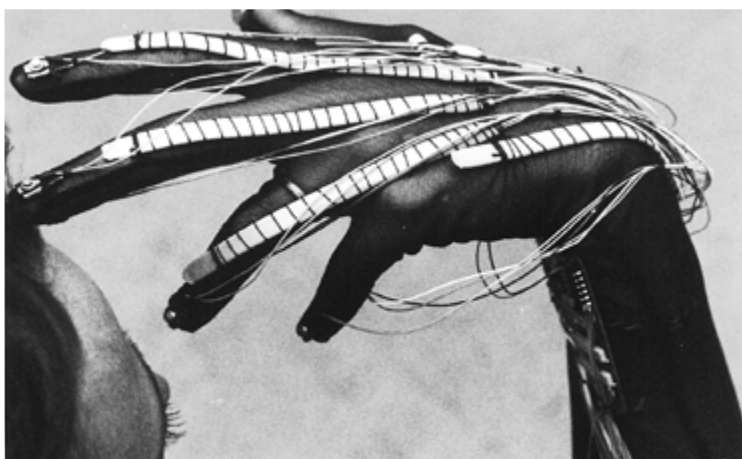


Musica ex Machina: Machines Thinking Musically | 20.9.2024–29.6.2025 |
EPFL Pavilions, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Lausanne

A musical journey of algorithms, from medieval theory to artificial intelligence

Opening on 20 September, the *Musica ex Machina: Machines Thinking Musically* exhibition is an historical and sensorial immersion into the universe of algorithmic music. From the Middle Ages to present day, it celebrates the heritage of visionaries who, by harnessing the technological advances of their time, have revolutionised the way music is conceived, created and performed.



Laetitia Sonami with the lady's glove v.4. Image courtesy of Laetitia Sonami. Photo credit: © F. Hoekzema.

The current omnipresence of algorithms might seem intrinsically linked to the development of digital technologies and artificial intelligence. However, their origins are age-old, and their sophistication is the result of centuries of scientific and artistic research in a multitude of disciplines and locations.

The evolution of music through in time has been highly influenced by the way humans enrich their creative process with the new technologies. Indeed, from elementary, hand-calculated, systems to generative AI, computational and algorithmic thinking has accompanied the development of music, carried out by successive generations of visionary

theorists, artists and scientists. The algorithmic organization of music is a global phenomenon, essential in both western and non-western traditional musical and vocal orchestrations, utilising systematic structures in their composition and performance.

Curated by EPFL professors Sarah Kenderdine and Martin Rohrmeier, and professors Paul Doornbusch and Jonathan Impett, the exhibition offers a unique insight into the conceptual, creative and technological advances that have enabled the integration of machines into the world of musical expression. Following a rich chronological and thematic itinerary, visitors discover a succession of ancient and historical objects, juxtaposed with contemporary works of art, and interactive or immersive musical installations developed by EPFL's Laboratory for Experimental Museology and EPFL's Digital and Cognitive Musicology Laboratory.

Musica ex Machina celebrates prominent individuals who, despite their differences, share a common legacy of pioneering and shaping modern music, and continue to inspire artists, musicians, and scientists today. An extensive and rich panorama, the exhibition highlights the richness of the past and its contemporary heritage, while also opening new perspectives on the future of music.