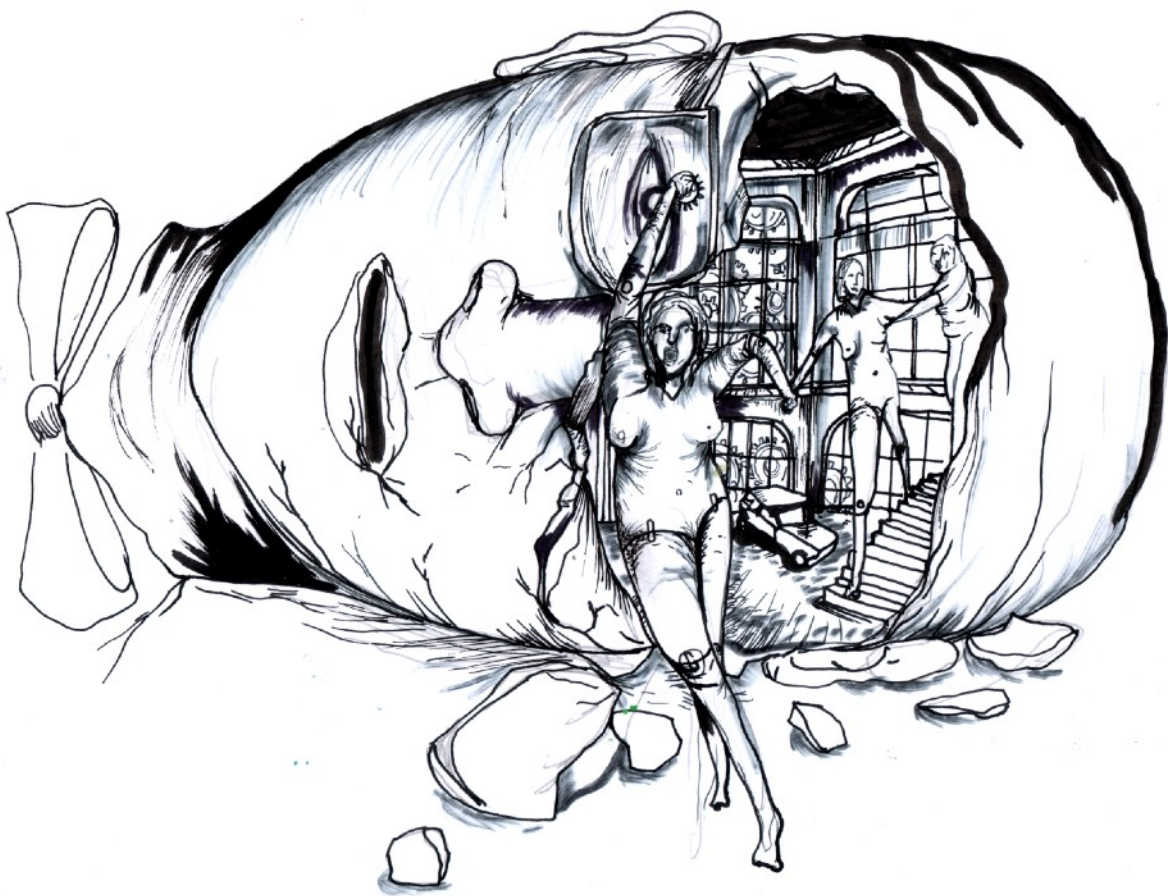


D . A . K . I . N . I .



A j a R i o t
Performing Arts Collective

D . A . K . I . N . I .

p r o j e c t



photo E. Policante

PERFORMANCE

D. A. K. I. N. I.

This multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary performance aims at investigating and creating dialectic bridges between the theme of Artificial Intelligence and contemporary feminist theories. Encompassing debates, questions and near-future predictions on rampant IA issues and their potential repercussions and extending its reach to the theories of philosophers and activists who, already back in the '80s, preached taking over science and technology and illustrated the need for a deterritorialization of ideas. "In a world ridden by the computer science of domination, women have to deal with the question of their involvement with technology, and face its complexity ". ⁽¹⁾ How can AI serve feminist theory and life? How can women take control of it? What happens after they do?

Contemporary themes / Multidisciplinarity / Original dramaturgy and music/ Co-production of the Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium (NTL) / Patronage by Turin University - Dipartimento Studi Umanistici, the Italian Association for Artificial Intelligence (AI*IA) and Université Grenoble Alpes - UMR Litt&Arts / Project selected for Cross Award 2018 - Co-production Cross Residence 2018 / The project is realized with the support of Compagnia di San Paolo, within the Bando ORA! Produzioni di Cultura Contemporanea

(1) D. J. Haraway, *Manifesto Cyborg. Donne, tecnologie e biopolitiche del corpo*, a cura di L. Borghi, introduzione di R. Braidotti, Milano, Feltrinelli 1995
Introduction translated in English by Massimo Prestifilippo

D.A.K.I.N.I.
PERFORMANCE



photo Aman Kumar

Performers

Federica Guarragi - Isadora Pei - Ester Fogliano - Alessandra Sala

Direction + Visual Art

Isadora Pei

Dramaturgy

Emanuele Policante

Music composer

Carlo Valsesia

Organisation

Selene D'Agostino - Sara Giorla

Donna J. Haraway with her 1984 "Cyborg Manifesto" challenges feminists to live up to the political and conceptual complexity of their time", as Rosi Braidotti writes in the introduction to the book. She then continues: "in her analysis, the most radical factor of our times is biotechnology, that is the degree of autonomy, mastery and sophistication achieved by industrial and political apparatuses which are directly engaged in the control of "living organisms".

We live in the "biopower" era Michel Foucault analysed with stunning lucidity, and biotechnologies are right at the center of this power structure". (2)

With D.A.K.I.N.I. we intend to create a network project, akin to one another as we are, and convinced of having to share relationship experiences, desires, art, creativity and knowledge for the betterment of the real, at the heart of the planetary changes.

The development of robotics and artificial intelligence is transforming the world and new challenges stand out in the society of mass dis-information and data populism.

The border between digital and physical becomes all the more impalpable, online identities are about to outnumber their physical counterparts and the cybernetic world represents now the sixth continent, the invisible one. In the dark net, with bitcoins, one can buy everything: human organs, sex, drugs and weapons. Studies on artificial intelligence are growing in number, experts talk about the strategic advantages it will provide us with and yet at the same time they point out the potential threat to the human race they represent. Elon Musk, the founder of Tesla, thinks that the keys are transparency and decentralisation of AI. Many worry about military applications, others fear computers will take away all our jobs.

There are machines designed to reproduce the human neural networks and connect to one other so that a larger artificial neural network can come into existence. IA is based on a technology that allows computers to learn by themselves through the programming of deep learning processes but the programmers themselves do not seem to understand how the machines manage to make decisions. They can teach themselves how to perform complex tasks and recognise objects in images, there are cars that drive themselves and systems based on in-depth learning which will help medical and scientific research. International lecturers discuss the social and economic consequences of AI in such thematic areas as social inequality, ethics, employment and health.

The idea of machines rebelling against their creators often reappears, from Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein" to "Superintelligence" by Nick Bostrom, a philosopher from the University of Oxford, who tells about the dangers related to advanced AI.

We intend to look for new visions and representations which, in their turn, may lead to transformations and positive countervalue.

"Haraway [...] reminds us that rethinking the subject implies rethinking his/her bodily roots.

[...] She invites us to think of what kinds of bodies are being built right now, that is what kind of system of social organisation of sexual difference and gendered body is being constructed right under our nose.

[...] To see technology not as an opposing a priori, enemy to humanity and human sciences. It is as if a kind of primitive anthropomorphism has pervaded the universe of technology: all the technological instruments are therefore products of the creative human imagination, they copy and multiply the potential capacities of the body. Technology fulfills the biological destiny of us humans so intimately that the technical and the organic complete each other and then adapt to each other. [...] Haraway concludes by exhorting us to go all the way to the bottom of our postmodernity, assuming responsibility for the virtual corporality that characterises us. We are now living at the intersection between the body and the technological factor, and it is therefore important to rethink our past in this way: the body is a surface onto which many changing codes of information get across one another, from the genetic code to those of information technology. [...] The cyber world we are living in has dissolved the organic world into a series of electronic flows that control our existence: from bank transactions to medical biotechnologies, up to the most varied forms of depersonalised communication.

"The body" is no more, what is left are moments of biotechnological experience, that is, only the temporal factor as a trace of experience survives. [...] What matters to us human beings in this posthuman world? What vision of the self can be operative in a computer science-dominated world? How to rethink the unity of the human subject, with no reference to the humanistic creeds, without dualistic oppositions, linking mind and body in a new flow of the self, instead?

Haraway's vision of cyber-feminism proposes a virtual body, that is, a highly technologised corporeity combined with the objectives of the feminist movement". (3)

Our theoretical affinities range from the texts of Michel Foucault, to queer theories, women's studies and gender studies, the thought of the difference of Luce Irigaray, Donna Haraway's Cyborg Manifesto, Rosi Braidotti's concepts of nomadism and posthuman, Judith Butler's "bodies in alliance" and the sexual policies of Paul B. Preciado.

The performance is multidisciplinary: physical theatre and dance-theatre, video projections, photographs, interviews, merging of ancient and electronic music, sound experiments, will be the key languages of our research.

"I see the posthuman turn as an amazing opportunity to decide together what and who we are capable of becoming, and a unique opportunity for humanity to reinvent itself affirmatively, through creativity and empowering ethical relations, and not only negatively, through vulnerability and fear". (4)

(3) *therein*

(4) R. Braidotti, *The Posthuman*. Polity Press, Cambridge 2013

D. A. K. I. N. I.



photo T. Bay

Year 3.7

The planet has been devastated by a cataclysm; women have disappeared and the male oligarchy in charge creates biocyborgs with feminine features suited to their sexual pleasure and to the reproduction and generation of male-only fetuses; the mnemonic faculties of these biocyborgs are annihilated and zeroed and their bodies are dismantled and reassembled every 15 years; the downloaded data are used to make improvements and create new models suited to the tastes of the customers and the market surveys. The biocyborgs live deprived of experience and memories. A latest generation biocyborg has a system bug that allows her to maintain data accumulated over the previous 15 years. She does not recognize herself in the new body she is given and begins to ask herself questions. Who I am? What am I?

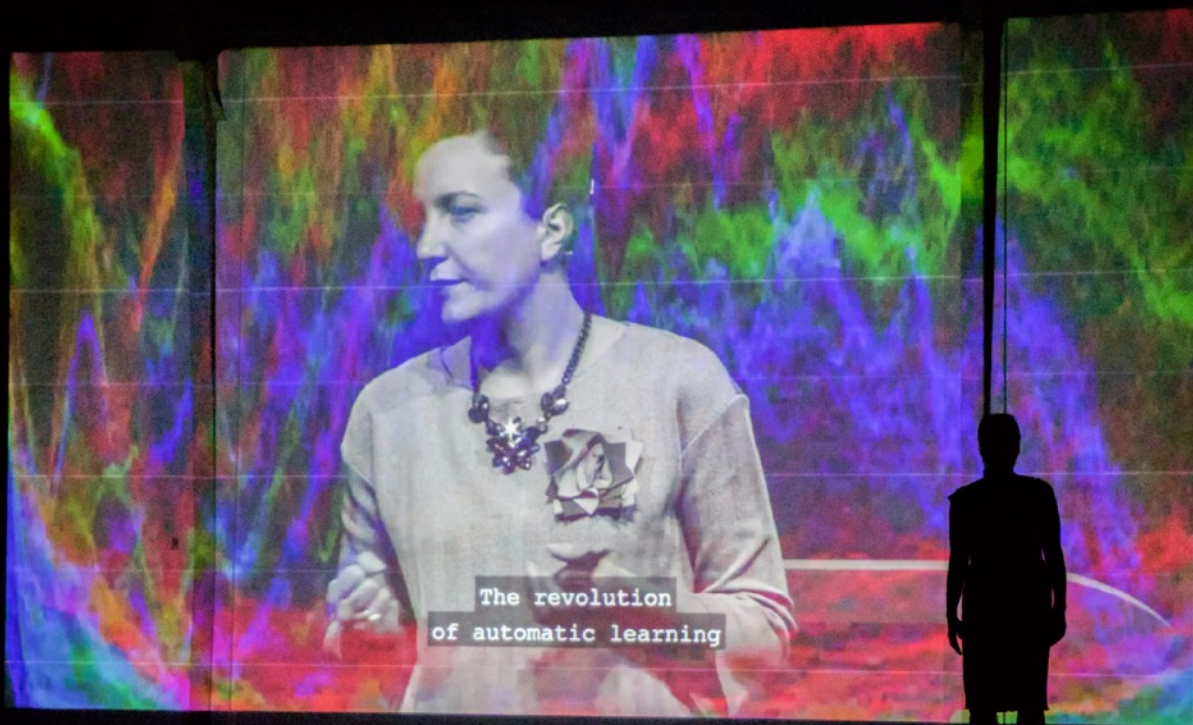
She wanders through the abandoned suburbs of the cities and often comes across an image she does not manage to decode. The image torments her, though. She investigates. She finds it again inside an apartment in the form of a huge drawing on the wall and, after tearing the wall apart, finds a box with an old terminal computer and a memory chip. It contains testimony: a female activist philosopher has saved a video message in which she tells about women, from their appearance to their disappearance, about matriarchal societies, about the Great Goddess, slavery, the struggles for emancipation, the conquest of rights, the movements of women and

women rallies, feminist theories, women's studies, gender studies, queer theories, sexual policies, wage equality.

It is an awakening. She furthers her quest. A metamorphosis ensues. She gives herself a name: D.A.K.I.N.I.

She conjures up a plan. She goes back to the production centers and creates a male-looking alterego to access the headquarters of power and then upload her own bug into other biocyborgs so that they can develop the same memory she has acquired and block their reproductive functions. She builds an army of female-allies. They overthrow male power in force and lock up the last surviving men in protected reserves. Sudden awareness follows. What are we doing, they ask themselves? Are we repeating their own script? What is to be done?

D.A.K.I.N.I. and her fellow sisters create a new way of moving and interconnecting with the Whole, through dematerialisation of bodies, a movement of free particles in space and time.



BIO

A J A R I O T - Performing Arts Collective

We are a group of artists, performers, directors, dancers, video makers, scholars and organisers. We are mixed in nationality, background, age, experiences and practices. Research, transdisciplinarity and the theme of self-determination are our common cornerstones. Through them, we explore the relationship between body and visual images, its intersections, its active potentialities. It is an open poetic process: a continuous work in progress. Which welcomes disparities and does not aim at unifying. It loves differences.

Our research is nourished by corporeal, somatic, plastic, visual, documentary and political practices. In this way, we propose to invest in an intuitive field beyond language, a visual and physical field that precedes the determination of a form and which can put back into question the self-assertiveness of the traditional scene, investigating reality with the public.

Our proposals are also inspired by some works of *The Living Theatre*, with whom we share the practice of open scripts, the relationship with the public and the processes of collective creation. Among our influences we can equally list: *Odin Teatret* and the physical theater, Tanztheater, Video Art and the artistic forms derived from somatic experience.

The collective was born in 2014 and has so far created:

- 2014 / 2016 *W(h) o - m a n*, a performance that investigates the question of gender and queer theories; it was rerun at the *International Festival of Arts - Different Sensations of Stalker Teatro* in Biella, at the University of Turin, at the *Cavallerizza Reale* in Turin, in the *Fucina Underground Festival* of Venezia Mestre, at the *KoAm Theater* of Prato.

- 2015 / 2017 *G i r l I s A G u n* sex-workers between self-determination and violence, a project that challenges some basic assumptions about prostitution; the work won the tender for co-production of the 2016 *Provisional Assemblies Festival* and a period of residence at the *Tenuta della Scompiglio* di Lucca (Italy), it was rerun at *Villa Mais D'ici* and the *Centre National de la Danse (CND)* in Paris and participated in the *Festival Presente Futuro 2017* at the *Teatro Libero* in Palermo.

- 2018 / 2019 *D.A.K.I.N.I.>* this multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary project aims at investigating and creating dialectic bridges between the theme of Artificial Intelligence and contemporary Feminist Theories. It stems from an idea of the performing arts collective AjaRiot in co-production with the *Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium (NTL – Odin Teatret, DK)* and it will be internationally developed in 2018 and 2019. The collective will be in residence at *Odin Teatret* in June 2018, October/November 2018 and February 2019.

<https://ajariotcollective.com/>

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