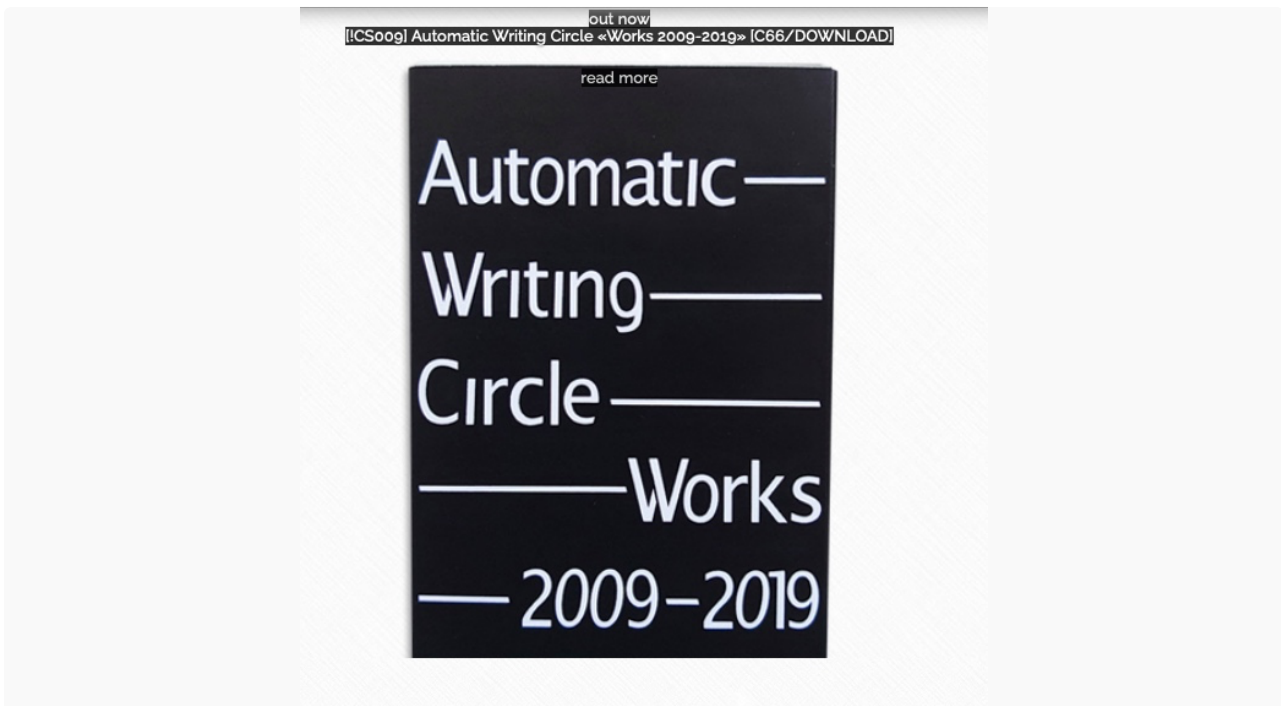


Automatic Writing Circle: Works 2009-2019



[Automatic Writing Circle's «Works 2009-2019»](#) collects live recordings and studio mixes from a decade of the group's existence, and documents their activity and creative / compositional approaches over the last ten years. Formed by Thomas Gardner in London in 2007, and having featured a number of artists and musicians from very diverse backgrounds throughout the years, the group performed at prestigious festivals and venues across the United Kingdom and Europe. The three pieces on this cassette present us with a wide range of sonic material - from electro-acoustics and jittery concrete, to free improvisation and contemporary classical - reflecting upon both the cultural and musical backgrounds of the performers, as well as the environments in which performances have taken place.

Performance of "Fortress For Three Musicians"

The outdoor performances use a specially constructed mobile environment influenced by the Talmudic concept of the sukkah.



Automatic Writing Circle are from diverse musical backgrounds, amongst them, historically informed performance, noise musics, electroacoustic composition, experimental and popular music. They meet to explore the nature of these traditions, the currents that flow between them, and to experience the loss and rediscovery of sonic identity aided by the mediation of the Ouija instrument. As the manual on Automatic Writing suggests [1]:

“When any form of control is consciously given, it is important to be properly protected. This is done by visualizing a white light (circle) then mentally stepping inside and asking for protection prior to beginning automatic writing.”

Whilst not all the instrumentalists are surrounded by white light, those most at risk, the players of the Ouija board, are placed definitively in its circle. Indeed, it is the white light itself that creates the shadows of their hands, and it is the shadows (with the intervention of omniscient media technology) which summon up the shaded sonic relationships that may be present, arriving from beyond the circle of light.

For example, all the location recordings heard have been made by the musicians in the group. When a recording is sounding it may evoke a personal memory. The musician who made the recording may be temporarily possessed by this memory, a process that Salomé Voegelin has called a ‘pathetic trigger’ [2]. The state of being, the bodily and mental state that is evoked in the musician, communicates with us, and may in turn transform our relationships in the here and now.

The moving focus of the ‘here and now’ is something that can surprise, enlighten or unhinge us while performing together in the AWC. Part of this changing focus stems from the varied instruments being performed, the Ney, the Baroque Flute, the Cello and the Daf – each of which have rich cultural histories in which the performers have, at various times, been deeply immersed. The performers may be liberating themselves from these histories, or re-engaging them in a novel context. They are assisted in this process by the performers of the Ouija board, whose focus is not so much on a particular instrument or cultural history, but on mediating between the different spirits that may appear.

[1] [Automatic Writing](#)

[2] Voegelin, S. (2006). Sonic memory material as 'pathetic trigger', *Organised Sound*, 11(01), 13–18.