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Maria Orciuoli (Avellino, *1989) is an artist living and working between Linz and Berlin. Her practice combines design, film, music, performance, physical computing and creative coding.

Her work swings between intimate close-ups on personal stories and zoom-out to collective narratives. Incorporating leisure, social and political critique, her films, installations, and public events range from small-town games to screaming interfaces, from a candy-activated seat sensor to the price index of a raindrop.

In a parallel universe, she runs KO-HUM, a communication agency promoting artists and cultural producers working in music and performing arts.

My work is influenced by my experiences as an Italian immigrant and digital worker. I draw inspiration from the mutable and fast-paced landscape of social media, as well as the potential for technology to challenge physical and conceptual boundaries. In my practice, I often employ algorithmically driven forms of media experiences to explore how technology absorbs, mediates, and shapes our sense of self and the relationship to the other.

Untitled (Passport Hologram)
mixed media installation, 2023-2024



Untitled (Passport Hologram)
installation, 2023-2024

hologram of expired passport on polymer film.
glass (dimension: 12 cm x 12 cm), light, soil

keywords: borders, identity, holographic paradigm

Nationality, or statelessness, is a phenomenon which, in most cases, is bestowed upon us without any of our input. Despite this, it effects our entire existence and subjects us to the whims of those in authority over the country we happen to be born in, or the parents we are born to.

At the core of this piece lies the hologram of an expired passport, where the Holographic Paradigm functions as a meta-structure providing insight into the phenomena observed in consensual reality. The concept of nationality or statelessness, mirrors a hologram, and within this framework, consensual reality emerges as an interplay of collective agreements on what is deemed real and true.

The installation offers a shifting perspective based on the viewer's position, presenting different angles of the subject matter as the viewer moves around. Symbolic of the mutable nature of physical and conceptual boundaries, it offers an insight into how these interact with our sense of self and the spaces we inhabit.

Partly produced during a 2023's residency in Japan at Yoichi Ochiai's Digital Nature Lab.

Raindrop Price Index - You Cannot Refill A Sea With Tears,
audiovisual installation, 2024



Raindrop Price Index - You Cannot Refill A Sea With Tears

audiovisual installation
and artistic research poster, 2023

Max/Msp audio-visual live demo of the three patches
generating respectively sound, rain precipitation data and
evapotranspiration measurements. Audio starts at 00:00:40.

Headphones recommended.

(<https://vimeo.com/820767591/516f0e104b?share=copy>)

***How would our perception of the ecosystem change if we
shifted from human-centered concerns to view rain as a
shared resource within Earth's ecosystems?***

Raindrop Price Index: You Cannot Refill A Sea With Tears is a research-based artwork and commentary on data-driven technologies used for ecosystem valuation. It presents Earth's rain precipitation and evapotranspiration data as a tangible entity that, separated from its scientific context, confronts the observer with information transcending human scales, emphasizing nature's unpredictable command.

keywords: Big Data, Climate Services, Natural Capital Accounting¹, Nature Abstraction, Critical Data, AI & Ecosystem Services

Drawing from early meteorology and price charts, Raindrop Price Index presents terrestrial ecosystems' water balance cycles within today's frames of computational reading and control of our environment. It features two generative audio-visual animations I created in Max/MSP utilizing the ClimateEngine's 2011-2021 TerraClimate dataset, sourced from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) by University of Idaho's researchers. Monthly rainfall and evapotranspiration measurements from 2011 to 2021, expressed in millimeters, appear on the pixelated canvases through generative algorithms, resembling the falling of raindrops on a surface. Sound, lines, and contours dynamically shift in rhythm with Earth's water cycle balance and terrestrial ecosystems' rain consumption patterns. In this work, I intentionally reference the aesthetic of early meteorology visualizations, such as the black and white palette of isohyets and early commodities price charts, framing the data within the tools used for knowledge acquisition and environmental economics decision making.



QR code to artistic research poster available
digitally at [https://mariaorciuoli.xyz/
raindroppriceindex.html](https://mariaorciuoli.xyz/raindroppriceindex.html)
splace Gallery, 2024 Linz (AT)

With this framing, the artwork seeks to question how the anthropocentric view of events beyond human reach conditions our experience of the natural world, while highlighting the subjective nature of the scientific method applied in economics. Stripped of its intended use and context, big data transforms into a tangible entity, confronting the observer with information transcending human scales and reintegrating it into the realm of personal experience.

The work's title draws from the economic model of supply and demand to re-interpret its framework from the perspective of terrestrial ecosystems as major consumers of rain. The second part of the title pays homage to the tragedy of the Aral Sea's human-driven disappearance and prompts to reflect on the interplay between nature, society, and economic systems.

Raindrop Price Index: You Cannot Refill A Sea With Tears uses the ClimateEngine's 2011-2021 TerraClimate dataset, processed by Google Earth and obtained from NOAA and NASA by the University of Idaho's researchers.

The research and the artwork originated in spring 2023 within the context of *Critical Data* lectures under the supervision of Univ.Prof. Mag.art Manuela Naveau from the Interface Cultures department of the University of Art & Design Linz and PhD candidate Danial Karpati from the University of Luxembourg. It reached completion during the Japanese rainy season while I undertook a three-month research fellowship at the **Digital Nature Lab**, guided by media artist and Univ.Prof. Yoichi Ochiai at the University of Tsukuba.

The audio-visual installation and poster have been exhibited at **Ars Electronica Festival** 2023 in Linz, the **Computational Creativity Hub** of the University of Luxembourg, **PUSH UX Conference 2023** in Munich, **Speculum Artium 2023** in Trbovlje, **splace Gallery** in Linz as part of the 2024 group exhibition **AI+ Art & Artificial Intelligence**.

Tomato Propaganda
mixed media installation, 2022-2023



**Tomato Propaganda -
*The Self-Destructing Contract***
2023

board game, manual press, films,
graphics, prints, materials

Developed in collaboration with cultural mediator and
immigrants rights activist Pierre Dimitri Meka (CF/IT).

Trailer (00:02:31 IT/ENG with ENG subtitles)
<https://youtu.be/AaNyM2wSuqU>

On view at **The Wrong Biennale** until March 1st, 2024:
Hyper*Espresso Italian digital pavilion

keywords: labor exploitation, migration, human rights, consumer
culture, food supply chain

In Italy, the third-largest tomato producer globally, the demand
for seasonal labor attracts economic migrants who risk to be
recruited by 'gangmasters' known as caporale, exposing them to
illegal wages, poor working conditions and lack of contracts.
Addressing these challenges requires a commitment to fair
pricing that reflects actual production costs, coupled with
awareness campaigns around labor rights and ethical practices.

In January 2023, Tomato Propaganda was taken to a local
supermarket in a small town in the Campania region. Visitors
and employees were invited to participate in an interactive price
bidding game, creating a win-win/lose-lose scenario. The core of
the interactive experience featured a manual press, a tomato can,
tokens, a dice, and scenario cards inspired by news headlines
about commodity markets and the factors influencing the
volatility of their prices. The game involved a seller and multiple
consumers embarking on a quest to find a price balance that
would prevent a tomato can from being crushed under a manual
press. Beyond being a game, this activity served as a metaphor for
the dynamics among consumers, producers, markets and the
realms of social and environmental sustainability.

The performance consolidated in an installation, incorporating
the game's materials, film, graphics and documents as forms of
activation, dissemination, and reflection. Conceptually, Tomato
Propaganda is a statement – that people can set alternative
narratives to reclaim economics as a means to address social
change.

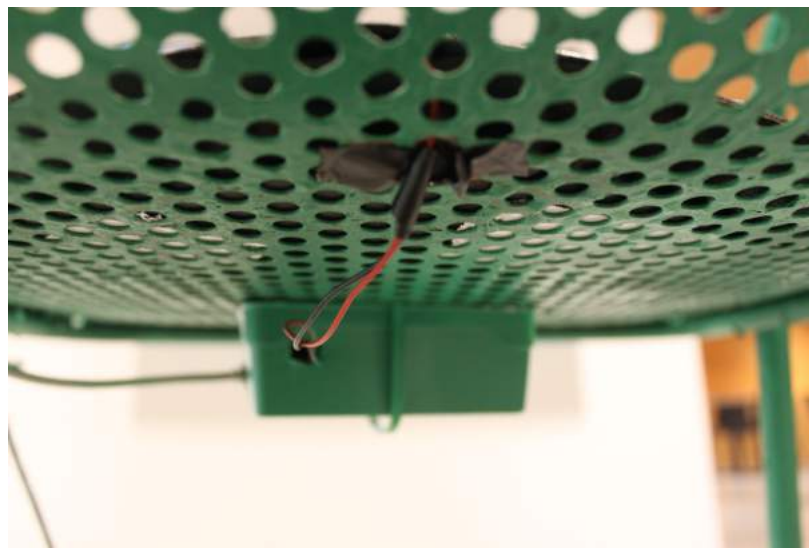
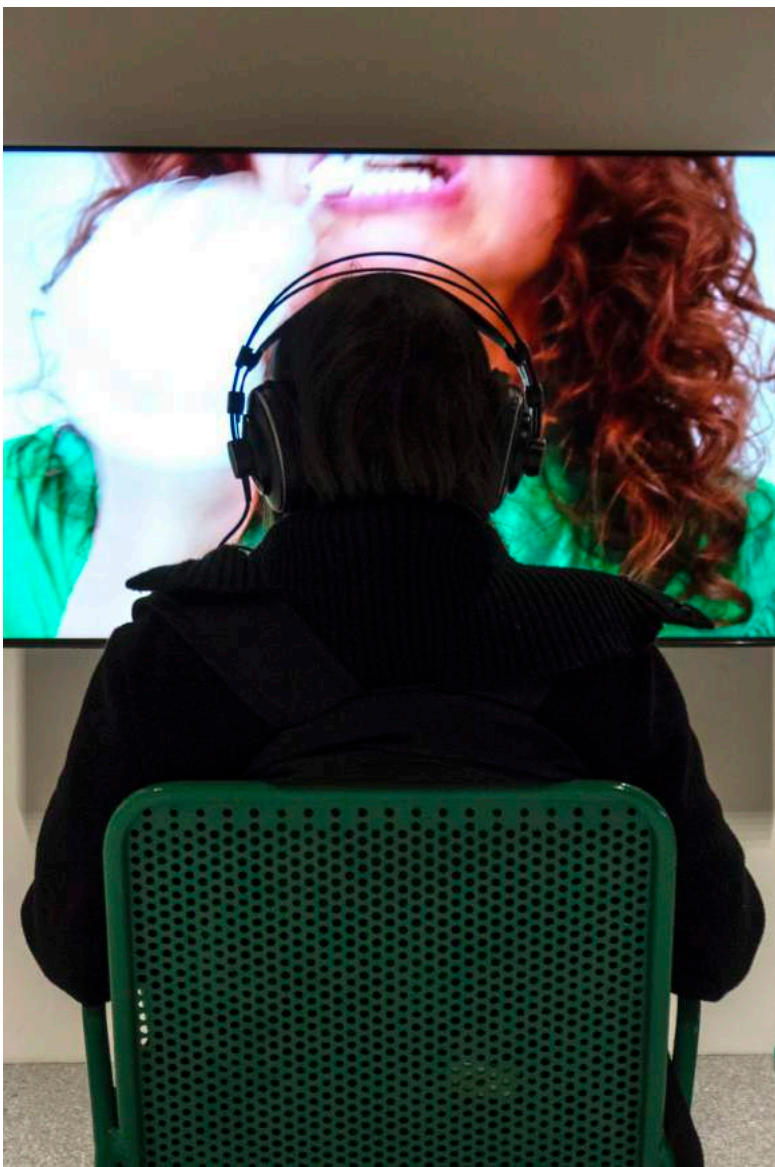


board game materials, 2023



video stills, 2023

RZ Piscium is an Insatiable Eater of Worlds
interactive video installation, 2022



RZ Piscium is an Insatiable Eater of Worlds installation view at Ars Electronica Festival Linz 2022
- photos by Indira di Benedetto

RZ Piscium is an Insatiable Eater of Worlds

2019-2022

interactive video installation

one-channel video (7 min, digital, color, sound, no dialogues), gummy candies, chair used in the performance video, custom algorithms, microcontroller, car seat' safety belt sensor

keywords: consumer culture, saturated self, accelerationism, catharsis

A response to the promises of the globalized world, whose ideology of growth, prosperity and progress is based on value extraction and exploiting the many, it asks: can certain developments in society be put on hold, or is it everything already in pieces? Consumer culture finds expression in offers whose pleasurable and comforting components can't be denied. At the same time, it's evident that the expansion inherent in this consumerist logic not only exploits the natural resources and different ways of living but in fact also dooms those who participates or benefit from it.

This interactive video work discusses consumer culture and accelerationism from the point of view of the body. The installation plays an accelerated sequence of a performance footage captured in 2019 on a construction dump in Southern Italy. In the video, the artist is shown ravenously eating a pile of waste: a binge eating ritual until the closing purging ceremony. Filtered through the artist's experience recovering from an eating disorder, the video questions society's mainstream values as the protagonist finds herself over-saturated by conflicting impulses.

By means of computation, two custom algorithms interfaced by the seat occupancy sensor allow viewing the video at its intended speed. By sitting and watching, the audience becomes complicit in how the film reproduces consumer culture's paradoxical nature. The gummies are an invitation to ruminate on the issues of overconsumption while making edible a part of the installation.

RZ Piscium is an Insatiable Eater of Worlds
video stills



RZ Piscium is an Insatiable Eater of Worlds

video, 2019

7 min, digital video (1920 × 1080, HD), color, sound
(stereo, no dialogue)

Video [link](#)

A person caught in a parody of grace ravenously eats a pile of waste unsettling through a candid exploration of a binge-eating ritual until the closing purging ceremony. This character takes on the role of the trickster figure, playing at the edge of self-destructive tendencies - an allusion to the 'accelerationist' ideas increasingly common across the current technological and political landscape.

A commentary on the current 'capitalist hangover,' the video stages the symptoms of a disease, pointing to the emotional dimensions of this exhaustion. The soundtrack of the video features recordings of Sun Drum experiments kindly provided by Terredaria - an Italian association promoting the research, and early childhood education in sonic art.

Scream Support System
cultural prosthetics, 2022



Scream Support System
wearable, cultural prosthetic,
2022-ongoing

force sensor, electronics, custom pillow

keywords: scream, thermodynamics, post-phenomenology, cultural prosthetic, energy harvesting, speculative design

Scream Support System is a cultural prosthetic that allows its user to scream, release and transform uncomfortable feelings.

The user's scream is absorbed by a pillow so that the surrounding environment and people won't be affected by the loud sound. Below the pillow's surface, a force sensor detects the user's face when in contact with it. By pressing the face against the pillow to release the scream, electricity is sent to a Peltier module placed on the user's chest. By lowering its temperature, the module's cold side in contact with the user's skin gives a refreshing sensation. This procedure reproduces the haptic feeling of the emotions released and cooled as they travel from the user's diaphragm, chest, and throat.

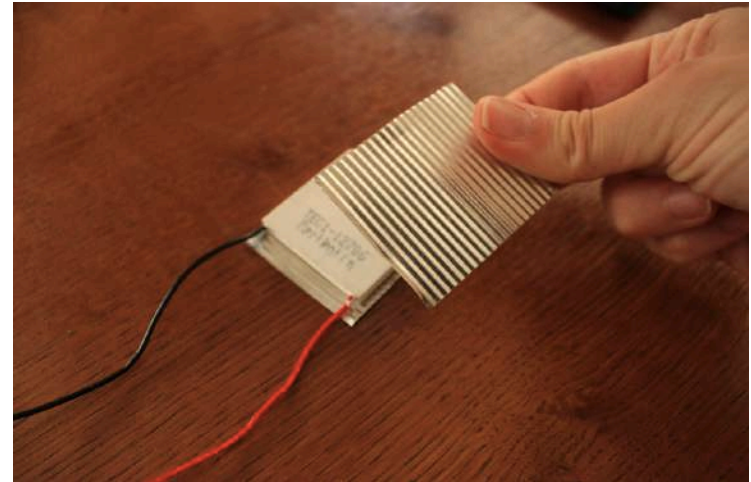
This piece explores the importance of emotions in a society living under the myth of self-control and autonomy driven by technological symbiosis with machines.

Work process & experiments:
<https://mariaorciuoli.xyz/energyharvesting.html>

Scream Support System
prototype



Scream Support System prototype



faith
interactive installation, 2021



faith
interactive installation, 2021

blank paint on QWERTY keyboard, computer, monitor

documentation (30 secs):
<https://vimeo.com/699468448/4bd90e7ee1>

keywords: human-computer interaction, lock-in effect, economics of the QWERTY, path-dependence, speculative design

This piece departs from the archetypal allegation of the QWERTY keyboard configuration as industry standard as well as from the economic theory's concepts of 'path dependence' and 'lock-in effect' by historical events.

Path dependence occurs when a feature of the economy (institution, technical standard, pattern of economic development) is not based on current conditions but has been formed by past actions. Past development decisions can influence and constrain future choices, leading to a 'lock-in' to a particular development path preventing newer alternatives from taking hold. The QWERTY layout transferred seamlessly from the 70's mechanical typewriters to computers and touch screens and is ubiquitous wherever the Latin alphabet is standard. In cultures overdetermined by concepts from economics, we are left without discursive instruments to comprehend how free market-driven standardization operates and will continue to empower innovators to revolutionize the way we work, learn, communicate and play.

This work explores an alternative design of the computer keyboard that is not driven nor thoroughly integrated in capitalist production - or culture. The function of these inquiries is to reflect on past, current and future trajectories of technology influences on human behavior.

The installation consists of a QWERTY keyboard whose keys have been covered with black paint. The interface challenges the user to rely on 'touch-typing' to enter a sentence in a text file appearing on the computer monitor. This procedure seeks to make perceptible to the user the persistence of the QWERTY arrangement at cognitive level and provides a speculative reference to the 'spectre of the universal.'