

踊る阿呆に見る阿呆、同じ阿呆なら踊らにゃ損々

The dancers are fools, the watchers are fools, both are fools alike so, why not dance?

Awa Odori's song



THE CLUSTERs

THE CLUSTERs | Format : Performance

★★★★★

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THE CLUSTERs is a group of performers formed in 2020 specialized in MECHA-DANCE.

We compose motor sounds of our bodies like musical rhythms. On the theme of "the fusion of body and mind", we represent our original universe, sometimes emotional and sometimes reasonable. Even animals can dance, why not us, robots? Listen to the rhythm of our vital energy!

- THE CLUSTERs, June 2020



Introduction

She doesn't dance like a leech. Because she learnt to feel comfort in her own body while dancing. It was me who taught her that. Wind goes around a small forest, insects hum, huge leaves rustle. I told myself : Ah, that's it. Sergio, that's it, that's our chance for rebirth. I carried my dance from Cuba, went to the US with it, and planted it in a little girl in Japan, same thing as a virus, and maybe it is the only thing that I did in my life, but I believe that's my chance for resurrection.

Ryu MURAKAMI, Kyoko 1995

THE CLUSTERS is a dance performance that brings inorganic machines to life. It stages eight robotic dancers, under the direction of an artist-performer. Each rhythm created by the moves of one robot is added to the others, and it gradually forms a complex musical space. Then the infection of this joie de vivre spreads to the public, just like a virus.

Humans have danced since the dawn of their existence. Each tribe around the world has an original dance, like a language of its own, as we find on the murals of the cave of Altamira.

We dance smiling to express happiness.

We dance crying to forget the things that depress us.

We cannot stop the beating of our heart. With dance and movement, we imitate this rhythm and sublimate it. In other words, dance is a regeneration of our vital energy.

Nowadays, flows of information circulate continuously through social networks. Like viruses, these flows of information contaminate our language and spread to all of society.

The spider-robots of **THE CLUSTERS** evolve into their own society with their peculiar morphology and their own means of communication. The performance questions how a perceived world can disrupt another one; it explores the spaces of interaction between humans and robots. Here, the movement is a carrier of contamination: the rhythm given by the artist's movements is the metaphor of the Human/Robot interaction. A dialog takes place by the means of a primitivo-technological dance that ends up contaminating the performer, the chimera-robots and the audience. The performer, entering this universe, disrupts its balance and transforms the pre-established world.

What new order will appear after this perturbation? How will the relationships reorganise?

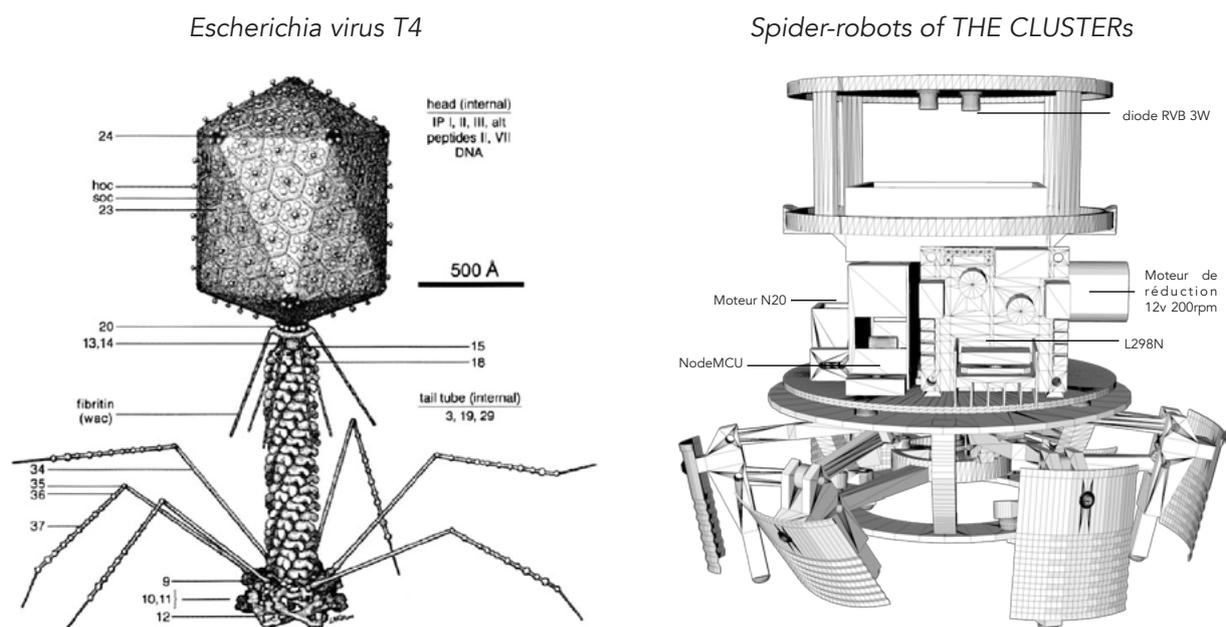


Fig. 1 The robot form is inspired by a virus - the escherichia virus T4



There's been a strange epidemic lately
Going amongst the folk
So that many in their madness
Began dancing
Which they kept up day and night,
Without interruption,
Until they fell unconscious.
Many have died of it.

Michael KLEINLAWEL, Strassburgische Chronick 1625

Profane time and peacetime necessarily strengthen established positions, vested interests, conventional opinion, routine and laziness, selfishness and prejudice. Things become weighted down and ossified, tending toward immobility and death. On the contrary, war and festival discard dregs and waste, eliminate false value, and recover the source of primordial energies, reactivating their full and dangerous, but salutary, violence.

Roger CAILLOIS, Bellone ou la pente de la guerre, 1963

A sudden terror disrupted our lives. The virus takes the form of an invisible darkness and paralyzes our nerves. We search for the truth to enlighten the reality. However no one knows the exact truth, so our brains keep shaking with fear. We are tired of the amount of information eroded by memes on the Internet. The fear has its roots in ignorance and lack of understanding : are we interested in a horror movie killer who presents his identity ? There are only two options to escape the fear that are to fight to resist it or to get drunk to forget it.

So now is the world planning a war or a party?

Roger Caillois, a French sociologist, said that the common point between war and celebration is the destruction of wear and tear of daily life. Then the entire society pursues in the same direction an illusion of plenitude and we all throw away our individuality. This social virus sends a single signal to our brain.

Break everything!

This message orders us:

Go straight ahead!

Eliminate all the obstacles in front of you! Like the living dead of Georges A. Romero, our own satisfaction lies on a tiny amount of ecstasy : the assimilation into the Holy.

This political meme guides us in a new direction. It dismantles and reorganizes our social system.

Imagine a group, like an army, silently lined up. Reassured, we find a beauty in this view. The stability has an effect that relaxes and fascinates us. Suddenly one of them can no longer stand this silence and starts to move. Our soft human bodies are not made to stand still. Life evolution always requires significant changes. The commotion spreads throughout the group and a cohesive shape begins to build. The boundless

energy destroys all the old ways and prepares us a new rule. This unknown system scares us, but we end up integrating it as something certain. Let's accept reality, it's going to transform something in us.

This rule is the **BEAT** of our heart. So our imagination will be updated by this rhythm.



Technical system

The device consists of eight spider-robots, a pair of extended getas and a sound and visual projection, all controlled by a main computer.

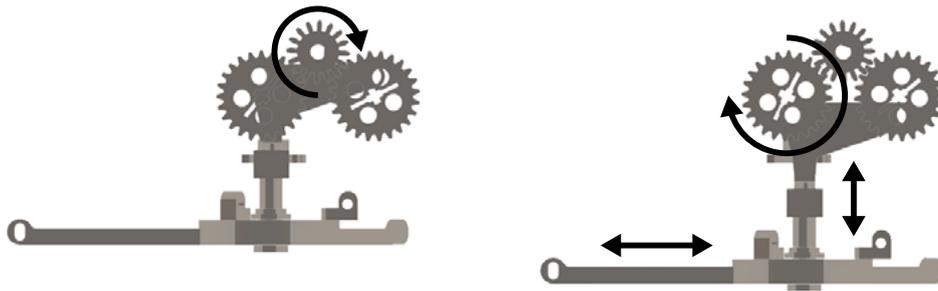


Fig. 2 Movement of Mechanical Linkage

Each spider-robot is an autonomous hexapod made of two motors, a power stage, an RGB superluminescent diode and a microcontroller (NodeMCU) which allows each robot to communicate wireless with a wifi module. This configuration makes it possible to send commands and to receive OSC messages (OpenSoundControl) about the robots' activity via a dedicated computer. Both motors handle the six legs of each robot thanks to 3D-printed mechanical connections that generate back and forth movement and direction changes. The diode can be static or go on and off and can change colors.

The extended getas of the performer are equipped with dry-contactor-like sensors that can detect the moves of the performer's feet. These data are transmitted to the dedicated computer via a microcontroller NodeMCU, just like the robots.

The Getas send the signals when the switch is activated.

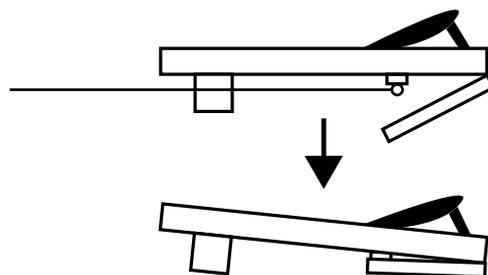


Fig. 3 The extended getas

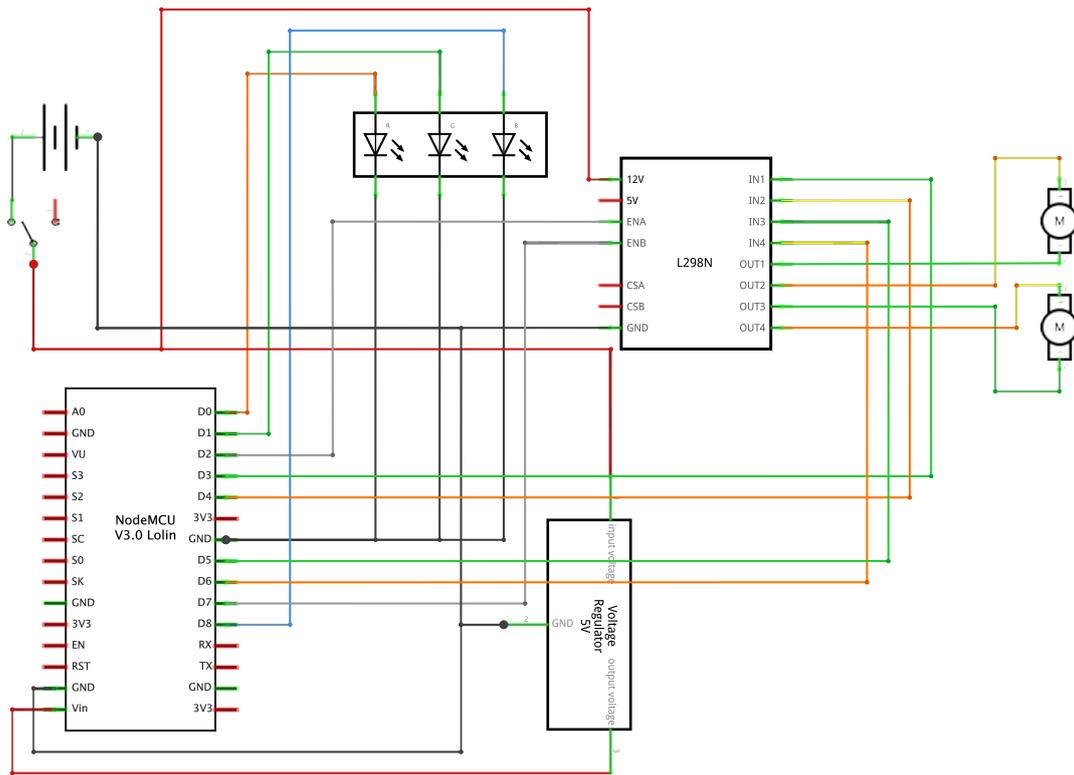


Fig. 4 Electrical diagram of the robot

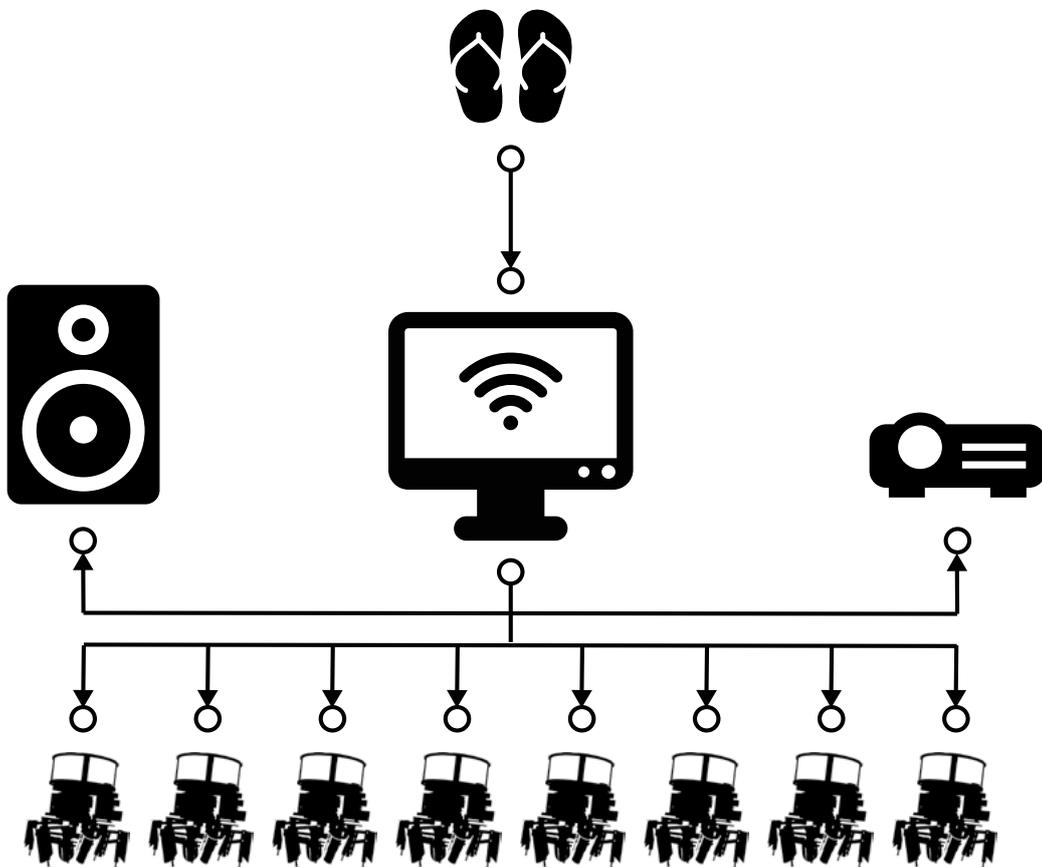


Fig. 5 Communication in local network

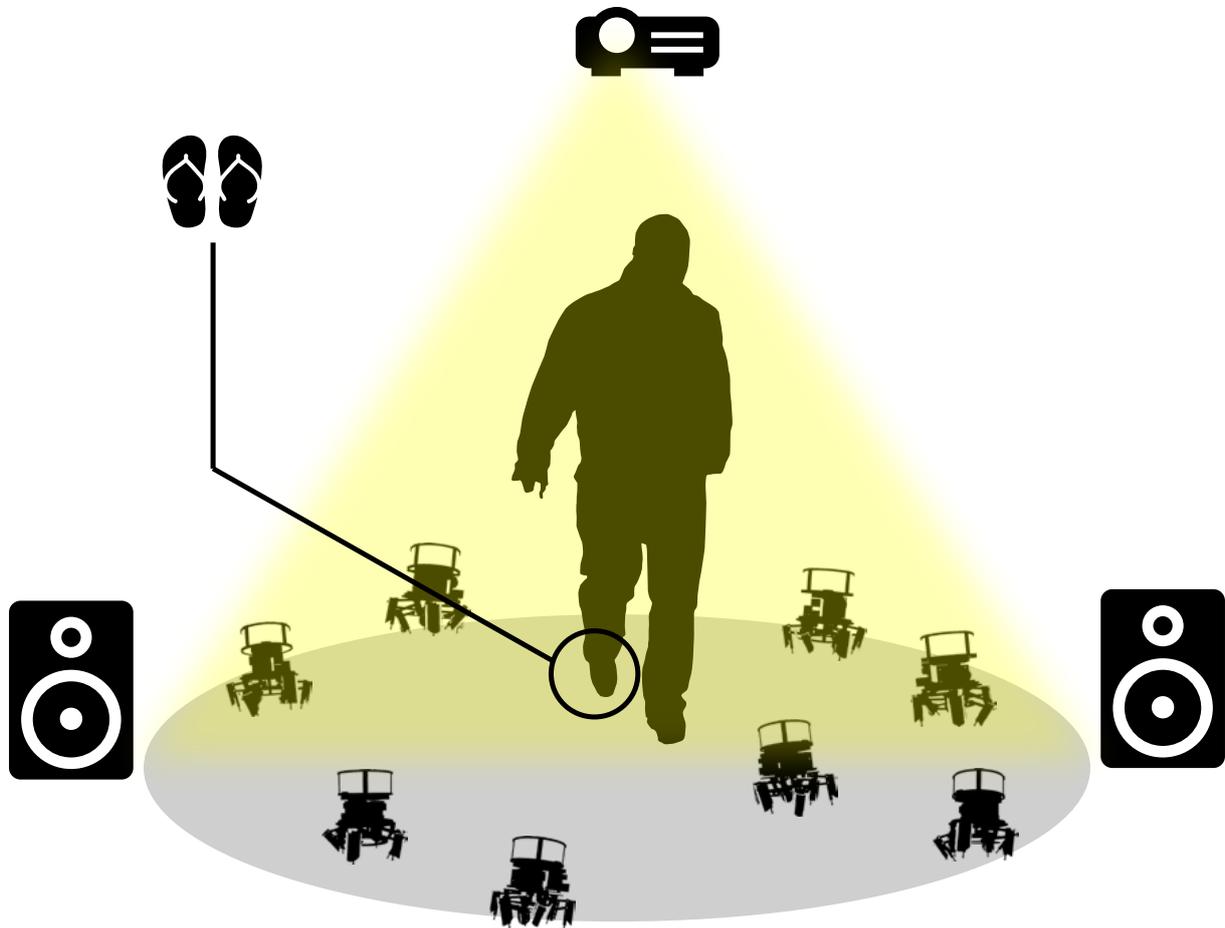


Fig. 6 Installation

Material to be supplied

- 1 x video projector + HDMI output
- 1 x VP support to project on the ground
- 2 x BM speakers and 2 x Subwoofers
- 1 x sound system (amp, mixing desk and cables)

We provide

- 1 x computer (Mac Mini)
- 1 x sound card (output 2 RCA or stereo jack)
- 8 x robots

Youtube

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJ1pBsZ-jG347u0lom5phu3r9dAuVKxe>

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