

Telephones are mindless machines. They are tools we use to connect voices to each other. But those voices enter into the make-up of the machine and become one if its components. In that sense, there is a machine in every man and a man in every machine.

Engines and photocopiers are also mindless machines. But they still have a heartbeat and a breathing pattern—turning and pumping and turning and scanning and turning and printing and turning over and over again. They have a rhythm’n’blues.

It takes thousands of photocopies to make an animated film. For their film *Gummibaum* (1993), Thomas Bayrle and Daniel Kohl became the machine, repetitively and mechanically stretching, drawing, erasing, and moving bits and pieces of images around. They merged aerial footage of children in a playground within the rotating image of a rubber tree plant. The bodies move across the leaves’ surfaces like mitochondria in a cell—propelling the plant around and around again.

Of course, film itself performs a kind of cellular reproduction. As millions of frames pass through a mindless projector, pictures jump to life. It's difficult to distinguish which part is alive and which part isn't.

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In 2010, Thomas Bayrle began cutting up car engines, as if he were performing a sort of open-heart surgery. Working with engineers, he reconstructed the components in new configurations and patterns, but made sure the motors still worked. In watching and listening to the mechanical repetitions, Bayrle recognized the soft and regular sound of meditation, and so he added recordings of religious preachers murmurings their prayers.

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Last month, Daniel Kohl made a wire-sculpture model of one of those engines. Equipped with a small motor, it performs the movement of the pistons and the crankshaft, in miniature. It's still a machine, but is no longer a tool.

Deleuze and Guattari would call this a *desiring machine*—an instance of pure abstraction where the machine finds itself in an affective state, populated by desire and intentionality. An impossibly happy or anxious machine.

On March 22nd, 2013, Thomas Bayrle and Daniel Kohl screen and discuss their collaborations. Kohl also integrates his films within the gallery, adding them to the accumulating works on view.