

Cod.Act: André et Michael Décosterd

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(Pendulum_choir2)



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In an age when the virtual world is becoming so prominent in our lives, especially in western cultures, where for example, less and less activities and jobs involve any physical activity (like agriculture or manufacturing), it's particularly interesting to see work that focuses on the mechanical and physical. *Cod.Act* are one of the most renowned names working in new media and kinetic art nowadays and their works include performances and complex interactive installations.

Cod.Act is the creation of the two Décosterd brothers, André, musician, composer and programmer, and a specialist in sound applications and algorithmic composition, and Michel, architect specialized in the treatment of plastic and self-taught mechanical engineer, and it emerged from their obsession with sound and mechanical movement.

The work of the Décosterd brothers also finds inspiration in science and the harmonic nature of movement and sound which drives their explorations into finding the perfect fusion of both. In pieces like the series *Silikonost* (I, II, III), *Hotschkuss* and *Ex Pharao*, the human physical activity is the force behind the performances and installations.

Other pieces are pure explorations of movement, form and mechanical energy. Like *Cycloid*, a captivating kinetic sound sculpture, which traces the space of sound orbits creating unique movement and sounds. Or *Cod.Act*'s latest creation, *Nyloid*, which was exhibited at Sonar festival in Barcelona this year, a magnificent tripod shaped sound sculpture, consisting of three nylon limbs of 6 metres in length. Like a sort of gigantic *Opiliones* (the order of long-legged spiders) the graceful movements and sounds of the piece emulate the organic and the living.

Cod.Act, with their utterly elegant and mesmerizing productions, aim to challenge the audience with a reflection on the interactions between sound, movement and their driving forces.



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(NYLOÏDE Codact – 2013)



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Your work involves sound, technology (engineering, architecture), art (sculpture, performance)... When and how did the fascination with them come about?

Myself as a musician and my brother as an architect, have always been fascinated by the technological part of our respective work. Our taste for machines and technology certainly comes from when we were children, because we were stimulated a lot in this direction. Our father was an engineer in electronics and he very often suggested, and helped us, realize electrical, electronically and computing experiments. On several occasions, we were even allowed to work in his laboratory, we were fascinated by this universe.

We always kept this interest for sciences and construction. Very often our ideas are inspired by scientific phenomena, and we like developing and building sound machines. That is how we developed our Cod.Act language.

What are your aims as a sound artist working in between technology and art?

After my training as a jazz musician, I became interested in sound and electroacoustic music. I've always had an acute curiosity for sound phenomena, the why behind sound and acoustic phenomena. Thus I've specialised in sound synthesis, and especially synthesis based on sound analysis.

This led to us to create interactive systems that generate sound, where the synthesis can be controlled at each step. The most interesting part in our work is trying to give to our kinetic sculptures a musical or vocal behaviour that is as organic as possible.

This work constitutes a new stage in our researches (in the researches we pursue my brother and me). It's the result of new investigations, each within his domain, on plastic and sound organicity.

For Nyloid, in which you explore organic mechanical complex movements, you carried out a lot of research (materials, kinetic energies, sound). What are the biggest challenges you face in the development of your projects?