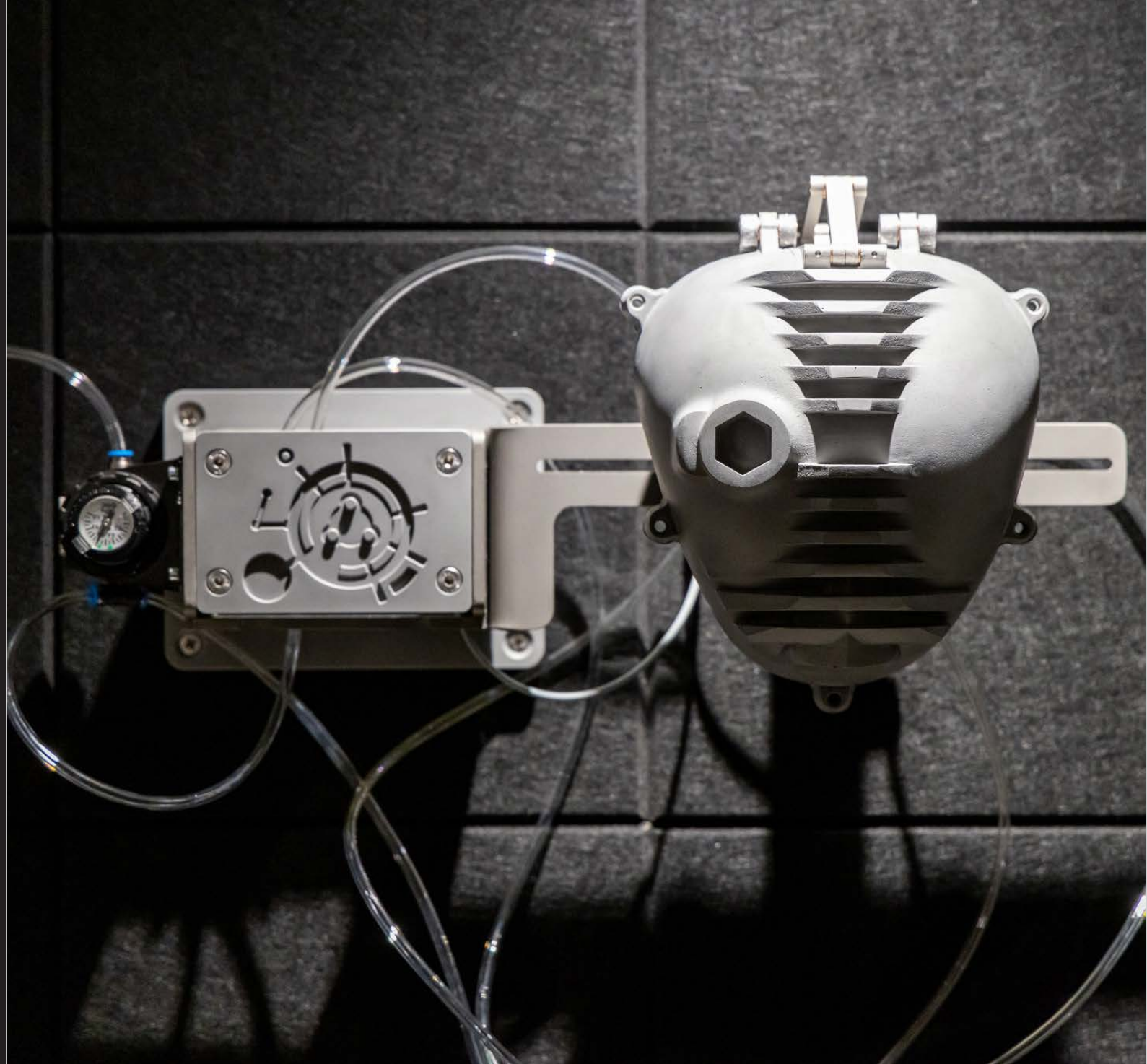


Harrison Pearce:  
Pneumatic  
Applications,  
Anthropomorphic  
Mutations, Ectoplasm  
and the MacGuffin

By Hector Campbell

Harrison Pearce : 氣  
體力學、擬人變異、外  
胚層質及麥加芬母題

文 /Hector Campbell





Autosomatic, 2023  
Oil, acrylic on canvas  
200 x 180 cm

《Autosomatic》· 2023  
布面油彩、丙烯  
200 x 180 cm

A permanent fixture in Harrison Pearce's practice, and one that attests to a particularly formative moment in the artist's personal life, is the presence of platinum-white amorphous manifestations, appearing variously as both sculptural spheroids and painted protuberant apparitions. Their origin story, if you will, extends back to when a pre-artist Pearce studying philosophy of mind was simultaneously and somewhat ironically discovered to possess a rare brain mutation. In the subsequent years spent processing the immediate medical repercussions, as well as pondering the pertinent philosophical ramifications, Pearce embraced uncertainty and abandoned analytic academia for art-making, aided by a three-dimensional scan of his cerebral malformation that continues to underpin the aforementioned excrescences. Over time, as witnessed in this latest body of work, presented at MOU PROJECTS, these mercurial mutations have themselves evolved beyond elucidation, now existing akin to a MacGuffin—that characteristically Hitchcockian conceit which promotes an object as being key to the progression of the plot, without itself necessarily being the principal protagonist.

And so, in the artist's latest kinetic and sonic sculptural installation, we find the biomorphic motif adopting technological augmentation, their usual supple surface hardened to house a series of speakers, as though connected straight to the brain stem. Their frailty is still foregrounded, however, as each is nestled within its own clam-shell casing, inspired by Celtic stone-carved amulets, medieval armored helm, sand-cast automobile engine blocks, Isamu Noguchi's brief dip into baby monitor design, and retrofuturist Iron Giant-esque paranoid androids. Displaying a skeuomorphic sentimentality and nostalgic acknowledgment of the industrial revolutions—those seismic shifts in production capabilities that first introduced mass manufacturing, digital electronics, and now post-humanist procedures such as artificial intelligence—Pearce's aesthetic distills elements from all four, and speculatively reflects on how such advancements inevitably end in the conflation of the physical, digital, and biological worlds.

Pearce, alongside collaborator and

Harrison Pearce 的作品中，一種鉑金色的無定形結構是個永恆存在的形態。它們的呈現形式既包括球狀的實體雕塑，有時也是繪畫中幽靈般的剪影，這些形態證實了藝術家個人生活中一個特殊的成長階段。說起來，它們的起源故事可以追溯到 Pearce 成為藝術家之前研究心靈哲學的時候，那時的他被診斷出擁有一種罕見的大腦病變——這當中的關聯性或許帶着些諷刺意味。在接下來受病變症狀影響、並思考相關哲學後果的幾年裏，Pearce 接受了不確定性，放棄了學術研究，轉而利用他的大腦突變的三維掃描（前面所提到的贅生物），來從事藝術創作。隨着時間的推移，正如在 MOU PROJECTS 展示的最新作品中所證實的那樣，這些變化無常的突變本身已經演變得無法解釋，而如今，他們是類似於麥加芬母題的存在，也是一種希區柯克式的狂想，從一個非主角的物體化身為情節發展的關鍵所在。

因此，在藝術家最新的動態聲音雕塑裝置中，我們看到，生物形態的主題實現了技術性擴增，這些雕塑通常柔軟的表面也被堅硬化以容納一系列揚聲器，彷彿直接連接至一個腦幹中樞。然而，因為每個結構都被賦予了一個外殼，它們的脆弱依舊顯而易見，這其中的靈感來自凱爾特石雕護身符、中世紀裝甲頭盔、砂鑄汽車發動機缸體、野口勇 (Isamu Noguchi) 對嬰兒監控器設計的探索，以及復古未來主義的鐵巨人式的偏執機器人。Pearce 的作品展示了一種擬物化的感情和對工業革命的懷舊之情：生產能力的巨大變化首先帶來了大規模製造和數碼電子產品，現在又帶來了人工智能和後人文主義程序。Pearce 的美學從這四個方面提煉出元素，並推測這些進步是如何不可避免地以物理、數字和生物世界的合併而告終的。

Pearce 和他的合作者低音巴松管演奏家 Thomas Stone 一起創作了一部四聲道的、由塞壬般的雕塑演奏的清唱歌劇。隨着雕塑那甲殼般的頂蓋不斷開合——通常獨立又時而同步地運作——一場清晰的對話式的合唱奏響了。透過捕捉揚聲器面朝下放置在軍鼓上而發生的物理振動，失真的低鳴成為了一種背景音效。這些彷彿口技歌手一般的動態雕塑爭相吸引觀者的注意，吶喊着，在被另一個過於急切的伴奏者打斷之前，迫切地在尋找什麼。而當這些雕塑繼續他們哀號的警告和悲傷的婉歌時，氣動閥門的爆裂聲



contrabassoonist Thomas Stone, has composed a four-channel operatic oratorio to be performed by the assembled sculptural sirens. With their carapace craniums opening and closing—sometimes synchronously, often independently—a clearly conversational chorus erupts. Distorted humming lingers in the background, the result of capturing the physical vibrations that occur when a speaker is placed face down on a snare drum. The ventriloquist vocalists jostle for attention, crying out as if in search of something before being interrupted by another, over-eager android accompanist. The popping of pneumatic valves punctuates the pathos, as the congregation continues their wailed warning, their lugubrious lament.

The impossibility of accurately choreographing the kinetic troupe, (human error here replaced with an unpredictability inherent within any engineered system), imbues the automaton orchestra with an animated anthropomorphism further aided by their unique physiognomic appearances. Neither fully figurative nor entirely abstract, they engage empathy and present as individual characters, not caricatures. Capable of conveying grief, guilt, fear, frustration, longing, and loneliness, whilst also demonstrating eccentric comic timing during the installation's abrupt ending, when Pearce's performers power-down reminiscent of a funfair animatronic ensemble at rest, awaiting another inserted dollar for coin-slotted activation.

Pneumatics, the compression or pressurization of air, could be considered Pearce's primary artistic tool, not only powering Stone's contrabassoon and the overall sculptural performance but also activating the airbrush spray gun used to complete his paintings. If the artist's sculptures represent a certain rarified rationalism, required to adhere to the laws of physics and the restrictions of the third dimension, then his paintings are where we approach the ineffable, free from the flaws and fallibility inherent to actual existence. An amalgamation of the industrial and the organic remains, that marriage of the man-made or mass manufactured with the omnipresent brain-mapped mutation, although whether in harmony or hostility it

打斷了悲愴。

由於對動態雕塑的精確把控幾乎是不可能的（人為錯誤在這裏被任何工程系統固有的不可預測性所取代），這個由機器組成的管弦樂隊被豐富而動感地擬人化，他們外貌特徵的獨特性也進一步被加強。它們既不是完全具象的，也不是完全抽象的，它們以個體角色的形式呈現，而非具有故事性的串聯。它們能夠傳達悲傷、內疚、恐懼、沮喪、渴望和孤獨，同時也在關閉電源、裝置的突然結束中表現出古怪的喜劇時刻，讓人想起一個正在休息的遊樂場內的動畫合奏，等待着一個硬幣的投入來被激活。

氣體力學（空氣的壓縮或加壓）可以被認為是 Pearce 的主要藝術工具，不僅驅動了 Stone 的低音巴松管演奏和整體雕塑的表演，還創造了 Pearce 繪畫所用的噴槍的原動力。如果說藝術家的雕塑代表了某種純粹的理性主義，需要遵守物理定律和三維的限制，那麼他的繪畫則描繪了一個近乎不可言喻的地方，沒有現實所帶來的固有缺陷和差錯。繪畫中，工業和有機的融合仍然存在，人造或大量生產的物體與無所不在的大腦突變圖像相結合，雖說這種並置究竟是和諧還是對立還無法確定。作品中，一團球狀物體的似乎正在發起攻擊，讓人想起好萊塢黃金時代的 B 級恐怖片：形態不定的敵人似乎在擴增、膨脹、包圍併吞周圍的金屬支撐物。

此外，Pearce 作品中的形象正在不斷進化至開始分泌外質流出物，就像 Mike Kelley 再現的維多利亞時代的戲劇幽靈一樣。雖然超自然的粘液狀物質在歷史上代表了形而上學的概念或關注點的物理表現，但在這裏，它是 Pearce 自己對笛卡爾二元論在哲學界令人懷疑的主導地位的可視化解讀。正如展覽的標題「自軀」所暗示的那樣——這既是一種令人愉悅的文字遊戲，也是一種物理主義的雙關語，依賴於兩個字所分別代表的含義：「自我」和「身體」。在技術不斷變化的時代，對心靈和身體之間相互關係的沉思與思考從未遠離人們的視線。



Auto Soma, 2023  
Sand-cast aluminum, steel, brass, bronze, copper, pneumatic control system, audio components, computer  
Dimensions variable  
Sound designed by Thomas Stone

《Auto Soma》· 2023  
砂鑄鋁、銅、黃銅、青銅、鋼、氣動控制系統、音響元件、電腦  
尺寸可變  
聲音由 Thomas Stone 設計



is unsure. An attack of the blob appears to be taking place, recalling B-movie horror flicks from the Golden Age of Hollywood, as the amorphous antagonists appear to expand, engorge, envelope, and engulf their surrounding metallic supports.

Additionally, in further evidence of their continued evolution, they have begun to excrete ectoplasmic effluence as if phony phantoms from those Victorian, vaudevillian vignettes recreated by Mike Kelley. Whilst the supernatural slime-like substance has historically represented the physical manifestation of metaphysical concepts or concerns, here it acts as a visualization of Pearce's own philosophical preoccupation with the dubious dominance of Cartesian Dualism. For, as the exhibition's title, *Auto Soma*, suggests—both a pleasing play on words and a physicalist pun that relies on the respective Ancient Greek translations of "self" and "body"—contemplative consideration of the interrelationship between the mind and the body, as rendered through changing technologies, is never far from view.

## About Hector Campbell

Hector Campbell is an art historian, writer, and curator based in South London. He is the co-founder and director of Soup Gallery in Elephant and Castle, which opened in May 2023.

Campbell continues to publish a weekly email newsletter, The Shock of the Now, and is currently a founding member of Collective Ending HQ, a collectively run studio and gallery complex in Deptford, South East London.

## 關於 Hector Campbell

Hector Campbell 是現居南倫敦的藝術史學家、作家及策展人。他是位於象堡的 Soup Gallery 的聯合創始人兼總監，該畫廊成立於 2023 年 5 月。

Campbell 持續每周發佈名為一份名為「當下衝擊 ( The Shock of The Now )」的電郵通訊。他目前是 Collective Ending HQ 的創始成員，Collective Ending HQ 是一間位於東南倫敦德特福德的集體工作室和畫廊綜合體。



## About the Artist

Harrison Pearce (b. 1986, UK) is an artist whose practice spans painting, sculpture, and installation. Often exploring the conceptually entangled relationship between machines and human bodies, Pearce constructs curious machine-driven objects in his sculptural works and renders wild imaginations of them on his canvases. Presented in cold, detached, and minimal aesthetics, the industrially sleek and compact shape of the entities in Pearce's works linger between humanity and artificiality, alive and metamorphosing within a dynamical system.

Pearce received his BA in Fine Art from Winchester School of Art in 2007, MA in Philosophy from the University of London in 2014, and MFA from City & Guilds of London Art School in 2016. His work has been shown at galleries and institutions worldwide and has been acquired for private and public collections.

The artist currently lives and works in London, UK.

## 關於藝術家

Harrison Pearce (生於1986年·英國)的藝術創作涵蓋繪畫、雕塑和裝置作品。Pearce經常探索機械和人體之間在概念上糾纏的關係，在他的雕塑作品中構建了令人著迷的機械驅動體，並在他的畫布上呈現出對它們的天馬行空的想象。以一種冰冷、超然而極簡的美學呈現，Pearce富有工業感形態的作品在女性和人工之間徘徊不定，在一個動態系統中存活與變形。

Pearce於2007獲得年溫徹斯特藝術學院純藝術學士學位，於2014年獲得倫敦大學哲學碩士學位，且於2016年獲得倫敦城市和公會藝術學校純藝術碩士學位。他的作品曾在世界各地的畫廊和機構展出，並被私人和公共機構收藏。

藝術家目前生活和工作的英國倫敦。



Portrait of Harrison Pearce

Harrison Pearce 肖像

Copyright © 2023 MOU PROJECTS Ltd. and the artist.

All images courtesy of Harrison Pearce and MOU PROJECTS.

All rights reserved.

MOU PROJECTS  
202, The Factory, 1 Yip Fat Street,  
Wong Chuk Hang, Hong Kong  
mouprojects.com

MOU PROJECTS