VB Plataforma Oiko-nomic Threads

by Maria Varela, Marinos Koutsomichalis and Afroditi Psarra

1. What was your research work like on creating your piece?

- Greek folklore art patterns

- Electrical knitting machines

- Knitting techniques

- Financial data from the databases of National Manpower Employment Offices

- Data visualisation techniques

- Generative algorithms

2. Which aspects of your creative process would you like highlight (aesthetical, ethical, poetical, political etc.)?

- Aesthetical: glitch generative composition from patterns of greek folklore art, traditional knitted patterns presented in a binary format.

- Technical: reuse of obsolete machine, DIY practices, hardware hacking, generative software.

- Poetical: data visualisation, objects fabrication with embedded narrative.

- Cultural: the use of craftsmanship in Greek tradition, as the core of domestic economy.

- Political: dipole of physical labour (knitting) - data of Manpower Office (unemployment).

3. How do you locate the conception of this piece in relation to your own poetics?

- Maria Varela / media archeology

- Marinos Koutsomichalis / generative art

- Afroditi Psarra / e-textiles and wearables

4. Which references from the art world or other fields of knowledge have driven the creation of this piece?

- Computer history

- Electronic visualisation

- Physical computing

- Generative art

- Tangible bits

- Glitch art

- Hacking and tinkering

- Digital fabrication

- Craft revival

5. Further, which dialogues and/or emotional exchanges arose from your creative process?

- Tradition / technology

- Electronic craftsmanship

- Generative mechanisms/ algorithm - physical labour/knitting

6. In what way did the social, cultural and political contexts interfere with the development of the work at hand?

- The project was commissioned from the National Museum of Contemporary Art (EMST) and realised with the valuable support of the National Documentation Centre of the National Research Institute of Greece that provided us with the data of the Manpower Employment Offices from 2008-2013, in the context of the *Open & Economically Sustainable Models of Creative Production Conference* that took place at the National Documentation Center (Athens, 2013).

7. What contemporary and/or historical experiences, fictions, and narratives does your piece address?

- Open data as creative tool

- Greek debt crisis and social effects of austerity measures on labour economy

- Domestic work / domestic economy

- Revitalisation of traditional greek craftsmanship

- Fabrication of objects with embedded narrative

8. In what way do you think that the form and the language adopted in conceiving this piece structure out and convey those issues?

- By creating a physical archive of the financial data in Greece, through the use of DIY methodologies and contemporary aesthetics.

9. Has this piece been featured in shows other than Southern Panoramas? Which ones? If links are available please provide them.

- 16th WRO *Media Art Biennale*, Wrocław, PL (2015).
  http://wro2015.wrocenter.pl/site/

- ISWC '14 *International Symposium on Wearable Computers*, Design exhibition at Microsoft Research Studio 99 [textiles only] Seattle, US-WA (2014).
  http://iswc.net/iswc14/

- Ars Electronica, *Future Innovators Summit* [textiles only] Linz, AT (2014). http://www.aec.at/c/en/future-innovators-summit/

- Bozar Centre for Fine Arts, *No Country for Young Men*, Brussels, BE (2014). http://www.bozar.be/activity.php?id=14351&lng=en

- Transmediale 14, *Future Past–Past Future*, Berlin, DE (2014).

- http://www.transmediale.de/content/partner-exhibition-future-past-past-future

- National Museum of Contemporary Art, *A-fresh*, Athens, GR (2013).

http://www.emst.gr/EN/exhibitions/emst_exhibitions/main.aspx?ID=224

10. What other readings and critiques has this piece been given? Would you like to mention them here?

Publications

- EVA (Electronic Visualisation and the Arts) Conference, Research Workshop (London, 2015).

- Proceedings of International Symposium on Wearable Computers (Seattle, 2014).

- Subtle Technologies Festival (Toronto, 2014).

- Creativity Conference: Open & Economically Sustainable Models of Creative Production, National Documentation Center (Athens, 2013).

Articles/Critiques/References

- L'Echo, p14 (27 March 2014).

- Athinorama (9 January 2014).

http://www.athinorama.gr/arts/article.aspx?id=1002172

- Wired DE magazine (November 2014). https://www.wired.de/collection/latest/ausgabe-2-elektrofaden

- Romano, Z. & Cangiano, S., Open Sourcing Wearables.

In Bihanic, D. (Eds) *Empowering Users through Design: Interdisciplinary Studies and Combined Approaches for Technological Products and Services* (pp. 153-176). Springer, New York (2014).