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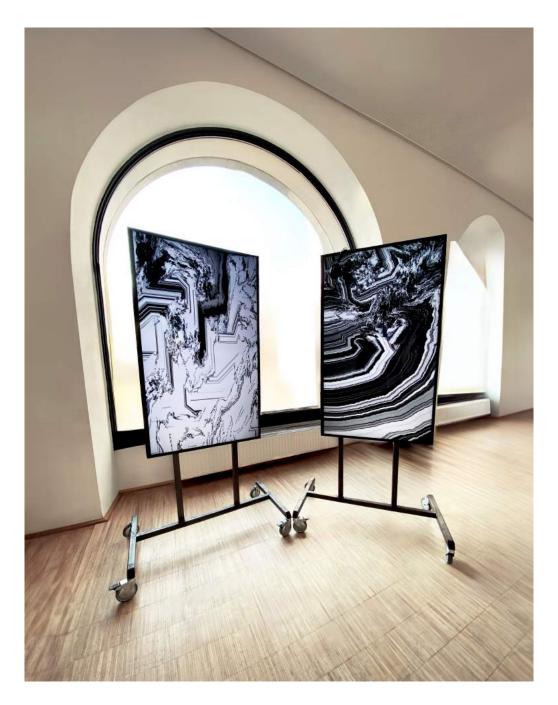
Maria Orciuoli (IT, 1989) is an artist born in Avellino and based in Linz. Her practice combines design, film, music, performance, physical computing and creative coding. With a focus on the digital realm, her work swings between intimate close up on personal stories and zoom-out to collective narratives. With a background in economics and electronic arts, she approaches collections of information, data, software and hardware systems as materials to investigate in the themes of consumer culture, self-staging, and nature's phenomena and how these affect human subjectivity through new technologies. Incorporating leisure, social and political critique, her films, installations, artifacts 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.







Raindrop Price Index - You Cannot Refill A Sea With Tears Speculum Artium 2023, Trbovlje (SI)



Raindrop Price Index - You Cannot Refill A Sea With Tears splace Gallery, 2024 Linz (AT)

# 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 Accounting 1, 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 <a href="https://mariaorciuoli.xyz/">https://mariaorciuoli.xyz/</a>
<a href="mailto:research">raindroppriceindex.html</a>
<a href="mailto:splace-Gallery">splace Gallery</a>, 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. While aligning with the growing prevalence of data-driven methods, which transforms almost every facet of an experience into quantifiable data, the installation counters this trend by reintegrating the data into the realm of personal experience, emphasizing its subjective and sensory aspects.

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 the adjacent artistic research 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 Pierre Dimitry Meka & Maria Orciuoli installation view a 2022-2023

# Tomato Propaganda - The Self-Destructing Contract

Maria Orciuoli (IT/AT) & Pierre Dimitri Meka (CF/IT), Italy, 2023

Board game, manual press, film, graphics, prints, materials

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

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

keywords: caporalato, food supply chain, human rights, sustainability, consumer culture

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, lack of contracts and forced labor. 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 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. 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. 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.

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.

Tomato Propaganda 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.





















video stills, 2023

board game materials, 2023



video still

Interview with Pierre Dimitri Meka, a friend, activist and cultural mediator within the program <u>Su.Pr.Eme</u> Italy funded by the Emergency Funds (AP2019) of the European Commission - DG Migration and Home Affairs, to combat labor exploitation in agriculture and the Caporalato; Dimitry arrived in Italy via boat 7 years ago and currently works as cultural mediator at the Italian General Confederation of Labour (CGIL) of the cities of Salerno and Avellino.

# TOMATO PROPAGANDA



The Self-destructing Contract

I am a tomato can! One made in southern Italy and exported all over the world. Despite my uniqueness, I am in danger of disappearing, being expelled by production system in which the Farmers' Organizations fail to organize themselves to counterbalance the Largescale Retailers, thus leaving the latter with the power to impose low prices. Through online reverse auctions using the doubledrop price mechanism, Large-scale Retailers force the Tomato Processing Industry and the Farmers to compress costs. This system effectively crushes the supply chain, making it environmentally and socially unsustainable

and favoring the persistence of the phenomenon of Caporalato-illegal intermediation and exploitation of migrant and Italian workers in the tomato fields. Politically neglected for decades, the Caporalato was made illegal by the Italian government in 2016 (Law of October 29, 2016, n. 199). On November 4, 2021, the Italian Council of Ministers approved the Legislative Decree EU (DL No. 198) implementing the European Directive on unfair B2B commercial practices, which includes a ban on the purchase of agricultural products through electronic reverse

auctions at a discount price. The issues reported by farmers, field laborers and activists persist. However, as the DL No. 198 came into force on December 15, 2021, it is still early to know if it has brought fairness along the supply chain. Consumers' purchasing power can make a difference. However, how can consumers recognize a fair price of a tomato can on supermarkets' shelves? One which reflects the work of the field laborers. the farmers, and the processing industry?



Scenario card printed on recycled paper and sealed in PE-LD bags

The scenario cards are inspired from the last two years' news headlines about commodities markets which affects their price volatility and fluctuations.

They are sealed in PE-LD (low-density polyethylene) bags. Half of the plastic collected in EU for recycling is exported to be treated in countries outside the EU; reasons for export include the lack of capacity, technology or financial resources to treat the waste locally; EU exports of waste to non-EU countries reached 32.7 million tonnes in 2020; the majority of waste goes to Asian and North-African countries (source, Eurostat, 2022 accessed Jan 25. 2023);

According to ISTAT 14.9 thousand immigrants who reached Italy in 2021 came from Tunisia; 7.3 thousand migrants were from Egypt, whereas seven thousand people originated from Bangladesh (source, Statista, 2022 accessed Jan 25. 2023).









#### Debris After Memory (An Old Argument) video, 2022-2023

phenomenology, built environment

4:12 min, digital video (1920 × 1080, HD), color, sound (stereo / no dialogues)

Link to video

Drifting between post-phenomenology studies and artistic research, this audio-visual short uses agential realism to approach thinking with, through, and about the built environment. Following Karen Barad's dedication to diffraction as a form of critique, it superposes various camera choreographies in the longing that their consonances and dissonances can stimulate novel ways of engaging with and perceiving the built environment as a cultural and material agent. It takes from the intertwined physical and metaphysical curiosities that characterize Barad's work, proposing an engagement with the temporal and spatial (dis)continuities that matter helps to understand.

Keywords: agential realism, human development, scale, post-

Enormous amounts of materials and energy are embedded in the built environment. As our technological systems scale up, can they bring configurations that are regenerative by design? What if we understood our reality to be much more bound up and reactive to our perceptions and intentions - shifting at levels and in ways that were not entirely predictable? How can this build up our confidence in making a change?

Filmed using the handheld camera technique, the audio-visual narrative explore possibilities of shifts in perspectives through the reconfiguration of relations of scale, exteriority, and connectivity. In a post-phenomenological sense, what is produced by the video camera is an immediate and live 'taking in' of the world shaped by the technical/perceptual apparatus of the camera – just as the human nervous system shapes the visions that seem to 'hit' the eye.

Shot on a family-run workshop in Southern Italy, this piece is a commentary on the idea of scale and human development within the context of the global energy crisis amid supply chain shortages and the rising costs of raw materials.

Debris After Memory (An Old Argument) video stills







# **Debris After Memory (An Old Argument)**

site-specific installation, construction dump in solofra (italy) 2023

oxidized-iron scaffolding frame (2 meters high, 4 meters long connected to Innocenti Tubes through orthogonal joints), copper electrical wires, electronics, steel pipes of varying length, plumbing systems' tubes in zinc-plated iron of varying length, black polyethylene pipes for aqueducts and distribution of water for human consumption, rainwater harvested in a plastic bucket, glass screen, cement bricks, structural clay tile blocks, industrial fencing mesh in polypropylene, paper-print energy bills, standard wooden pallet, electricity

I often hear questions about assessing the environmental impact of A versus B answered with a standard metric (usually in the quantity of carbon released). My father has been working in the construction sector for over four decades. I asked him if there is an environmental impact index out there that encompasses multiple metrics at once, what are the steps to take during an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and if it's possible to trace the footprint of a construction work. While EIA procedures are established in many countries, there is considerable soul-searching about how effective it is and whether EIA is achieving its purposes (especially if EIA stakeholders aren't reading from the same script).

This is an intervention I did in my father's workshop area, while thinking about these things. The sculpture attempts to take in materials and resources that are used in the built environment. These materials are tied to "human development concepts", including land ownership, security, and entrepreneurship among others. It consists of a metallic scaffold with a tube-and-joint system, introduced and patented in 1935 by Italian inventor and entrepreneur Ferdinando Innocenti (1891 - 1966), and widely used today. The iron pipes have been rusting outdoor for nearly twenty years and re-assembled to form the type of temporary scaffolding used to support a work crew and materials in the construction, demolishing, and maintenance of human-made structures in the built environment. This temporary entity attempts to count its components' environmental impact (an abstract concept, potentially unmeasurable) by looping a video memory of its components' debris and the surrounding area.



Debris After Memory (An Old Argument) installation view on 03.01.2023

### **RZ Piscium is an Insatiable Eater of Worlds**

2019-2022

interactive video installation

One-channel video (7 min, digital, color, sound, no dialogues), gelatin-free gummy candies, recycled metal chair and side-table, microcontroller, car seat' safety belt sensor

Interaction video

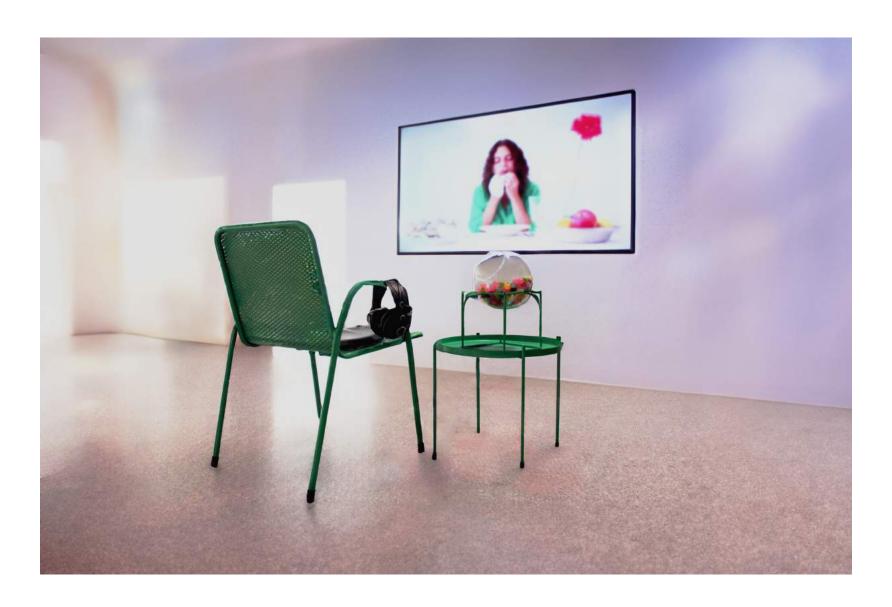
Keywords: consumer culture, saturated self, accelerationism, catharsis

Maria Orciuoli's first video work discusses consumer culture and accelerationism from the point of view of the mind and the body.

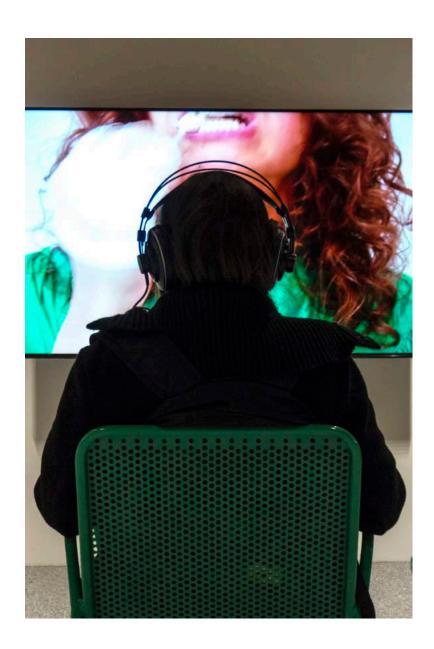
The installation consists of a video projection, gummy candies and a custom sensor seat. In the video, the artist is shown ravenously eating a pile of waste: a binge eating ritual until the closing purging ceremony. Filtered through the artist's experience recovering from an eating disorder, the video questions society's mainstream values as the protagonist finds herself over-saturated by conflicting impulses.

Borrowing the title from the 2017 Astronomical Journal report on the RZ Piscium star dubbed 'Eater of Worlds' for being surrounded by the wreckage of planets it has consumed, the installation is a commentary on the current 'capitalism hangover.'

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



Ars Electronica Festival Linz, 2022







RZ Piscium is an Insatiable Eater of Worlds installation view at <u>Ars Electronica Festival</u> Linz 2022 - photos by Indiara di Benedetto



"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?

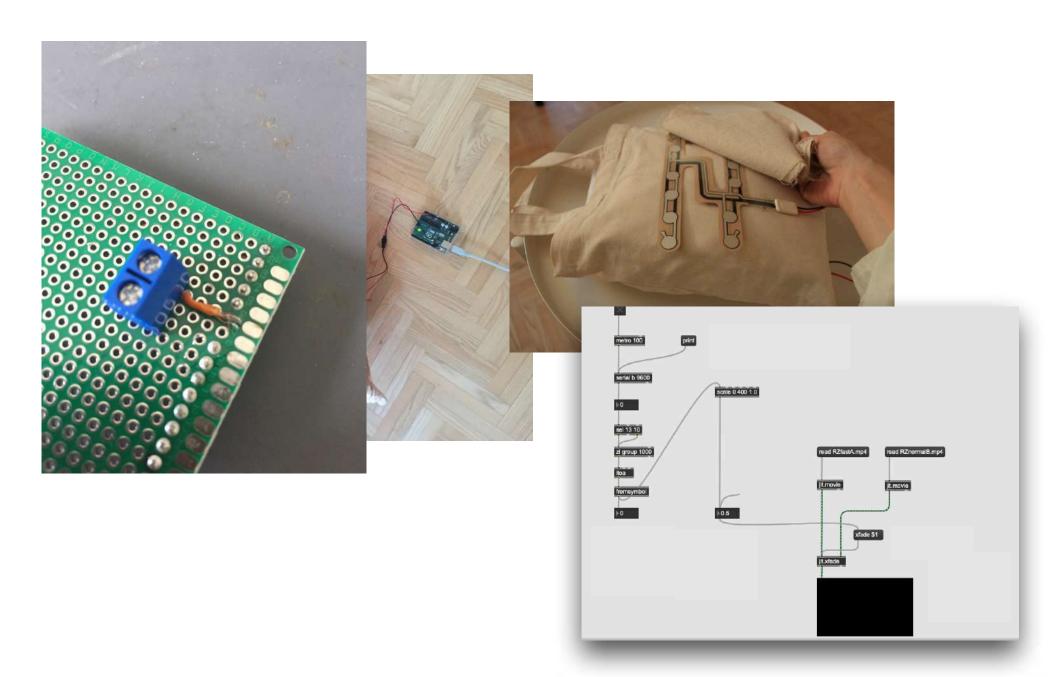
Consumer culture finds expression in offers whose pleasurable and comforting components can't be denied. At the same time, it's evident that the expansion inherent in this consumerist logic not only exploits the natural resources and different ways of living but in fact also dooms those who participates or benefit from it.

The video's narrative affronts society's mainstream values by pairing a parody of grace with the life reality of the protagonist staging the symptoms of an eating disorder.

The installation plays an accelerated sequence of a performance footage captured in 2019 on a construction dump in Southern of Italy. 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."

**Software:** Max/MSP, Arduino IDE

Hardware: Arduino microcontroller, laptop, TV monitor, car seat's safety belt warning sensor



# **RZ** Piscium is an Insatiable Eater of Worlds

video, 2019

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

Video <u>link</u>

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.

RZ Piscium is an Insatiable Eater of Worlds video stills







## **Scream Support System**

wearable, cultural prosthetic, 2022-ongoing Keywords: scream, thermodynamics, post-phenomenology, cultural prosthetic, energy harvesting, speculative design

force sensor, microcontroller, peltier module, cotton fabric pillow (30x40 cm), wires

Research: https://mariaorciuoli.xyz/energyharvesting.html

"The apparatus serves to bridge the person's internal state and the outside. Participants access sensorial energy that has been implicitly or explicitly put to sleep by societal norms. The project was developed in a DIY setting, and in parallel to readings on energy harvesting from the human body's heat and environmental noise."

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 human emotions in a society living under the myth of self-control and autonomy driven by technological symbiosis with machines. We are supposed to be "all things nice" and learn to "behave" from a young age. This project reminds me and whoever can relate to it that all emotions are valid, and repressing them is detrimental to our physical and mental health.

Machines affect how we conceptualize and express ourselves, social perception, the feeling of agency, and action. Social awareness is brought out by accessing and imagining different interplays of humans and machines through custom interaction design and breathing techniques, and individuals are encouraged to reinvent their existence. Scream Support System is visible play-use equipment that offers context-sensitive functionality to its wearer. Simultaneously it announces the need for existence by being used in public without being hidden.



Scream Support System prototype

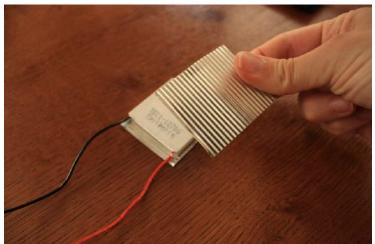
Scream Support System prototype







Scream Support System prototype







# The Perfect Day in a Drop

installation, 2022

glass vessel (variable), glass dropper (7cm long),
rain sample (variable), cotton fabric (variable)

documentation:

https://mariaorciuoli.xyz/theperfectdayinadrop.html

video:

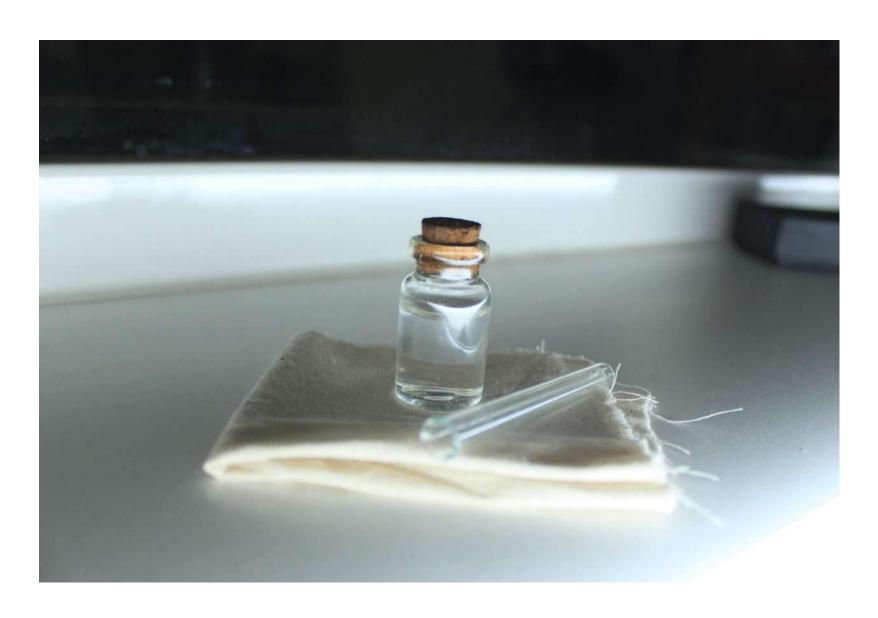
5:17 min (loop), digital (1920 × 1080, HD), color, sound (stereo / dialogues / english subtitles) https://vimeo.com/705875754

What forms of wet poetics and practices emerge from encounters with rain? How can memory and my perception of time be (re-)imagined through the lenses of rain as a contingency?

I spent most of my childhood in Southern Italy where sunny days are the norm. I used to dislike rain and only made peace with it after years of living in Germany and Austria.

In April 2022, I started collecting raindrops falling in Linz. This project explores my relationship to rain, as the water-based phenomena that makes me company for nearly half of my yearly life time.

Accompanied by a documentation video, the artifact consists of a rain sample preserved in a glass vessel, a glass dropper and a cotton cloth. The vessel is a materialization of time: it encapsulates the memory of the raindrops collection while providing the audience a space for intention and contemplation.



The Perfect Day In A Drop WHA Gallery, Linz 2022



The Perfect Day in a Drop documentation

faith
interactive sculpture, 2021

 $$\operatorname{\mathsf{materials}}:$$  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

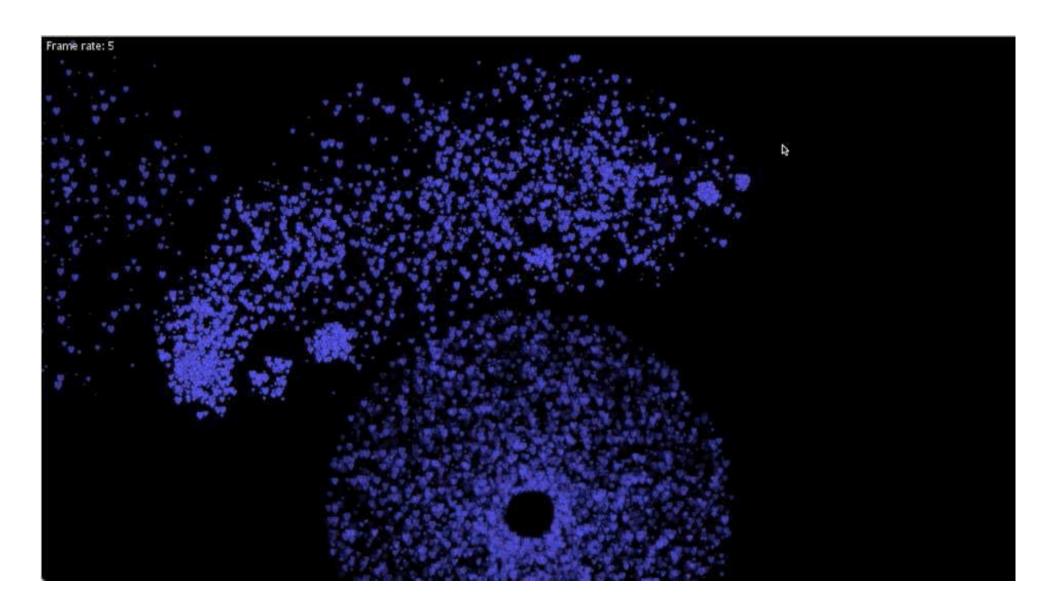
This artistic provocation, departs from the archetypal allegation of the QWERTY keyboard configuration as industry standard as well as from the economic theory's concepts of 'path dependence' and 'lockin effect' by historical events.

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 project 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 experiment 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.'



Sankt Interface, University of Arts, Linz 2021



emo\_rendering
video still of mouse-computer interaction of
 'Heart\_Particle' sketch in
 Processing.py

# emo\_rendering

documentary film & algorithm, 2021

'Heart\_Particles' code available on <a href="Github">Github</a>

Documentation video (3 min, colors, dialogues, English subtitles): <a href="mailto:link">link</a>

Video interviews (7 min, colors, dialogues, English subtitles): <a href="https://link.pubm.nih.gov/link.gov/lin

keywords: human-computer interaction, unconditional love, infinity, affective computing

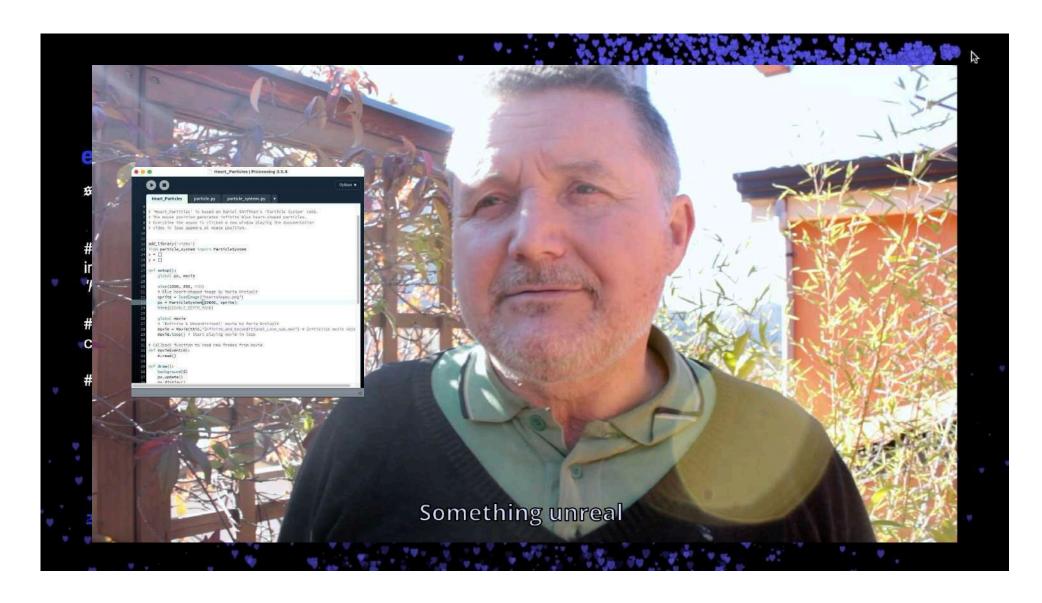
'emo\_rendering' came up in response to the increasing impact of technology in my social interactions. It combines documentary, performance, and creative coding to explore our cultural relationship to concepts tied to our desire for care and interconnectedness.

Humans are made to be in relationships. We have an innate longing to share our lives with family, friends, and partners. This type of social interaction is essential and complex. A person sends and receives information in many ways when communicating with someone physically in front of her. For instance, a conversation is not just about the words; instead, the message includes tone of voice, body language, facial expressions, context, and sometimes touch.

While in-person interaction is the most genuine form of social interaction, many of today's digital devices extend our abilities to connect with each other while being far apart. At the same time, the disability of our digital devices can be seen through the loss of tangible human interaction.

This piece was made to reflect on the importance of human interdependency in a society living under the myth of autonomy driven by technological symbiosis between humans and computers.

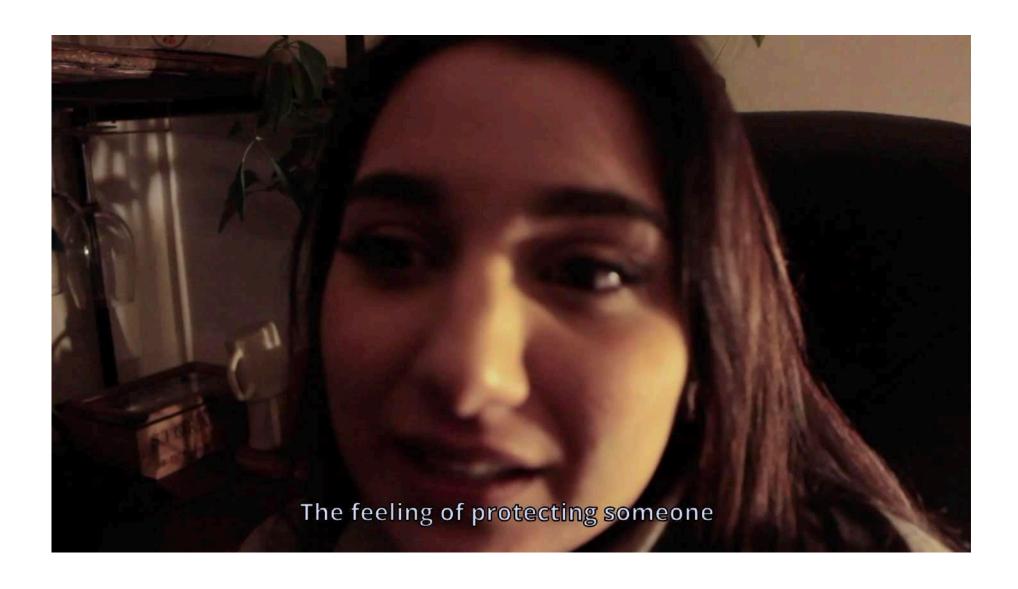
# emo\_rendering documentary film & algorithm, 2021



documentary video still + processing.py code screenshot



emo\_rendering
documentary video still



emo\_rendering
documentary video still



# anatomy of a gossip

performance & documentation video, 2020

one-channel video: 5 min, loop, digital (3840  $\times$  2160, 4K), color, sound (stereo / no dialogues), monitor or projector, loud speakers or headphones

video link

keywords: bias, tribalism, human error, noise

"Wherever there is judgement, there is noise - and more of it than you think." - Daniel Kahneman, *Noise: A Flaw in Human Judgement* (2021)

'Anatomy of a Gossip' is a five-minute audio-video work with footage from a performance and social experiment I held in August 2021 in Solofra, Italy.

For this experiment, a group of friends (people who share beliefs and a language code) was asked to sit in a closed circle and pass a message into each other's ears without revealing aloud. The experiment took place in the form of the popular children's game 'Chinese Whispers' ('Telephone' in English, or 'Il gioco del telefono senza fili' in Italian), and concluded with the participants being unable to remember correctly the first version of the message.



video stills





video stills



Experiment participants: Pierre Dimitri Meka, Ilenia Orciuoli, Arnelle Nonon, Donato David D'Alessio, Francesca Penna,

Gerardo D'Arco

Music: Colin Tobelem

Camera & video: Maria Orciuoli

#### Literary reference

Kahneman, D., Sibony, O., & Sunstein, C. R. (2021). Noise: A Flaw in Human Judgement



performance-experiment photos at Oracma Studio in the city of Solofra (Italy), 2021