

SALOMÉ CHATRIOT
FIRST MONTH OF ANGER

In *First Month of Anger* (2026), a new video installation and the centerpiece of the eponymous exhibition by multidisciplinary artist Salomé Chatriot at New Galerie, the machine that changed the artist's life forever virtually comes to life. Chatriot first encountered this machine—a gigantic turbo alternator—in 2018, through an exhibition held at the decommissioned paper mill Moulins de Sainte Marie in Paris. A deep fascination and ongoing practice sprang from their initial encounter, unfolding through performance, painting, video, and interactive sculpture. The turbo alternator became a counterpart with which the artist desired to merge, 'breathing' life into 'her' empty shell.

After years of intense engagement, something in Chatriot shifted. "I was using her," the artist stated in our studio visit, recognizing a kind of violence she felt she had imposed on the machine. Chatriot continued by describing a relationship built around the reanimation of a technological relic or inanimate other—a narrative closer to the story of Pygmalion or Frankenstein's obsession with creating 'his monster' than with mutual exchange. "Machines have been used for centuries as distorted mirrors to define what it means to be human," said Chatriot—and such myths lie at the heart of her artistic practice.

In turn, the video *First Month of Anger* tells a speculative tale about machinic reincarnation. The five-channel installation consists of one large projection and two vertical screens on either side, confronting the viewer more like an altar than a cinema. The premise of the story centers the machine as protagonist who narrates the experience of waking in an intangible but living human body. From the machine's perspective, this organism is unstable and hypersensitive, governed by irregular rhythms, and subject to erratic biological processes. A constant threat of nervous breakdown hovers, and unknown sensations such as pain and suffering occur. Over time, the machine begins to test the limits of this newly inhabited 'body' by pursuing contradictory desires or trying to perform impossible gestures that nearly lead to its collapse.

The computer-generated figure is headless with attributes we could identify as female, recalling early internet images of digitally manipulated women that circulated as fetish objects. Against a dark background, the transparent and reflective figure twists and turns as the perspective circles, then enters the body's digital landscape. Chatriot uses 3D rendering, inverted normals, and a Möbius-like structure—imagine a two-way mirror turned inside out—to fold the body back onto itself without which it would technically disappear. This is not merely formal; it underlines the machine's existence as conditional, paradoxical, and entirely dependent on reflection. The machine exists only as representation.

The installation is accompanied by a soundtrack guiding the viewer through different states of awakening, distress, and submission. The original score is produced by New York-based Swiss composer Mauro Hertig, who works with orchestras and as a vocalist under the alias Xol Meissner. Initially, Chatriot and Hertig imagined the machine's voice as entirely abstracted and non-human. In the end, they settled on a mix of idiomatic language and sound: Hertig's own heavily distorted voice, recorded through multiple channels and layered with analog and synthetic instruments. The spoken words are extracts from Chatriot's poetic narrative, centering the artist's written practice for the first time.

Alongside the central installation, the exhibition presents an existing work titled *Partita (Butler)* (2025), as well as a newly produced sculpture and a series of paintings that extend the video's visual world. *Partita (Butler)* is a performance set consisting of an interactive leather sculpture shaped like a swirling conch and a matching leather costume. It was produced during a six-month residency at Fondation d'entreprise Hermès, in which Chatriot collaborated with the brand's artisans but retained full creative autonomy. Initially conceptualized as interactive instruments, the four works made with Hermès exist solely as objects presented on tables in the exhibition space, never to be activated.