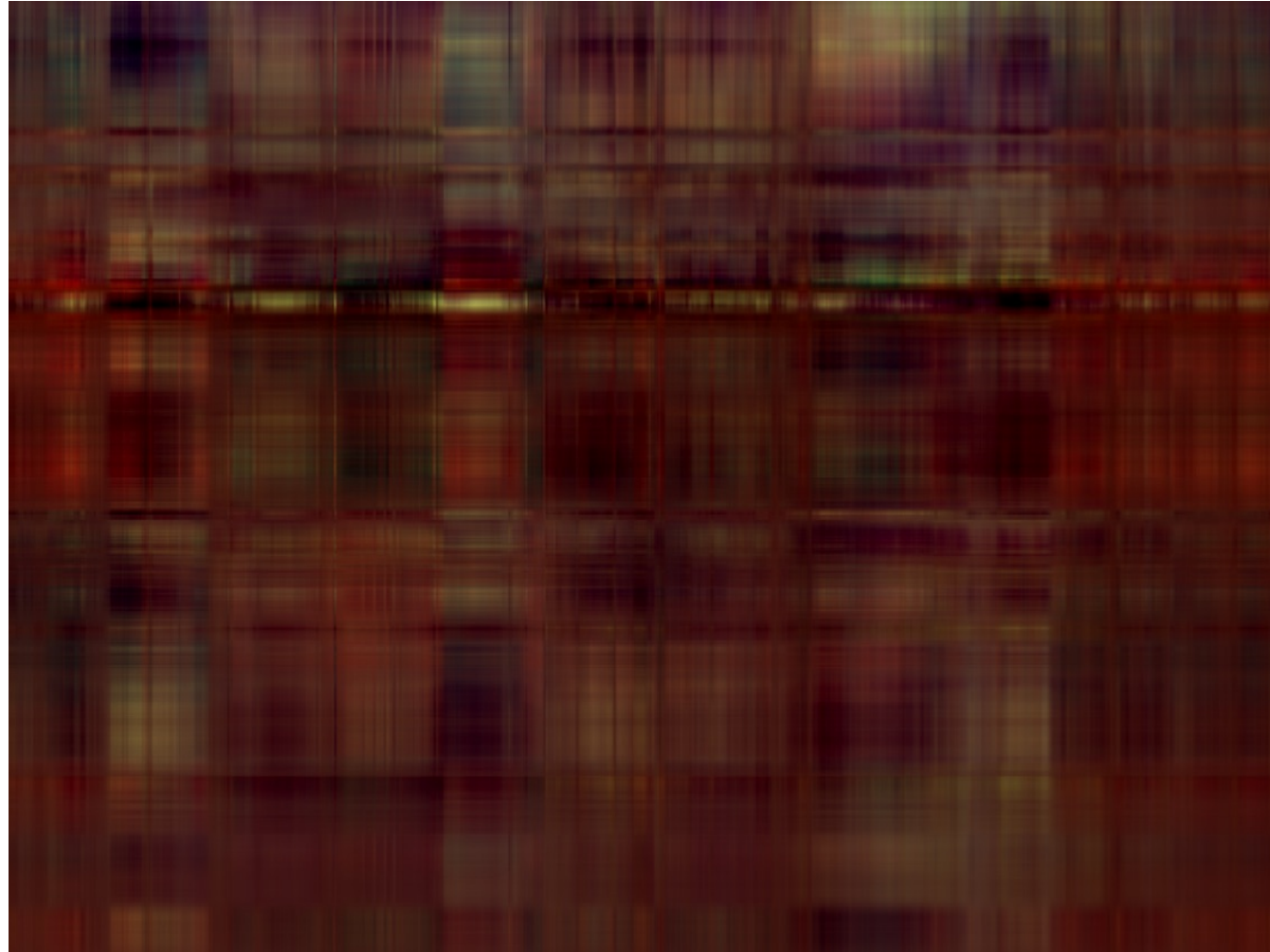
PERFORMANCES

- DANCE
- SOUND

STILL WORKS

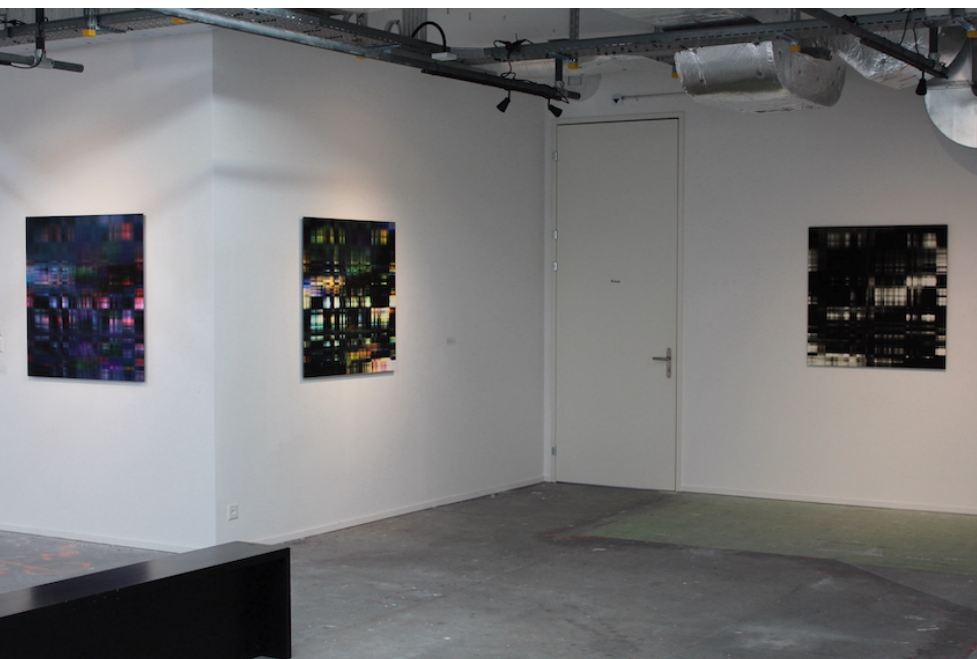
ALGORITHMIC ABSTRACTION

Algorithmic Abstraction is a method of extracting the essence of an image in a world in which perception is through an algorithmic looking glass. One central motivating question is: what does an image look like from the point of view of an algorithm? Visual building blocks are abstracted from an original image and these parts — playing the role of the painter's palette of paint — are the basis of the subsequent composition "by hand". Aspects such as colour, weight, influence, balance are all non-algorithmic. In the resulting work, the observer is often left free to impose their own interpretation.



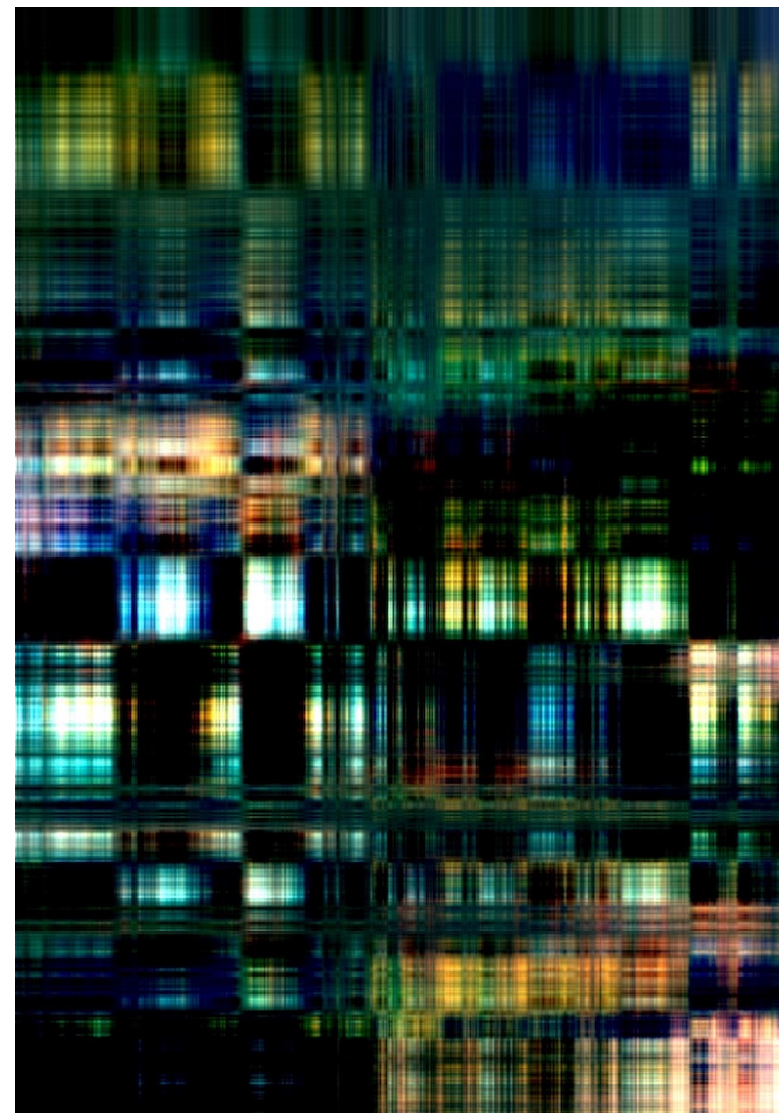
La Tourelle, 2020

Ink on Hahnemühle paper Albrecht Dürer
53 x 40 cm

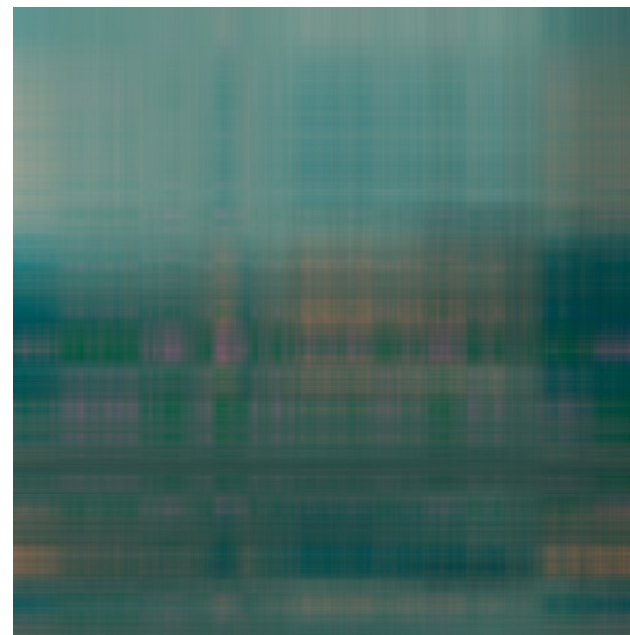
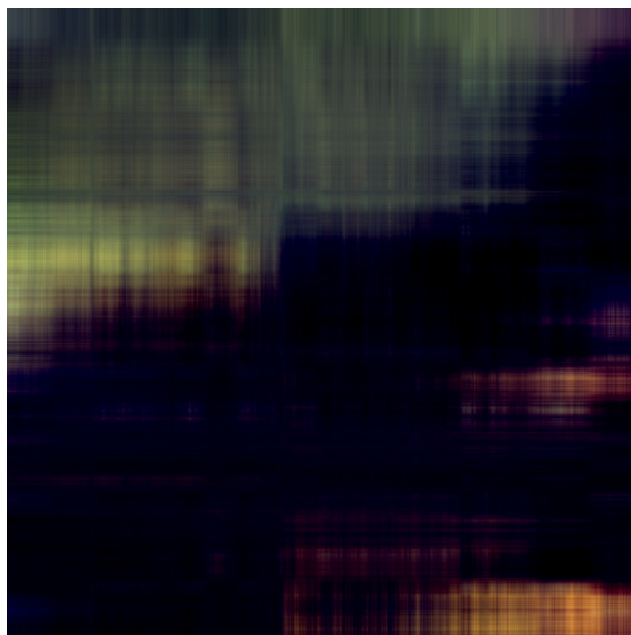
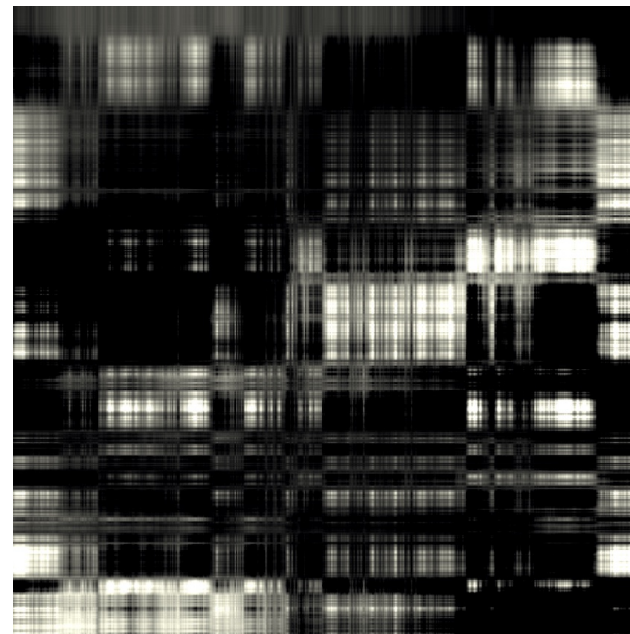
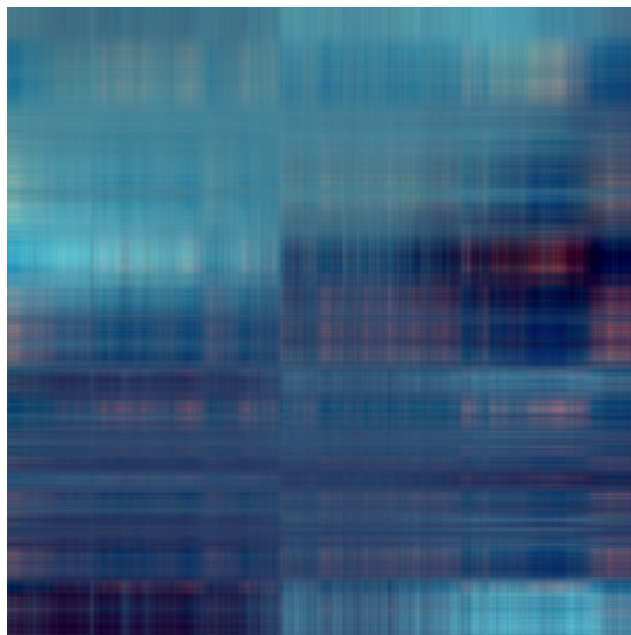


The Metaphysics of Funk, 2019

Ink on Hahnemühle paper Albrecht Dürer
100 x 100 cm



The four works displayed here, along with the three on the previous page, are from the series Pohutukawa, all created from a single image — a pohutukawa tree, native of New Zealand. Each work, despite conjuring up a different reality, was created out of the same basic visual palette of algorithmically abstracted elements, and no trace of the original image is present.



Pohutukawa series

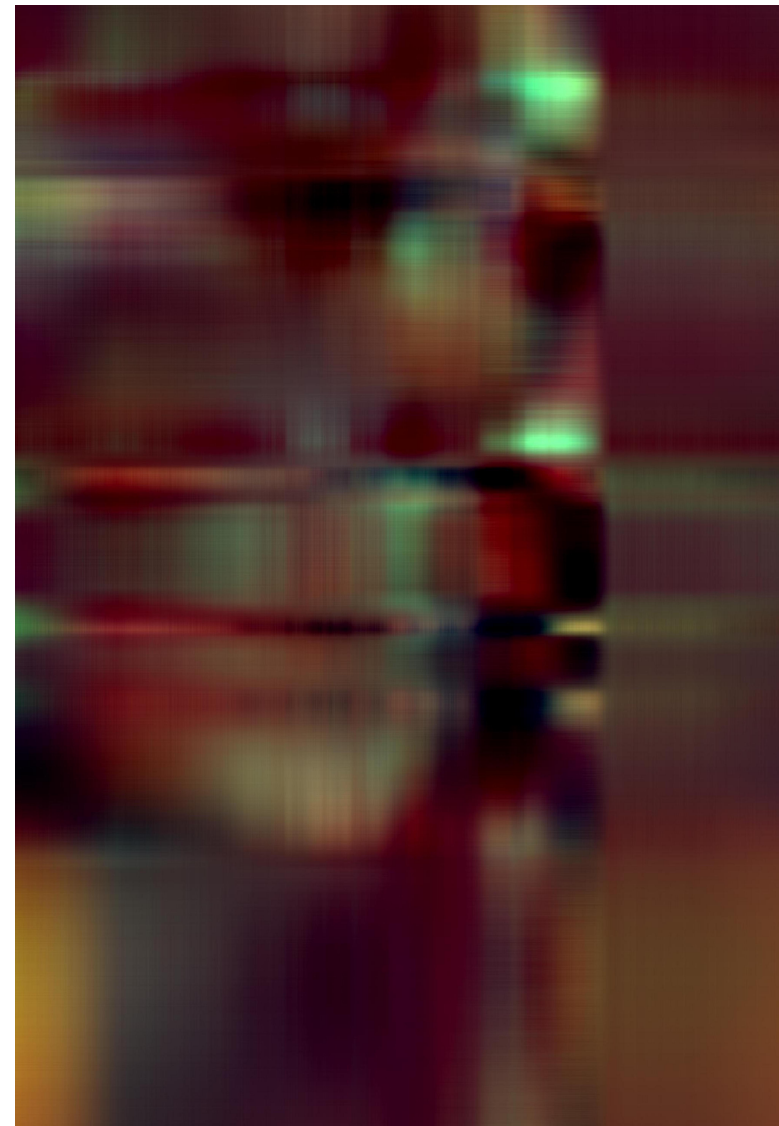
Ink on Hahnemühle paper Albrecht Dürer

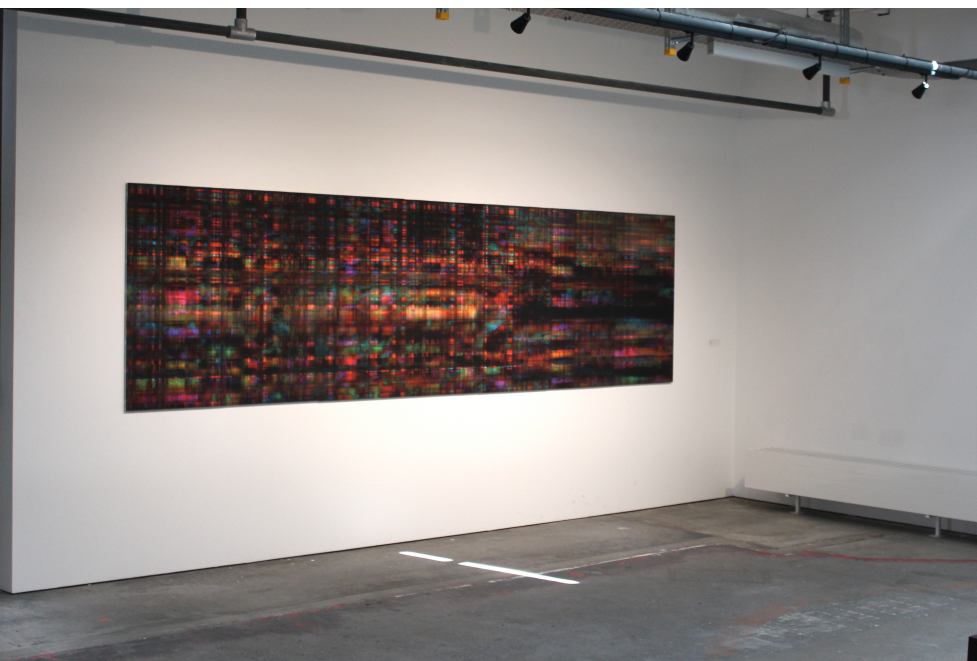
Each work 60 x 60 cm – 100 x 100 cm



Far Away, 2022

Ink on Hahnemühle William Turner paper on dibond
Triptych of three 70 x 100 cm

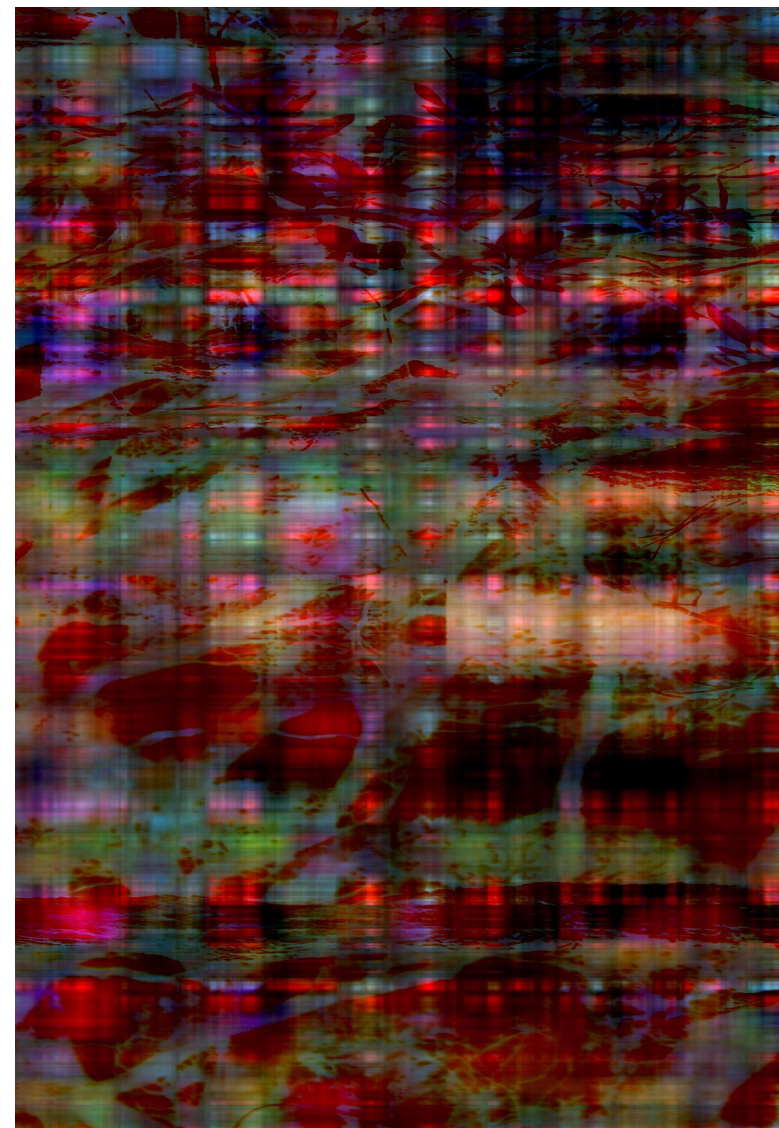




Ecumes, 2022

Ink on paper on cardboard

420 x 120 cm

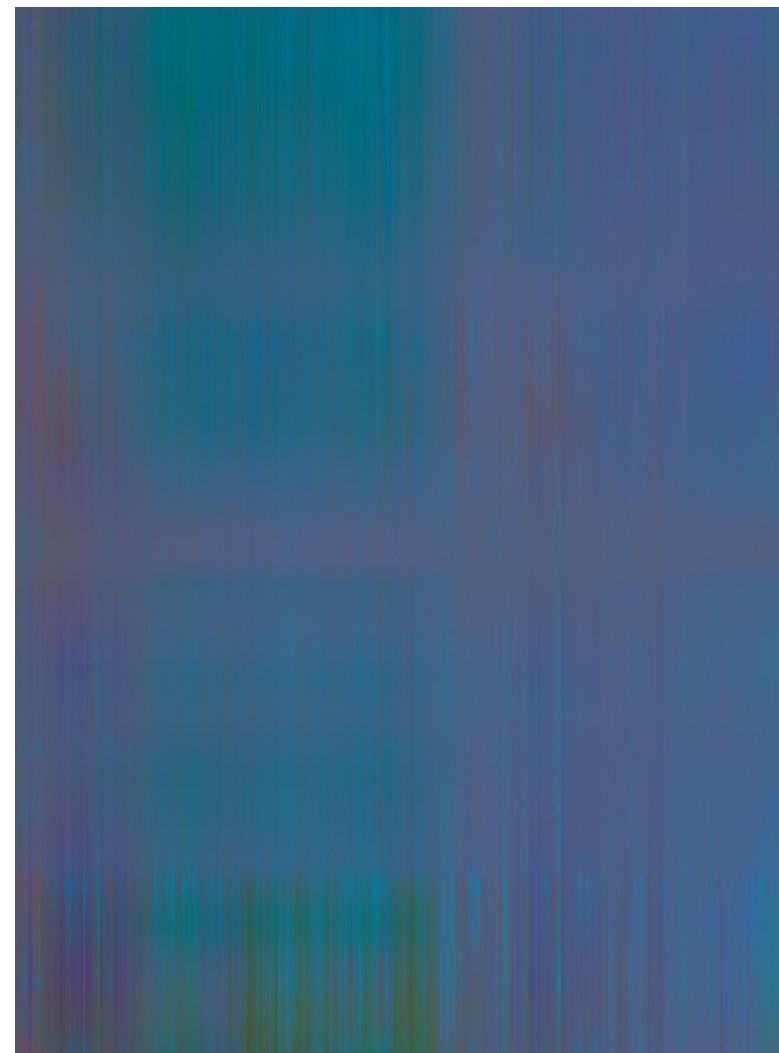




Du bout de la pensée I and II, 2022

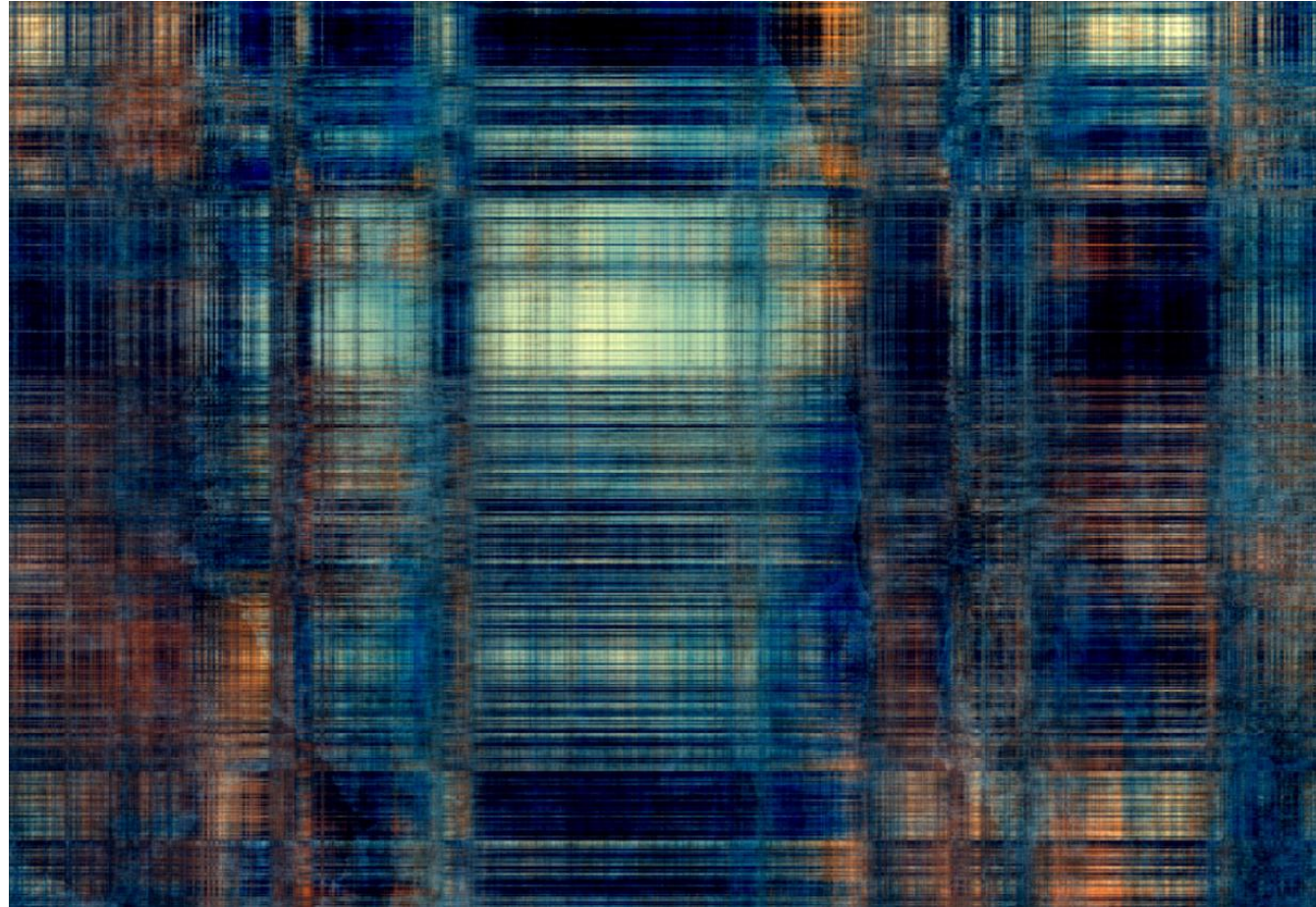
Ink on paper on cardboard

Each 240 x 300 cm



Rotation

A combination of images can be the result of a simple weighted sum, but the straight line path can be substituted by more interesting trajectories in the space of images. In particular hybrids can be obtained by “rotating” two source images within the multidimensional space of decompositions arising in the process of Algorithmic Abstraction. These non-linear blends of two real-world images are themselves then used as source images for compositions based on their algorithmically abstracted components.



The Unforgettable Sound of Forgotten Freedom, 2020

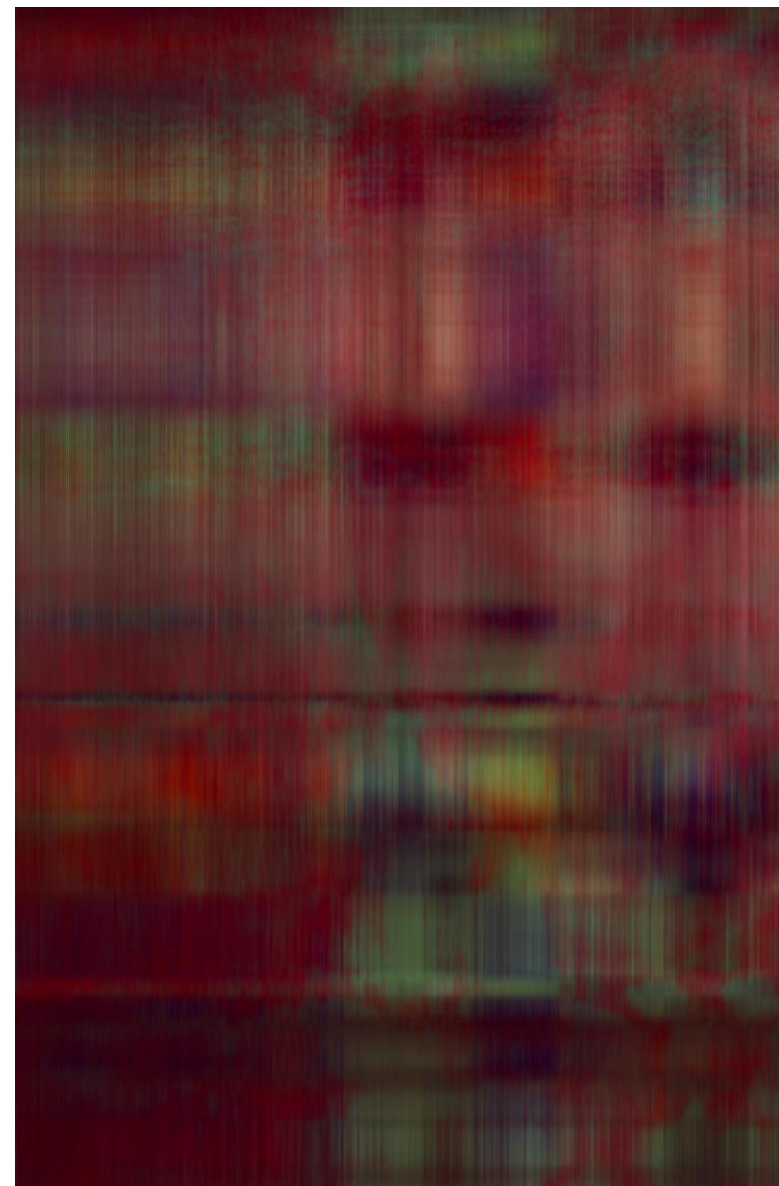
Ars Electronica Global Gallery



Relative Radiation Nine, 2022

Ink on Hahnemühle paper Torchon

Nine of 40 x 40 cm





Unknowable Woman, 2020

Ink on Hahnemühle paper Torchon

20 x 20 cm



Doubtful Branch, 2020

Ink on Hahnemühle paper Torchon

20 x 20 cm

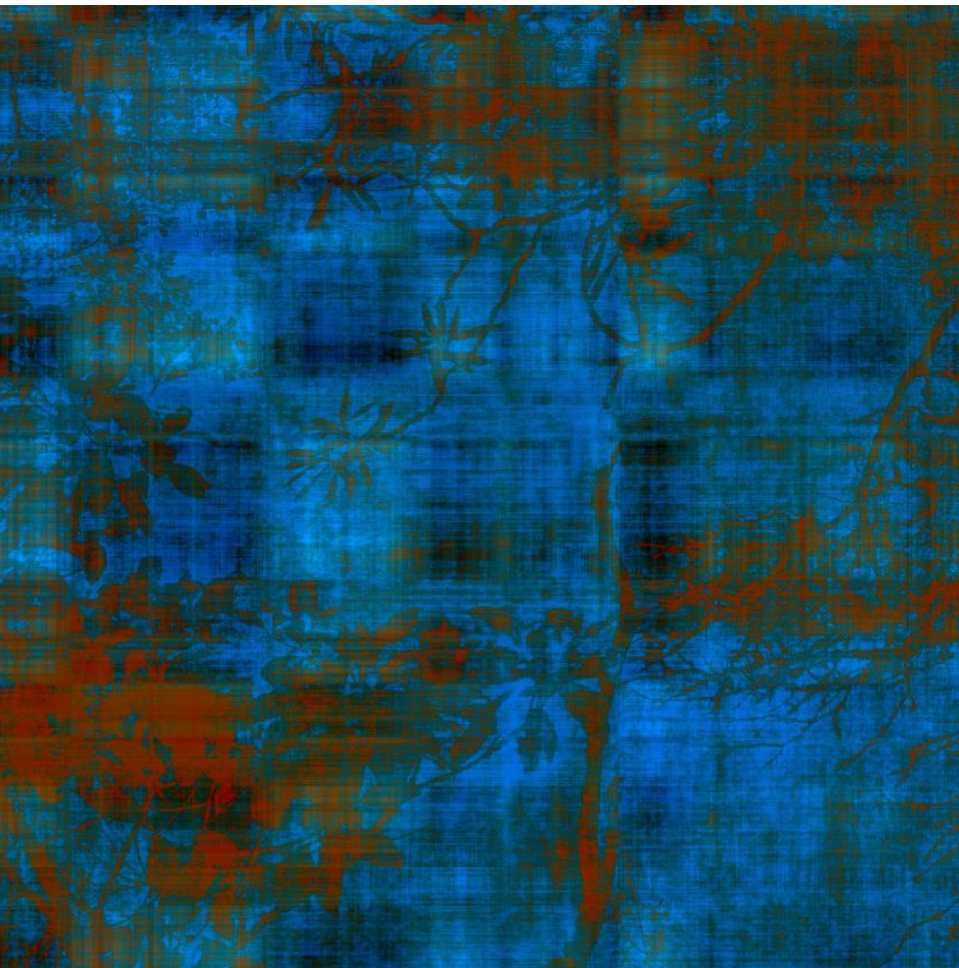


Multicosm, 2022

Ink on Hahnemühle paper Torchon

100 of 15 x 15 cm

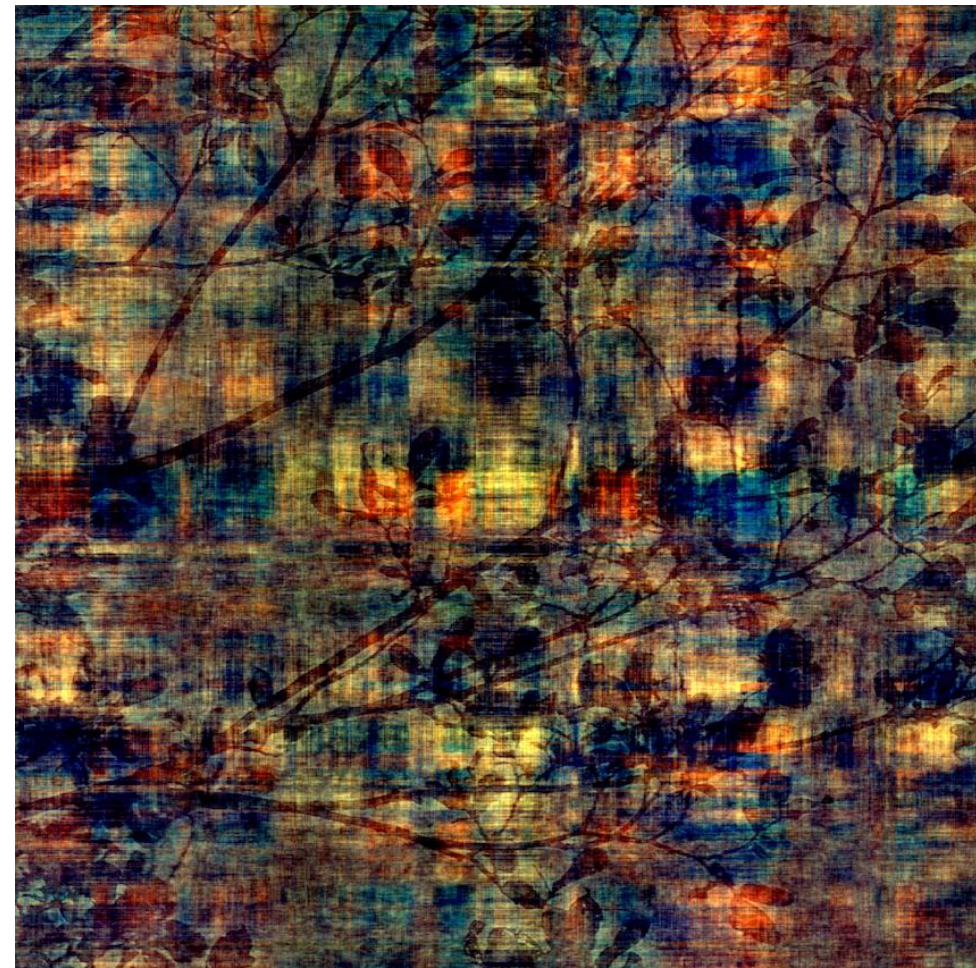




Isla, 2020

Ink on Hahnemühle paper Torchon

40 x 40 cm



Leaves 6, 2020

Ink on Hahnemühle paper Torchon

80 x 80 cm

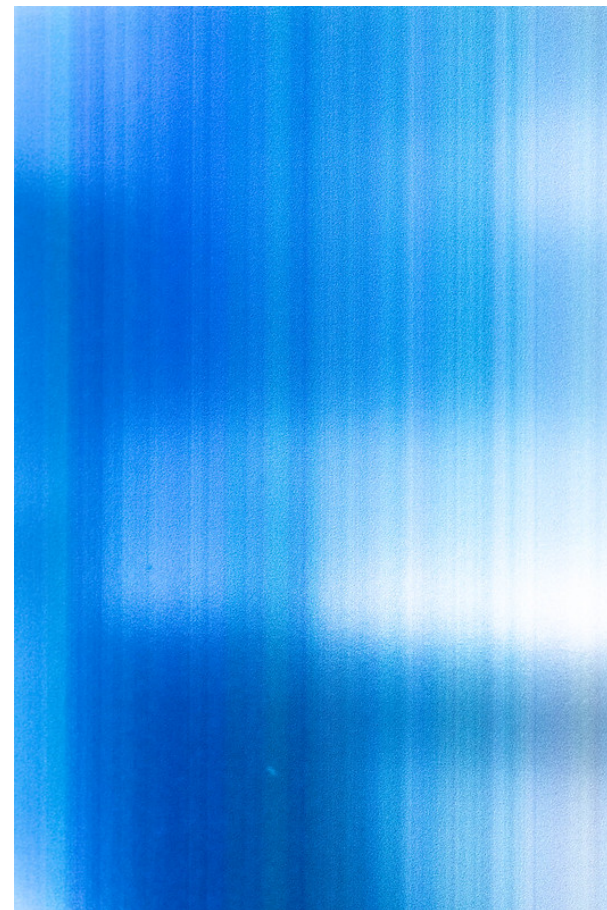
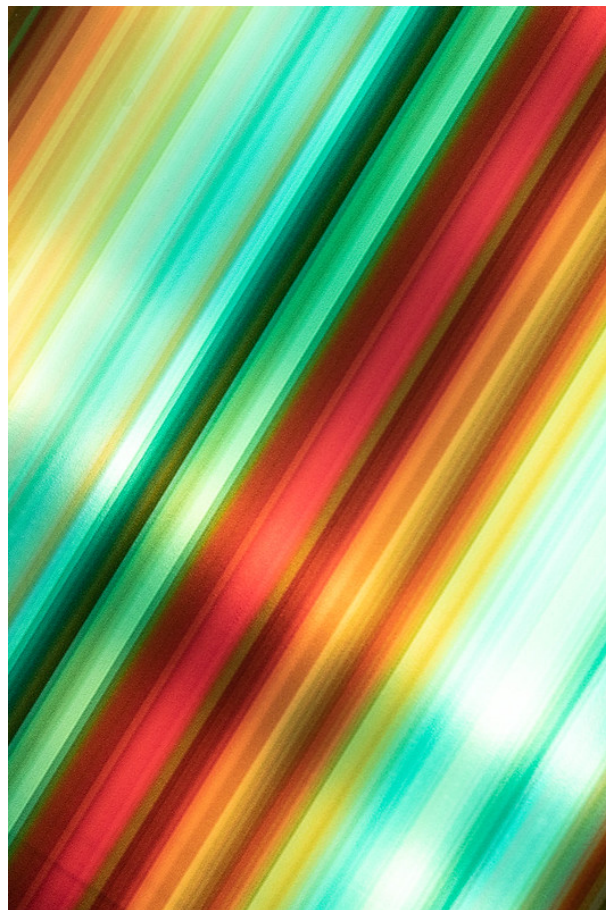
Windows

In order to retain the luminous quality of some works, without recourse to electronic screens, backlit transparent film provides an ideal medium. Multi-pane windows provide an excellent support for compositions which harness the natural light for illumination.



Sonic Lines, 2022

with Daniel Maszkowicz's Sonic Tree
Le Commun, Geneva

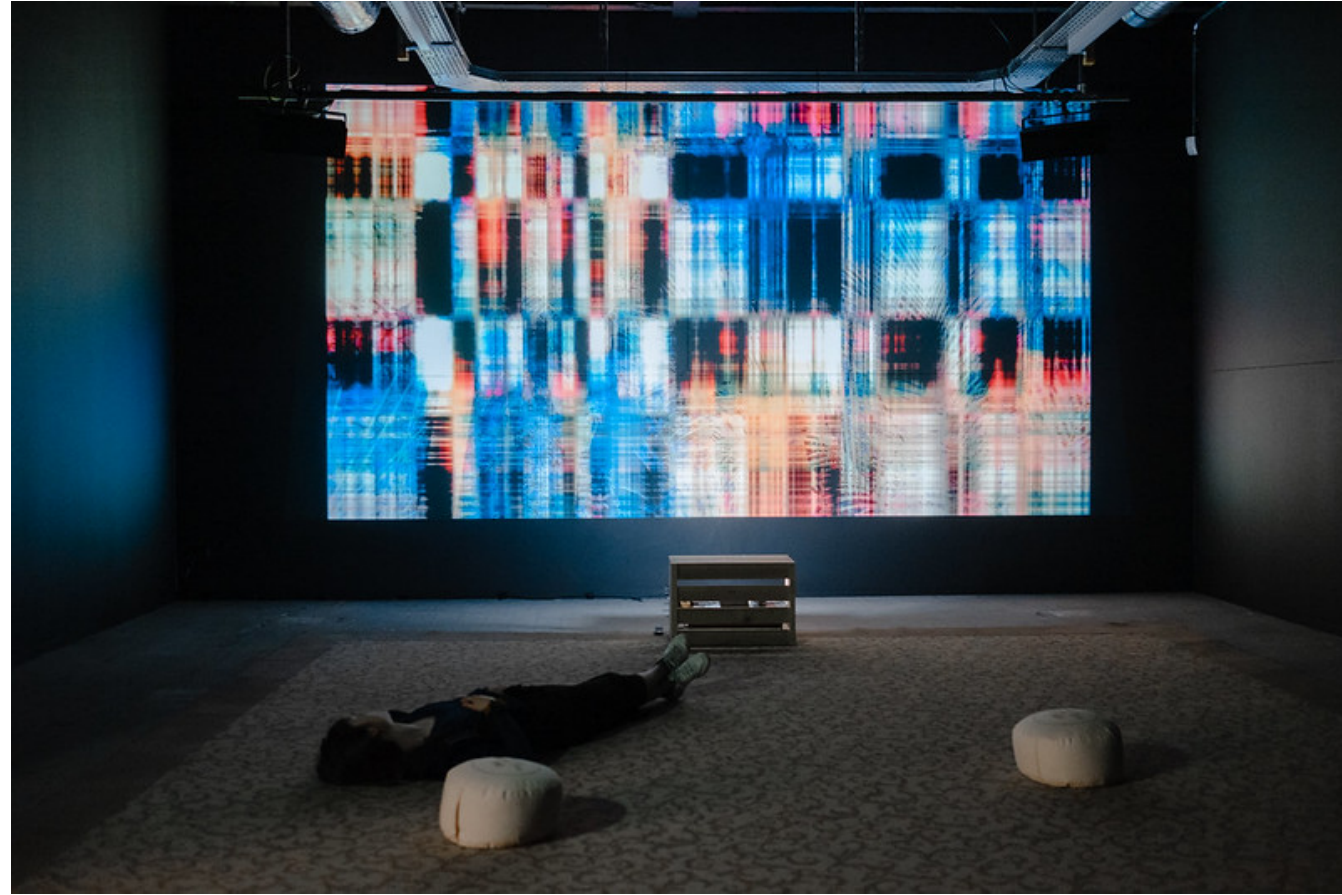


Sonic Lines, 2022
Le Commun, Geneva

AUDIOVISUAL AND MOVING IMAGES

LIVING STILL

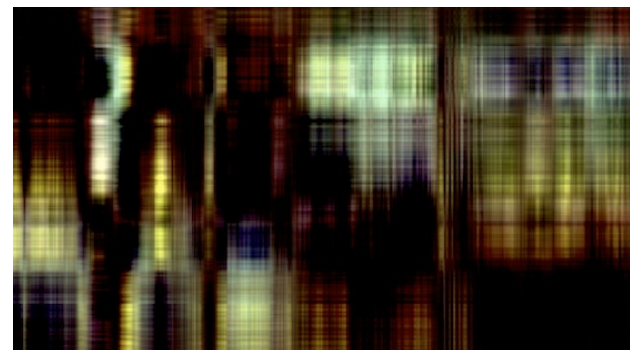
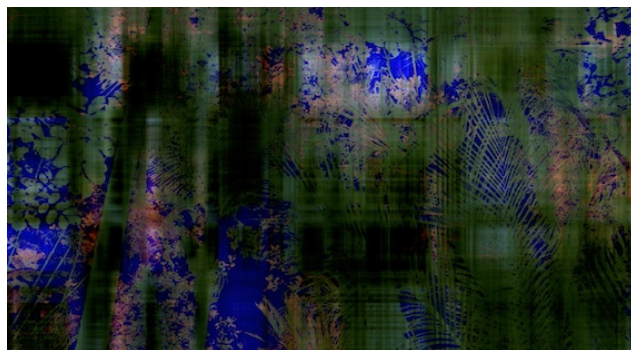
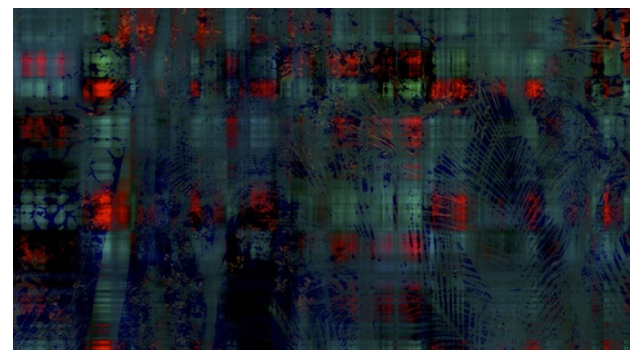
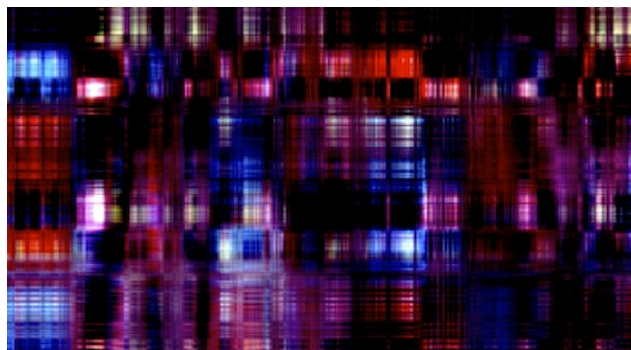
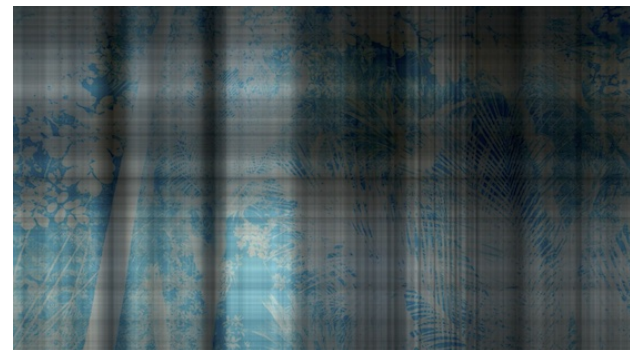
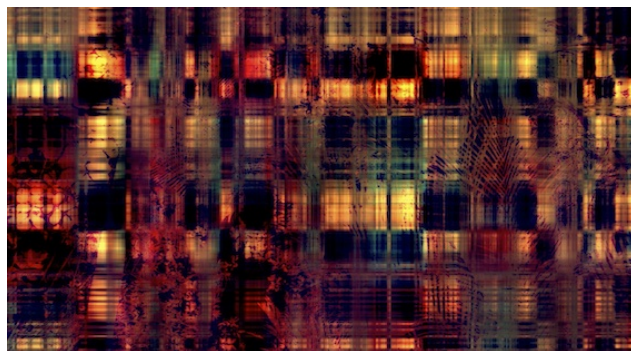
Our natural environment may seem to be static, but this is an artefact. In the real world, we experience constant variations and changes. Wind, light, the activity of living organisms and so forth all have an effect. The simple passage of time, the deterioration that it causes and the regeneration that it brings, are enough to give rise to such continuous changes. Playing on the term "still life", the Robert Turner Collective has developed the concept of "Living Still": a digital work which at first appears to be fixed, but which evolves slowly and constantly. On the one hand, the apparent immobility of a scene reflects the unstoppable and incessant flow of time and its regularity: when everything is still, only time moves. On the other hand, the evolution of a scene underscores the irreversibility of time and reveals its essential nature in what we call life.



Tāne's Garden, 2022

Living Still projection
Le Commun, Geneva

In this Living Still, Tāne, the god of the forest, observes the sky through the branches and leaves of the canopy, dreaming of a myriad of possible futures. The work is constructed from a single still image and is brought to life by the slow procession through different compositions which mingle to illustrate the intertwining of these myriads of futures. The surrounding space is to be thought of as a place of meditation and the projection is accompanied by a quadraphonic spatial sound diffusion.

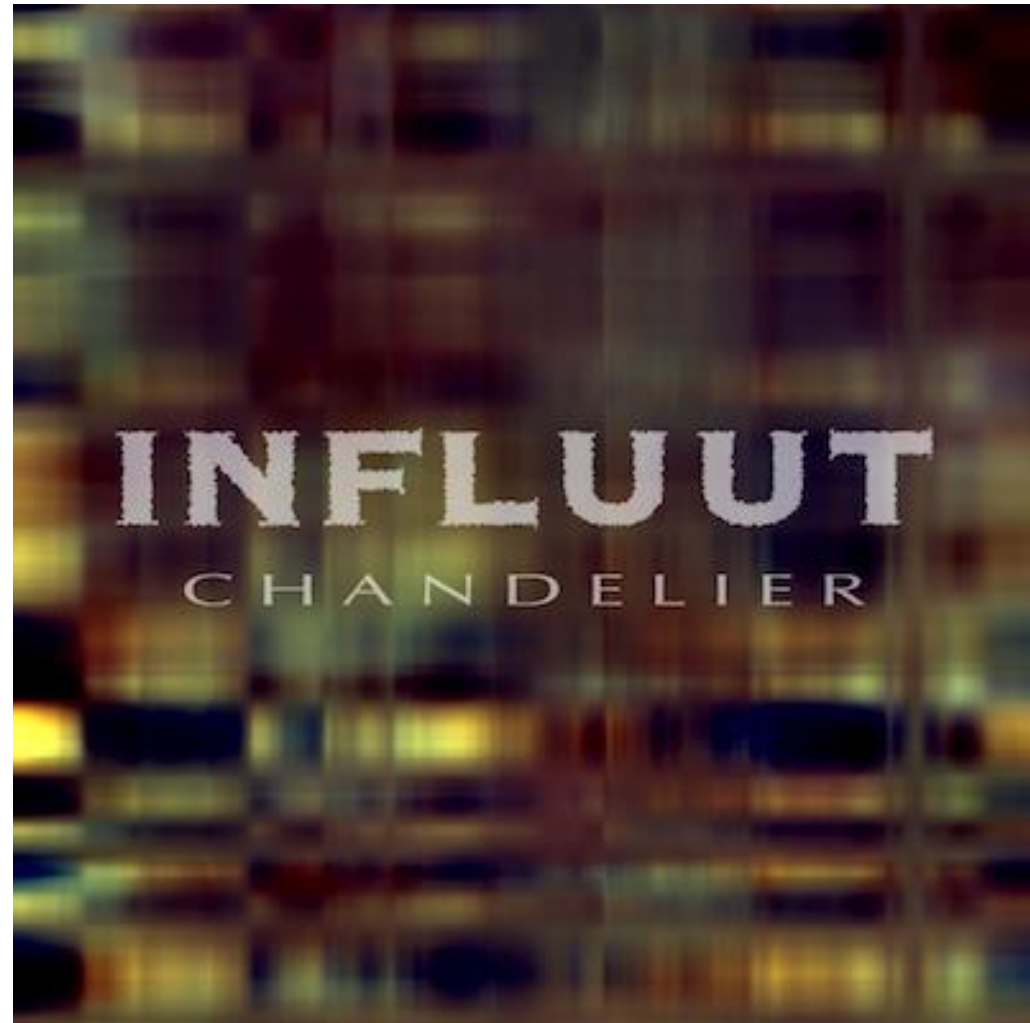


Tāne's Garden

Living Still Projection

6 stills

A Living Still was created for the cover of INFLUUT's second album. The online version displays the Living Still itself while individual frames were used to create distinct album covers : each album in the release run has its own unique sleeve.



Cover for album Chandelier, 2021

Living Still frames

INSTALLATIONS

The techniques used on still images, in particular algorithmic abstraction, can be transferred to video and combined with other moving image methods. Working in collaboration with sound artists and musicians the Robert Turner Collective has created immersive audiovisual works, along with audiovisual sculptures.



Renaissance, 2022

with sound by INFLUUT

6 screen projection, quadriphonic sound

Le Commun, Geneva

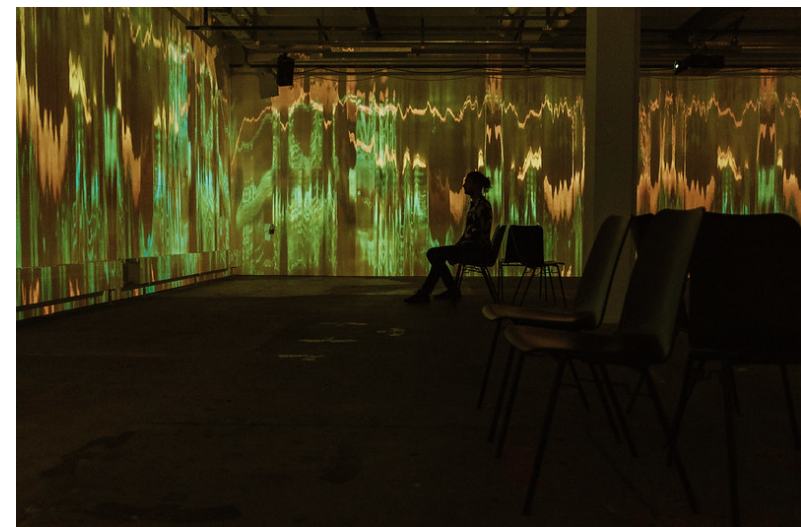
Renaissance is an immersive audio-visual work involving six moving-image projections that interact with a hybrid sound composition. The visual display includes audio-reactive images, in which sound influences the different algorithms used in their creation. Algorithmic abstraction and other techniques allow for the creation of a graphic universe that enhances and complements the atmosphere of the immersive experience. The original sound composition by the duo INFLUUT comprises human-produced sounds using objects and instruments, which are pre-recorded, processed and played according to decision loops based on harmony rules.

Renaissance, 2022

with sound by INFLUUT

6 screen projection, quadriphonic sound

Le Commun, Geneva



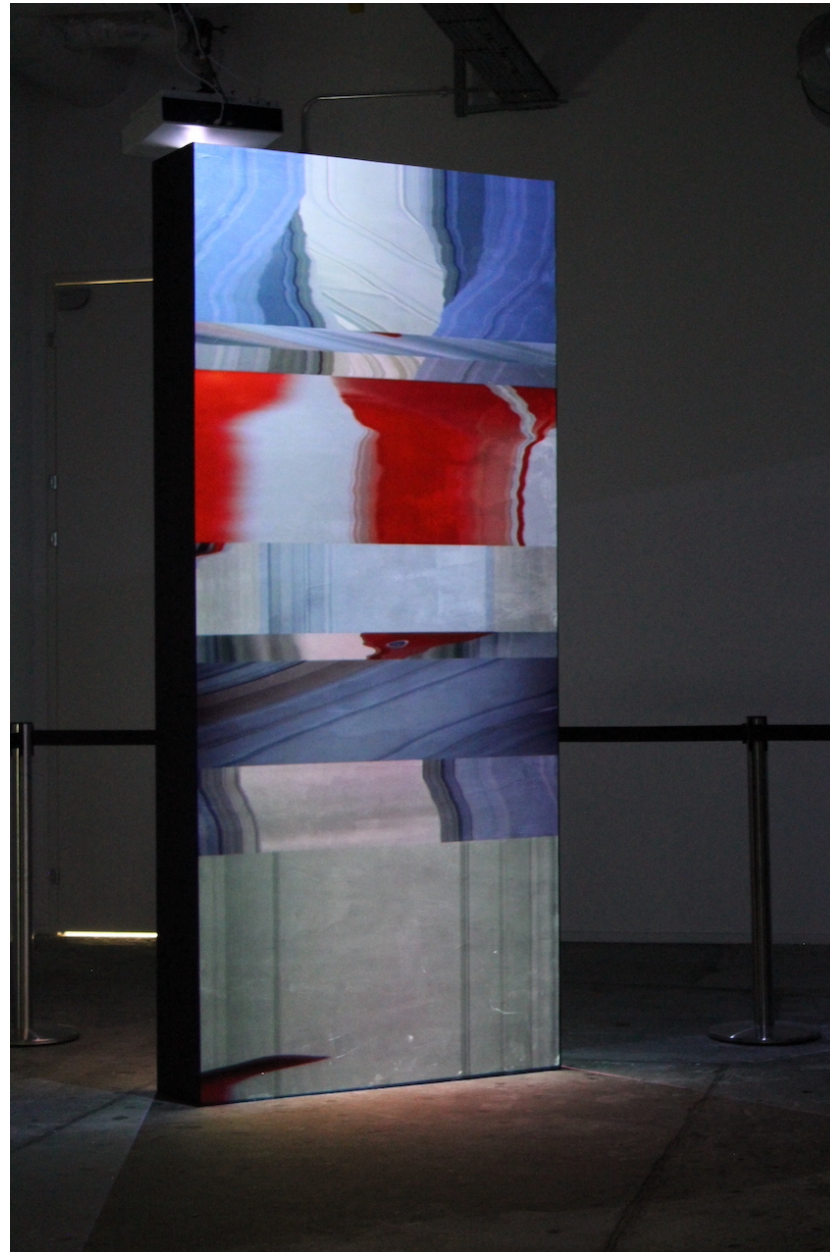
A digital image is a 2-dimensional rectangular array of colours and a movie can be thought of as a sequence of images in a 3-dimensional array: individual frames are strung out along a time axis to fill a solid slab of pixels. By putting time and space on an equal footing, we may interchange a space axis with time, creating a new version of the original clip. These moving works are further developed by applying algorithmic abstraction to create new hybrid realities in motion.

An example of this method is a work created for the exhibition Renaissance (Le Commun, Genève, 2022), which consists of a 2.5 metre high monolith with projections on the two large faces. A time-slab of pixels has been rotated in space-time.

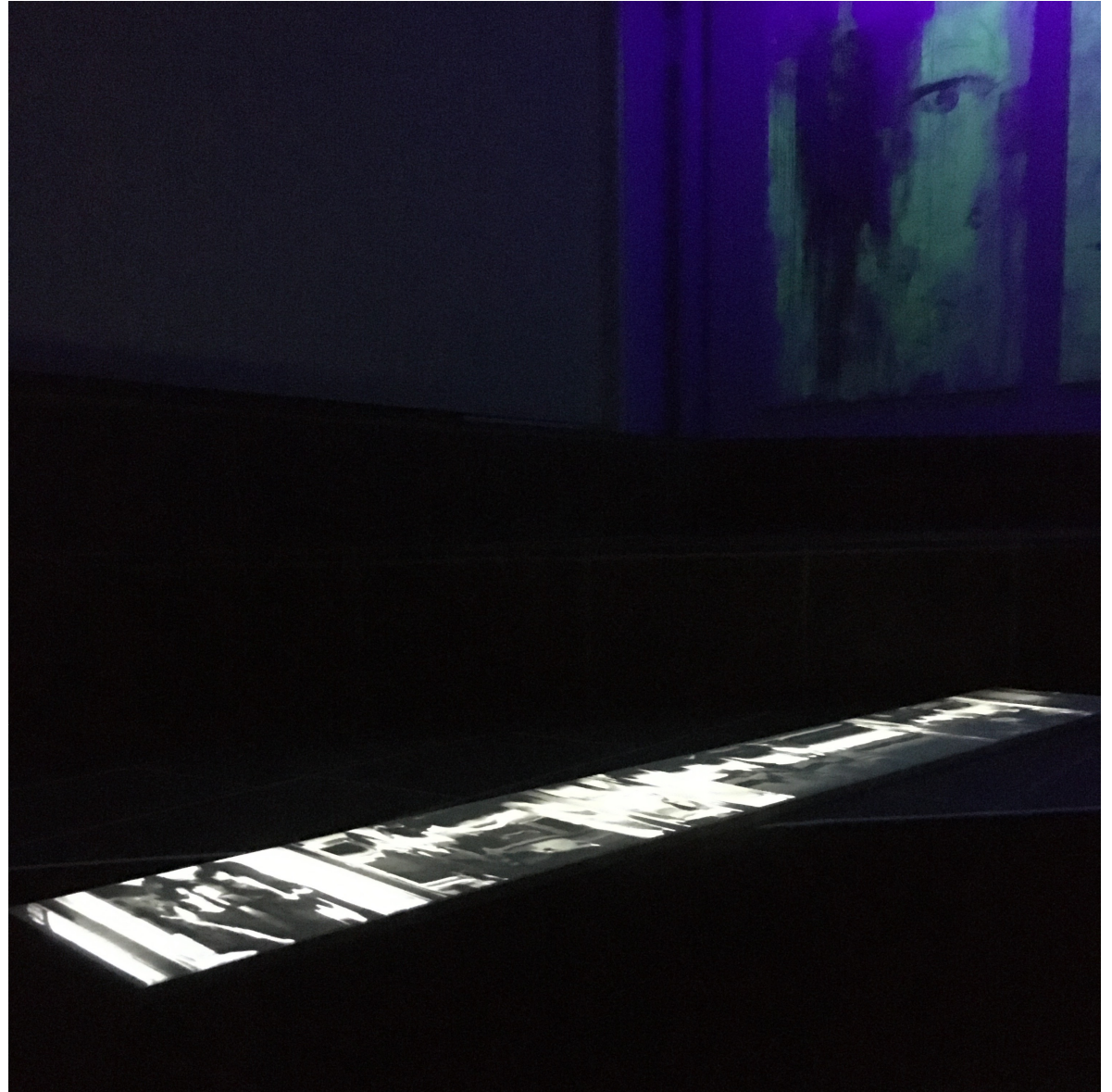
space | time | space, 2022

Installation and projection

Monolith of size 250 x 111 x 28 cm



Who needs time?, 2023
Installation and projection
Trudelhaus, Baden



The piece "Noctambules" begins with Edward Hopper's 1942 painting "Nighthawks". It is decomposed into a coarse grid of 360 coloured squares which are then mapped by groups of three, row by row, onto the fifteen pillars of the piece. The intention is that the columns themselves become the isolated "lifeforms" - the noctambules - enveloped by darkness. To bring them alive each pillar acts independently from the others, randomly rotating into its next state. This rough downward scan forces us to look at physical vertical space as a temporal object. A melancholic feel is retained by the using the original colour palette.



Noctambules, 2023

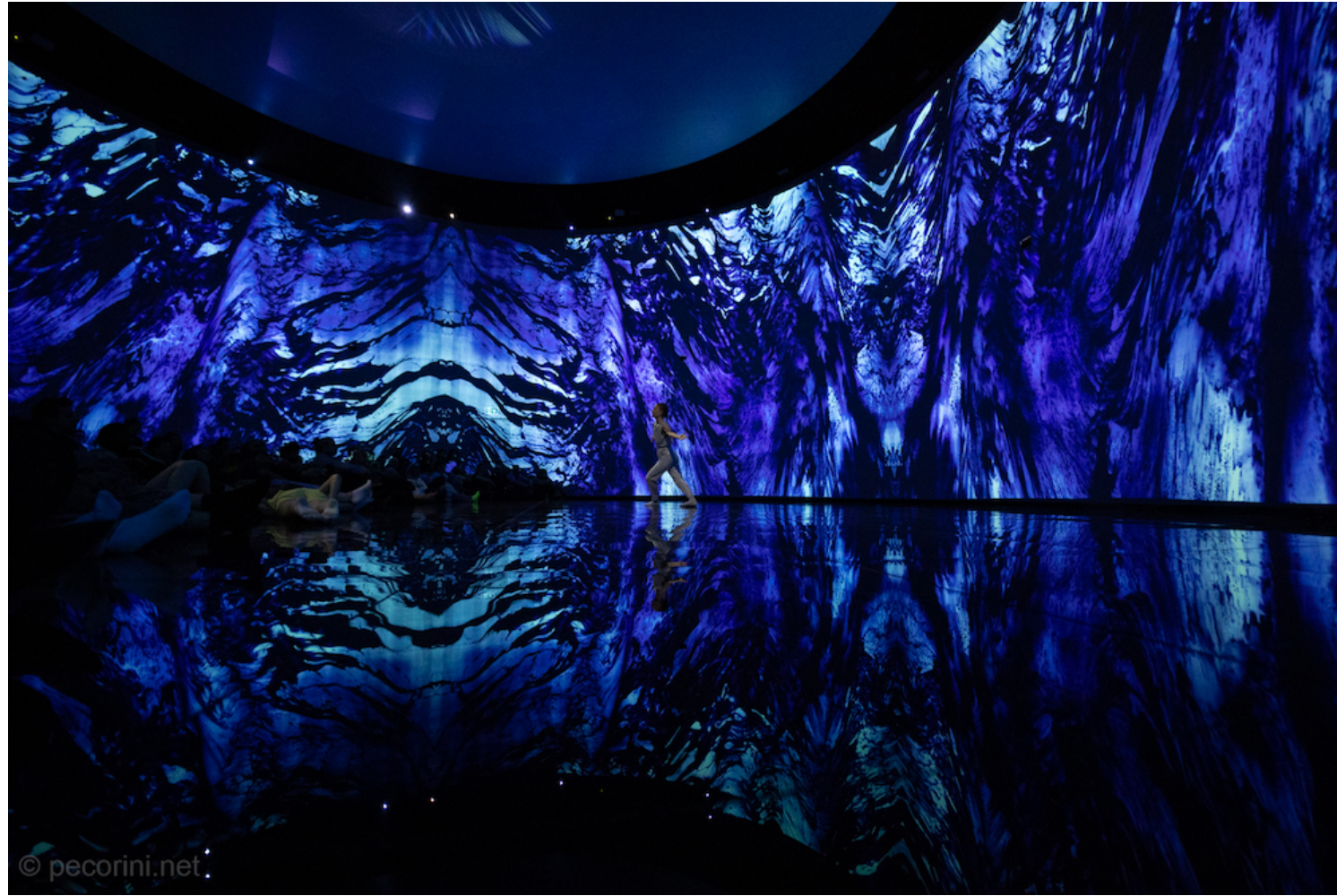
Trudelhaus, Baden

Group show with Carmen Perrin, Claude Cortinavis,
Noemie Doge and Virginie Delannoy

PERFORMANCES

DANCE

The Collective collaborates regularly with dance practitioners and choreographers providing moving images to be woven into the fabric of the choreography. Sometimes this involves improvisation in which prepared video sequences are mixed in real time.



Les Vagues, Geneva Mapping Festival, 2023

with Lucie Eidenbenz and Daniel Maszkowicz



Rencontre avec des algorithmes mi-humains, 2022
Collectif InCorpore with the Robert Turner Collective



SISMES, 2022

Marion Baeriswyl and D.C.P.

with Living Still scene by the Robert Turner Collective

SOUND

Music and sound art provide fertile ground for collaboration. The Robert Turner Collective has teamed up many times with In-fluut, the electroacoustic, post-jazz, sound collaboration between Nat Cilia and Daniel Maszkowicz. The Collective developed a way of modifying the Algorithmic Abstraction of an image in real-time based on an audio input signal. By mixing this live with other video clips, the Collective creates a visual atmosphere to accompany musical performance.



Chandelier, 2019

INFLUUT and the Robert Turner Collective
Spoutnik, Geneva



Guia Fest!, 2021

Macau

INFLUUT and the Robert Turner Collective (virtually)

with the Guia Experimental Band (live)



Rencontre avec des algorithmes mi-humains, 2022
Collectif InCorpore with the Robert Turner Collective



Concert Contrastes, 2022

Archets du Léman with the Robert Turner Collective

PHOTO CREDITS

Dorota Grajewska

Robert Turner Collective

Photo page 26: Kaspar Ruoff