



MAUMAUS
Residency Programme

Press Release | 10.06.2026

Ed Atkins

Pianowork 2

20.06 – 27.09.2026

(closed between 03.08 and 01.09)

20.06 | 17h00 Conversation between Ed Atkins and Simon Thompson
| 17h30 Opening of the exhibition

Lumiar Cité presents **Pianowork 2** by British artist Ed Atkins – his first exhibition in Portugal. For the show, Atkins devised a large, extruded, hollow sculptural screen in black MDF that fills the upper gallery; the eponymous video is projected on its outer surface, while inside's a void.

For over a decade, Atkins has worked with computer-generated moving image, writing, and the staging of speech and gesture — examining the uncertain border between presence and likeness, sincerity and artifice, the body and its digital representation. His digital surrogates, at once intimate and uncanny, function less as illusions than as devices through which questions of feeling, interiority, and agency are tested against technologies that promise the wrong fidelity.

Pianowork 2 (2023) is a sixteen-minute animation in which a digital double of the artist performs *Klavierstück 2* (2001), a minimalist piano composition by the Swiss composer Jürg Frey. To make it, Atkins played in a motion-capture suit with a camera mounted to his head; his head and hands were scanned separately for likeness. Driven by his gestures and rendered as faithfully as the medium allows, the avatar oscillates between accurate replication and the small failures that betray it: a hand that trembles, a breath that doesn't quite synchronise with the body, a gaze that holds just a fraction too long — realism persisting as residue, always almost achieved.

The exhibition revisits long-standing problems: how depictions of pain, concentration, and effort challenge the viewer; how interiority is granted to or withheld from figures on screen; how new technologies of digital likeness reactivate much older questions of portraiture, mourning, and the ethics of looking. As Ben Lerner has observed, Atkins's work asks ancient questions in newly pressing terms — setting in motion alternations between past and future, human and avatar, presence and likeness, automatism and invention.

The exhibition is accompanied by a pamphlet designed by the artist, which includes texts by him and Ben Lerner.

Ed Atkins (Oxford, 1982) is a British artist living in Copenhagen. In recent years, Atkins has presented solo exhibitions at Kunsthaus Bregenz; Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin; Castello di Rivoli, Turin; Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam; K21, Düsseldorf; MoMA PS1, New York; and Serpentine Galleries, London, among many other venues. In 2025, Atkins co-wrote the libretto for Rebecca Saunders's opera *LASH* at Deutsche Oper Berlin, while a mid-career retrospective opened at Tate Britain, London, in the same year. Alongside the poet Steven Zultanski, Atkins wrote and directed the play *Sorcerer* (2022) and the feature film *Nurses Come and Go, but None for Me* (2025). He is the author of *A Primer for Cadavers* (2016), the epic anti-poem *Old Food* (2019) and the confessional nothing *Flower* (2025), all published by Fitzcarraldo Editions. He teaches at Kunstakademie Düsseldorf.

The artist and the artistic director, Jürgen Bock, are available for talks, interviews or guided tours with the press.

For further information, please contact:

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Lumiar Cité

Rua Tomás del Negro, 8A 1750-105 Lisbon, Portugal

Wednesday to Sunday, 15h to 19h, or by appointment

Bus: 798 stop Rua Helena Vaz da Silva, 717 stop Av. Carlos Paredes

Metro: Lumiar (exit Estrada da Torre)

Production:

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