

# VAC — VISUAL ACOUSTICS



Curator: Zsolt Gyenes, 2018



# VAC

Artwork by T. Bortnyik/Tubák

## Project Facilitator

Zsolt Gyenes

## Artists

Matthew Attard

László Zsolt Bordos

T. Bortnyik/Tubák

Vince Briffa

Matthew Galea

Antal Lux

Jerzy Olek

Gabor Palotai

Pierre Portelli

Zsanett Szirmay

## Venue

MALTA SCHOOL OF ART

106, TRIQ L-IFRAN

VALLETTA

## Dates

Monday 9th April - Friday 4th May 2018

SOA



VIVA

VALLETTA  
INTERNATIONAL  
VISUAL ARTS  
FESTIVAL



Visual Acoustics = Visual Music

What is Visual Music?

General definition:

Such works of art in which sounds and images are given equal importance, are developed either simultaneously and/or using of musical structures that is alluded to in connection with the visual expressions.

The sound/music can be transformed into pictures and a solution in the opposite direction can be imagined too, when the visual elements are converted into sound.



## VAC - Visual Acoustics

### Artists

Matthew Attard | László Zsolt Bordos | Éva T. Bortnyik | Csaba Tubák  
Vince Briffa | Matyou Galea | Antal Lux | Jerzy Olek  
Gábor Palotai | Pierre Portelli | Zsanett Szirmay

**Curated by** Dr Zsolt Gyenes

This international exhibition is not intended to represent every aspect of current work in the visual music/acoustics genre, but a very small sample of its thinking and practice. Emanating from the (classical) silent visual music tradition, the exhibition looks at how artists using current technology recreate this form; where the disposition of the computer as a tool with a natural proclivity of combining visual and aural structures, contributes to the quantity and quality of works. These works generally present experiences that have not undergone research in the classical tradition, but rather lean towards the interest artists have in the use of such unconventional media and the excitement of experimentation. They use different techniques and tools, such as eye-tracking equipment, 3D mapping projection, interactive installation, audio-video, data-generation and printing. The common thread is in the exhibition's common goal - an approach that reflects the general feeling of our contemporary society and its relationship with ever-changing technology.

[viva.org.mt](http://viva.org.mt)



## 1. László Zsolt BORDOS

He is a Hungarian 3D mapping artist who is wellknown internationally.

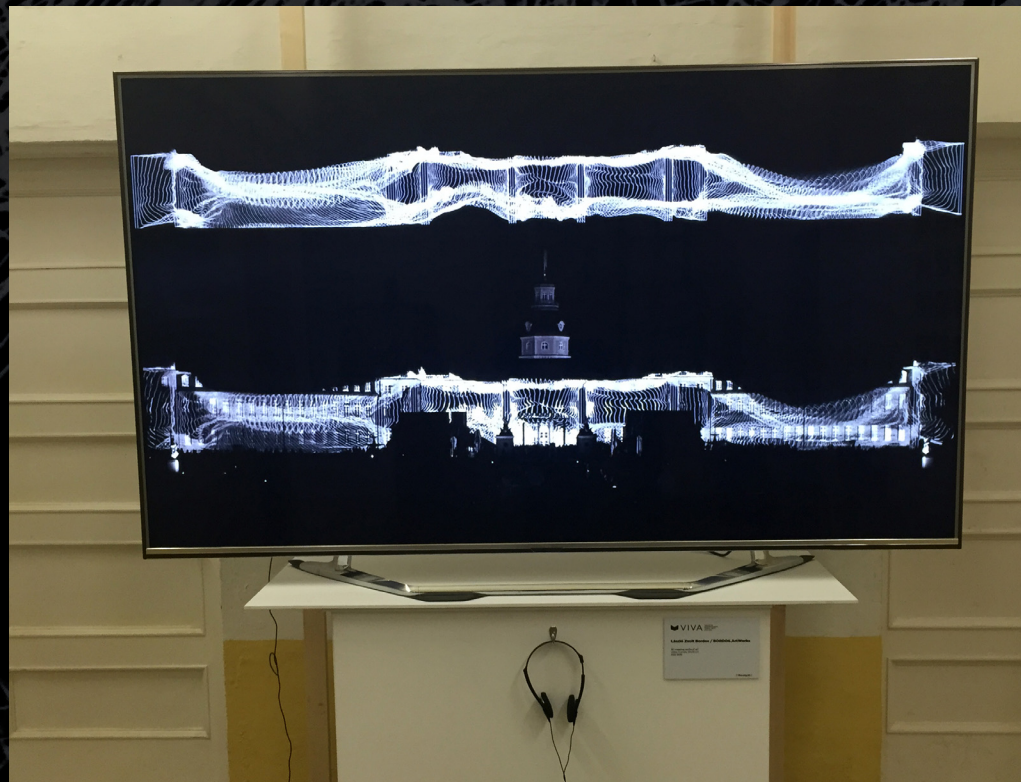
What is 3D projecting mapping?

Projection mapping is a new art form that transforms objects into an animated canvas. This technique is used by artists and advertisers alike who can add extra dimensions, optical illusions, and notions of movement onto previously static objects. The video is commonly combined with, or triggered by, audio to create an audio-visual narrative. Bodos' contemporary works of art follows the best avantgarde and neo-avantgarde traditions (eg. László Moholy-Nagy, Gyorgy Kepes, Victor Vasarely) and are using the newest high tech.



Title of Artwork: 3D mapping works of art  
Medium: Audio-Video (documentations)  
Year: 2015-2016

- A-Synchron, Adelaide Festival of Arts, Australia, 06:29 min., 2015.
- io, Fondation Vasarely, Aix en Provence, France, 14:08 min., 2016.
- KA300 / ZKM, Karlsruhe, Schlosslichtspiele, Germany, 08:08 min., 2015.





## 2. Jerzy OLEK

He is a Polish artist, theoretician and professor.

Title of the Artwork: Silent Existence

Medium: Mixed technique (CDs, paper, collage)

Year: 2016

The CDs as the carrier of sound become the surface of different visual elements. So the installation is a collection of different “musical scores”.



Photo: Jerzy Olek



### 3. Éva T. BORTNYIK – Csaba and Ádám TUBÁK

They are a Hungarian/Transylvanian origin artist couple collaborated with their son. They live in Austria.

Title of Artwork: N-Dimension

Medium: Video documentation (9 min.) and 4 prints (50x70 cm)

Year: 2012-2018





They have been working mostly with light installations since the early eighties. The screening motifs are different geometrical forms. Projecting different abstract light structures on them results in continuously renewing, changing virtual plastic shapes. Some group of their works applies one of the most spectacular features of light; – refraction for creating the artistic experience.

“In our light installation entitled N-Dimension we project computer animated light structures on two semi-gloss, black, square-shaped surfaces, positioned at a perpendicular angle to one another. The light compositions, which move according to shifting rhythms, reflect from the two surfaces back onto one another, producing multi-dimensional visual effects.”

The film documenting the making of their light installation is displayed on the screen set next to the photographs.



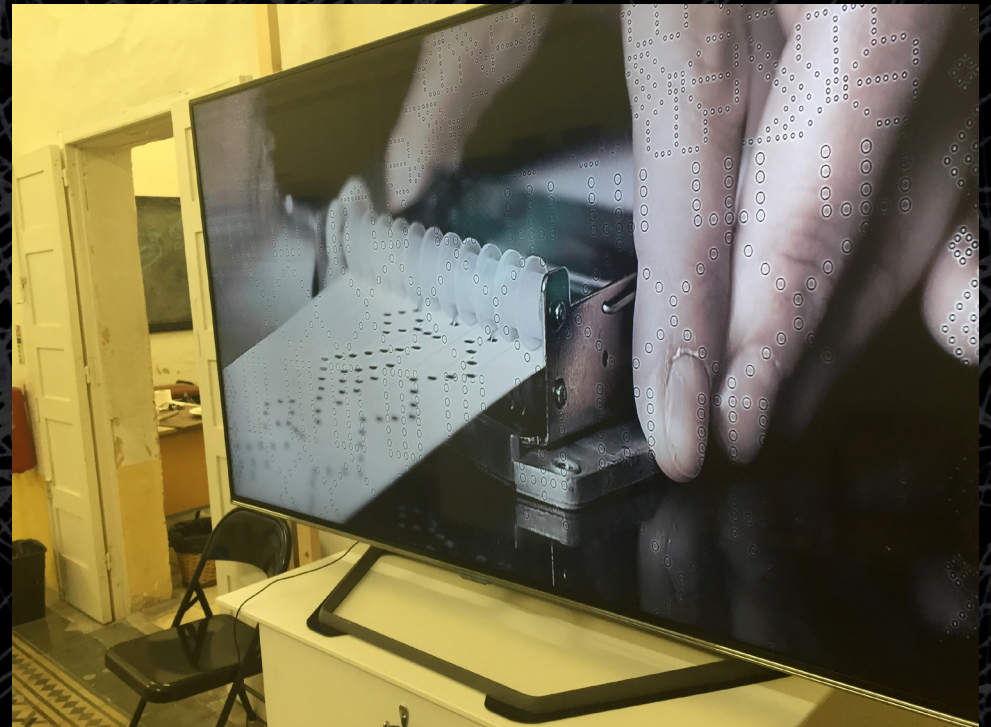
#### 4. Zsanett SZIRMAY

She is a young Hungarian textile and graphic designer from Budapest. The different edition of her Sound weaving project were exhibited, shown in many countries.

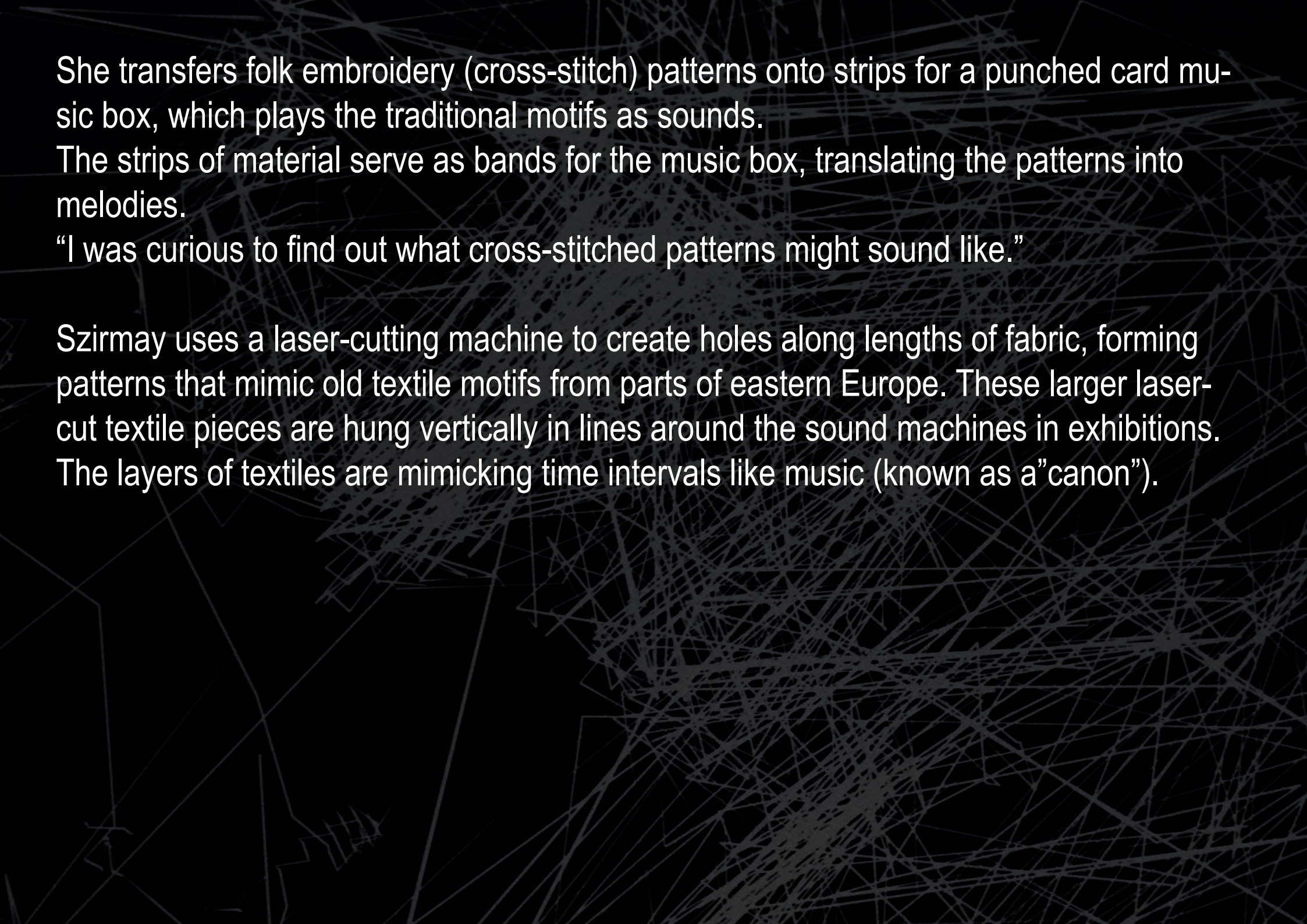
Title of Artwork: Sound weaving

Medium: Audio-video (documentations)

Year: 2014-2016







She transfers folk embroidery (cross-stitch) patterns onto strips for a punched card music box, which plays the traditional motifs as sounds.

The strips of material serve as bands for the music box, translating the patterns into melodies.

“I was curious to find out what cross-stitched patterns might sound like.”

Szirmay uses a laser-cutting machine to create holes along lengths of fabric, forming patterns that mimic old textile motifs from parts of eastern Europe. These larger laser-cut textile pieces are hung vertically in lines around the sound machines in exhibitions. The layers of textiles are mimicking time intervals like music (known as a “canon”).



## 5. Matyou GALEA

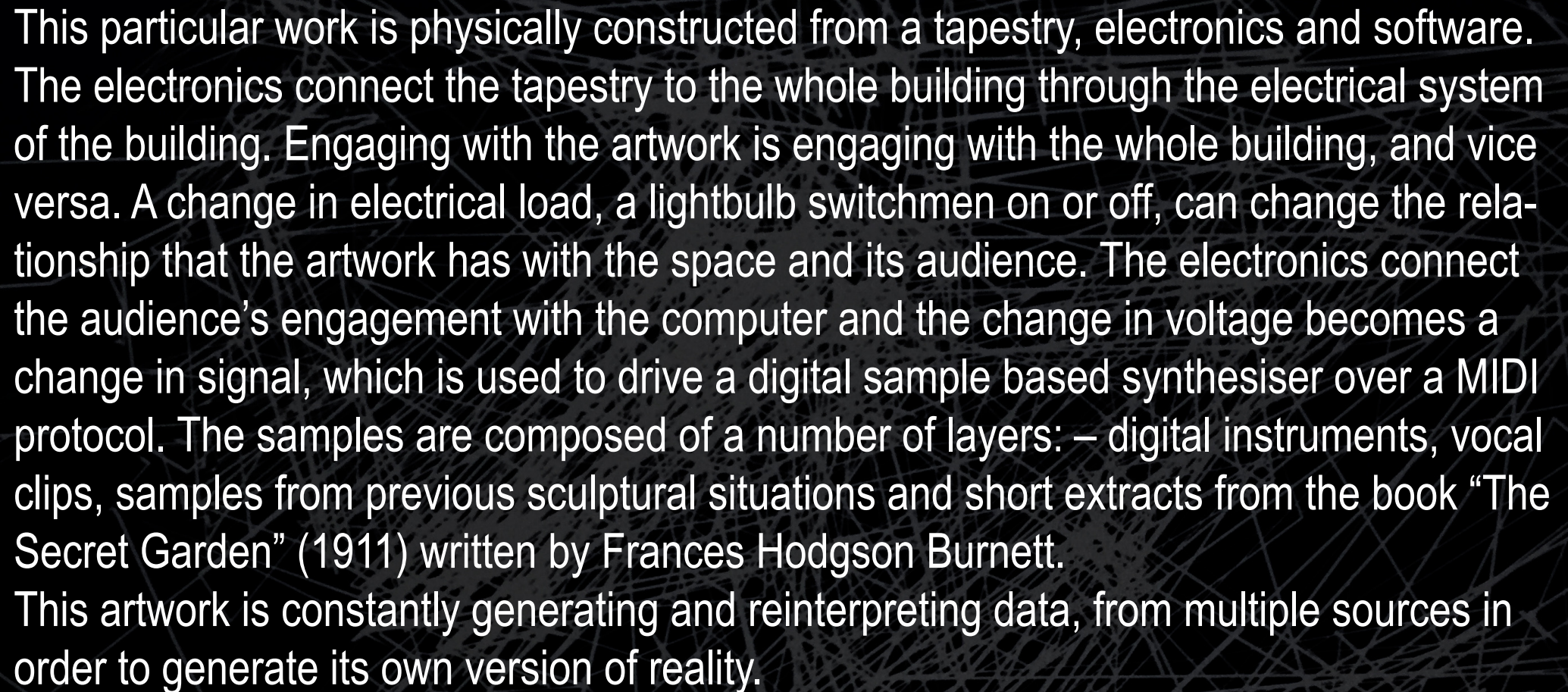
Matthew Galea, b.1986 is a hyper-media sculptor and researcher working out of the island of Malta. Currently reading for a PhD in Digital Arts at the Department of Digital Arts, Faculty of Media and Knowledge Sciences within the University of Malta, where his research and practice focus primarily on the integration between software and sculpture.

Title of Artwork: Soft Landscape

Medium: Tapestry, Electronics, MIDI







This particular work is physically constructed from a tapestry, electronics and software. The electronics connect the tapestry to the whole building through the electrical system of the building. Engaging with the artwork is engaging with the whole building, and vice versa. A change in electrical load, a lightbulb switchmen on or off, can change the relationship that the artwork has with the space and its audience. The electronics connect the audience's engagement with the computer and the change in voltage becomes a change in signal, which is used to drive a digital sample based synthesiser over a MIDI protocol. The samples are composed of a number of layers: – digital instruments, vocal clips, samples from previous sculptural situations and short extracts from the book “The Secret Garden” (1911) written by Frances Hodgson Burnett. This artwork is constantly generating and reinterpreting data, from multiple sources in order to generate its own version of reality.



## 6. Pierre PORTELLI

Born 1961, Malta. He lives and works in Malta.  
Works mainly in conceptual art and installation.

Title of Artwork: Economies of Desire: Radical  
disorder

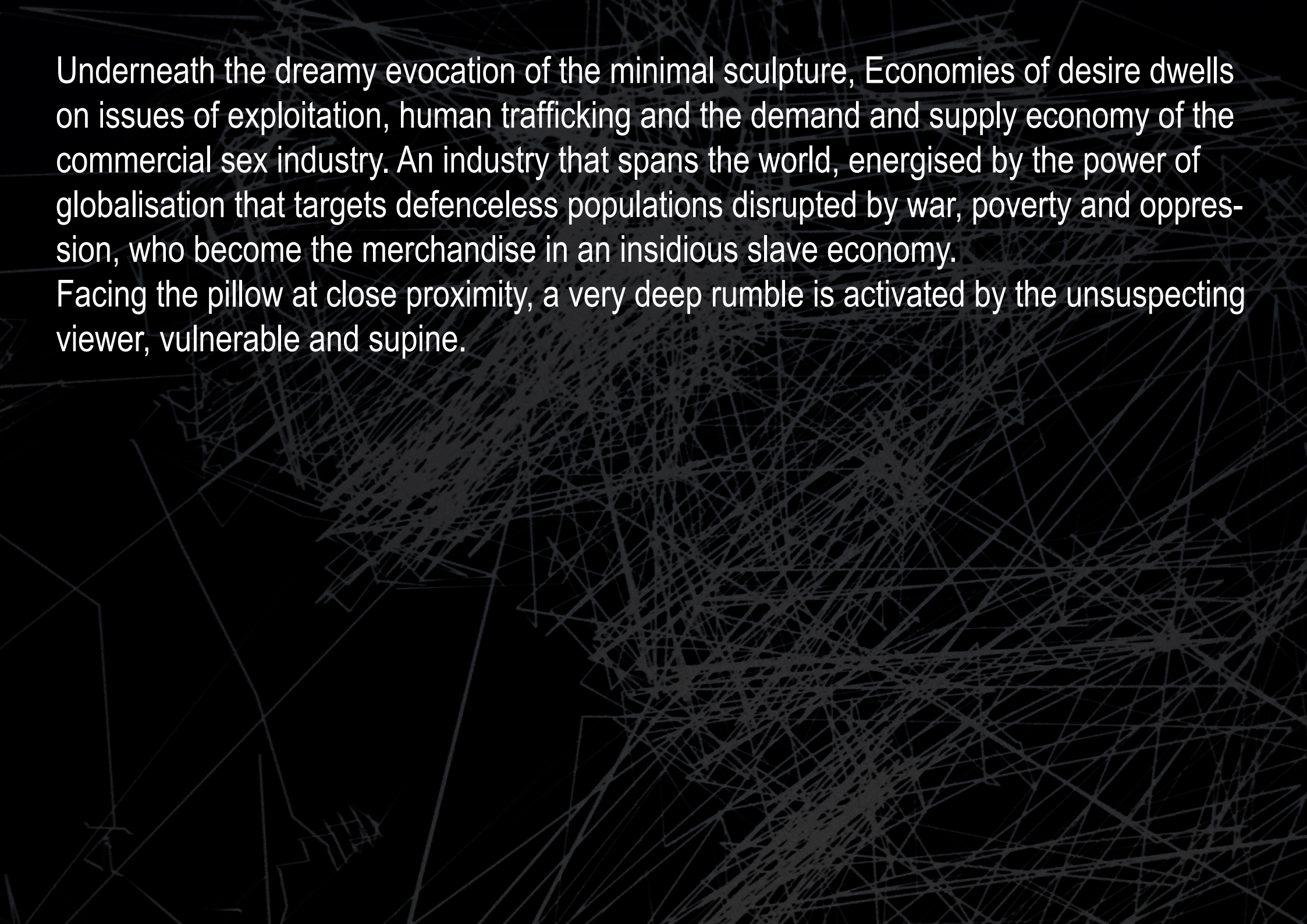
Medium: Different media, interactive installation

Year: 2018



Photo: Vince Briffa





Underneath the dreamy evocation of the minimal sculpture, Economies of desire dwells on issues of exploitation, human trafficking and the demand and supply economy of the commercial sex industry. An industry that spans the world, energised by the power of globalisation that targets defenceless populations disrupted by war, poverty and oppression, who become the merchandise in an insidious slave economy. Facing the pillow at close proximity, a very deep rumble is activated by the unsuspecting viewer, vulnerable and supine.



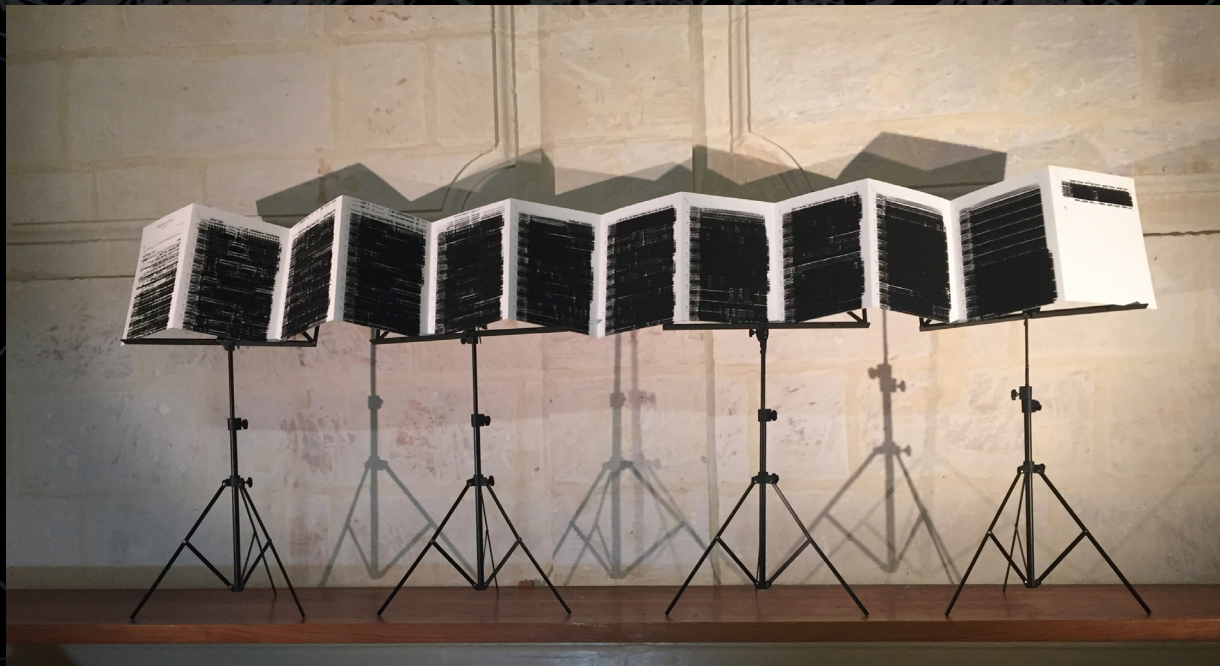
## 7. Vince BRIFFA

Maltese artist, curator, professor and writer, who produces gallery and site-specific artwork, objects and installations integrating traditional artistic practices with digital and electronic media.

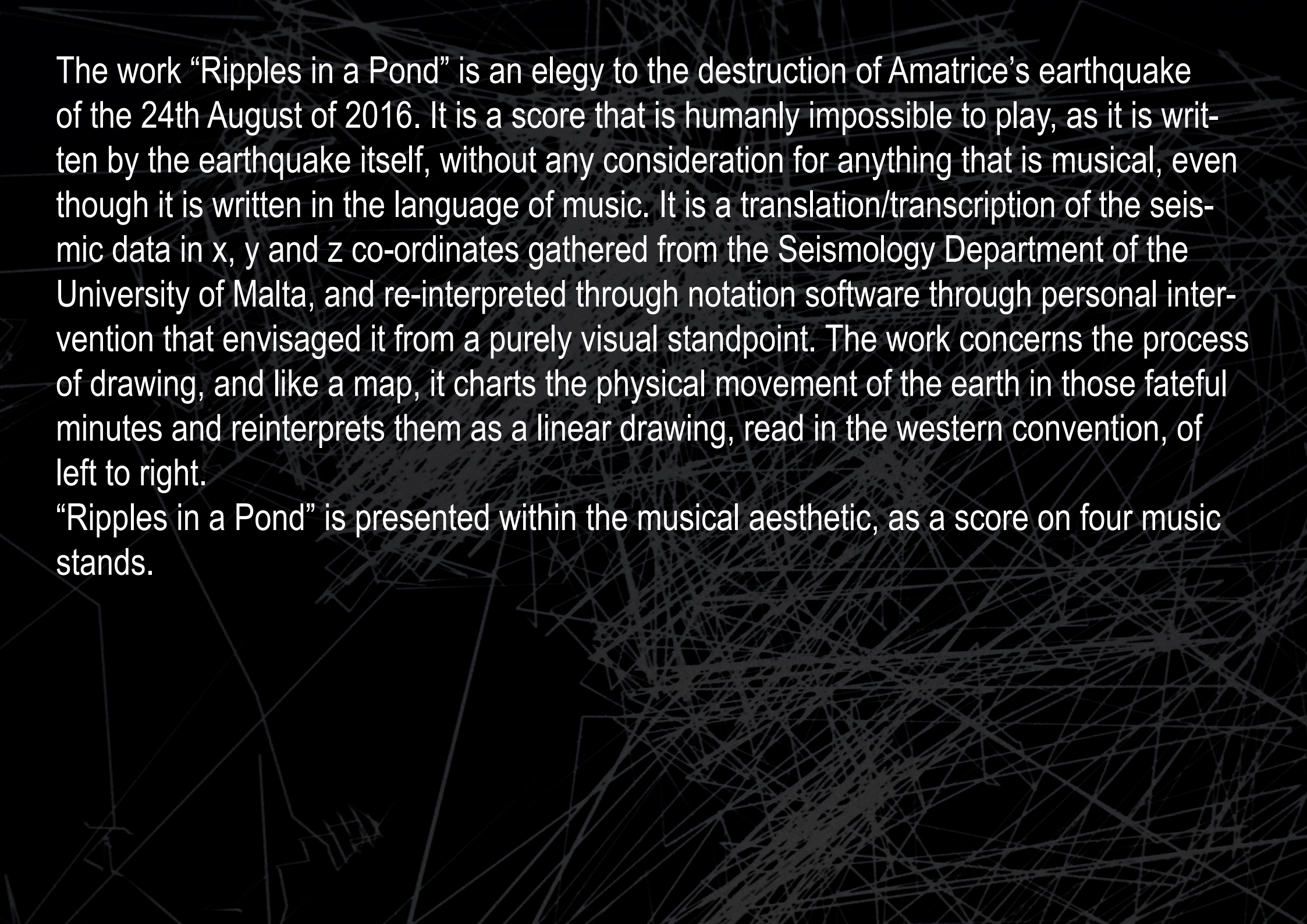
Title of Artwork: Ripples in a Pond

Medium: Paper, digital prints, metal stands

Year: 2018







The work “Ripples in a Pond” is an elegy to the destruction of Amatrice’s earthquake of the 24th August of 2016. It is a score that is humanly impossible to play, as it is written by the earthquake itself, without any consideration for anything that is musical, even though it is written in the language of music. It is a translation/transcription of the seismic data in x, y and z co-ordinates gathered from the Seismology Department of the University of Malta, and re-interpreted through notation software through personal intervention that envisaged it from a purely visual standpoint. The work concerns the process of drawing, and like a map, it charts the physical movement of the earth in those fateful minutes and reinterprets them as a linear drawing, read in the western convention, of left to right.

“Ripples in a Pond” is presented within the musical aesthetic, as a score on four music stands.



## 8. Matthew ATTARD

Matthew Attard (b. 1987) currently lives and works in Malta where he just terminated a Masters by Research at the Digital Arts Department, Faculty of Media and Knowledge Sciences, University of Malta.

Title of Artwork: A 30-second eye-drawing while listening to the Ramones

Medium: Digital print

Year: 2018

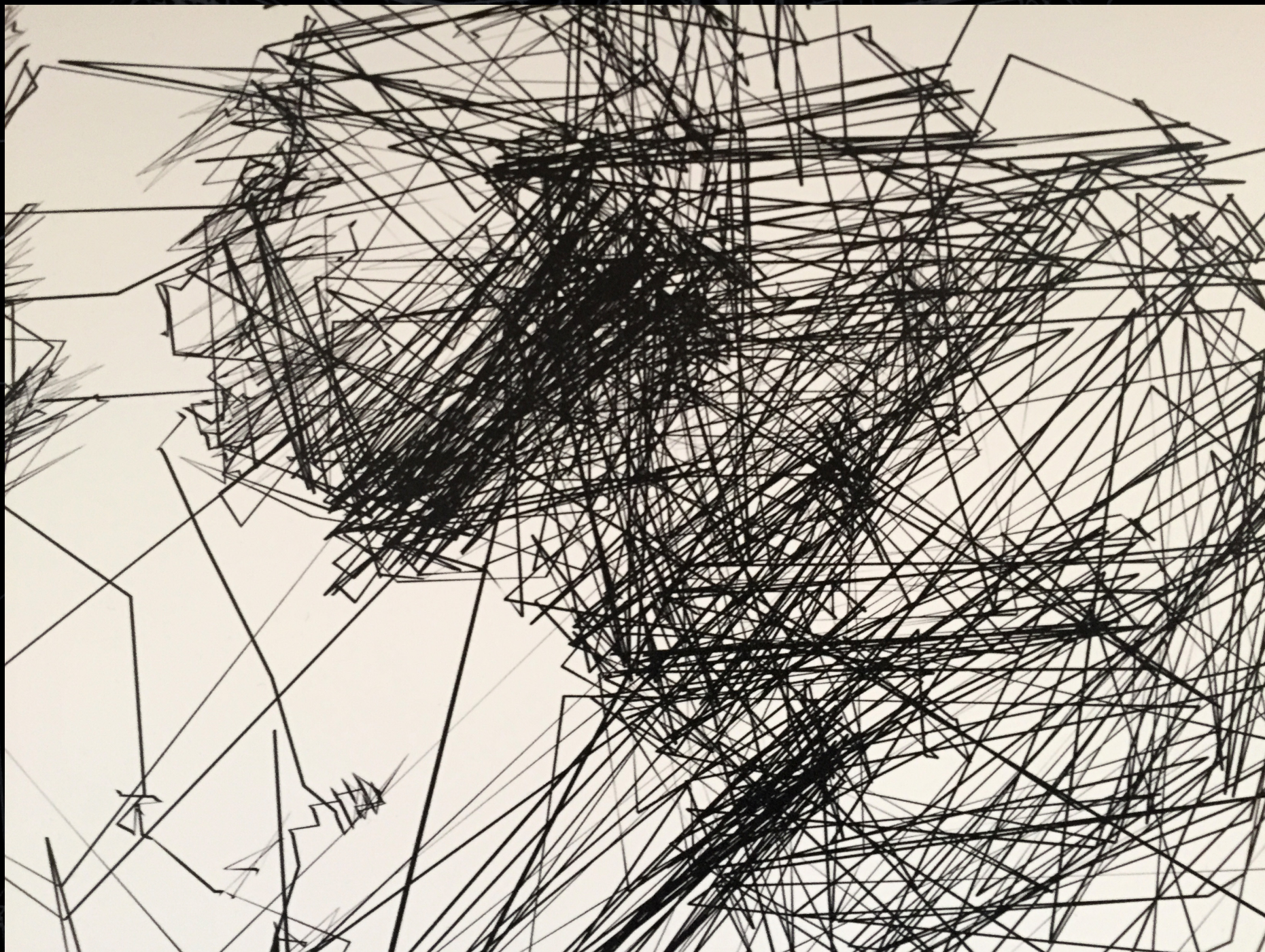
Title of Artwork: A 1-second eye-drawing while listening to the Ramones

Medium: Wire sculpture

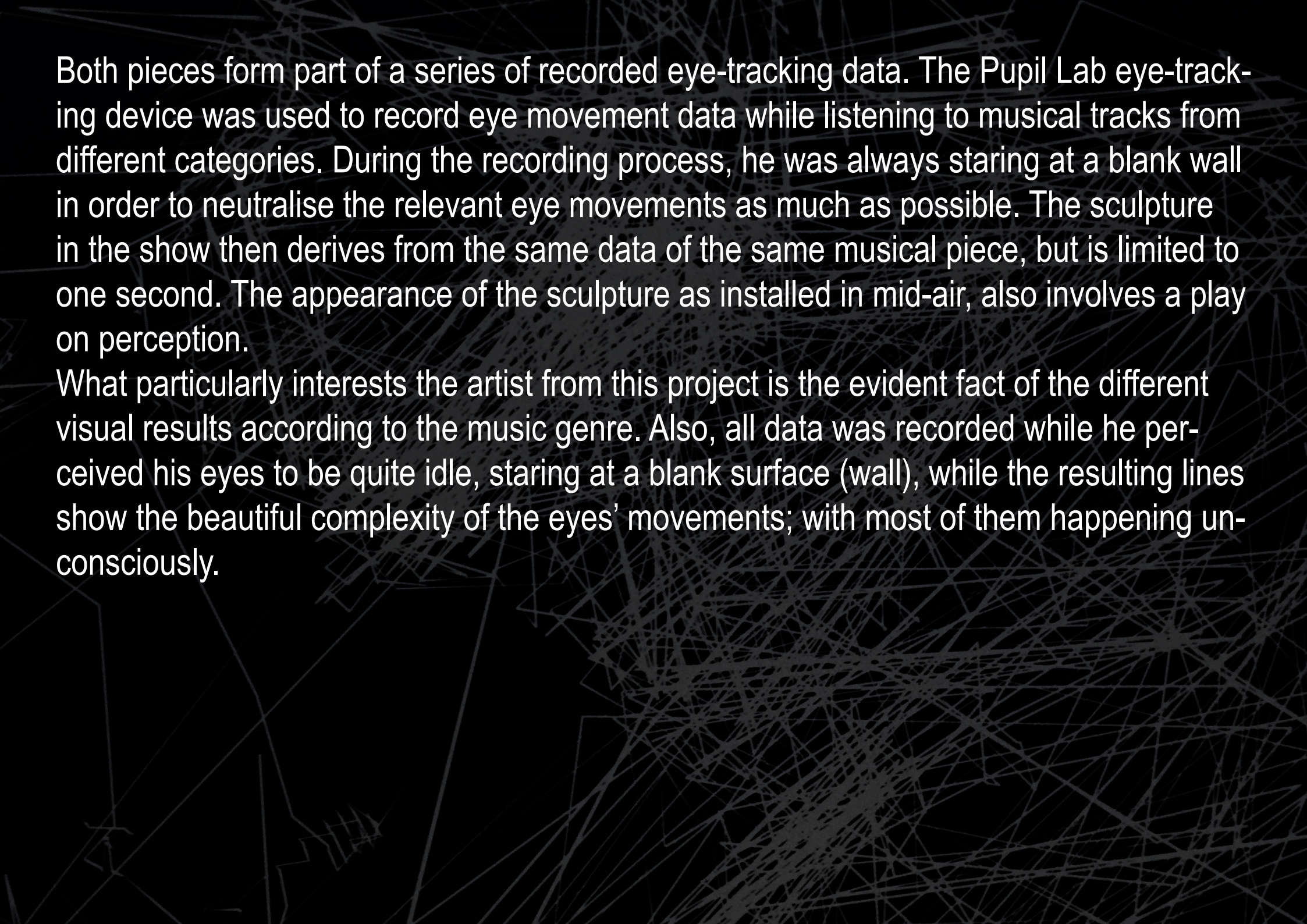
Year: 2018











Both pieces form part of a series of recorded eye-tracking data. The Pupil Lab eye-tracking device was used to record eye movement data while listening to musical tracks from different categories. During the recording process, he was always staring at a blank wall in order to neutralise the relevant eye movements as much as possible. The sculpture in the show then derives from the same data of the same musical piece, but is limited to one second. The appearance of the sculpture as installed in mid-air, also involves a play on perception.

What particularly interests the artist from this project is the evident fact of the different visual results according to the music genre. Also, all data was recorded while he perceived his eyes to be quite idle, staring at a blank surface (wall), while the resulting lines show the beautiful complexity of the eyes' movements; with most of them happening unconsciously.



## 9. Antal LUX

Lux born (1935) in Budapest. In 1956 he fled to Germany and 1960-65 studied painting and graphics at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste, Stuttgart. His artistic works are at the same time videos and paintings. He lives and works in Berlin.

Title of Artwork: Stroke (Im Herzen...)

Medium: Artvideo

Year: 2011–2012

Title of the Artwork: Mondhof (Halo round the moon)

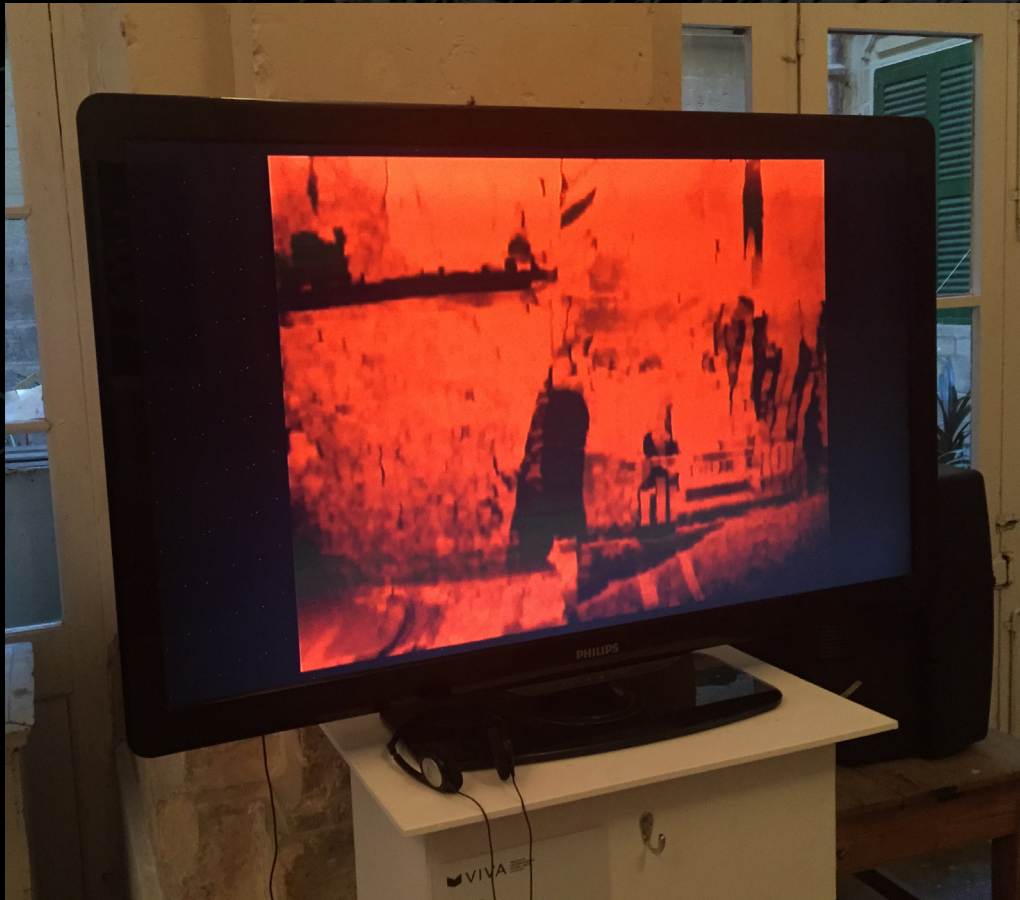
Medium: Artvideo

Year: 2012



“People have the habit, to permanently make music in situations, where music isn’t called for.” (Eric Satie)

An experiment in unified dissonance! A chord, felt as tension, that, after it’s dissolve, seeks to transform into consonance.  
Classical audio-video pieces where the aural and visual parts build together each other.





## 10. Gábor PALOTAI

Gábor Palotai is a Swedish–Hungarian artist, graphic designer and professor. Since 1981 he lives and works in Stockholm, Sweden.

Palotai is working across genres in both art and design. His design has rendered him many awards over the years and he has held several solo exhibitions and participated in numerous group exhibitions throughout Europe.

Title of Artwork: “Odysseus” Animated film, based on the graphic design novel Odysseus by Gabor Palotai,

Director: Gábor Palotai, Music: Tamás Ungváry

Medium: Animated film, 15 minutes

Year: 2018

Title of Artwork: “The Pitch of the Equalizer” Graphics series

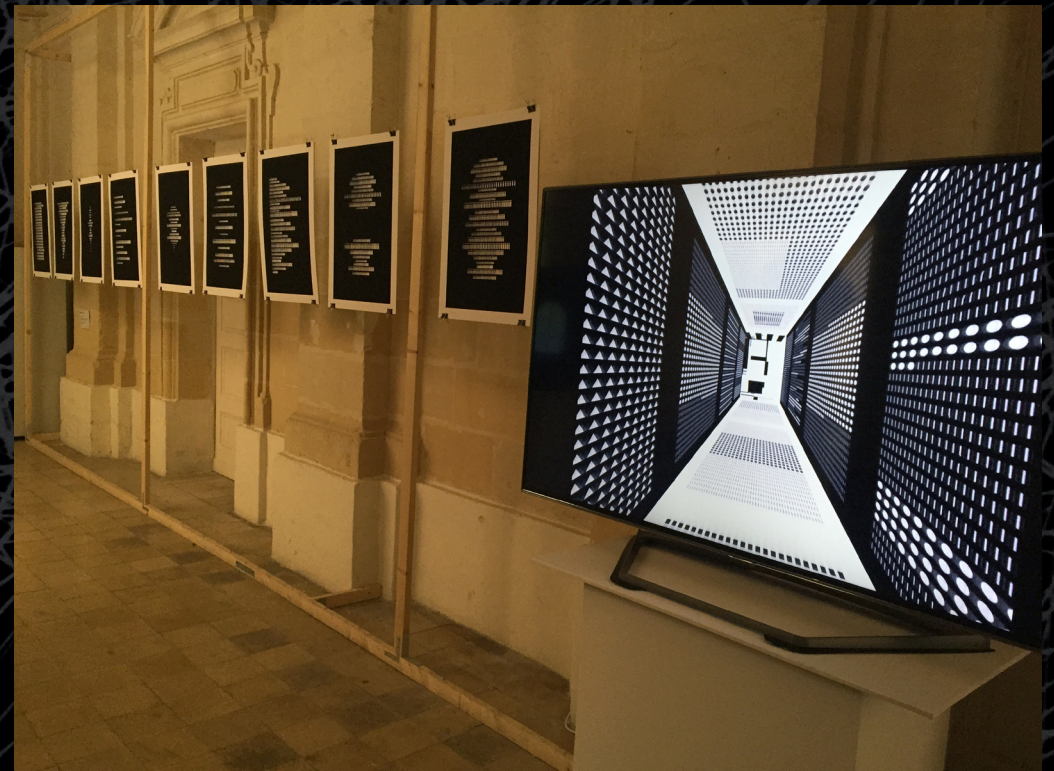
Medium: 9 digital prints, 50 x 70 cm

Year: 2018



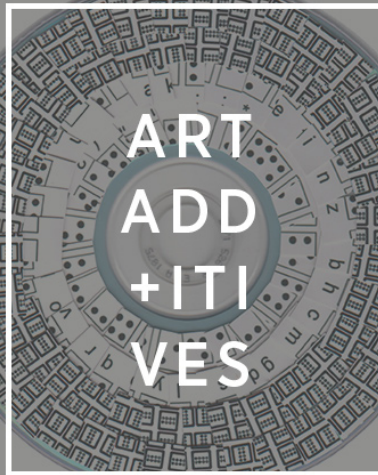
This audio-video work of art based on the graphic design novel *Odysseus* by Gabor Palotai. The audio part of this work is performed first time at this exhibition; so this is a premier.

In his artist's book *Odysseus – A Graphic Design Novel* (2007), Palotai replaces the verbal with the visual. In Greek mythology Odysseus spent his life condemned to be on a journey. Every trace he left of his life in motion became an endless narrative to be retold and reinterpreted. But, ODYSSEUS is a verbal voyage out of joint: the storyteller makes up the storytelling and is, at the same time, the listener interpreting his own story told by himself. Read as a story without words, ODYSSEUS visualizes a blown-up novel, creating a broken cosmos where language disappears at its very dawn. With its hypnotic effects the black-and-white-pulse blasts the mind.





Zsolt Gyenes, curator of VAC – Visual Acoustics, is delivering a presentation on the theme of visual acoustics. The presentation is followed by an exhibition tour led by the curator himself. (18. 04. 2018)



Artwork by Jerzy Olek.

## AN OLD-NEW GENRE: **VISUAL MUSIC**

on WEDNESDAY 18 APRIL 2018, 6:30PM

at SCHOOL OF ART,  
106, OLD BAKKERY STREET,  
VALLETTA

Zsolt Gyenes, curator of VAC - VISUAL ACOUSTICS,  
will be delivering a presentation on the theme of  
visual acoustics. The presentation will be followed  
by an exhibition tour led by the curator himself.

RSVP | [outreach@kreattivita.org](mailto:outreach@kreattivita.org)

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meetings and happenings around the Spazju  
Kreattiv contemporary visual art programme.

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## Curator's Bio

Dr. habil. **Zsolt GYENES**

Born in 1962, Gyenes is a Hungarian media artist and theoretician making audio-videos, electrographic/digital works of art and sound textures. Outside of Hungary, his individual exhibitions, performances were to be seen in the USA, Thailand, Malta, Germany and Poland. Curator of many national and international exhibitions and symposia, Gyenes is also a member of different artistic associations and an associate professor and director of the Visual Institute at the Kaposvár University. Having participated or given lectures at international conferences, workshops and festivals (e.g. USA, Thailand, Turkey, Poland, Germany, France, Italy, Romania, Malta and Croatia), his works of art have been presented internationally. He authored 7 books and some 50 articles in Hungarian and/or English. Online: <http://www.gyenes62.hu>.

© The text of this e-booklet was written by the artists and the curator. Malta, 2018

The visual background was made on the basis of Matthew Attard's work of art.



<http://vizualzene.hu>