

## Jean-Pierre Hébert

One of the world's first fine artists to co-opt computer code as an essential tool, [Jean-Pierre Hébert](#) has used computer programming for nearly four decades to compose his pieces and to drive mechanical and electronic devices that assist him in making intensely beautiful, meditative, math-based works on paper, sand, water, and other materials.

Hébert was born in Calais, [France](#), in 1939. As a youth he frequented the Galerie Alphonse Chave in Vence, a village in Provence where he spent summers with his grandparents. At the gallery and in the neighborhood, he viewed fresh work [by](#) artists such as Matisse, Man Ray, Max Ernst, [Chagall](#), Picasso, [Cocteau](#), and Léger. Alphonse Chave encouraged Hébert to explore the gallery's attics and storage rooms filled with art brut and folk art. In 1959, as an engineering student, Hébert landed a summer job with IBM and programmed in fortran on the first commercial computer in Europe. In the early [1970s](#), [as](#) a consultant in Paris working with the very first HP lab computers and plotters, Hébert began using [computers](#) as [tools](#) to create drawings.

His attraction to patterns and textures in [nature](#), such as wind on sand or waves on water, along with his affinity for mathematics and science, inspired him to independently develop his own software to use computers to draw ever more complex graphical forms on the early plotters, pioneering what is now computational drawing.

In 1985 Hébert moved to Santa Barbara, California. [His first solo exhibition, "Sans lever la plume,"](#) was held in 1989 at Galerie Alphonse Chave, and presented a variety of ink-on-paper drawings made with mechanical plotters.

In 2003 Hébert was appointed [artist in residence](#) at the Kavli Institute for Theoretical Physics at [the University of California, Santa Barbara](#). He was awarded a Pollock-Krasner fellowship in 2006 and a David Bermant Foundation grant in 2008. His work has been presented [in solo and group shows](#) nationally and internationally, and has entered the collections of several museum and public institutions in the US and the EU.