LAb[au]

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Manuel Abendroth
Jérôme Decock
Els Vermang

Exhibitions (selection)

[2021] // 'X' : group exhibition at **FRAC** des Pays de la Loire, Carquefou [fr]. 20.11.20 > 30.06.21

[2020] // 'Ce mouvement qui deplace les lignes' : trio exhibition with Roger Vilder and Pol Bury at **Patinoire Royale**, Brussels [be]. 26.05 > 29.08

[2019] // 'If Then Else' : solo-exhibition at **Casino Luxembou-rg**, Luxembourg City [lux]. 27.09.19 > 05.01.20

[2018] // 'mosaique 5x15 bw' : in group exhibition 'Action <> Reaction' at **Kunsthal**, Rotterdam [nl]. 22.09.18 > 20.01.19

[2018] // 'What Hath God Wrought?' : in group exhibition at **MAAT**, Lisbon [pt]. 22.10 > 28.10.18

[2016] // 'What Hath God Wrought?': in group exhibition at **Museum M**, Leuven [be]. 19.10.15 > 17.01.17

[2016] // 'S/N' : in group exhibition 'Terminal P' at **La Pana-cee**, Marseille [fr]. 17.06 > 18.08

[2015] // 'mosaique 4x4x4 rgb' : in group exhibition at **ACC**, Gwangju [kr]. 25.11 > 30.06.16

[2014] // 'S/N' : in group exhibition 'Physicality' at **Musee d'Art Contemporain**, Montreal [can]. 23.05 > 01.06.14

[2014] // 'zero un' : solo-exhibition at **galerie denise rene**, Paris [fr]. 06.02 > 22.03.14

[2014] // 'S/N' : in group exhibition 'Artist Novelist' at **MOMA**, New York [usa]. 08.01 > 31.03.14

[2013] // 'PixFlow #2' : in group exhibition 'noise' at **Biennale di Venezia**, Venice [it]. 30.05 > 20.09.13

[2012] // 'Particle Springs' : in group exhibition at **Seoul Museum of Art**, Seoul [kr]. 04 > 23.12.12

[2010] // 'Chrono.prints' + 'f555 prototype + notations' + 'Binary Waves notations' : in group exhibition at **Ludwig Forum**, Aachen [de]. 12.09 > 14.11

[2010] // 'Binary Waves' + 'f552' : in group exhibtion at **Singapore Art Museum**, Singapore [sgp]. 16.09 > 26.09.

[2010] // 'm0t1v' : solo-exhibition at **Kunst-Station Sankt Peter**, Köln [de]. 08.01 - 12.02

[2009] // 'Young Belgian Painters Award' : group exhibition at **BOZAR**, Brussels [be]. 24.06 > 13.09

[2008] // 'PixFlow #2' : in group exhibition 'Emocao Art.ificial' at **Itau**, Sao Paolo [br]. 1.06 > 14.09

[2007] // 'Touch', 'Who's afraid of Red, Green and Blue' and 'spectr[a]um', on **Rogier Tower**, Brussels [be]. 26.12.06 > 15.12.08

Permanents artworks

[2022] // ƒlux, Union Station, Toronto, Canada
[2019] // Zäit Wuert, Casino Luxembourg, Luxembourg
[2019] // Palimpsest, Wijkpark De Porre, Ghent, Belgium
[2019] // 365, De Hoorn, Leuven, Belgium
[2016] // 365, Quai 10 and La Vigie, Charleroi, Belgium
[2016] // Lux Aeternae, AZF Mémorial, Toulouse, France
[2016] // 10e-15, Temis Science, Besançon, France
[2016] // siloScope, Square Jules Guesde, Vitry-sur-Seine, France
[2012] // mosaique 15x26, Maison de la Mécatronique, Annecy-le-Vieux, France

Artworks with LAb[au] in collections (selection)

[2021] // yes, no: perhaps - Hager, Strasbourg
[2018] // 2x540 kHZ - Kiasma, Helsinki
[2017] // origamiSquare 59 squares - Linklaters, Madrid
[2017] // origamiC160 Rhombi - Reynaerts, Duffel
[2017] // origamiC 20 squares 54 kites - Cosnova, Frankfurt
[2017] // origamiPenrose 71 kites and darts – Aegon, Amersfoort
[2016] // EOD02 - ZKM, Karlsruhe
[2016] // origamiSquare 192 squares - Linklaters, Brussels
[2016] // SwarmDots - Fidelity, Luxembourg City
[2006] // pixFlow02 - Itau Cultural, Sao Paulo

Monographic Publications

[2015] // concepts, modes, systems - R-diffusion
ISBN 978-2-916639-38-3
[2010] // MetaDeSIGN - Les presses du Reel
ISBN 978-2-84066-404-8

Exhibitions, Collections, Publications

PI–-8 70 7 59
/QYGA/YKNZSDCM P
WAUR GOS LAD
AIDS MOO CUB S C
DON TOT GAG DAG
DOR MIG YOD HMM
LASH BOW CAB FIL
FOG CALX TOE LEA
MAT SHH DON EWE

FR

LAb[au] est un collectif d'artistes basé à
Bruxelles (Belgique), composé de Manuel
Abendroth, Jérôme Decock et Els Vermang.
Sa démarche artistique consiste à s'interroger
sur la relation entre art et langage, au moyen
non seulement de mots ou langage – au moyen
langages codes – la sémantique –, mais aussi
au moyen de signes – la sémiotique. C'est ainsi
que LAb[au] formule une approche linguistique
appliquant les sciences de l'information et de
la communication dans le domaine de l'art.

De nombreuses œuvres de LAb[au] trouvent
leur origine dans des définitions propres au
champ de l'art, comme celle, par exemple,
du monochrome. Cette approche les amène
à s'intéresser aux limites du langage. Le sens
du monochrome, la fascination du vide qu'il
incorpore, n'est pas décrit dans sa définition
et ne peut être appréhende qu'à travers
une lecture plus élargie de l'art. Les artistes
abordent ainsi la tradition de la peinture par
la terminologie, tout en la contextualisant
dans sa perspective culturelle.

Cependant, tout langage peut être retranscrit
dans un autre media ou l'utilisation de
couleurs, de formes, de motifs, etc. constitue
un langage visuel. Les artistes de LAb[au]
abordent ces différents médias en parlant
de syntaxe, de grammaire et de vocabulaire
à partir desquels ils recherchent des moyens
de traduire, de transcoder les diverses
expressions artistiques d'un support à l'autre.

Le titre de l'exposition If Then Else est une
expression issue de la logique de programmati-
on, une déclaration conditionnelle qui trouve
ses origines dans la philosophie du langage.
Par conséquent, ce raisonnement linguistique
permet de relier la logique algorithmique
et la pensée conceptuelle – ce qui, de fait,
constitue le cœur de l'exposition.

EN

LAb[au] is co
Jérôme Deca
Brussels, Belg
investigate th
language not
and other for
but also throu
they take a li
information an
the field of ar

Many of LAb[
definitions spe
the limits of la
of the monoch
void. Is not de
can be appreh
understanding
the tradition o
while contextu
perspective.

However, any l
secondary me
shapes, patter
LAb[au] utilize
speaking of sy
In so doing, th
ways to transl
expressions fro

The exhibition t
in programming
stemming from
Accordingly, pro
algorithmic and
linguistics – wh
the exhibition.

π   2019

This work confronts the viewer with the infinite string of digits of Pi. One of the only truly random sequences known so far, Pi
contains all possible number combinations and thus, in theory, can describe the entire universe. In the process presented here,
these numbers are first translated into characters, then analysed according to the possible formation of words. The eternal cal-
culation of the Pi sequence becomes a sort of automatically generated poetry, which also can be seen as an attempt to decode
the secret pattern, to listen to the universe.

aluminium
160 split-flaps
custom tailored electronics
computer
generative software

10 pcs 1 50 * 15 * 26 cm

PI--770367515906

QYSNLHKNHVPARMPB

WAUR GOS LAD

AIDS MOO CUB S C

DON TOT GAG DAG

DOR MIG YOD HMM

LASH BOW CAB FIL

FOG CALX TOE LEA

MAT SHH DON EWE

ZINES CAD FAR

origamiJacquards 2019

The transcoding of the alphabet appears on four tapestries woven by a zero-one (under-over) Jacquard process. Based on the principle that weaving is a code, the fabric displays a language pattern that extends the notion of the flag as signal to the tapestry as encyclopaedia. The many possible ways of structuring the combinations produce diverse geometrical patterns, thus creating a connection between formal logic and written language.

jacquard tapestry
generative software

1 80 * 1 80 cm

U-238 > Pb-206

2019

This work illustrates the material change from uranium to lead, known as "uranium-lead dating," a 14-step transformation process that changes one material into another. The transition takes several million years. Based on the same material/colour in two different states, the work investigates the notion of the monochrome and places it in relation to time. Although in fact identical, the painted colours appear as in far-distant times.

30 * 30 cm

chroma 2019

The paintings explore the legacy of the monochrome. Here, the same painting can be entirely white and at another moment, entirely black. In between these two states, the viewer contemplates a slow but continuous process of material transformation; the propagation and dissipation from one colour into another colour, and vice versa. This paradox of being one and its opposite at the same time questions the tautology of the monochrome as an absolute state of pure colour.

variable

xxxxxxxxxxxx

2019

If one randomly permutes the 26 letters of the alphabet, it can take just an instant or an incredible amount of time to produce a 12-letter word: theoretically, it can take from 1 second to infinity. The system is initialized at the beginning of the exhibition, starting the permutation/query for a 12-letter word. Will a word emerge during the exhibition? Will we have the chance to see one? Which word will it be?

16 segment display
custom tailored electronics
computer
generative software

60 * 8 * 8 cm

palimpsest   2019

Palimpsest is a public artwork conceived for the cooling tower of a former industrial site in Ghent, Belgium. The artwork consti-
tutes two circular displays - one at the top of the chimney and the other at the bottom. The lower ring displays the process - the
generation of random letters, while the upper one displays the result - words that have been accidentally created by combina-
torial logic. The overwriting of found words on the top ring follows the palimpsest principle in a digital display, proposing an
autopoietic light sign inviting passers-by to participate in interpretation and reading.

steel
aluminium
PMMA
custom tailored electronics
LED computer
16 segments LED displays
generative software

higher ring: 1 50 * 4 50 * 4 50 cm
lower ring: 8 * 1 50 * 1 50 cm

If Then Else

2019

If Then Else is a conditional statement in programming language, subjected to a Boolean evaluation, true or false, 1 or 0. The origin of the expression can be traced back to language philosophy and its predicate logic, which enables us to relate algorithmic and conceptual thinking through semantics. The sign's handwritten look tempers the austerity of both the statement and the cold light, lending the phrase an almost poetic dimension.

80 * 40 cm

Good Luck   2019

The project deals with the difference between 'chance' and 'luck'; betwe-   variable
en its probabilistic dimension and its symbolic understanding. By exhibiting
a field of Trifolium Pentaphyllum; a genetically engineered variation of the
commonly found Trifolium Repens, the artwork points out the tension betwe-
en manipulation and imagination.

OMG   2019

The artwork aims to decode the universe's cosmic rays by rendering them into light and sound. Cosmic rays are high-energy   Geiger-Mueller tubes   variable
particles that circulate in the interstellar space. Since light travels faster than cosmic rays, they arrive on Earth up to 10 million   fluorescent light tubes
years later than their origin: the extinction of a star. As such it leads us directly to the relativity of time: we measure something   speakers
which does not exists anymore. Cosmic rays are carriers of this past existence.   custom tailored electronics
                                                                                                                                            generative software

Positions of Past Presence   2018

Inside a selected zone of a wall every existing hole is filled with a screw. The screws directly address our memory to remember   protocol   variable
something which has existed at that very position; a trace. The mental outline of the selected zone operates as a frame containing   screws
an arrangement drawn from other works of art, but which now through this gesture have turned into a new work of art. Each of
the used screws is logged by the name of its past and the date of its new presence, create yet another trace.

Interstice   2018

The artwork follows a simple protocol: a geometer measures with highest accuracy the space and marks his triangulation points   geometer points   variable
on the floor. His resulting drawing is superposed to the original plan of the architect. On this basis is drawn a map pointing out   architectural map
the gap between both, the added or missing millimetres and the difference in angles. By unfolding the map the visitor is invited
to explore all limits of the space. By doing his attention is drawn to this little tiny space, the interstice, which exists between the
plan; what has been imagined, and its realisation; what has been done.

Modern Times   2017

When in 1340 Jacobo Dondi gave the clock its form, he shaped more than a visualisation of time: he created an image of the   analogue clock   variable
world. With its circular and cyclic finitude, it represents the universe as a mechanism and establishes one of the strongest icons   digital clock
of the Renaissance world. In 1970, the digital clock replaces the watch hand and its dial with a linear display. By placing the
analogue and the digital clock next to each other, the artwork 'Modern Times' creates a tautology of the notion of time with their
corresponding circular and linear world view.
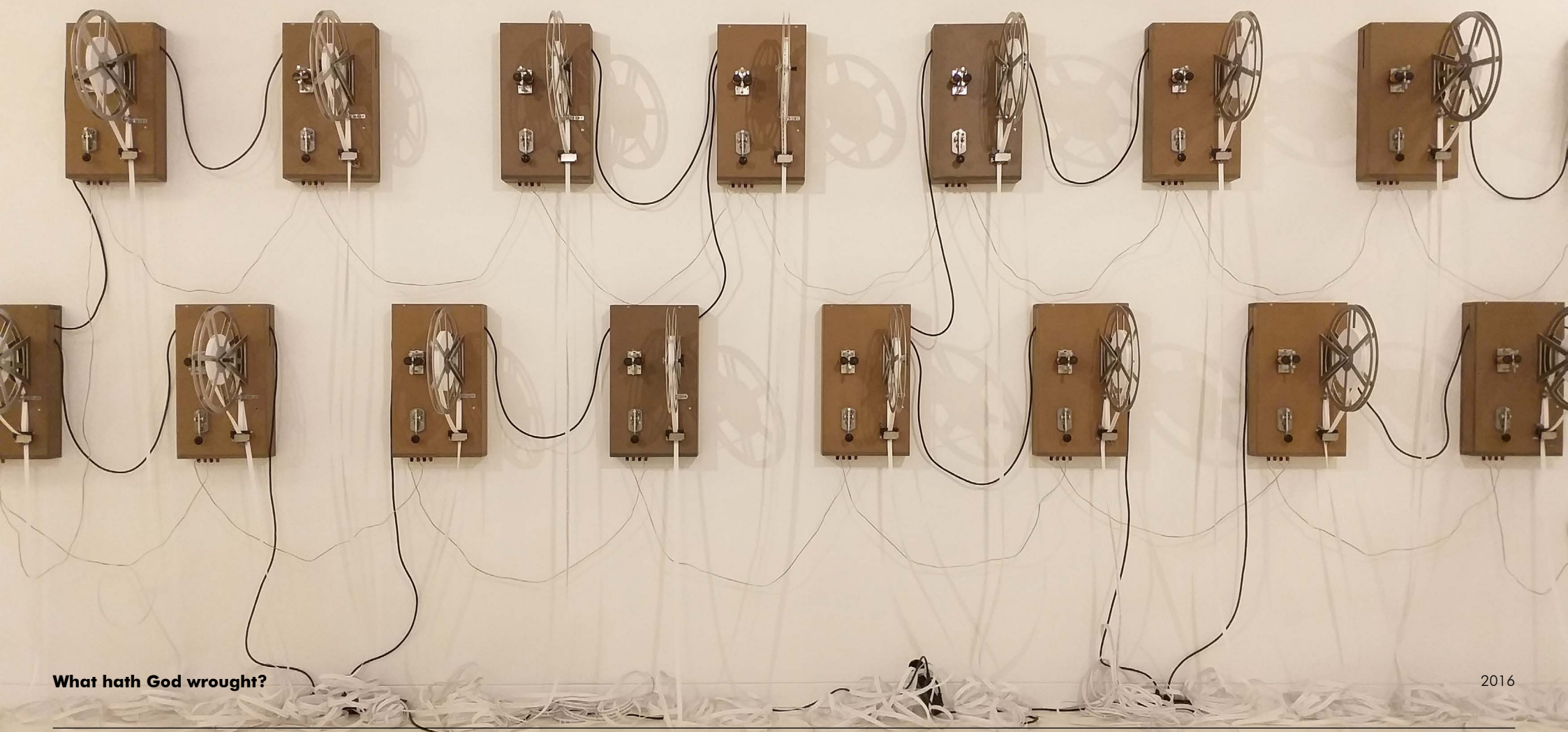
What hath God wrought?   2016

The title quotes a line from the Book of Numbers in early modern English. It was the first message ever transmitted by telegraph   MDF   variable
in 1844. Its invention marks the beginning of communication technology based on electric binary coding and information's   custom tailored electronics and mechanics
separation from its material inscription. The telegraphs that make up the installation are cross-linked in a network, while sending   impact printers
and receiving the quote from one to the other. The hammering sound of their keys and the beeping of their receivers translate   generative software
the messages into sound and the rolls of paper drifting on the floor trace their exchange. In time, collusions and mistakes appear
in the closed system and alter the signals. The Morse orchestra deals with rationalism and its belief in progress and posits by
contrast a self-regulating system in which error rules and becomes the parameter of its evolution.

'365' is an installation constituted by monumental custom-tailored alphanumeric 16 segment displays, displaying words and geometric configurations. The project title refers to the number of days in a year. Every day the system randomly generates a different word, following the unpredictable and combinatorial logic of the system. This agnostic approach encourages interpretation and associations of the displayed word. This auto-poetic machine questions through seemingly meaningless words our habits; 'métro, boulot, dodo', and renews the reading of our daily post-industrial landscape.

steel, aluminium   variable
pmma
custom tailored electronics
LED
computer
generative software

365 (2016, Charleroi) :
www.facebook.com/charleroi365

365 (Leuven, 2019) :
https://weer.sluispark.be/index.php?p=mnu_webcam

Zait Wuert (Luxemburg, 2019) :
www.instagram.com/zait_wuert/
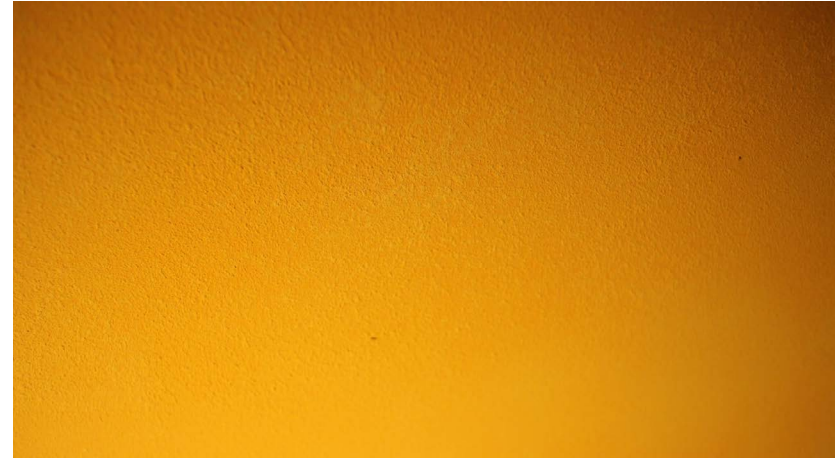
Thousand Six Hundred Light Years   2016

Reflexion about the monochrome and its possible nowadays interpretation. If the black square on black background by Malevich   radio-luminescent paint   variable
proposes a new experience of space and time and Yves Klein's blue is the vision of infinity and absolute time, than this radio-   geiger counter
luminescent monochrome is in contrary an expression of decline, an emission of energy into space which fades slowly in time.   microphone
                                                                                                                                   speaker

origamiSemaphore   2019

5 pcs 80 * 50 cm

This work explores the tessellation of planar geometries along with combinatory logic, using the principles of semaphore si-
gnalling to extend its formal language to written/spoken language. The starting point consists of five modules transcribing the
coding and anthropomorphic constraints of the flag telegraph (semaphore) into a geometric and kinetic construct. But instead of
displaying words, the work randomly permutes letters, producing equal geometric compositions. Here, written language, where
one would normally locate meaning, is reduced to probability, all possible meanings within the same construct.
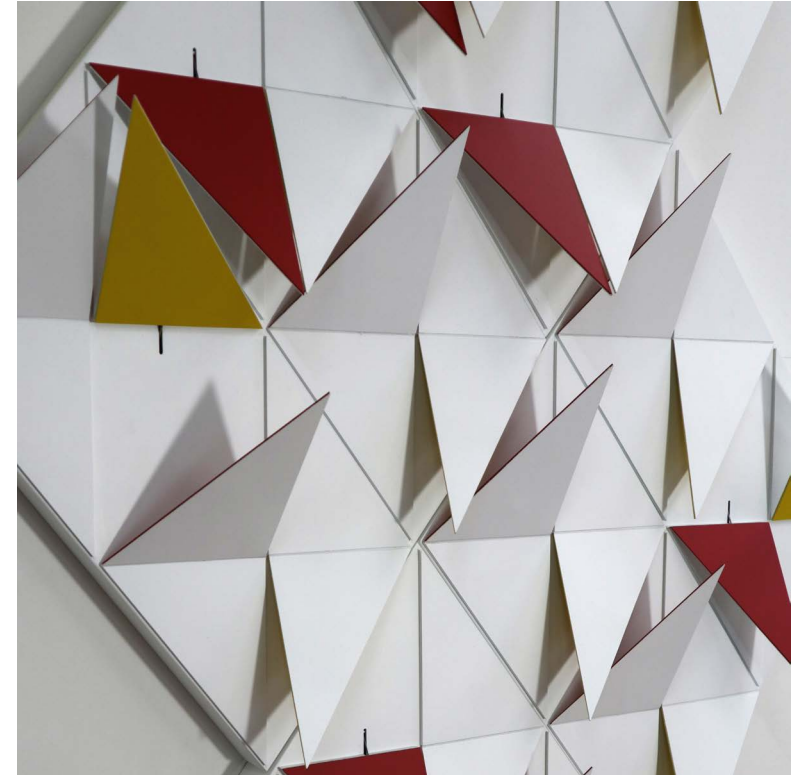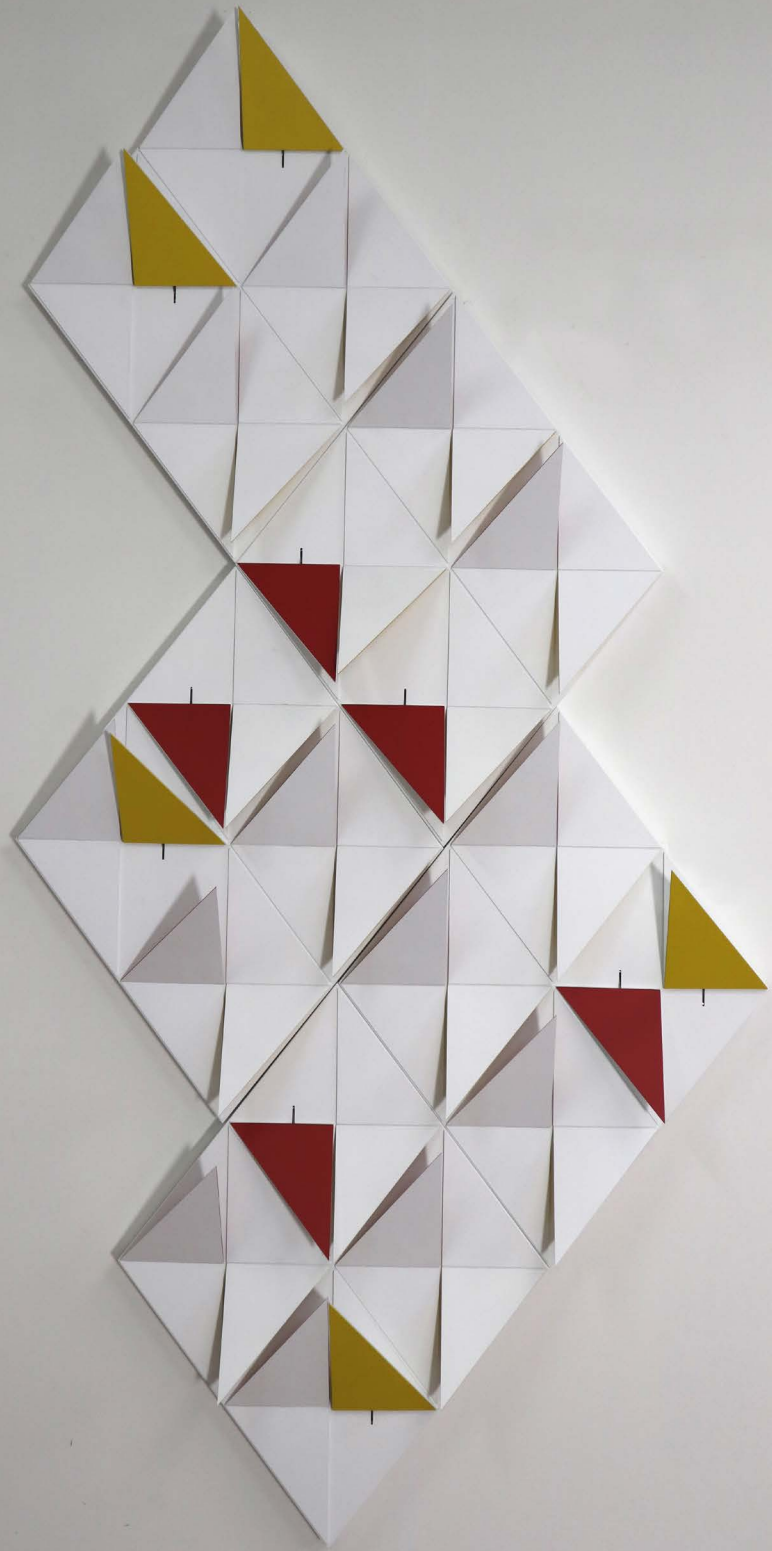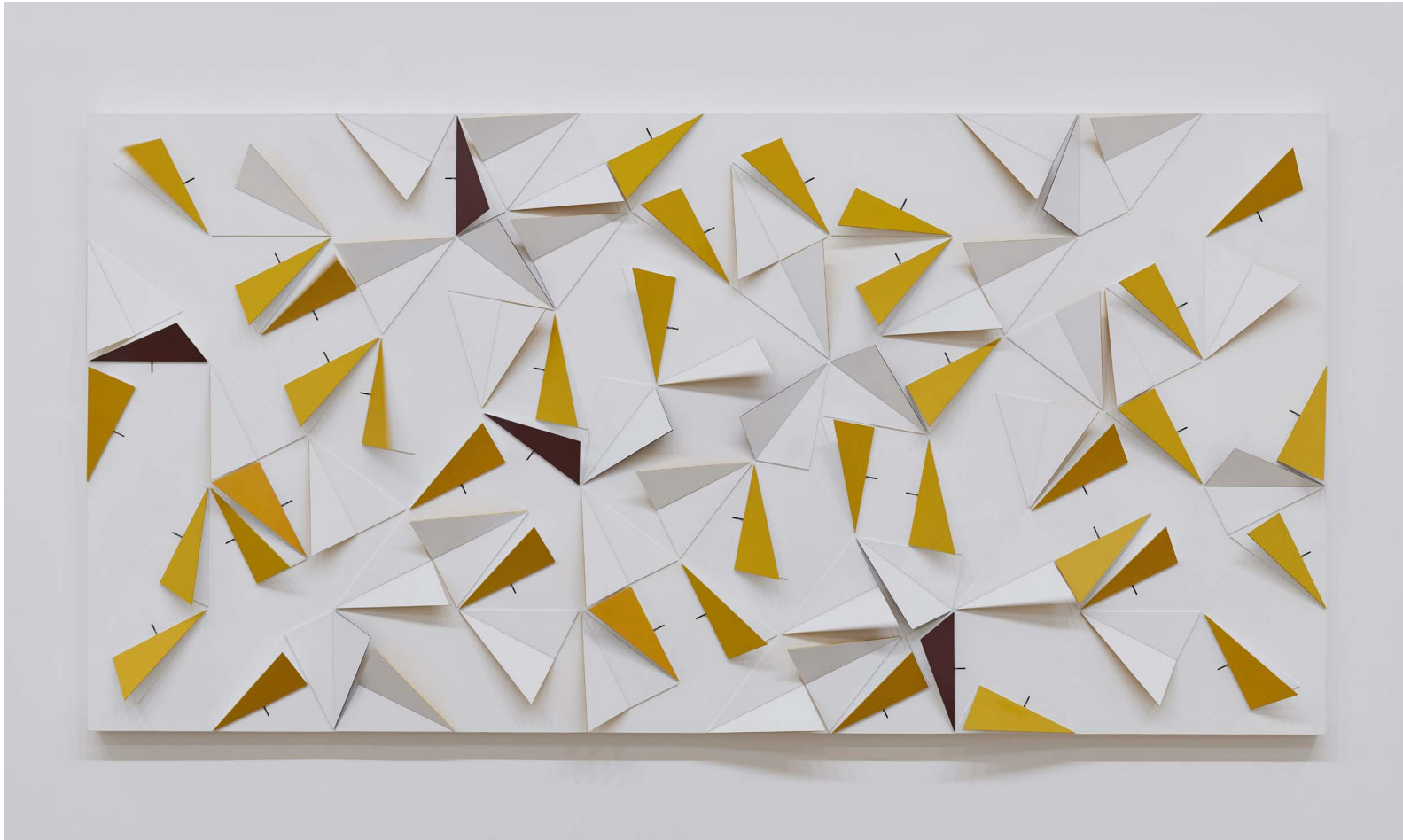
origamiPinwheel, 70 triangles x 12 kites   2018

These kinetic reliefs are based on different tessellation filling a surface with triangular shapes. The recurrent pattern is created by the multiplication of a triangle forming a similar bigger one. The work is thus part of an endless, larger whole. The geometry is complemented by colours underlying the constituent parts and highlights the movement of the tiles. Through irregular motion within a regular composition the work alternates between order and disorder, predictability and unpredictability.

aluminium, steel
MDF
paint
servomotors
custom tailered electronics
generative software

1 25 * 2 50 cm
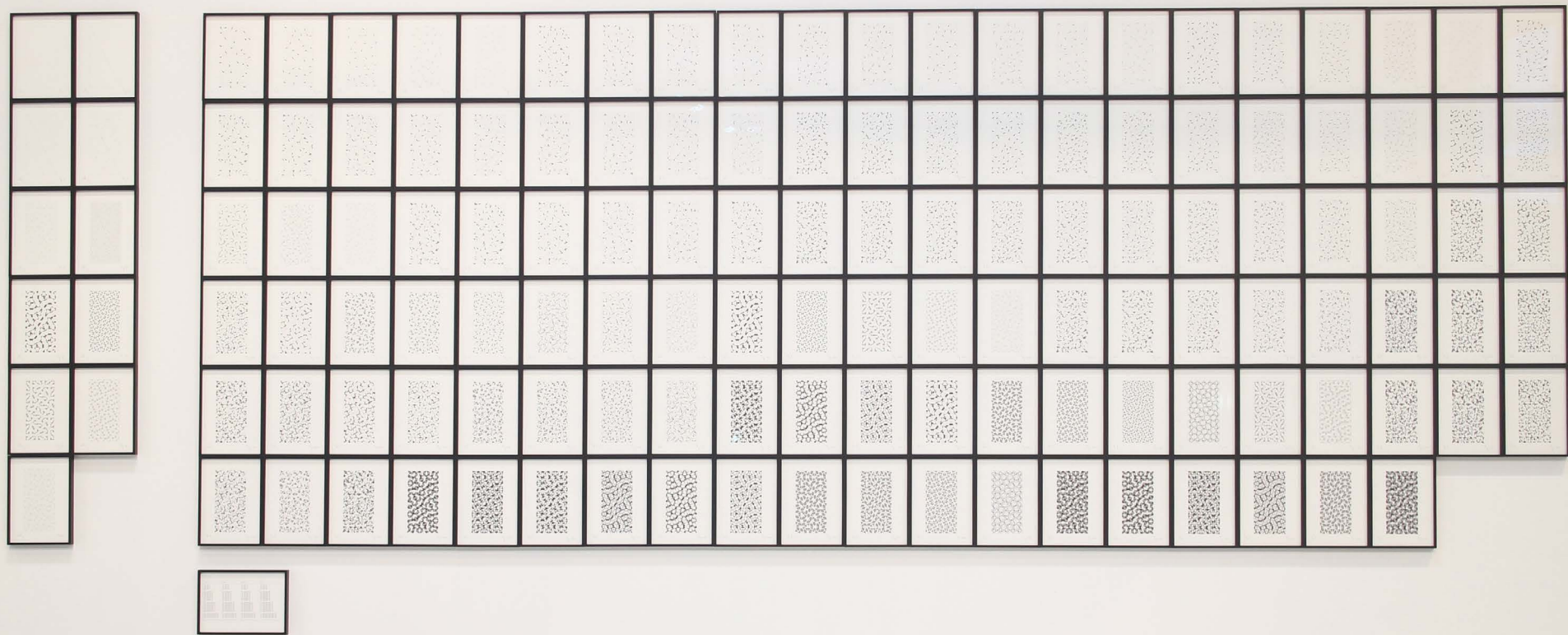
origamiLexicon 2017

Composed of a series of prints visualising the steps of the instructions which are at the base of the kinetic behaviour of the origamis, the Lexicon constitutes the conceptual framework of the origamis. Its procedural nature questions our ability to translate creative thought into written rules and, as such, investigates the relationship between art and language.

A4 120gr Steinbach paper
graphite
black anti-reflex frames
library

variable

origamiPermutations

2016 - ...

The origamiPermutations are a series of unique reliefs exploring the tessellation of a surface in divisions and subdivisions. The resulting shapes are the vocabulary, whereas their permutation is the syntax of the work, constituting its formal language. Following this principle, an unlimited number of variations is obtained, and each relief is merely an extract of the infinite surface.

MDF
ABS
paint

variable dimensions

deepBlue   2016

This work progresses over 43 pages from white to black, passing through 256 shades of blue. Each of them is visualized by its binary encoding in the form of an 8x8 grid. The columns and rows of the grid are then read as numbers and letters. Employing the combinatory logic of the binary system, which is also the basis of the chess game, the work creates a nonmetaphorical relationship between colour and text and gives it historical perspective with the title reference to Deep Blue, the IBM computer that won against the world chess champion Garry Kasparov in 1997.

computer generated prints   variable
generative software

808 2016

808 generates patterns of lines, rhythm and motion. The visual field of its custom tailored 'split flaps', the early devices used to display information in train stations and airports, is subdivided into 8 sections underlining the 8-bit logic of early computer music and computation.

refurbished split-flaps
vinyl
custom tailored electronics
generative software

1 73 * 35 * 22 cm
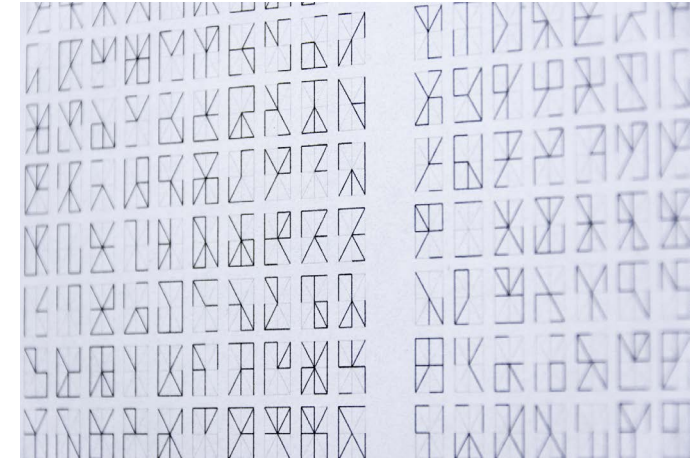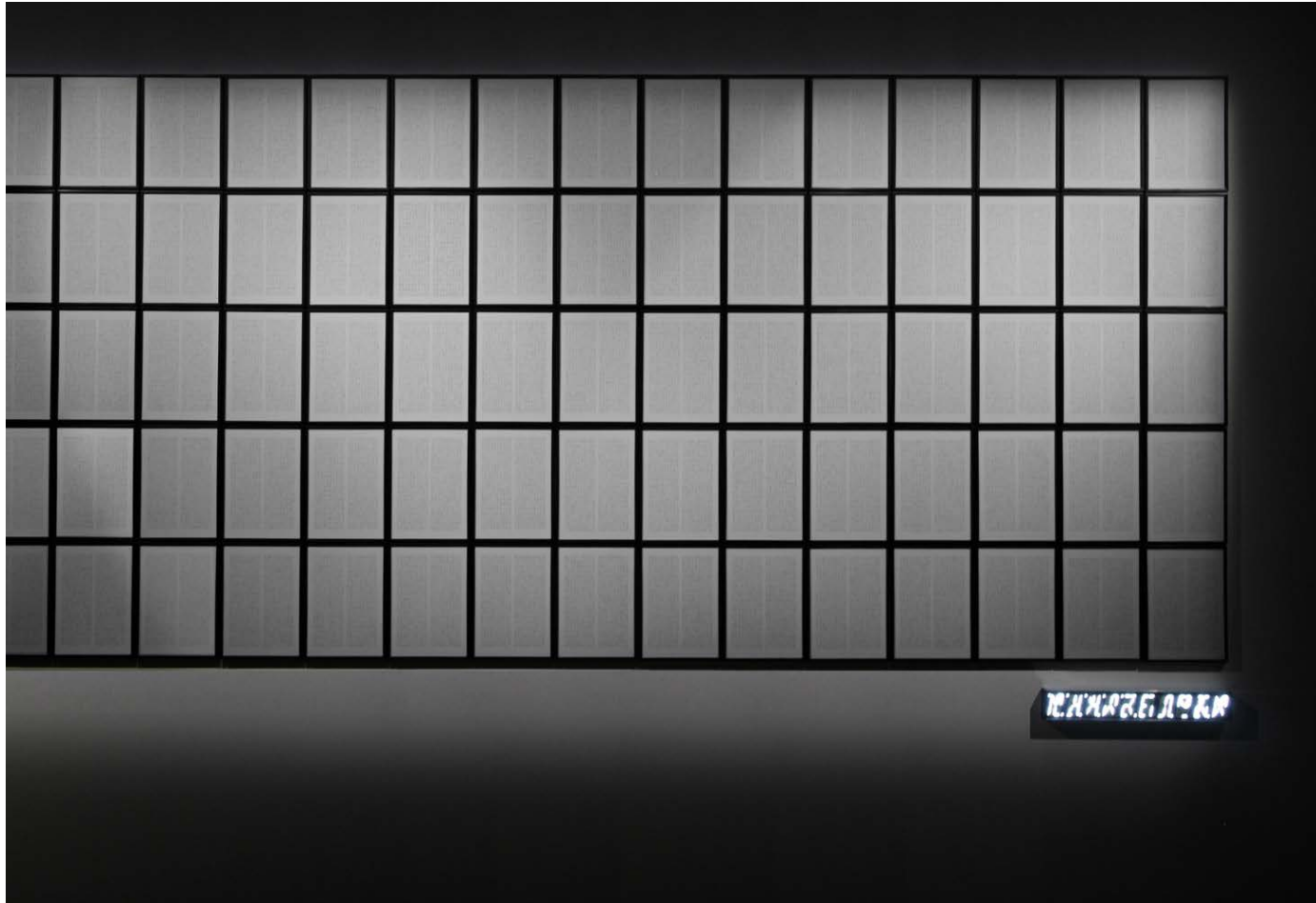
1 of a Billion Days

2015

When thinking about time, one can imagine any referential system to capture its essence. Here, a 16-segment display can display not only alphanumeric symbols but an astounding number of unique combinations: 2e180. These combinations also contain all possible signs and words in all kind of languages. If one combination were displayed every hour, it would take more time than the Earth has existed to show them all. The wall corresponds to combinations generated during one day. From a simple construct come infinite variations which the work relates to the perception of time and the production of meaning, information.

216 computer generated prints
216 black A4 frames
light object
generative software

variable
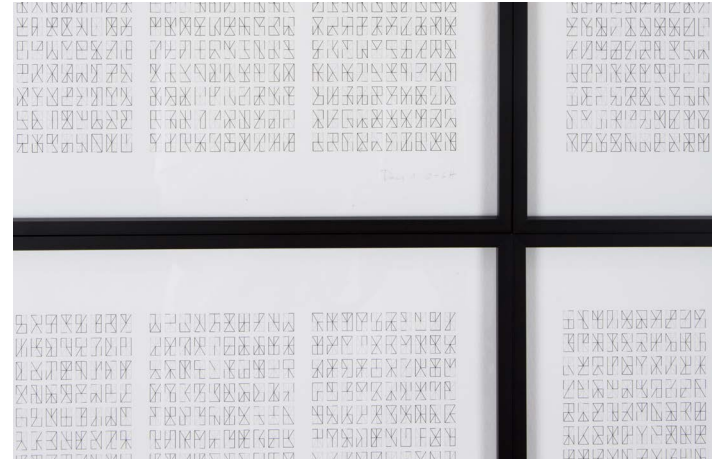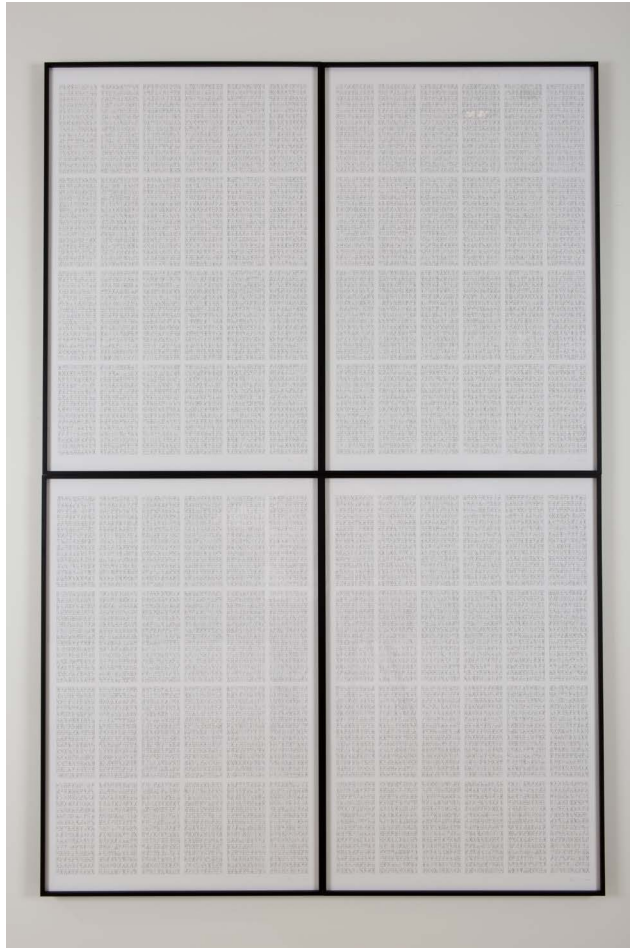
1 of a Billion Weeks   2016

Each four frames on the wall and each book on the table represents the combinations generated during one day, while all twenty-eight frames on the wall and seven books gather all combinations generated during an entire week.

28 black A1 frames   variable
7 hard cover A4 books
light object
generative software

1 of a Billion Years   2019

Each frame on the wall represents the combinations generated during one day, while all 365 frames on the wall or 365 pages   365 black A1 frames   variable
of a book gather all unique combinations generated during one year.   100 hard cover A4 books
                                                                                                                                 light object
   generative software
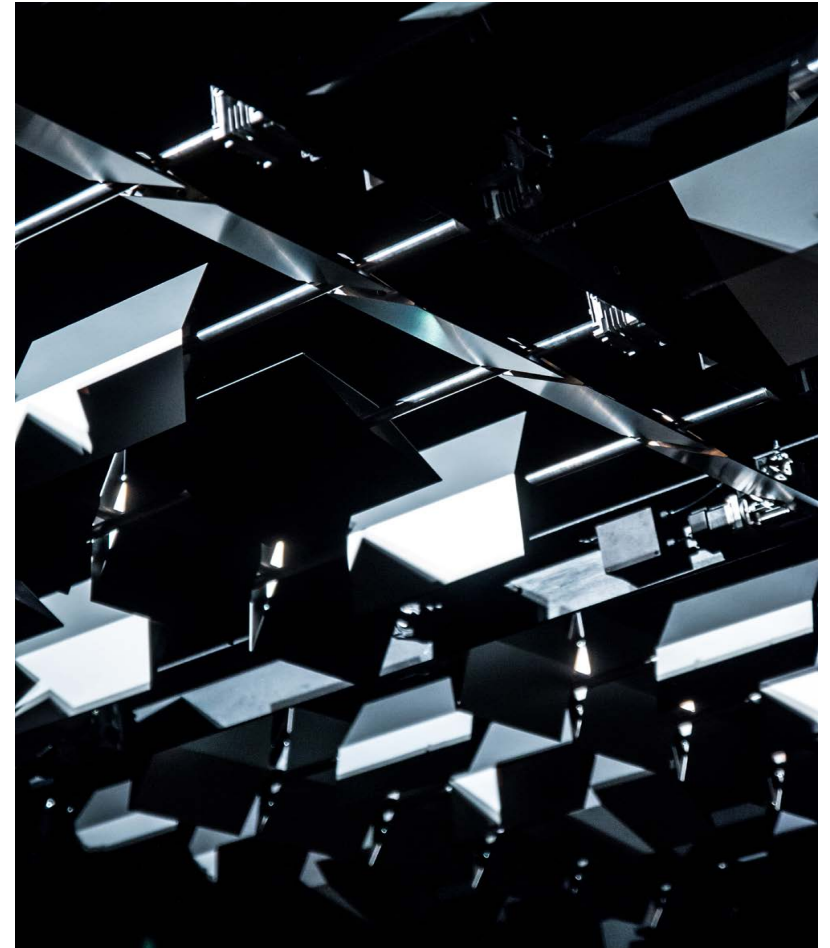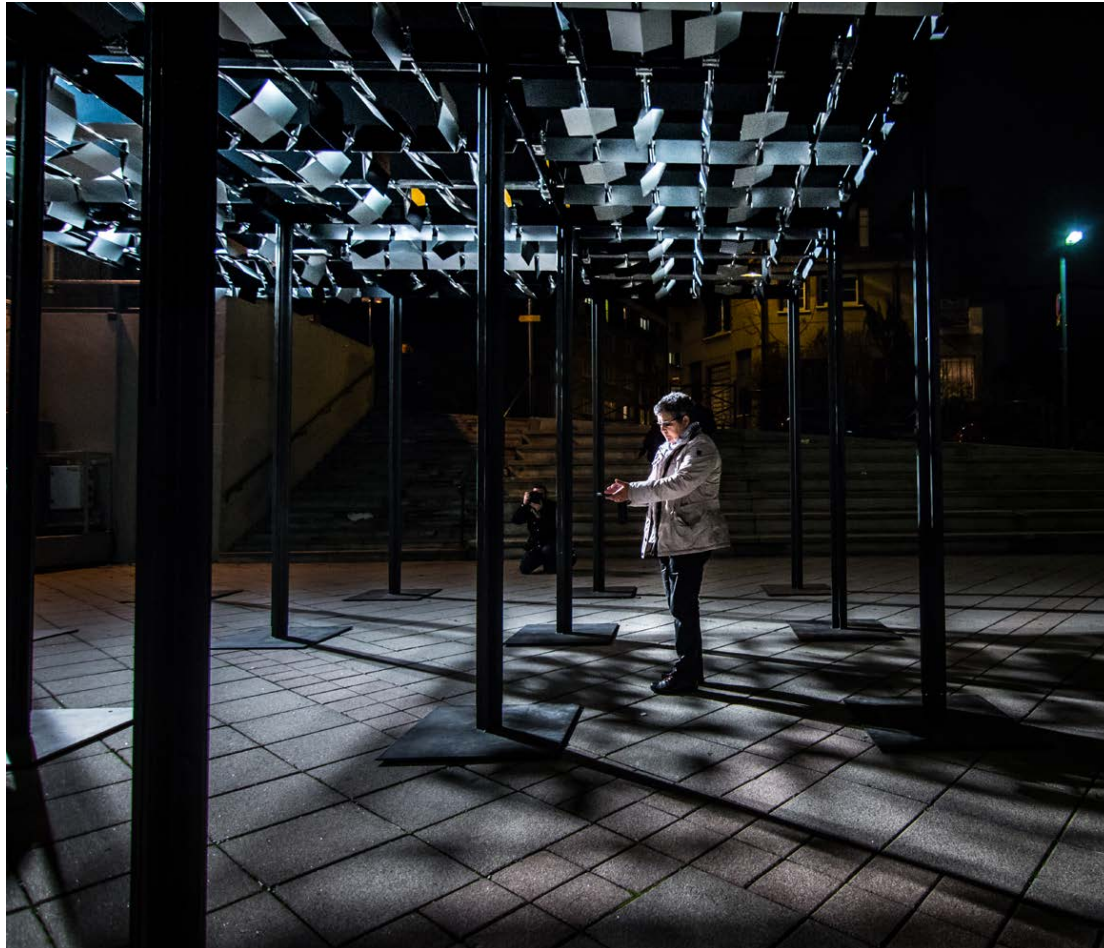
pergola 2015

Kinetic light artwork constituted of an elevated steal frame supporting rotating squared tiles. The artwork invites the spectators to enter in a space under this artificial sky to contemplate patterns of light and motion.

steel, aluminium
paint
moteurs
custom tailored electronics
reactive software

9 modules 2 10 * 2 10 cm

10e-15   2014

This public artwork was created for the French research centre Femto in Besancon. Femto is a prefix in the metric system deno-
ting a factor of 10e−15. Its applications range from optics to the manipulation of light photons. The installation transcribes this
exponential measure into 15 Fresnel lenses, each with its own focal point. They form a continuous frieze of progressive magni-
fication playing on the viewer's perception. An 'abstract' scale is transformed into a 'concrete' visual game by breaking light
into its colourful spectrum producing moiré effects and chromatic aberration besides bending light to magnify its surroundings.

aluminium frame   15 00 * 65 * 19 cm
15 custom tailored fresnel lenses
light object

mosaique 15x26   2012

Kinetic light artwork assigning the visible spectrum of light to the position (space) and motion (time) and consequently unifying colour and motion through the phenomenon of light.

wood
390 linear motors
RGB spots
custom tailored electronics
1 computer
generative software

6 20 * 3 40 cm
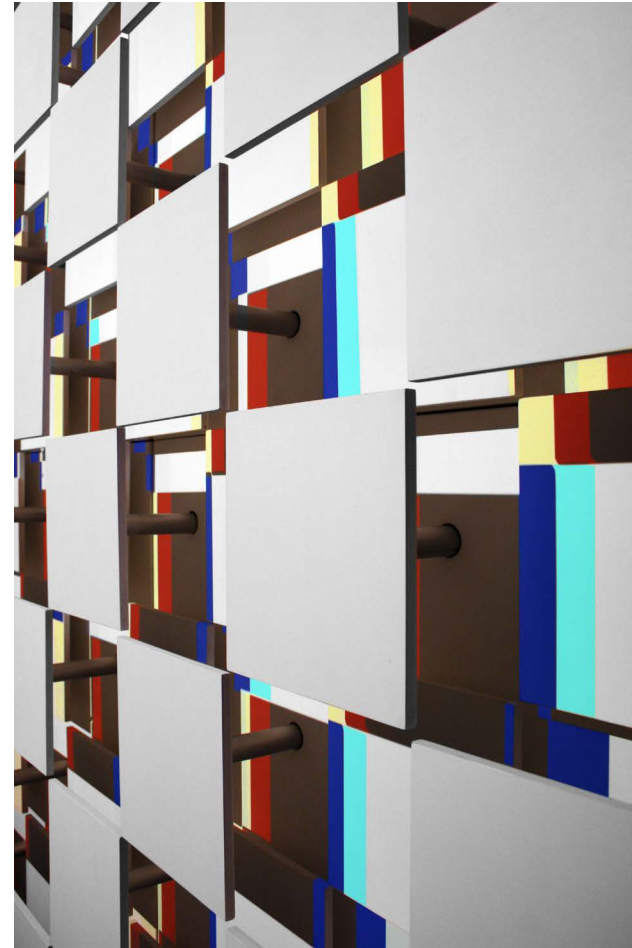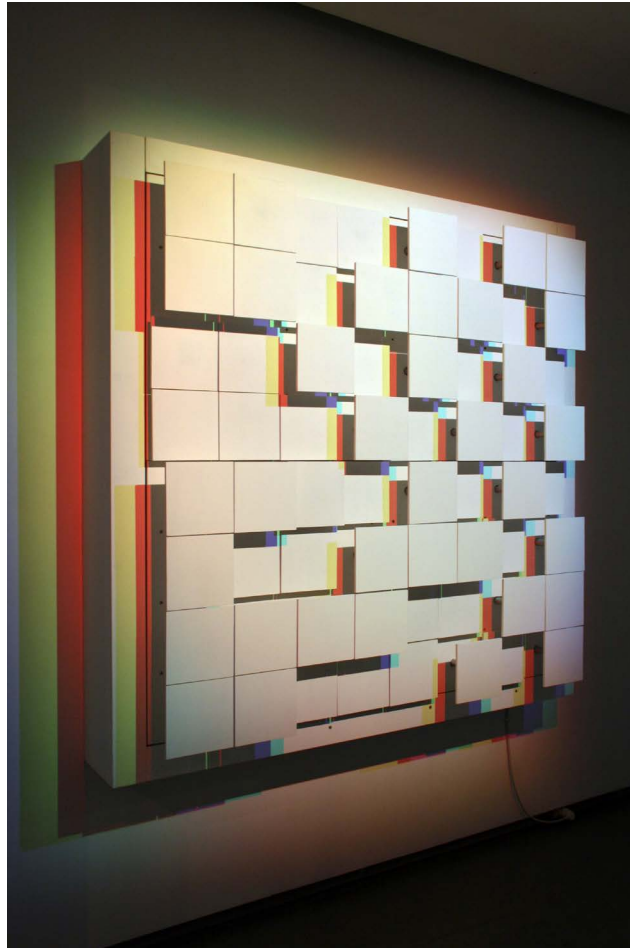
mosaique 8x8 rgb   2013

Questions the relation of light to position and motion by actuating a regular grid of 8*8 squares and refracting RGB spotlight in its constituting colours.

MDF
paint
64 linear motors
RGB spots
custom tailored electronics
generative software

2 00 * 2 00 cm

mosaique 5x15 bw   2018

The mosaic is based on a regular grid of 75 tiles. Each tile can be activated individually and is retro-illuminated. This produces white luminous surfaces against the black background, creating the illusion of shadow. The inversion between light and shadow and the varying intensity of the gradients further creates an optical effect: extracting a black tile causes the inverse movement of a retracted white tile and vice versa. The motion of the tiles follows combinatory logic, balancing between ordered and random patterns, configurations.

wood
75 linear motors
LED
custom tailored electronics
generative software

2 40 * 90 cm

signalToNoise / signalToNoisePermutations   2012

The term 'signal to noise' is a measure used in science and engineering that compares the level of signal to background noise.
The work of the same title puts the viewer at the centre of an autopoietic machine, a circular installation formed by 512 mechanical split-flaps. They are spinning at a variable speed equal rhythm determined by the calculation process analysing in the maze of random letter combinations the appearance of a word.

aluminium   h: 1 80 cm
512 split-flaps   ø: 3 40 cm
custom tailored electronics
1 computer
generative software

Binary Waves   2008

Kinetic light artwork measuring the electromagnetic and traffic flows and transposing them into luminous, kinetic and sonic behaviour, transmit by 40 panels of 3 meter high and 60 cm wide turning around their vertical axis rendering visible the invisible flows of the city.

aluminium, mirror, pmma
LED
piezo
custom tailored electronics
1 spectrum analyser
1 computer
reactive software

panel:
3 00 * 60 * 12 cm

installation:
variable

framework 5x5x5

Kinetic light artwork extending the bi-dimensional screen space by transposition of its pixel resolution to the physical space allowing to transcribe captured data from the physical environment in a kinetic and luminous play.

aluminium, LED, lexan
custom tailored electronics
250 servomotors
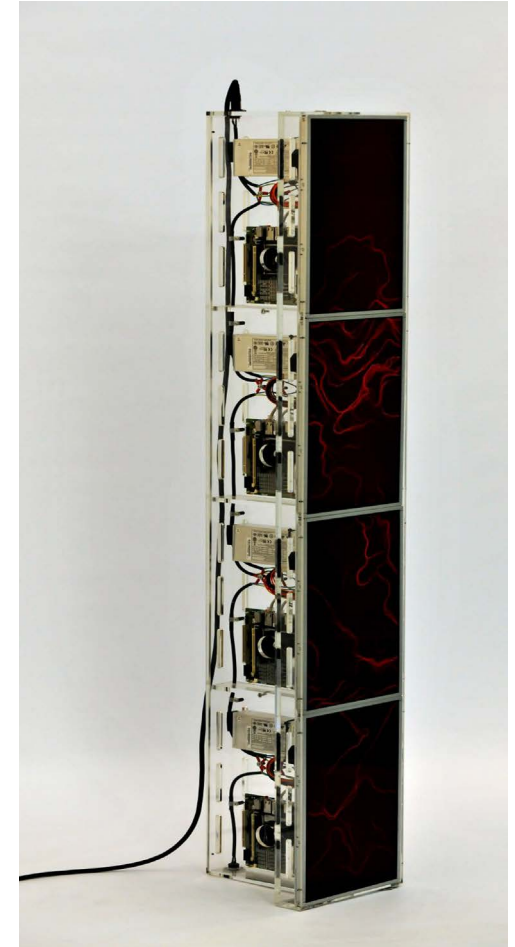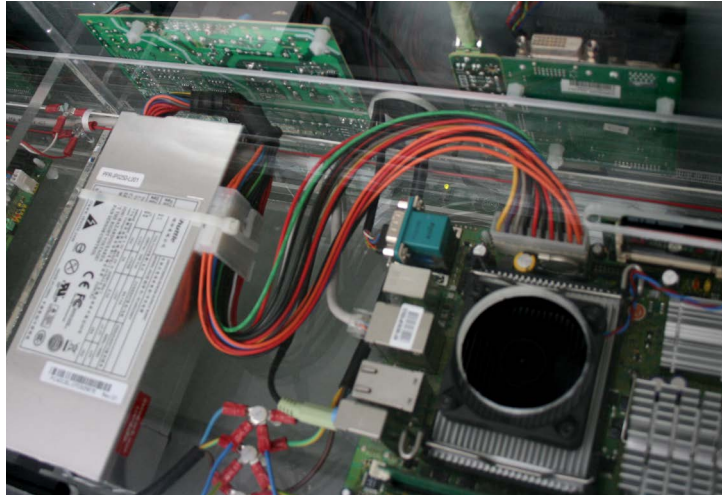50 sensors
5 computers
reactive software

10 00 * 2 15 * 85 cm
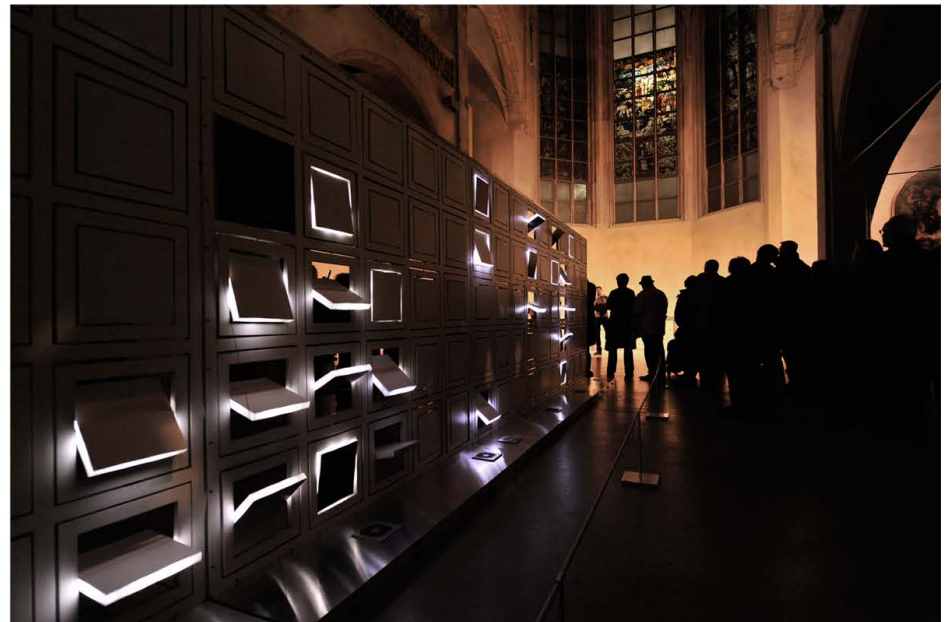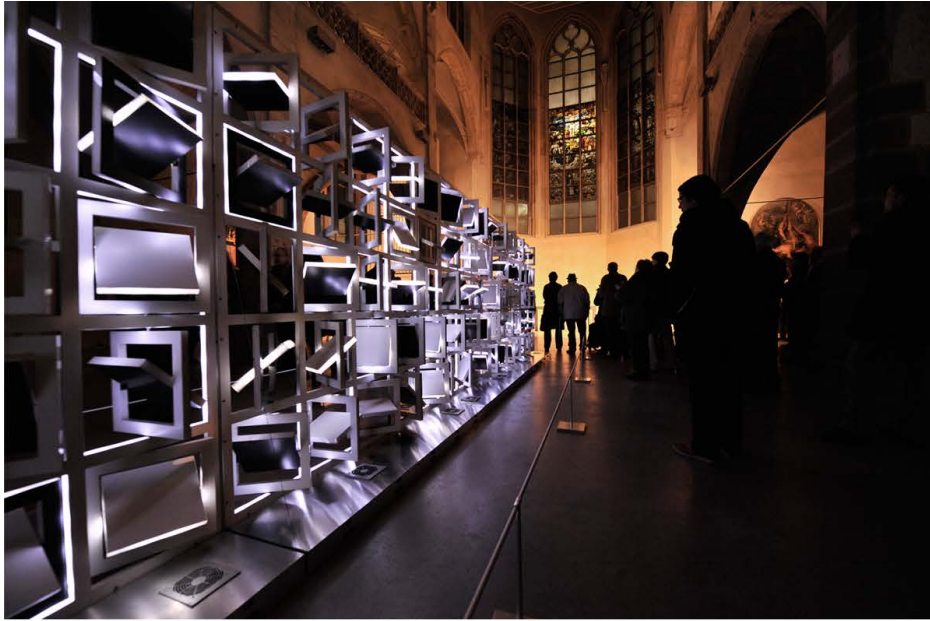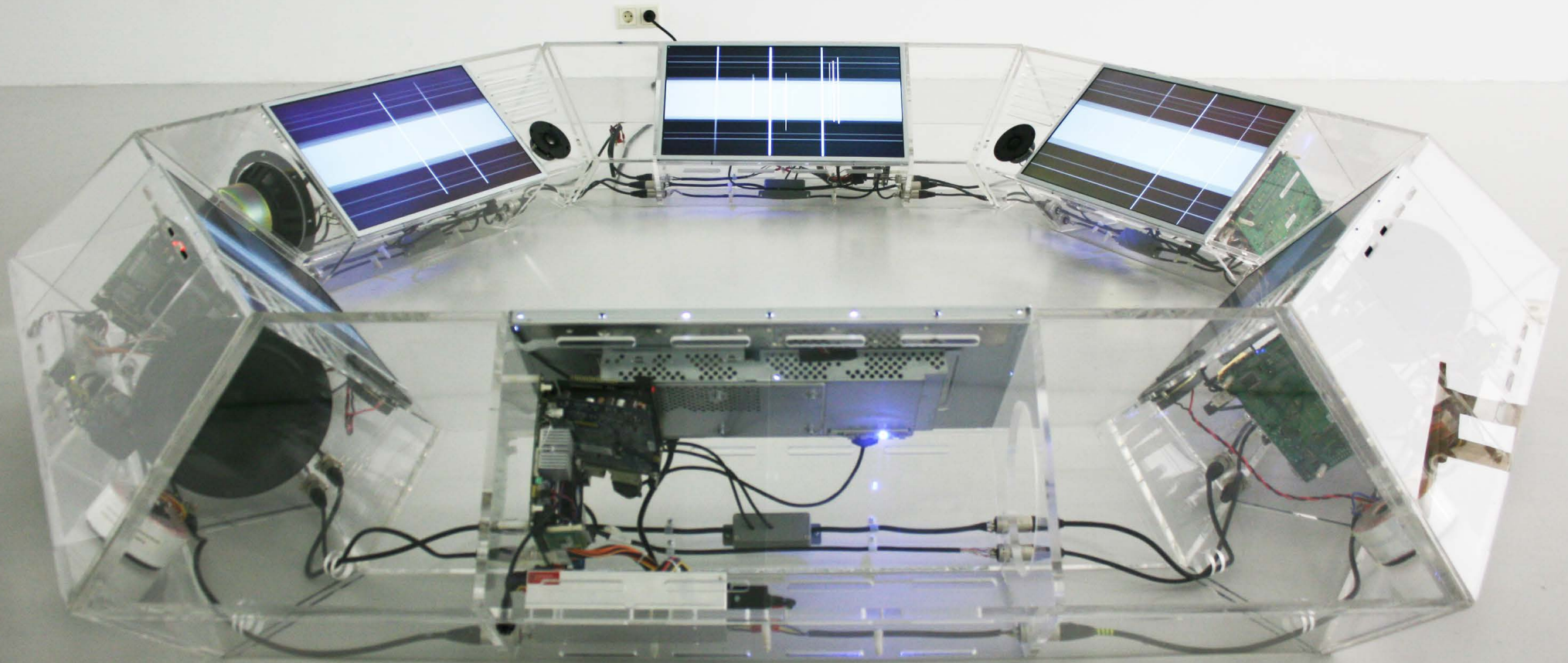
particleSynthesis 2010

Sound installation using custom 3D real-time engine relating particle rendering and granular synthesis in a 360° audiovisual construct.

Plexiglas
6 networked computers
6 screens
4 speakers
custom tailored electronics
generative software
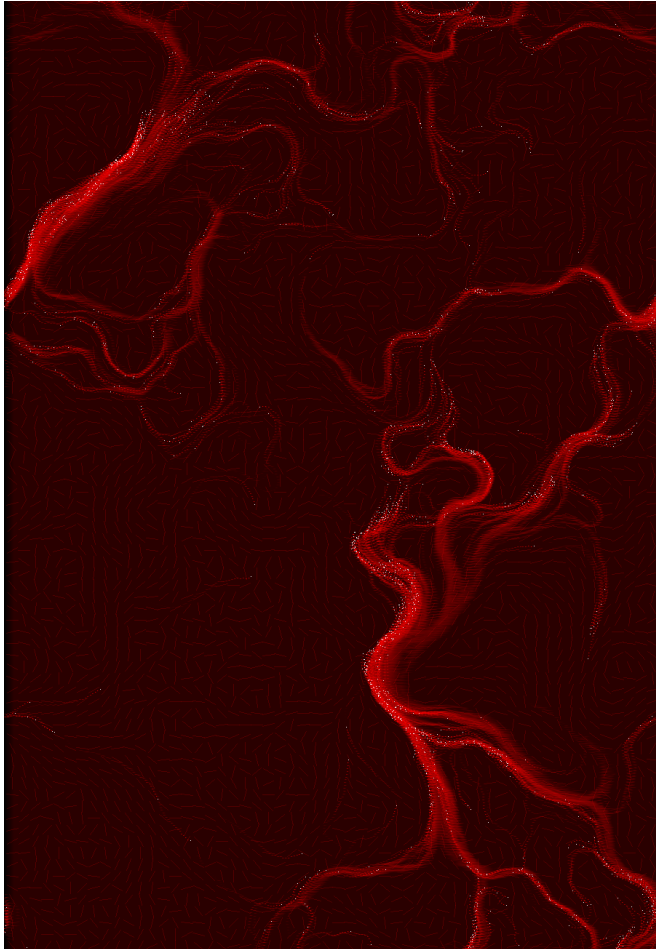
ø: 3 00 cm
h: 45 cm
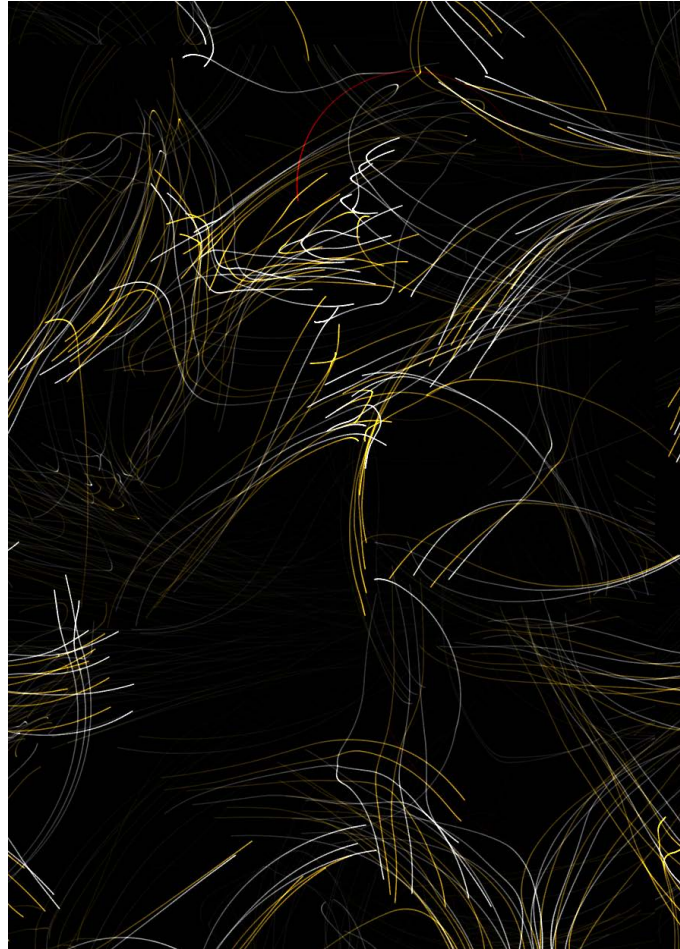
Consoles

Real-time visual artwork

Plexiglas
4 networked computers
4 TFT screens
4 compact flash cards
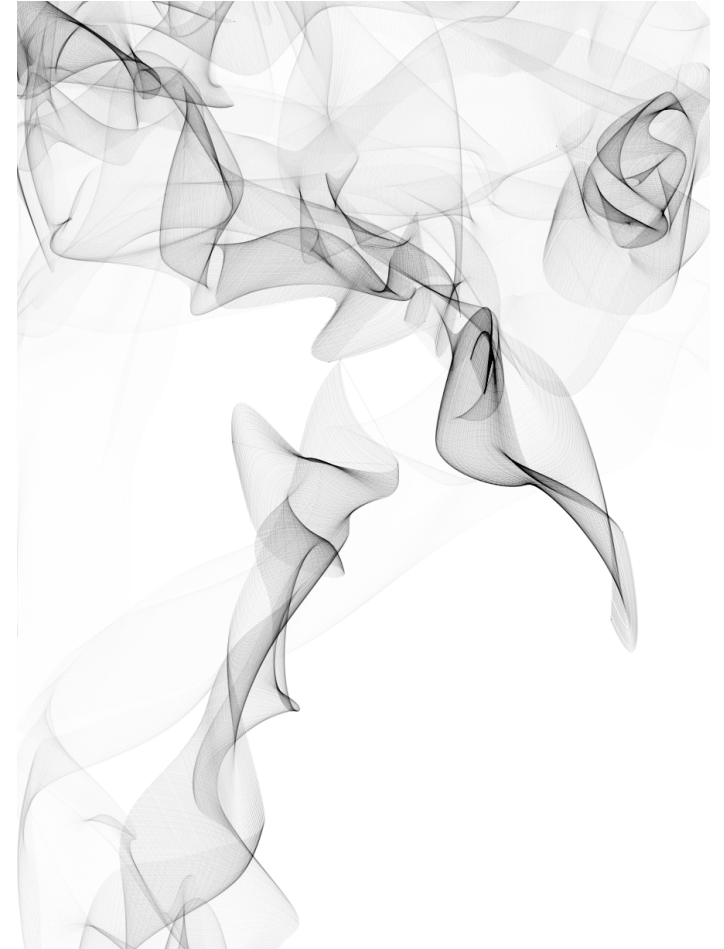cutom tailored electronics
generative software

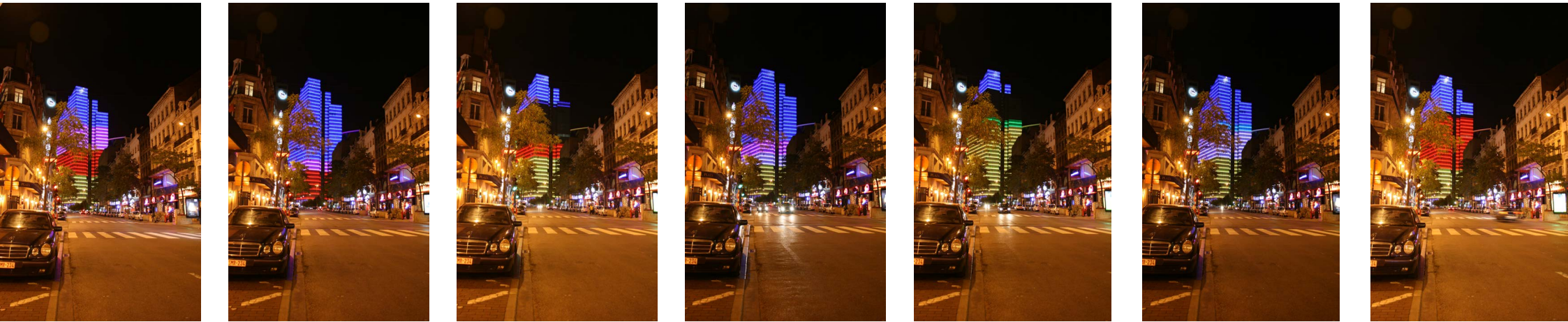1 72 * 32 * 29*cm

pixFlow #2   2007

swarmDots   2009

particleSprings   2011

chrono

2007

Light artwork expressing its very medium; light and its corresponding colour-model; RGB by assigning the basic units of time – hours, minutes and seconds - to the primary colours of light - red, green and blue.

302 400 LEDs
1 computer
autreactive software

4400 m2

chronoPrints

2009

The units of time measurement - hours, minutes and seconds - are associated with the primary colours of light - red, green and blue. This association results in a process where the surface is gradually filled with coloured surfaces. Each of the 24 prints reflects the pattern of an hour of the day, from the first second in the upper right-hand corner to the last in the lower right-hand corner, and shows the relationship between colour and time.

1 10 * 1 10 cm
60 * 60 cm
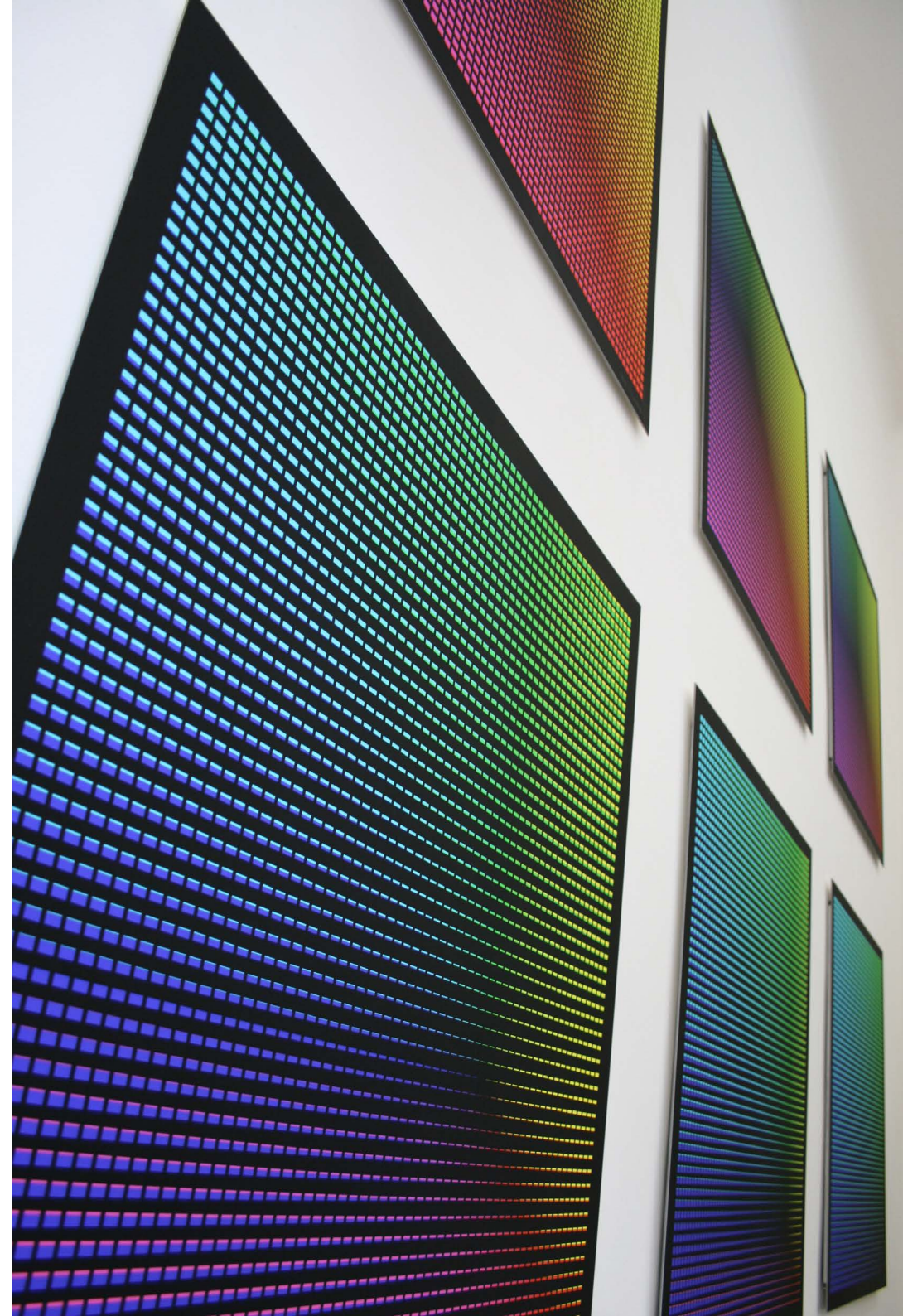
fLux   2022

Reactive light artwork transcribing passer-by's motion into luminous and sonic behaviour, transmit by 96 vertical profiles, consti-   stainless steel structure with lexan diffusers   h: 4 00 cm
tuting a dialogue between light, lux, and the passage of people, flux.   LEDs   l: 70 00 cm
                                                                                                                              custom tailored electronics
                                                                                                                              reactive software