

what's at stake?

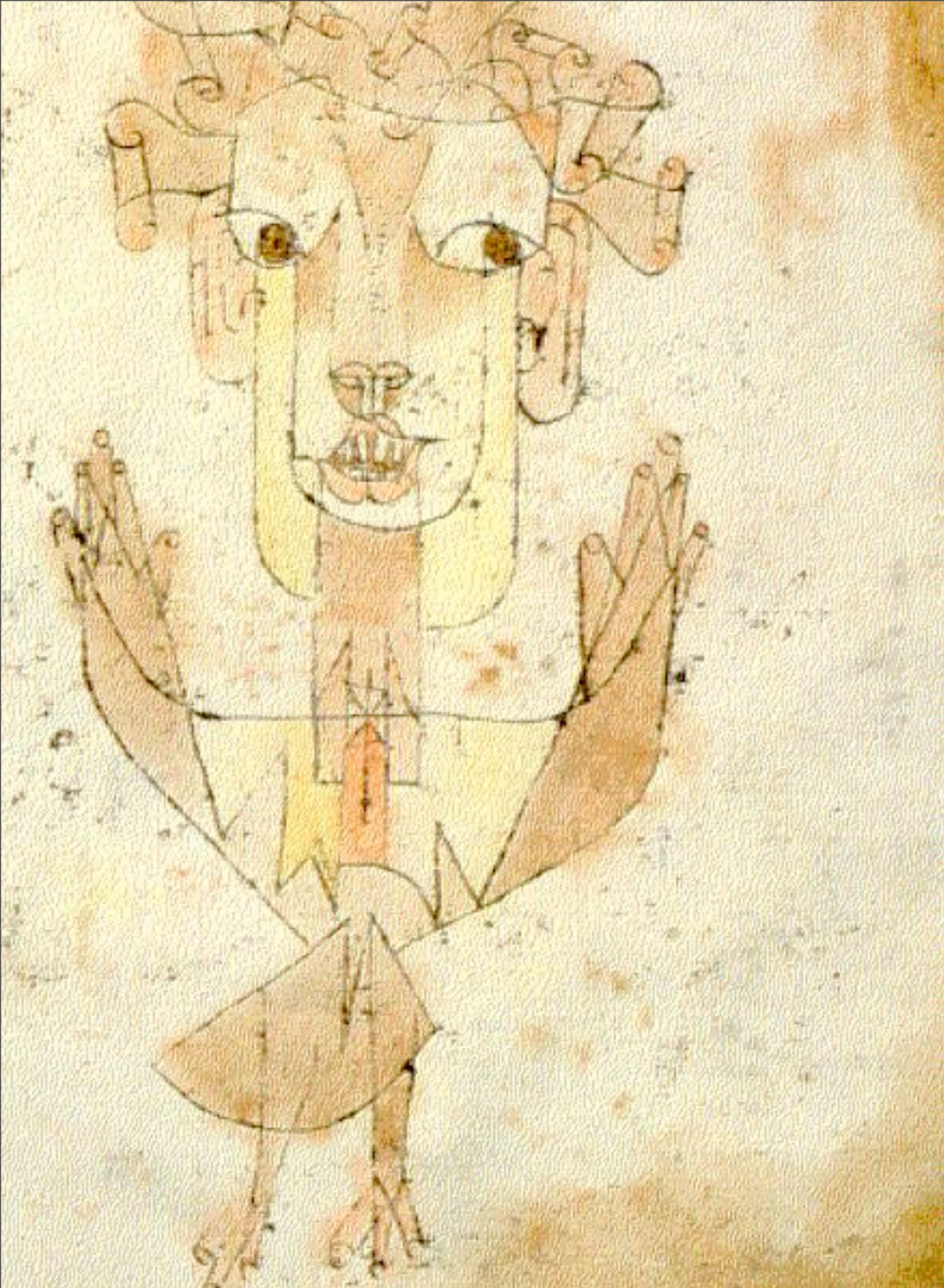
poetics of performative space

Topological Media Lab

Sha Xin Wei

AI & Society

London 6 October 2007



A Klee painting named "Angelus Novus" shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread.

This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past.

Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.

- *Walter Benjamin*



negative critique

Knowledge \neq Information (| Sign)

People (ren zai) \neq costs

Felt experience \neq Knowledge \neq Language

Avoiding Reductionism & Naive empiricism

Crises of Representation

Benjamin, Weber, ... to

Latour-Weibel: Atmospheres of Democracy

Schema, rule, grammar ...

Can we sidestep these problems?

problems

Brittle code

Dry semiotics

Classification

Measurement

Context

Heidegger, Derrida

Ossified power

Transcendentalizing
representations

positive critique, alternative approaches

Brittle code

Dry semiotics

Classification

Measurement

Context

Ossified power

Transcendentalizing
representations

Prosody

Nuance

Care

Substrate

Continuity

Poiesis

material ethico-aesthetics

Just as Gandhi did, [the dissenters in Newton's time] argued that it is only because one takes matter to be brute and stupid, to use Newton's own terms, that one would find it appropriate to conquer it with the most destructive of technologies with nothing but profit and material wealth as ends and thereby destroy it both as a natural and a humanitarian environment for one's habitation. ... the dissenters thought of the world not as brute but as suffused with value

- Akeel Bilgrami

ethico-aesthetic play

The work of art, for those who use it is an activity of unframing, of rupturing sense, of baroque proliferation, or extreme impoverishment [minimalism] which leads to a recreation and a reinvention of the subject itself.

Its encounter can ... generate fields of the possible 'far from the equilibria' of everyday life.

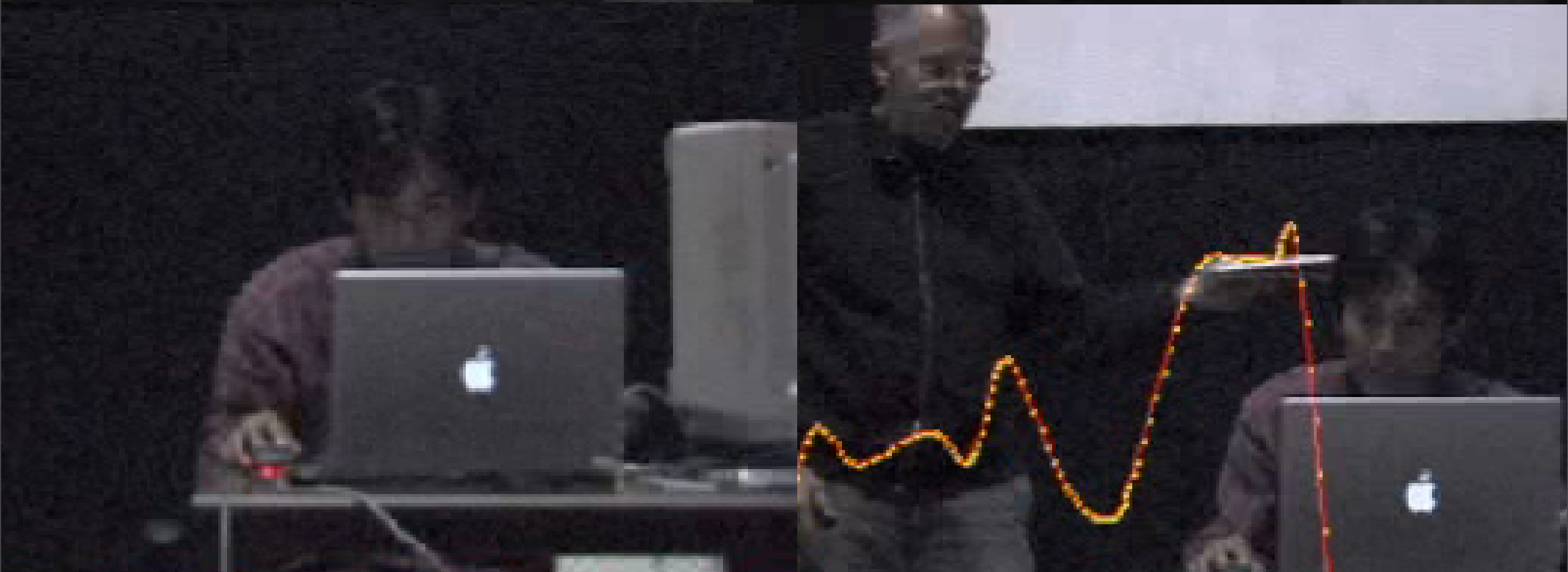
- Felix Guattari, *Chaosmosis*

poetic imagination

Mathematicians: speculate propositionally
(Isabelle Stengers)

Scientists, artists:
imagine other than what is the case

Poetic imaginary ~ social imaginary



material expression

Can we create installation-events in which people can palpably encounter arguments for imaginaries?

Constructive arguments!

topological media lab

making events (not things)
potential, imaginary, marvelous

concerns approaches

<i>thick</i>	Geertzian analysis, Geertzian design
<i>sensuous matter</i>	vs. bodies (BWO)
<i>co-structured</i>	vs. turn-taking (Thick/N, dance)
<i>processual, performative</i>	real-time , time-based media
<i>embodied experience</i>	physical co-presence
	eg. Eve Cafe drinking -- or Hilbert doing math walking in mountains

atelier lab methods

(artist) studies

sketches

installation-events as experiments

workshops

performances

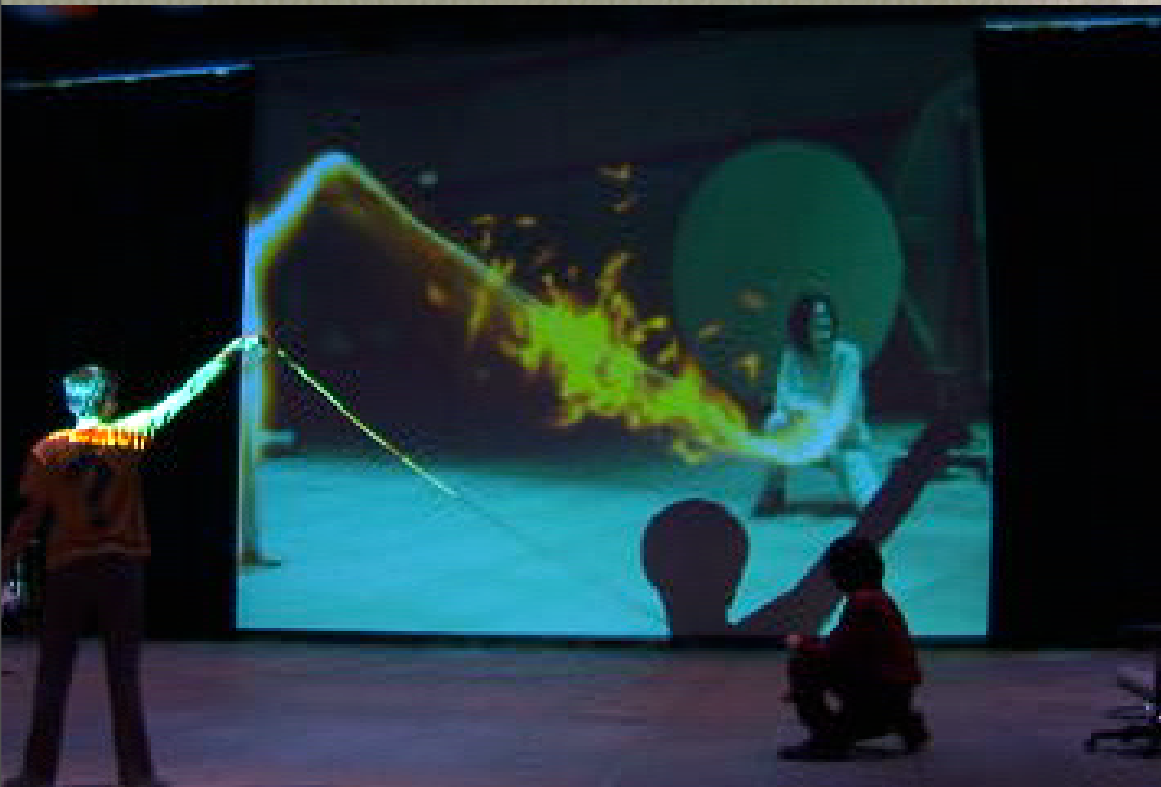
some examples...

study: snail house

gratis Gins and Arakawa
Architectural Body

poetic architecture

sketch: Meteor Shower, density & wind from movement



public installation: Cosmicomics



workshop: movement research

Ouija Experiment June-July 2007:
Collective Gesture In Responsive
Media Spaces

Distributed agency, intentional gesture
Conditioned improvisation:
entrainment, calligraphy, camouflage, delay



ouija workshop: *Calligraphic video,
responsive gestural sound*



ouija workshop: entrainment

ouija workshop

ouija workshop: Camouflage

ouija workshop: Calligraphy



public performance

Women in Black

Blink!

Hubbub

Architecture

tml's practice-based research

**Art in Public /
Research in
University**

Dual Network



The background is a painting of a courtyard. On the left, a large, stylized yellow flower with long green stems and smaller yellow flowers at its base is in the foreground. The courtyard features a stone wall with several windows and a dark doorway. A staircase with a black metal railing leads up on the right side. The sky is filled with many small, colorful flowers or petals in shades of red, orange, and yellow.

art all the way down?

Topological Media Lab = atelier + laboratory

Collective experiments >+ solo expression

Events not things

10x15 collectiu

An abstract background featuring a textured blue-grey surface. Overlaid on this are several organic, flowing shapes in shades of orange, red, and brown. Dark, irregular black lines are scattered across the composition, some appearing as thin strokes and others as thicker, more defined shapes. The overall effect is one of dynamic, layered movement.

what's at stake?

(the first & last question)

what's at stake?

Ethico-aesthetic Play

Event

Gesture

Tissue and Molecular Politics

art all the way down: opening blackboxed concepts

“interaction” “program”

“information” “bit” “sensor” “cpu”

“linguistics” “market” “design” “industry”

“body” “ego” “citizen”

“machine” “human”

...



Eden Musée,

SEANCES

Extraordinary & Mysterious.

AFTERNOON, 2.10.5. EVENING, 7.30 to 10.30.

"AJEEB,"

THE FAMOUS AUTOMATON.

WHICH EXHIBITS FACILITY & THE FINEST CONSTRUCTION.

ITS MOVEMENTS ARE SO LIFE-LIKE,
THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO
BELIEVE THAT IT IS
NOT ENDOWED
WITH LIFE.

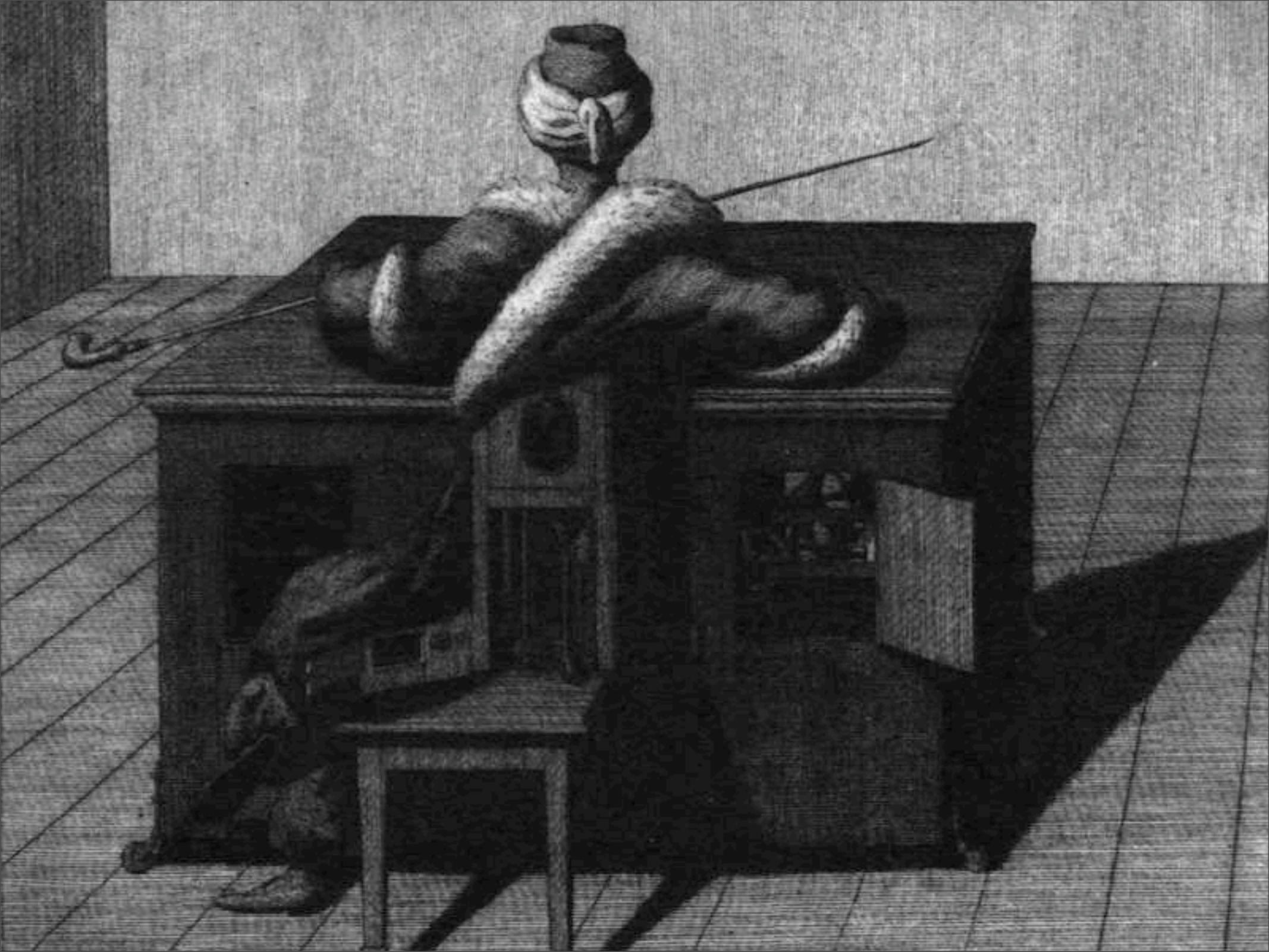
THE GREATEST WONDER
EVER INVENTED.

VISITORS TO THE
EDEN MUSÉE

WILL BE
Amazed, Astonished and Mystified with

"AJEEB,"

On the Gallery of the Winter Garden.



Bill Viola, The Passions



Do you owe allegiance to Homo Sapiens Rex, or ...

do you owe care to the world ?

The force that through the green fuse drives the flower
Drives my green age; that blasts the roots of trees
Is my destroyer.
And I am dumb to tell the crooked rose
My youth is bent by the same wintry fever.

The force that drives the water through the rocks
Drives my red blood; that dries the mouthing streams
Turns mine to wax.
And I am dumb to mouth unto my veins
How at the mountain spring the same mouth sucks.

The hand that whirls the water in the pool
Stirs the quicksand; that ropes the blowing wind
Hauls my shroud sail.
And I am dumb to tell the hanging man
How of my clay is made the hangman's lime....

Dylan Thomas



Παντα το πυρ επελθον κρινει και καταλεπσεται.
Fire is the ravisher of all things. Heraclitus

<http://topologicalmedialab.net>

<http://sponge.org>