



# Ryoji Ikeda

## Paris 2008

SPECTRA [PARIS], NUIT BLANCHE, 4–5 OCTOBER 2008

V≠L, LE LABORATOIRE, 11 OCTOBER 2008 – 12 JANUARY 2009

DATAMATICS [VER.2.0], CENTRE POMPIDOU, 21 – 22 NOVEMBER 2008

DATA.TRON, GRAND PALAIS, 18 – 31 DECEMBER 2008

*...my intention is always polarized by concepts of the 'beautiful and the sublime'. To me, beauty is crystal; rationality, precision, simplicity, elegance, delicacy. The sublime is infinity, infinitesimal, immensity, indescribable, ineffable. The purest beauty is the world of mathematics.*

### Ryoji Ikeda

Paris' night sky is illuminated with blinding white light beamed from scores of highly powered architectural lamps in international artist Ryoji Ikeda's major new commission, *spectra [paris]* for *Nuit Blanche*, the city's annual 'white night' contemporary arts festival. Passing through the grid of intense white light, visitors' body movements create a unique symphony of ultra pure sine soundwaves. Situated on a plaza close to the tallest skyscraper in France, Ikeda's startling twelve-hour transformation of Paris is one of the key events for *Nuit Blanche*.

*spectra [paris]* follows on from *spectra [amsterdam]*, Ikeda's acclaimed commission for DREAM AMSTERDAM 2008, his first large-scale project for a public space pushing light to its utmost extremes in the city's Vondel Park, Van Gogh Museum, Westergazfabriek and on Java Island.

*spectra [paris]* precedes *V≠L*, Ikeda's first major solo exhibition in France. *V≠L* showcases three new works by the artist as part of Festival d'Automne, commissioned by Le Laboratoire, a new space in Paris dedicated to creating new forms of art through scientist / artist collaboration. *V≠L* has evolved from Ikeda's close association with the mathematician and number theorist Benedict Gross and continues his artistic explorations of the infinite and sublime in mathematics.

At the Centre Pompidou in November, Ikeda performs *datamatics [ver 2.0]*, a full-length audiovisual concert using pure data as a source for sound and visuals, and combining abstract and mimetic presentations of matter, time and space. In December at the Grand Palais, he presents *data.tron*, an audiovisual installation in which every single pixel of video image is strictly calculated by mathematical principle. The vast scale of the projection heightens and intensifies the viewer's perception and total immersion in the piece. The installation is a centrepiece of *Dans la nuit, des Images*, a larger show at the Grand Palais.

Ryoji Ikeda is an internationally acclaimed composer and artist who creates highly technologised installations that play with human perception in concerts, installations and recordings, integrating sound, acoustics and sublime imagery derived from pure mathematics and real-world data. Accompanied by video and graphics projected at cinematic scale in his concerts, Ikeda's compositions achieve synaesthetic effects as sound and image become almost indistinguishable provoking an intensely physical experience.

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# Notes to editors

1. **Ryoji Ikeda** is Japan's leading electronic composer and sound artist who has gained a reputation as one of the few international artists working convincingly across both visual and sonic media. His work focuses on the minutiae of ultrasonics, frequencies and the essential characteristics of sound. Since 1995, Ikeda has been intensely active through concerts, installations, and recordings, integrating sound, acoustics and sublime imagery. In his works, music, time and space are shaped by mathematical methods as Ikeda explores sound as sensation, pulling apart its physical properties to reveal its relationship with human perception.

An earlier installation, *spectra II*, and its adaptation for Terminal 5 at JFK Airport, faced viewers with a long corridor, which alternated between total darkness and intense, dazzling brightness and could only be navigated by the acoustic interaction between sound and the architecture of the space. Another work, *db*, combined the totally dark space of an anechoic chamber with a silent white, reflective room illuminated by hundreds of fluorescent tubes. Using computer and digital technologies, Ikeda's audiovisual concerts *datamatics* (2006 – present), *C'I* (2004 – 2007) and *formula* (2000 – 2006) suggest a unique orientation for our future multimedia environment and culture. His acclaimed installations *data.tron [prototype]* (2007), *data.film n°1-a* (2007), *data.spectra* (2005), *spectra [for terminal 5, JFK]* (2004), *spectra II* (2002) and *db* (2002) continue to diffuse Ikeda's aesthetic of 'ultra minimalism'. For the past six years, Forma has produced and toured Ikeda's exhibition and performance projects worldwide. Ikeda is performing alongside other Forma artists at RomaEuropa Festival, 11 October 2008. From 1 April to 7 June 2009, a major exhibition of Ikeda's work, including many new works, opens at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo. [www.ryojii Ikeda.com](http://www.ryojii Ikeda.com)

2. **Nuit Blanche 2008** is directed by Herve Chandès and Ronald Chammah. The train stations and monuments of Paris will be the focus for the programme in which fifty projects utilise the windows, facades and platforms of the stations, as well as certain churches and monuments in the city. The programme includes international artists such as Tony Oursler (USA), Shaad Ali (India) and Ryoji Ikeda (Japan). *Nuit Blanche 2008* takes place from 4 – 5 October from 19:00 to 7:00.

3. **Festival d'Automne** was created in 1972 by Michel Guy, Georges Pompidou's Minister of Culture. It aims to provoke and present experimental work across all art forms with an emphasis on emerging artists. It commissions new work, often in collaboration with global partners and aims to provide access to non-western cultures, including Japan, China, Australia, Morocco, India, Korea, Egypt, South Africa and Iran.

4. **Le Laboratoire** is a dynamic space which allows pioneering artists and scientists to collaborate and create new forms of art and design around a central theme. Four types of innovation are engaged in through Le Laboratoire's programme: cultural, where the artistic imagination is exercised by collaboration with the scientist; industrial, where design skills enable the scientist to make new inventions; educational, where the artist and scientist pass on their knowledge to a student; and humanitarian, where artists and scientists identify new solutions to human and world issues.

5. **Centre national d'art et de culture Georges Pompidou** was created to provide an original cultural institution focused on modern and contemporary art works, where the visual arts would rub shoulders with theatre, music, cinema, literature and the spoken word. Housed in a building designed by Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers, the Centre Pompidou opened in 1977.

6. **Grand Palais** is an historical site built for the World Fair 1900 that has more recently gained a reputation for contemporary arts programming. It also houses the Galeries Nationales and the Palais de la Découverte.

