

SUPERIMPOSITION
by Polisonum

6 September – 26 October 2025

In SUPERIMPOSITION the Italian artist duo Polisonum (Filippo Lilli and Donato Loforese) investigates the theme of listening, exploring the concept of *earworms*: catchy sequences of melody fragments from pop music, advertising, TV theme songs or video games that loop endlessly in our minds. This phenomenon has been known for a long time. In his 2007 book *Musicophilia: Tales of Music and the Brain*, British neurologist Oliver Sacks referred to it as “brainworms” that forcefully nestle themselves in the brain, behaving much like parasites and triggering mechanisms of cognitive control. They inhabit airports, bars, shops, gyms, and shopping malls, and are characterised by redundant sequences of sounds from which it is difficult to break free.

To realise this project, a data analysis was carried out on more than 10,000 English-language music tracks that appeared in the popular international charts between 2000 and 2022. This analysis, based on the word repeatability index, was automated using specially developed software. The songs were then superimposed to generate a composition devoid of any recognisable melody – a gesture of pulverisation and disarmament of the earworm that we hear diffused throughout the entire exhibition space (*Superscape*).

At *ALTEFABRIK the project is on display in its entirety for the first time – a journey that moves between research processes and artistic interventions. SUPERIMPOSITION unfolds in all its parts as a site-specific installation.

Visitors embark on a multi-layered parcours that unveils the creative process behind this interdisciplinary work, which oscillates between sound practices, fashion, performance, research, and data analysis. The exhibition presents snapshots of various developmental stages through several distinct works, including experimental armor-like garments (*S05 – S10*) conceived as visualisations of earworm control. These sculptural dresses, developed in collaboration with the fashion brand MARIOS, are designed to protect the body from invasive musical tracks and feature sound-protective fabrics in striking forms—from fluorescent yellow puffy ensembles and transparent black mesh pieces to anthracite nylon jumpsuits with sculptural details. They function both as a warning, raising visitors’ awareness of the control exerted through the music industry, and as scientifically grounded protective clothing. Their

sound absorption has been measured and verified by DENERG, the Energy Department of the Polytechnic University of Turin. The exhibition weaves together these protective garments with fragments of algorithmic text analysis of catchy tunes that function as cut-up poetry, illuminating the space through a double-sided LED wall –a reworked version of a large LED wall set used in the first performative act in Luxembourg (2024). They reveal the impoverishment of language in pop song lyrics through data notation. The journey encompasses video documentation of the Superimposition performance, an immersive anechoic room installation with binaural sound (*Anechoic room*) where an intimate listening experience is activated, and as a central moment the looping Superimposition video work –conceived as a fashion movie– that guide visitors through this exploration of how we might shield ourselves from the persistent grip of musical earworms.

For the opening of the SUPERIMPOSITION exhibition on September 5, the artist duo Polisonum brought the exhibition space to life with a performative act, conceived as a dystopian catwalk and reminiscent of ancient rituals. At *ALTEFABRIK, one performer, seems haunted, reenacting her proper earworms in her brain. The act of changing the sound absorbing dresses in front of the audience is conceived as a choreography and an intimate encounter, and transports the listeners to an eerie inner soundscape. Through the remaining scenography, a Follow-spot, the performative act continues to inhabit the space adding a different sense of presence to the exhibition.

The exhibition is curated by Francesca Ceccherini and Anastasia Chaguidouline

Data curation: Elisa Bernardoni

Performer: Valentina Sansone

Fashion Design: MARIOS Collective

Research of material and phono-resistance: Marco Carlo Masoero, Louena Shtrepi, Politecnico di Torino, DENERG

Scientific support: Francesco Nucci, Neuroscientist

Video work in collaboration with: Vittorio Antonacci

SUPERIMPOSITION is supported by the Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity of the Italian Ministry of Culture under the Italian Council program (2023) and has been presented at Ars Electronica (Linz, AT), Careof (Milan, IT), Cerclé Cité (Luxembourg, LX), Haus der Kunst (Munich, DE), MAMbo - Museo d'Arte Moderna Bologna (Bologna, IT), Politecnico di Torino (Turin, IT), and OTO SOUND MUSEUM (Zurich, CH). wird von der Generaldirektion für zeitgenössische Kreativität des italienischen Kulturministeriums im Rahmen des Italian Council-Programms (2023) unterstützt und wurde bereits bei Ars Electronica (Linz, AT), Careof (Mailand, IT), Cerclé Cité (Luxemburg, LX), Haus der Kunst (München, DE), MAMbo - Museo d'Arte Moderna Bologna (Bologna, IT), Politecnico di Torino (Turin, IT) und OTO SOUND MUSEUM (Zürich, CH) präsentiert.

EVENTS

KULTURNACHT

Samstag, 20. September 2025, 18 und 20 Uhr

Führung mit der Kuratorin Anastasia Chaguidouline

KINDER KUNST LABOR

Mittwoch, 24. September 2025, 14.30 – 16.30 Uhr

Workshop für Kinder mit Rilana Schmid

CHECKCHES

Mittwoch, 24. September 2025, 18 – 19 Uhr

Interaktiver Rundgang mit Rilana Schmid

*ALTEFABRIK is supported by:

City Rapperswil-Jona | Cultural Funding Canton of St. Gallen | Swisslos |

KulturZürichseeLinth | Ortsgemeinde Rapperswil-Jona | Foundation Asuera