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Art by Machine

Programmable Analogue Drawing Machines

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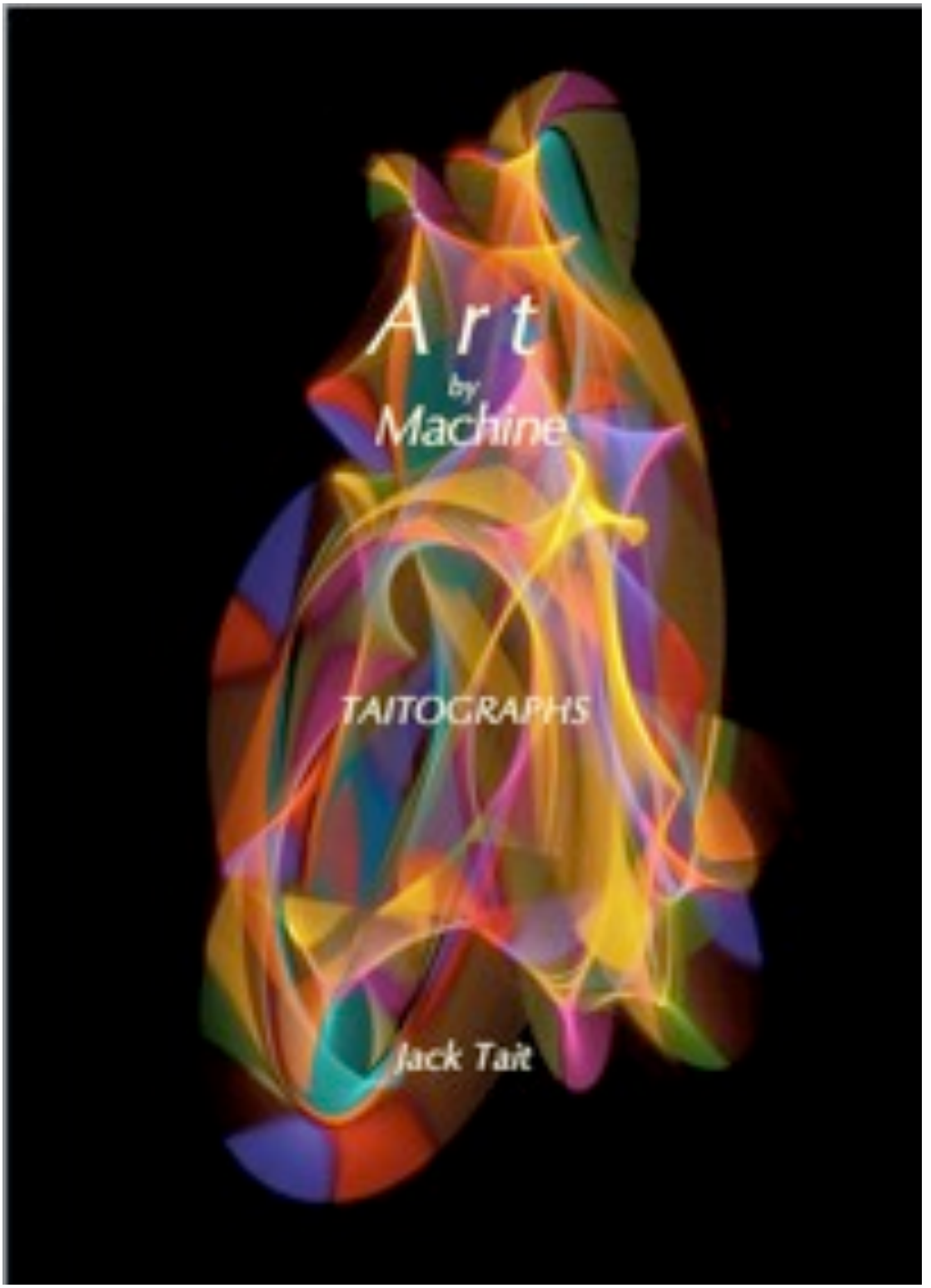

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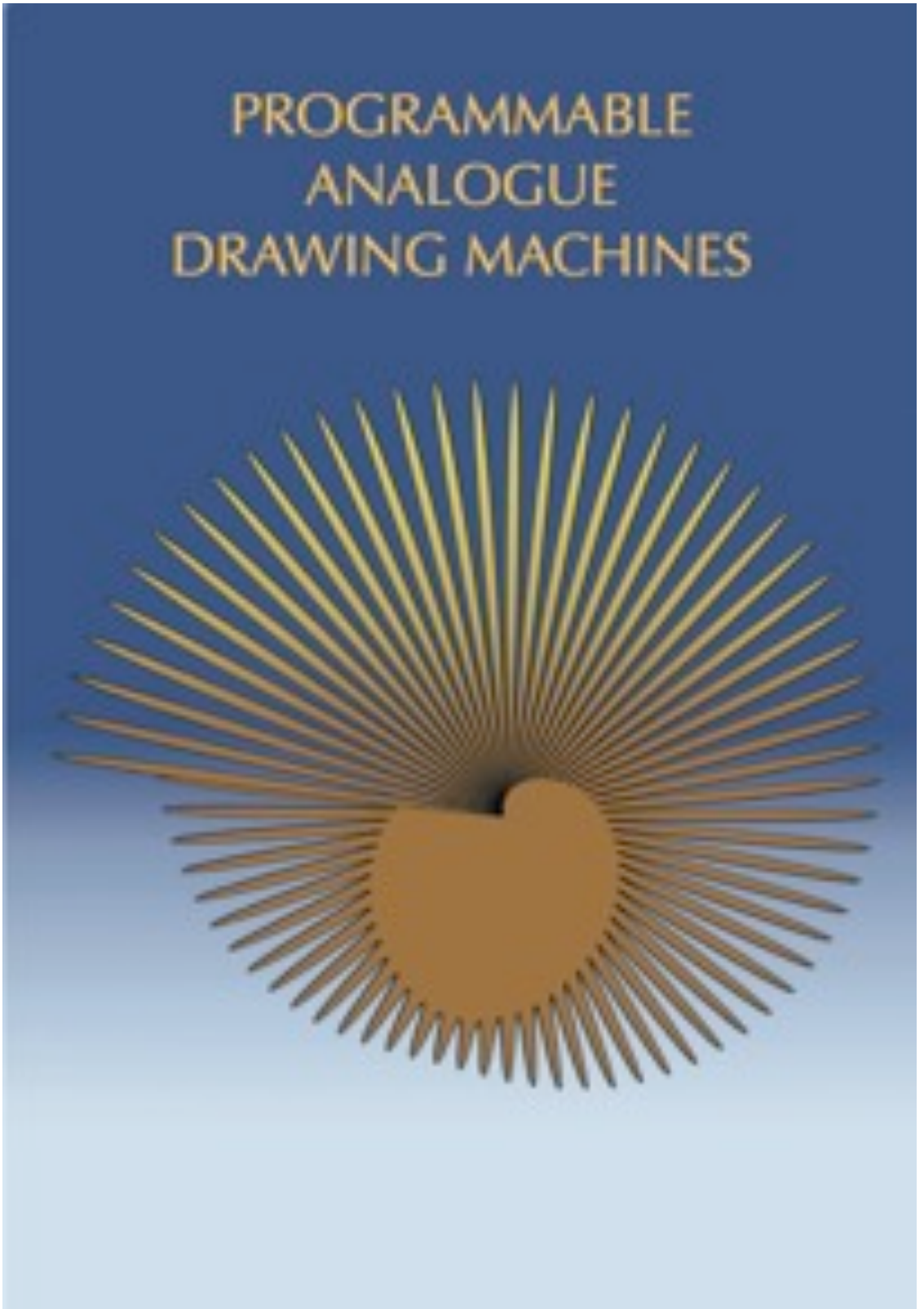

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This book is about curiosity; how simple instructions given to a drawing machine can generate complex images. If a machine drawing is seen as an art work this raises philosophical questions about how art works. All the steps in the production of the art work are necessarily transparent, unlike other circumstances where we do not have access to the workings of the artist's mind. The decision process is delegated to a machine; wholly different from conventional practice where the artist's hand/eye co-ordination is essential.

The book is derived from my Ph.D thesis; abridged and rearranged to be accessible to the general public. In A4 format, it has 138 pages with 199 illustrations. Seven machines, four timer/programmers are described together with the drawings made by them. Many drawings are made with pens; others made by light traces recorded by a digital camera. All the images are processed in Adobe Photoshop; the pen drawings have to be scanned and in some cases colour is added.

The machines and programmers are now housed at the South Kensington Science Museum where they will eventually be displayed alongside their images. Other machines have been built and plans are ongoing to mass produce them for use in schools.

Other books by the author are: ***'Beyond Photography'****, on the use of the photograph in Fine Print.* ***'The Illustrated Dictionary of Photography'****, joint author, teaching photography theory by drawings. It won Time Life Award in 1973 for Joint Best Buy of the Year.* ***'The Curate's Kingdom'*** *is a book documenting a year in the life of a parish church where a black poodle is the curate. Most recent publication is* ***'A Sapper in Flanders'****, joint author, based on photographs taken in 1918 on a simple box camera.*

Drawing; simple instructions from a timer to 'X:Y type' plotter.

Turntable machine set up to draw with light. Hybrid machine with integral programming but also able to accept instructions from timers.

Dr. Jack Tait 2014