portfolio

{ ella hebendanz }

ella hebendanz
*1997, Münster, GER

www.ellael.la
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ella-hebendanz@web.de

education

2023 ongoing	*Live Art Forms, performance practise master,* Master of Arts
	Akademie der Bildenden Künste Nürnberg,
2017–2021	GER
	Interactive / Media / Design, Bachelor of Arts
2020	Royal Academy of Art The Hague, NL
	Screenbased Arts, Exchange Semester (interrupted due to Covid19)

work experience

2023	*Supervision of Intercultural Student Exchange,* Freelance
	KurzFilmFestival Hamburg, GER
2021–23	*Production + Studio Assistant,* Freelance
	Melanie Bonajo + Skinship, Berlin, GER
2021–22	*Video Editing + Compositing,* Freelance
	Studio Ulu Braun, Berlin, GER
2019–20	*Event Management + Tour Guide,*
	Royal Academy of Art The Hague, NL
2016–17	*Assistant in Sales, Distribution, PR + Festival,* Cultural Year
	KurzFilmAgentur Hamburg, GER
2016	*Set Design Assistant,*
	filmpool, Hamburg GER
2016	*Costume Design,* Internship
	Rivafilm, Hamburg, GER
2016	*Production + Art Department,* Internship
	27 Kilometer + La Mosca Bianca Film, GER

courses

2023	*Basis Programm,* part-time intensive course in dance
	motion*s Berlin, GER
2016–2017	*Backstage Youth,* Theater Project
	Deutsches SchauSpielHaus Hamburg, GER

honorary

2022 ongoing	*Design Team + Art&Politics Team,* Fluid Festival
	Heterotopie e.V., GER
2023	*Exhibition Host,*
	CTM Festival, Berlin, GER
2021	*Participation / Props + Costume,* Assistant
	When the Body says Yes, Melanie Bonajo, GER
2018 + 19 + 20	*Exhibition Host,*
	Today's Art Festival + Rewire Festival, The Hague,
2016	NL
	Selection Commitee German Competition,

exhibitions

2023 upcoming	*re-c(O)unting,* Film, Performance, Installation
	Bio Art & Design Award + MU, Eindhoven, NL
2023	Ω*ma,* Performance
	Synergy Festival Amsterdam, NL
2023	*milieu #05,* Performance for and with Theresa Schubert
	soil conversations, Galerie im Körnerpark, GER
2022	*lichti@,* Installation + Performance
	Come Alive, Muntgebouw Utrecht, NL
2022	*fl0wraliä,* Installation + Performance
	every moment a junction, Nest, The Hague, NL
2022	composition of unbroken flows, Installation
	The New Current, Art Rotterdam, NL
2022	Ω*mą,* Video Contribution
	STONEORGY Earth Rave, MU Eindhoven, NL
2021	*sïïren@,* Performance
	Fluid Festival Showcase, HÖR Berlin, GER
2021	*lun@ticå,* Installation + Performance
	JAM-POD, SIGN Project Space, Groningen,
2021	NL
	ănim@, Installation + Performance
2021	GOGBOT Festival 2021, Enschede, NL
	composition of unbroken flows, Performance
2021	Graduation Festival, Royal Academy of Art, NL
	entangled bodies, Installation
2019	Intermezzo, DYAD Amsterdam, NL
	1n1t1@t10n, Exhibition + Performance
2019	Life after the Warmup, The Grey Space, NL
	Dépaysment, Film Screening
2018 + 2019	Eye Film Museum, Amsterdam, NL
	Lucitopia Rural Design Challenge, Exhibition

workshop facilitation

2023	*Spirit Creature Rituals,* Workshop Faciliation
	De Studio, Antwerp, BEL
2022	Sonic tECkhnO-craft workshop, Workshop Faciliation
	iii, The Hague, NL

podcast + publication

2022	*Day 18, 21 Days Self-Pleasure Calendar Vol.II,* Podcast
	Skinship Berlin, GER
2021	Cyberfeminist Artivism, Presentation
	Gira Zapatistas Holanda, OT301 Amsterdam,
2021	NL
	ManifestX, Publication
2021	Wxtch Craft Zine, The Hague, NL
	Witchcraft & Technological Reappropriation, Podcast

grants + awards

2023	*Award Winner + Project Grant,*
	Bio Art & Design (BAD) Award, NL
2022	*Digital Culture Grant,*
	Stimuleringsfonds Creatieve Industrie,
2021	NL
	Nomination Department Prîze,
2020	Royal Academy of Art The Hague, NL
	Holland Scholarship,

softwares

Adobe Suite
Touchdesigner
Arduino C++
Html / CSS / Javascript
Unity
Cinema 4D
Ableton Live

skills

Electronics
A/V Technologies
Wood, Metal, Textile Work
Exhibition Design + Setup
Artistic Reseach
Impro Dance + Performance
Driver's License (B)

languages

German, native
English, fluent
(Cambridge
C1)
French, intermediate
Spanish, basic skills

ella hebendanz

I view myself as a tECkhnO* feminist researcher, question raiser, thought explorer & visual narrator. Intentionally embracing the in-betweenness, my artistic research floats somewhere within the cyberspace and the tangible world. Morphing virtual, material, and linguistic bodies, I create fluid collages of moving image and performance. Drawing inspiration from materialist feminism, I weave my personal narrative into the discourse of bodily entanglement. Reflecting on the intersections of technology, sexuality and positionality, I like to imagine utopian landscapes of digital/physical fluidity. Seeing it as an urgency to rethink the borderisation of our world, I aim to celebrate the non-borders, the in-betweenness, the colourful gradients of bodily entanglement.

compositions of unbroken flows

{ audio-visual performance / installation }

With my work *compositions of unbroken flows*, I am inviting the audience to an audio-visual journey through a landscape of thoughts on materiality and fluidity. Exploring the beautifully chaotic discourse on corporeal entanglement, I am questioning the borders and boundaries of the individual body.

Inspired by the craft of pottery and clay's symbolism of matter, I use mechanised turning wheels to compose a swirling dreamscape that contextualises my research. Playing with the synchronicity of sound, image, and movement, as well as that of human and machine, I weave my own narrative into the discourse of bodily entanglement. Together we morph, move, spin, spiral, swirl, and dance.

(video: compositions of unbroken flows ↗)

created + performed by
Ella Hebendanz

in collaboration with
Hilde Wollenstein
Maarten Keus
Xiaoyao Ma
Sorin Angeleanu
Hilde Barwegen

Dancers
Ines DeRu
Cami Chebez
pamela varela
Lara Santos

presented at
the new current,
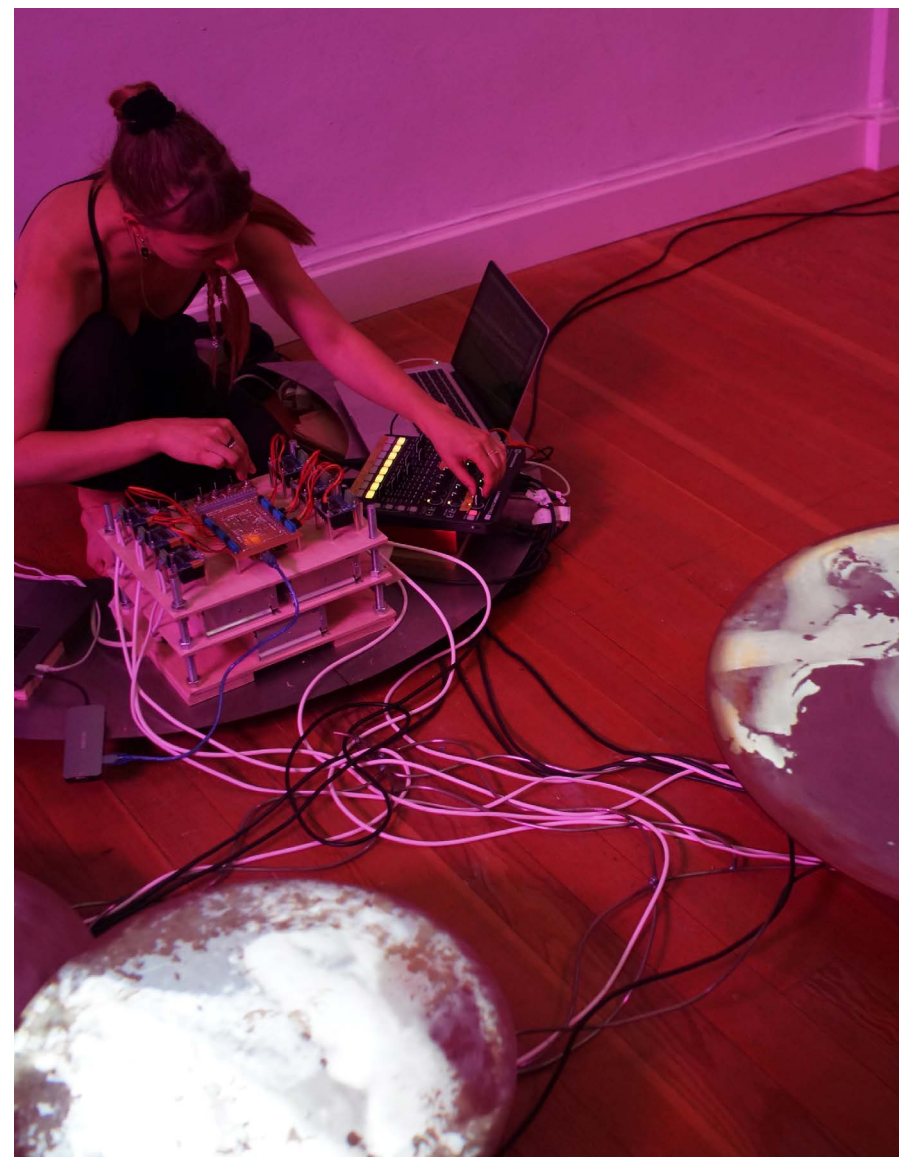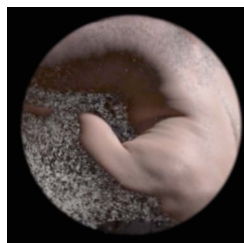Rotterdam, NL
05 / 2022

Sign Project Space,
Groningen, NL
11 / 2021

Gogbot Festival,
Enschede, NL
09 / 2021

Royal Academy of Art,
The Hague, NL
07 / 2021

Media
metal structure + plates
wiper motors
motor controller
generated visual
narrative
generated soundscape
performance

Software
Arduino
Touchdesigner
Milumin
Ableton Live
After Effects

image credits: Robinou, ella hebendanz

0 inputM1

0 inputM2

0 inputM3

image credits: Emma Grima, Melle de Groot, ella hebendanz

The work has also been presented as an independent installation without the performing act, creating compositions on its own in a continous loop.

image credits: Tim Schütze, ella hebendanz

I researched the relationship between the textures of the human body and clay, using clay as a symbol for matter and the primal element. Eventually, I incorporated technology into my experimentation and discourse. I began interacting and communicating with the pottery wheel until eventually building my own controllable versions.

image credits: ella hebendanz

entangled bodies

{ artistic research publication }

Journeying through the mingling mess of materialist entanglement, I am looking at bodies; bodies of any kind. This thesis resembles a gathering of observations and speculations about bodily materiality. It is questioning a body's beginnings and its endings while observing points of segregation and surfaces of intersection. Where are the limits, boundaries and borders of a body? And do they actually exist?

I am investigating mechanisms of separation that divide, categorise, marginalise, and oppress our bodies. Simultaneously, I am wondering how, instead, we could acknowledge, allow, and create a space for bodily fusion, transition, transformation, and, finally, entanglement.

thesis pdf: entangled bodies ↗

text + design
ella hebendanz

with assistance by
Anna Arov
Lyndsey Housden
Hilde Barwegen
Arthur Codier

presented at
Royal Academy of Art,
The Hague, NL
07 / 2021

Media
various paper
vinyl

image credits: ella hebendanz

What I find intriguing about the *Parliament of Bodies* is how it materialises the struggle of the art world and its institutions to find a voice for an affiliation of bodies, while simultaneously staying critically alert about potential marginalisations of individual opinions or viewpoints, and even bodies. The *Parliament of Bodies* refers to itself as an actor "against the individualization of bodies but also against the transformation of bodies into a mass" and as "neither a bank nor a collection of data, neither 'folk' nor a corporation."[45]

I see resemblances between nationalism and The Body of Parliament in the sense that they both aim to unite bodies, creating a body of bodies. However, the significant difference between the two lies in the second's goal to join forces beyond the act of *bordering* other bodies. Idealised nationalism, though, can run into danger of facilitating corporeal segregation. It can create exclusive spaces that can not only lead to the marginalisation but also to the domination and oppression of bodies that are not considered to "belong."

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40 Andreas Musolff, *Metaphor, Nation and the Holocaust: The Concept of the Body Politic*, Routledge Critical Studies in Discourse 3 (New York: Routledge, 2010), 4.
41 Achille Mbembe, 'Bodies as Borders', European South Journal, 4 (2019): 5–18, http://europeansouth.postcolonialitalia.it/journal/2019-4/2.Mbembe.pdf.
42 Deutsche Welle (www.dw.com), 'Documenta Cancels "Auschwitz on the Beach" Performance after Hefty Criticism | DW | 22.08.2017', DW.COM, accessed 3 February 2021, https://www.dw.com/en/documenta-cancels-auschwitz-on-the-beach-performance-after-hefty-criticism/a-40193224.
43 Srećko Horvat, *Poetry from the Future* (UK: Allen Lane, 2019).
44 Shame on Us: A Reading and Discussion, accessed 3 February 2021, http://www.documenta14.de/en/calendar/24356/shame-on-us-a-reading-and-discussion.
45 'The Parliament of Bodies', accessed 3 February 2021, http://www.documenta14.de/en/public-programs/927/the-parliament-of-bodies.

touch, fuck, and dance

bodies that flow, fuse, transition,

Bodies fuse; they can merge, intertwine, unite, entangle, in various and endless ways. Nonetheless, for human bodies these possibilities are under certain restrictions. Culturally established rules and codes regulate bodily interaction; sexual interplay is constrained and sexual bodies are categorised. Thus, social and cultural boundaries contain corporeal fluidity. However, to enable a diversity and multitude of bodily entanglement, I am wondering how we can change our perception of the sexual body.
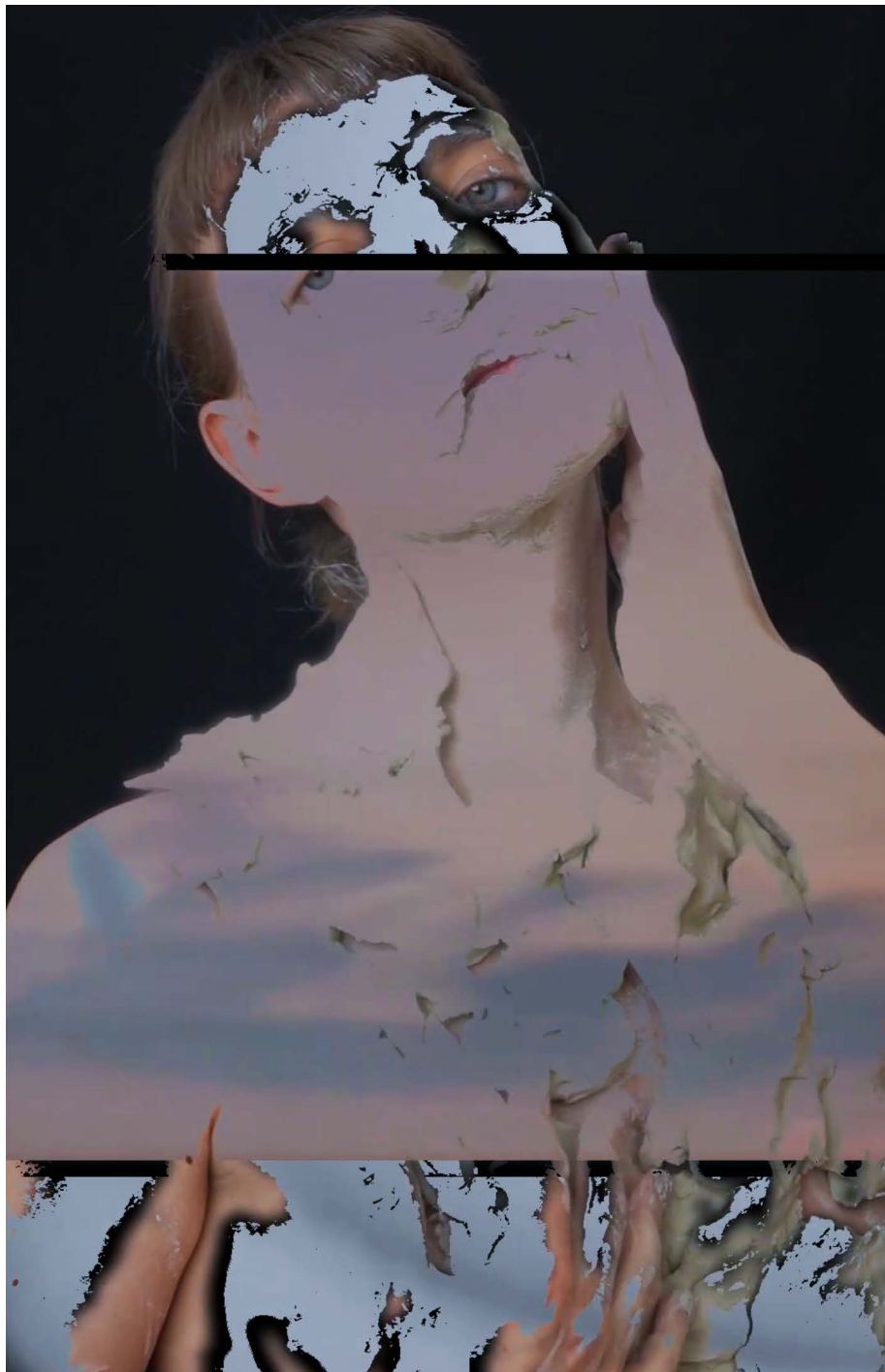
65

Introducing entangled bodies

One could say that the skin symbolises the border of the body. A fleshy surface that separates the individual entity from its surroundings, a thin line that divides the "me" from the rest. My research begins at this crossing and aims to put this physical border, this bodily fragmentation, into question. How can we define the beginning or end of what we call a body? Does this body actually stay within the physical borders of its own skin, or does it extend beyond those corporeal peripheries[1]? The following text embodies an investigation of bodily entanglements; it examines the porosities of corporeal surfaces and eventually questions the actuality of our bodies' borders.

This written creation was developed like a spiralling dance.[2] A continuous interweaving of conscious and unconscious neural processes, almost four years of I/M/D experiences and silent background CPU circuitries were rendering this body a becoming thesis. Our mutual cognitive understanding of the English language, its concepts and our shared ideology, acts like a transparent skin. It binds and holds this body together: we recognise a text. Thus, many bodies become one body, yet only temporarily. While your eyes recognise the words in front of you and your brain processes their meanings, your body, thoughts and existence become part of this thesis as much as it momentarily becomes a part of you. Skin to skin, bodies are touching each other.

This work is a body consisting of many other bodies: a collage, a mosaic, an assemblage[3] of thoughts, ideas, concepts, questions, wonderings, doubts and hopes, many of them of different origin and of diverse matter. One can view it as a wild intermixture, a strange recipe, a unique composition of words and loose thoughts. Some of them are my own, many of them are based on other's previous speculations. Due to their fleeting and generative nature, many of the ideas introduced here are only beginnings waiting for further development, while other theoretical components will evolve into new constellations.

This body is moving; it is an ongoing process of thought. Therefore, this sequence of text has to be viewed within its respective context. Nevertheless, the individual body parts will transform. They will mature, gain relevance or grow outdated and eventually die, but it may be that something or somebody will stay and continue to live on.

Throughout this thesis, one will encounter different concepts, an intentionally and thoughtfully hand- picked collection from diverse backgrounds. These concepts meaningfully support and articulate a conceptual framework regarding the entanglement of bodies. Dedicatedly knitted together, they represent an interwoven web of bodies themselves.

During the writing process, this thesis joined the discourse on the philosophy of language, yet it is not my aim to analyse linguistic ontology itself but rather its consequences towards corporeality. One could say that the bodies I speak of are equally contextualised and textualised. I am wondering how the linguistic bodies of concepts influence physical bodies of matter. How do words and language shape, regulate, frame, confine and limit our bodies? And at the same time how do they extend, elaborate, imagine, fantasise and liberate our bodies?

If I do not specifically use the term "human" in a section, then I refer to bodies of any kind, be it human, animal, bacterial, literal or virtual. My approach is to embrace interspecies kinship and to distance myself from a solely anthropocentric dialogue. Nonetheless, the human body can be seen as the initial locus of research and represents the common thread throughout the following chapters. This is not because the human body takes priority, but rather because I am aware of my subjective point of view and that I can solely share perspectives from my own corporeality. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the author's positionality as an influential component within this literary anatomy. My views, understandings, upbringing, privileges, rights and personal experiences shape the skeletal framework that I base these presented theories and thoughts upon.

At this point, I would like to acknowledge my Northern-European heritage and privileges which permit my body to move within a wide range of spaces. Being a white, abled, cis[4] woman,[5] I experience advantages that people of colour, trans*[6] people, differently abled people and many more people with less opportunities and social class benefits might not experience. Nonetheless, I want to raise my voice in order to question the disadvantages that still restrict my body.

Considering that technology and the internet enable wider accessibility and a certain overcoming of physical borders, I position my artistic practice in between cyberspace and the tangible world. As a tECkhnO[7] artist, designer, performer and questioner, I am intrigued to find ways to deconstruct and reconstruct existing structures, translating my observations into physical-virtual experiences and performances. This thesis was created in parallel to ongoing research of the boundaries of human materiality; my own body becomes the subject and object of artistic interventions and explorations. This artistic research is intrinsically interwoven in the following chapters.

Throughout this body of work, one will come across many universalised dichotomies that this body itself wants to repel against. The aim is to find the in-betweenness of those binaries and celebrate the radical diversity and specificity which so often succumbs to the many dualisms. Therefore, I would like to embrace all those entanglements that do not hold at physical borders, material boundaries, conceptual limitations, or linguistic separations but, instead, invite to a journey of intermingled speculations. I desire to create a discursive space without borders, boundaries, barriers. Everything that follows simply functions as a conversation starter, a thought provoker.

Shedding my skin, this body is curious to open up and unite, morph, coalesce, consolidate, conflate, conglomerate, amalgamate, affiliate with other bodies, exploring my own corporeality in context with many others, mainly raising questions and perhaps answering some.

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1 This question is inspired by Silvia Federici's book On the Periphery of the Skin which served as one of the main inspirations and references for this thesis.

2 Reference to neo pagan ecofeminist Starhawk who published a book under the name The Spiral Dance. The spiral dance was developed as Reclaiming Ritual in the Pagan community to emphasize „community and rebirth".

3 Reference to the concept developed by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in One Thousand Plateaus which I will introduce later in the text.

4 Cis or cisgender is a term for people whose gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth.

5 I decided to use the word "woman", instead of adopting an alternating spelling variation like "womyn" or "womxn". Even though, I recognise the intersectional feminist approach to reclaim the term through removal of the "man/men" at the end of the word, I prefer to use the term "woman" out of inclusivity reasons. Trans* women and women of colour are women and I view them already included in this term. If I speak specifically about cis women, trans* women or women of colour, I will mark this in the text.

6 Throughout the thesis, I am adding an asterisk at the end of the word trans* to be inclusive towards the variety of people who identify with this umbrella term, such as people who are bigender, agender, genderfluid and many more. All of these identities have one shared denominator: a trans* person is not a cisgender man or cisgender woman.

7 tECkhnO is a term created by my friend, artist and collaborator pamela varela. It references techno, without diminishing eco. The spelling with k references the idea of political and anarchistic activism. Inspirations were drawn from the Spanish squatting scene OKUPA (misspelling of OCUPA) and the term magick which differentiates the occult from performance magic.

Bodies ... interact, connect, relate, flow, fuse, morph, touch, and dance

image credits: ella hebendanz

Sticking the fingers into the clay,
I expose my body to
artistic exploration.

Pouring her into the world,
Our different bodies
are shaping each other.

Dreaming of borderless utopias,
And bodies beyond boundaries.

Creating fleeting compositions
of curious entanglement,
all I wonder is,

Where does one body end
and another begin?

The video was created as a visual representation of my theoretical research process. It was exhibited at DYAD in Amsterdam for two weeks in May 2021, Cinematography and editing by ella hebendanz.

delusive borders, imaginary spaces

{ artistic research }

Delusive borders, imaginary spaces is an artistic research project that has never been concluded within a final outcome but is an open research with multiple leads. Searching for a deeper understanding of the magnitudes of border conflicts and global correlations regarding the 2nd world war and, at the same time, grasping to understand my own positionality within this complex global-political entanglement, I travelled to live for six months in Jerusalem. There, I was attending the Art Academy Bezalel - a school positioned on top of a mountain overviewing the divided territories of the "holy" city only a few car minutes away from Palestine.

Due to the outbreak of the Covid pandemic, I was confronted with a new reality of closing borders: While travelling within the territorialsed Westbank, Europe suddenly began erecting its frontiers. Trapped within new digital world full of possibilities and limitations, I continued studying online, thereby reflecting on the many surrealisms and lostness of the situation, personal priviledges and global challenges.

During this time, I wrote five intimate poetic-political letters and contextualised my research in a theoretical frame work and a loose video essay.

essay pdf: delusive borders, imaginary spaces ↗

research
ella hebendanz

presented at
Online
07 / 2020

with assistance by
Hannah Aschenbrecher

image credits: Google, ella hebendanz

image credits: ella hebendanz
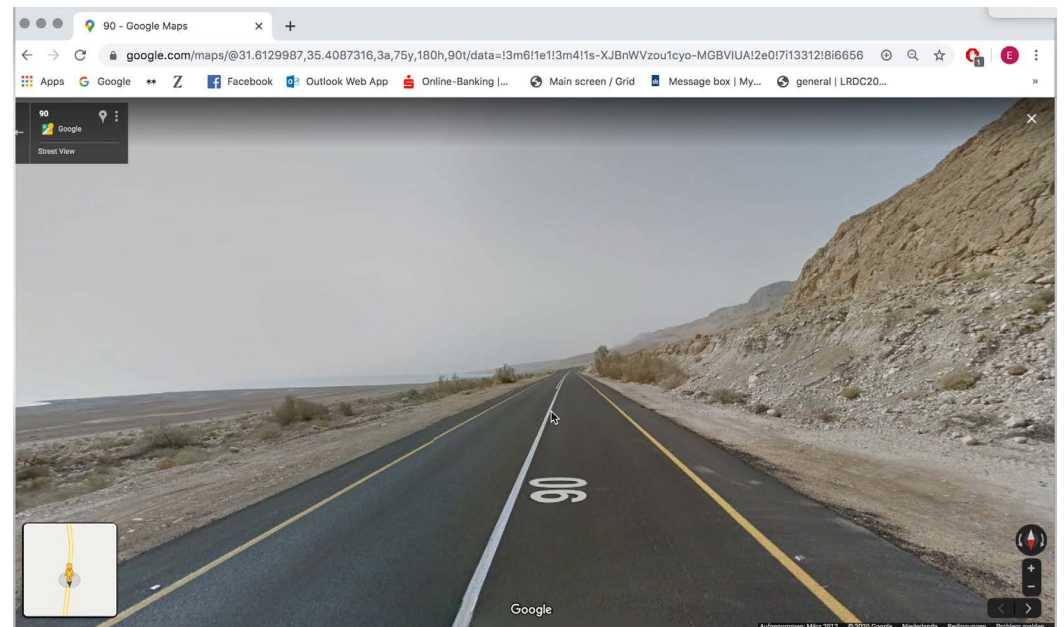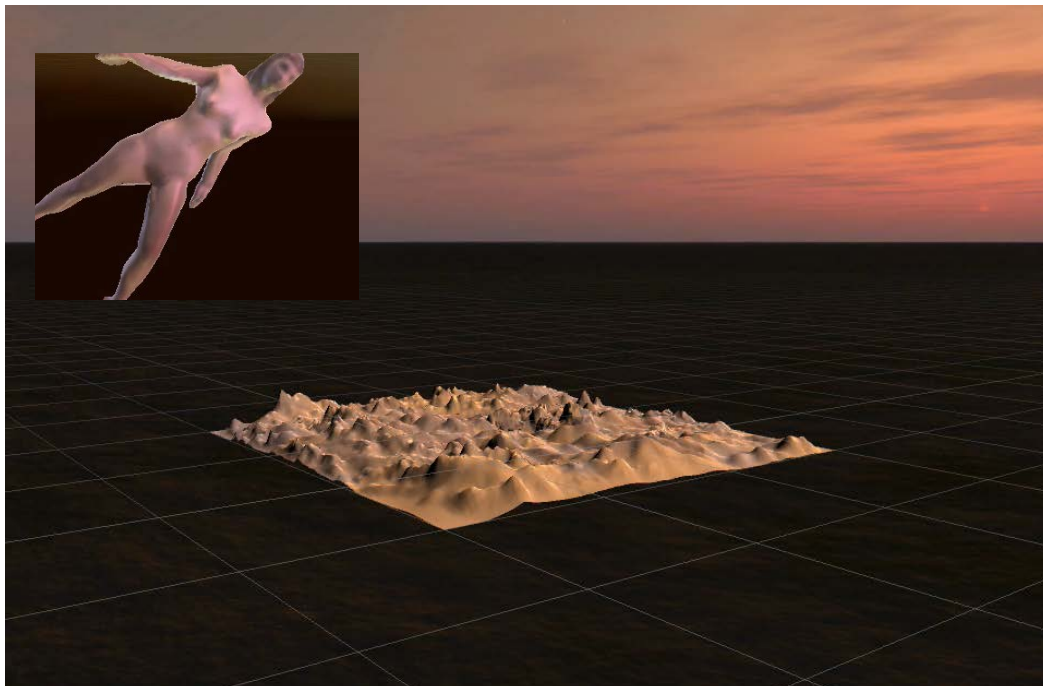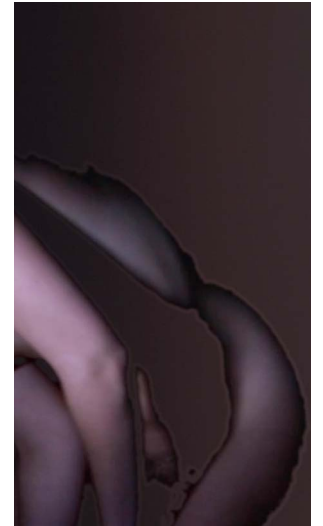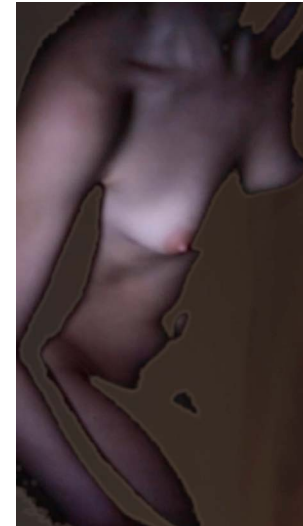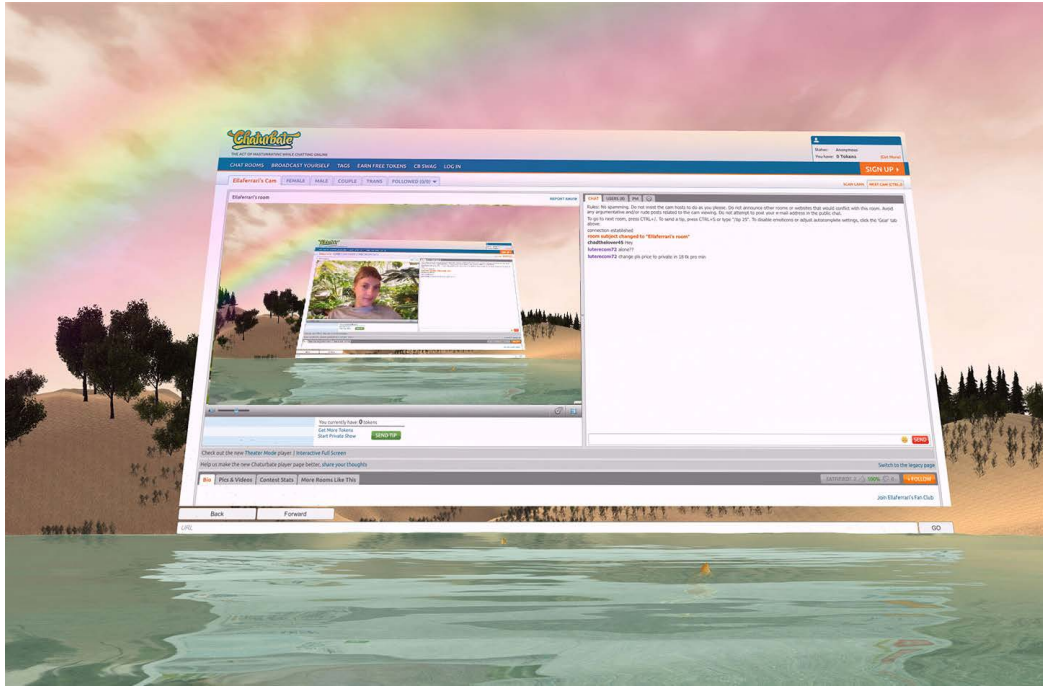
a second skin

{ sensorial garment }

This interactive garment portrays a second skin -representing the correlation between the individual and its environment. The electronic wearble serves as a protector and exposer silmutaneously.

The LRD sensors imbedded within the fabric measure the exposure of light, thus the movement of its surrounding. According to the light exposure in the environment, small servo motors between the layers of fabric are activated via an Arduino Uno. Thus, the motors pull and stretch the fabric across the body. While wearing the outfit, the performer can chose to either let oneself be guided by the external influence or on the other hand protect oneself, letting solely the motors react to the environment.

The visible electronics display the inner life of a body; organs and veins that interact just underneath the surface. Consciously working with the element of opacity, I want to question the distinction between human and machine.

concept + creation + performance
ella hebendanz

with assistance by
Anja Hertenberger
Ines DeRu
pamela varela

presented at
Royal Academy of Art,
The Hague, NL
01 / 2020

Media
textiles
electronics

image credits: Carlos Lopez
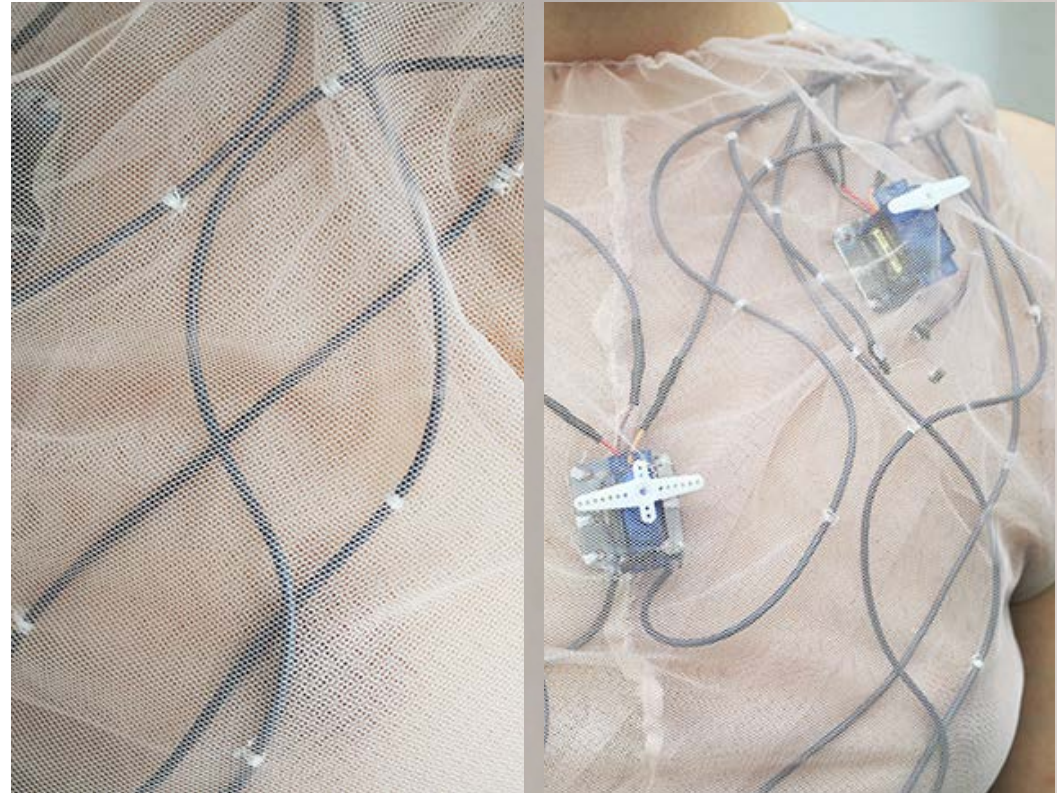
The garment is composed of different layers and shades of tulle, resembling a skin like textile, a transparent layer that wraps around the human flesh. Since I designed the outfit for my own body, it is a unique representation of my skin and the reason I decided to work with lighter colors.

image credits: Janine Huizenga, Carlos Lopez
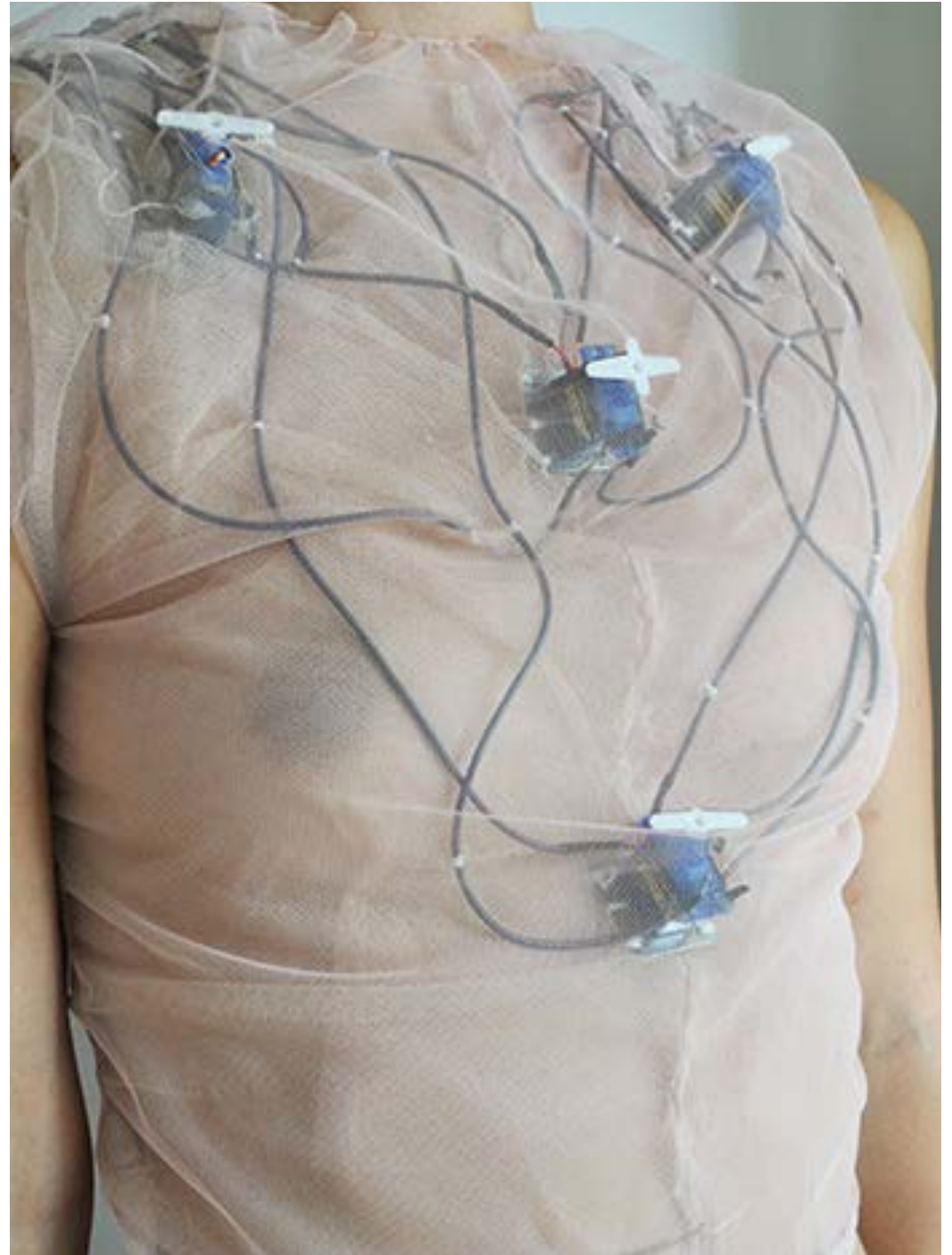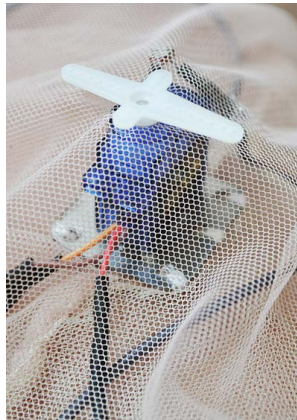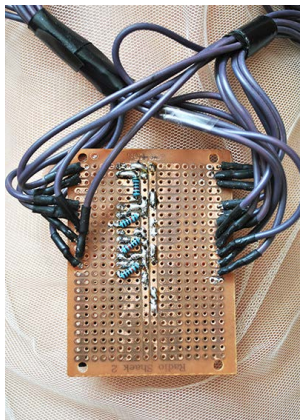
dépaysment

{ short film }

Dépaysement is a oneiric short film that, through a dreamlike lens, explores a journey through the body and mind, a journey where the boundaries of self and reality are blurred.

A traveller finds himself drifting in a surreal and unfamiliar landscape, a place where language and culture are but a distant echo. Meeting other familiar and unfamiliar nomads on the way, they begin to form a sense of camaraderie in their shared search for something intangible, all bound by a common thread of displacement. Though they speak different tongues and hail from different lands, they all experience a sense of estrangement. The film contemplates the nature of self and the meaning of belonging in an ever-changing world, a world where identity is fluid and reality is but a fleeting illusion.

direction
Arina Livadari
ella hebendanz
Thora Thøgersen

screenplay
Arina Livadari
ella hebendanz
Thora Thøgersen

cinematography
Arina Livadari
ella hebendanz

cast
Junghyun Kim
Carmen Roca Igual
Thora Thøgersen
Timoteo Carbone
ella hebendanz

Erik Kamaletdinov
Nicolas Landriati
Alexandra Dalavaga
Miltos Sotiropoulos

presented at
Eye Film Museum
Amsterdam, NL
07 / 2019

This is a mind trip.

image credits: ella hebendanz
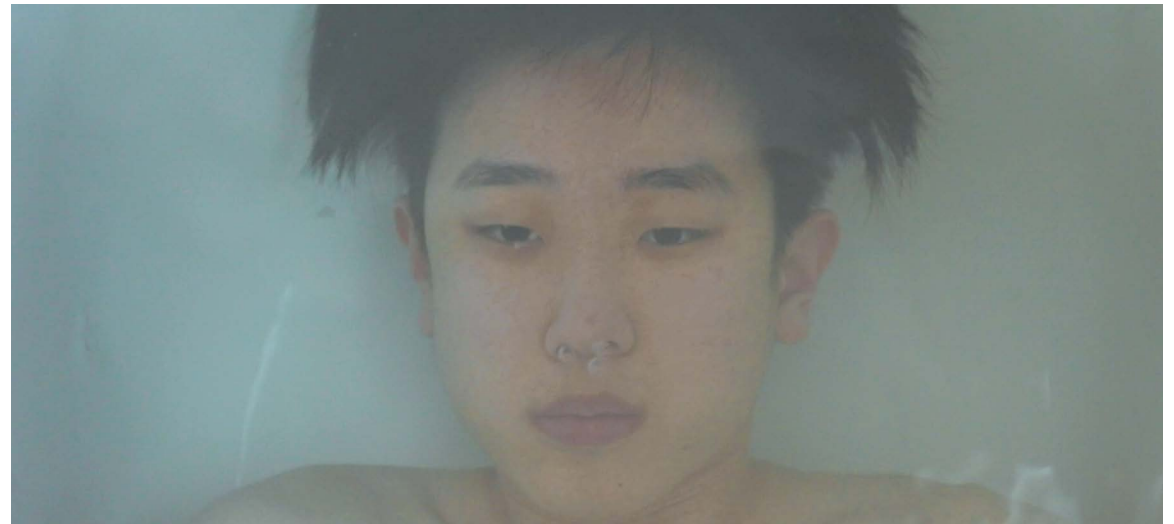
"Dépaysement" (French) derives from the verb "se dépayser" and the noun "pays" meaning country or land and means to take away from one's country or to displace.

image credits: ella hebendanz

german structuralism

{ artistic research / installation }

german structuralism is a project that reflects on my personal visual heritage. Generations later, the Second World War still has left visible traces in our surroundings. Having grown up next to a Former British military station and having had to pass its long and imposing fence - isolating the station from the rest of the city - every day on way to school, left me pondering on the issue of "the wall". What does it mean to separate people by a frontier and who is standing on either side? Having had a childhood full of freedom and privileges, I began wondering about the meaning of the wall in my personal but also cultural and historical context and where to position myself in this dialogue.

The project consists of three states: construction, destruction, restruction. The final work represents the neatly arranged traces of incomprehensible destruction which weighs on the German history until today.

conceptual research +
development
ella hebendanz

with assistance by
Johan Gustavsson
pamela varela

presented at
Royal Academy of Art,
The Hague, NL
05 / 2018

Media
Bricks
Wood

image credits: ella hebendanz

image credits: Melle de Groot, ella hebendanz
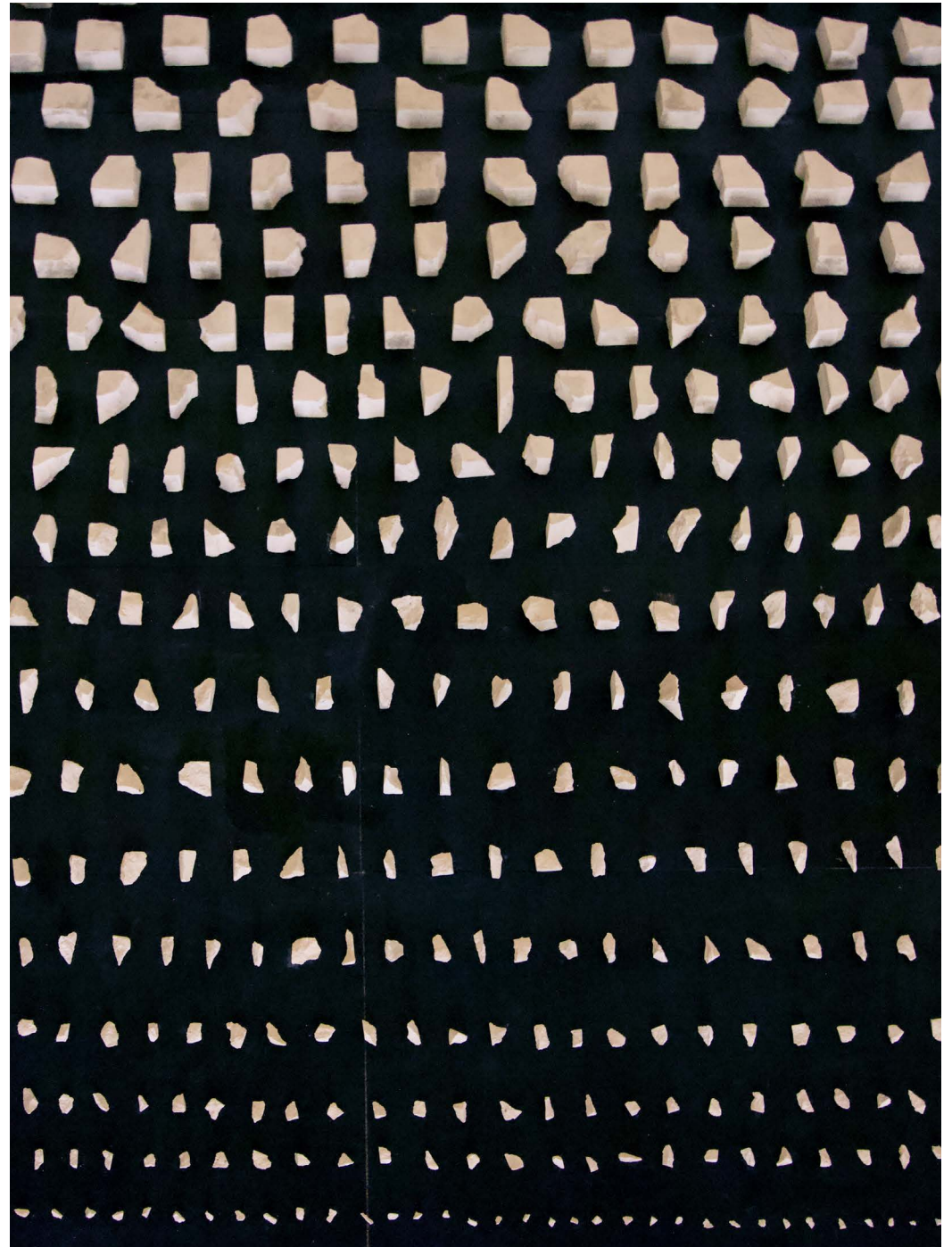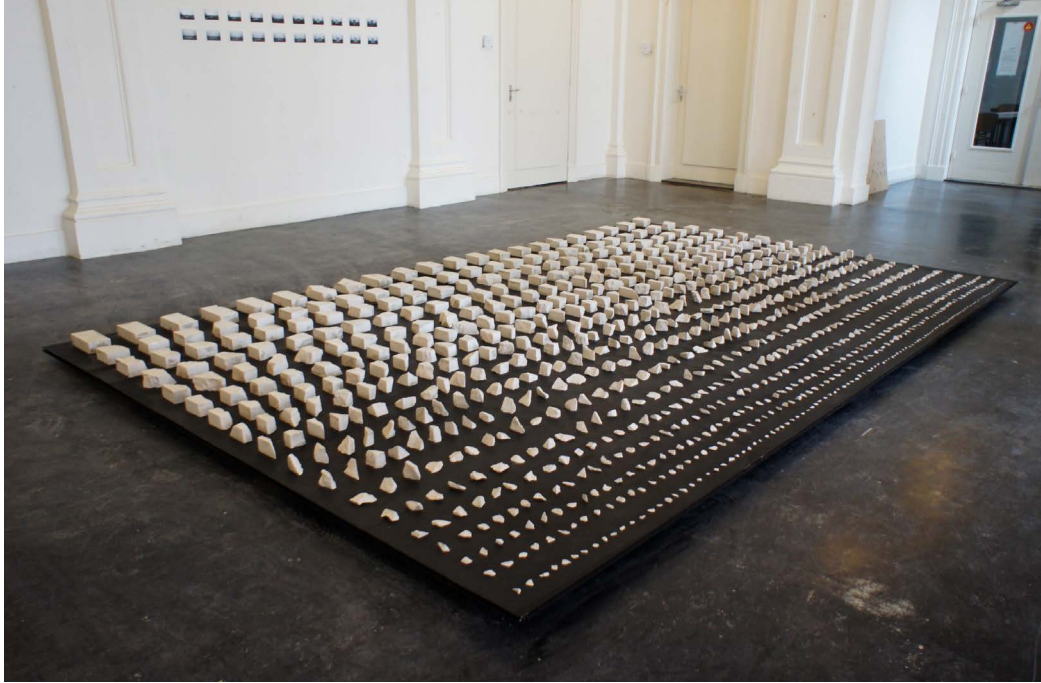
sWitches

We are *sWitches*, an interdisciplinary, cyberfeminist,
artivist constellation formed by pamela varela (MX, 1995),
Ines DeRu (ID/ES, 1998), and ella hebendanz (DE, 1997).
Taking the witch as a symbol for the rebellious feminist,
we make our way into the patriarchal technological field
to express a more diverse(ifying) view on technology and
create sensorial experiences that extend and enhance
human connection. We use technology in close contact
with our bodies, envisioning it as a tool for contemporary
magick, while simultaneously exploring the notions
of power and control that arise between human and
machine. Getting inspiration from our diverse origins
and creative approaches, we link back to our own roots,
while creating a new network.

lichti@

{ installation / performance / cyber performance }

lichti@ is an interactive live/cyber dance performance and installation, immersing the audience in an ecstatic, climatic, and orgiastic experience through the use of technology and the extended performers' bodies. Addressing the objectification and oppression that society puts on the body, together, we use the power of dance to fight, liberate, and heal. Our movements are translated through a vaginal EMG muscle sensor, which then activates the installation and affects lights and visuals within the environment.

The ritual is a celebration of the nourishing power of the sun, where the sensual force of its rays is channeled through our pelvic floors. As a viewer, you become part of a sensorial journey that transcends our physical, spiritual, and digital worlds.

lichti@ exists in three different formats:
installation, performance and cyber performance.

(video: lichti@ ↗)

created by
sWitches

concept + artistic direction + technology + performance
ella hebendanz
Ines DeRu
pamela varela

concept + technology
Marlot Meyer

performance dramaturgy
Fazle Shairhahomed

costumes + wearables
persophino

sound design
Vesnianka, mala herba

video footage
Adam Centko

video edit + visual design
ella hebendanz

supported by
Stimuleringsfonds
Niet Normaal INT

presented at
Come Alive, Utrecht
06 - 07 / 2023

software
Arduino
ESP32
Touch Designer
Millumin
Premiere Pro
Ableton Live

media
Vaginal Muscle Probes
Electronic Wearable
Dance Performance
Sound Piece
Textile Installation
Lights + Projections

image credits: Emma Grima
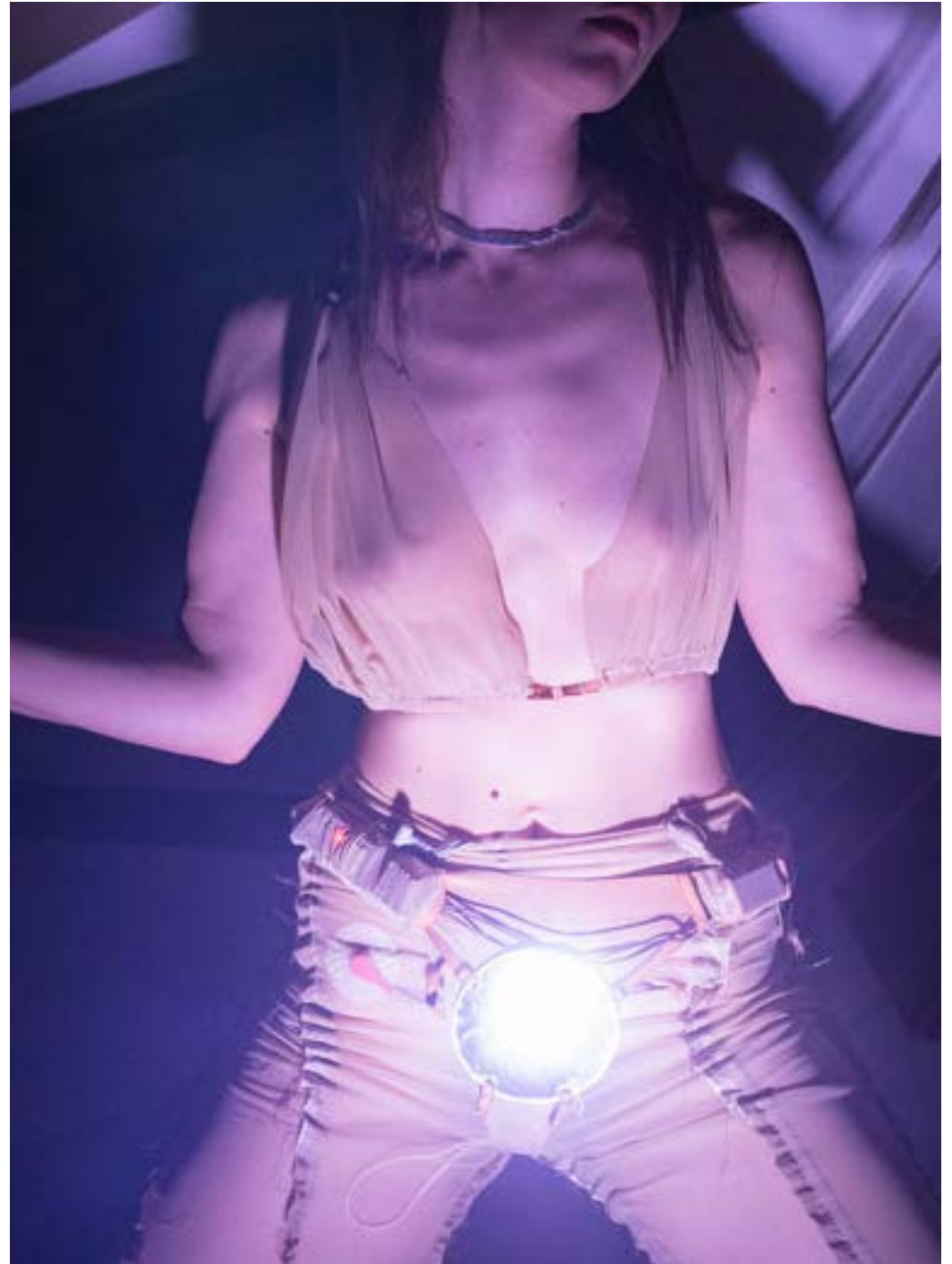
ĭichti@ draws inspiration from Summer Solstice and Midsummer festivals, which historically involved dancing and singing around bonfires to symbolize the sun's energy and ensure a supply of light. Some traditions involved gathering in architectural structures, such as Stonehenge or Chichén Itzá, which were built following the movements of the sun. However, in certain European traditions, a figurine of a witch is burned alongside the bonfire, to "protect" the community against evil spirits and "witches", a consequence of the medieval witch hunts which finally is starting to disappear.

image credits: Ines DeRu, ella hebendanz
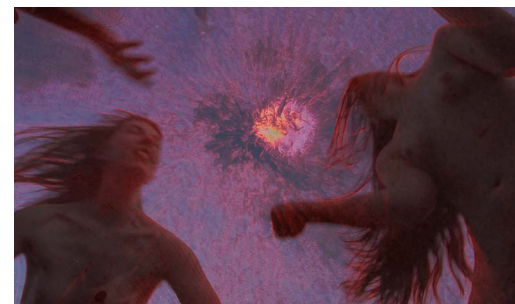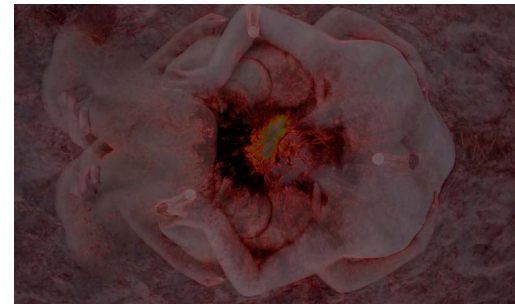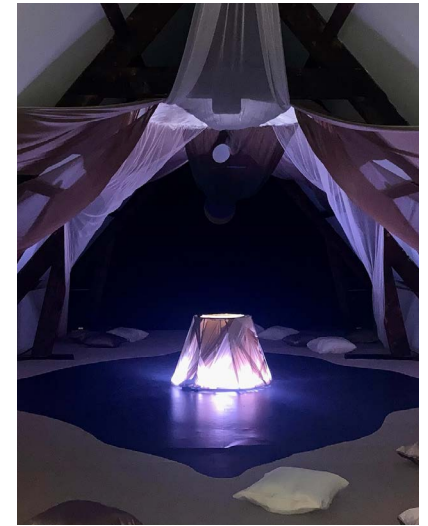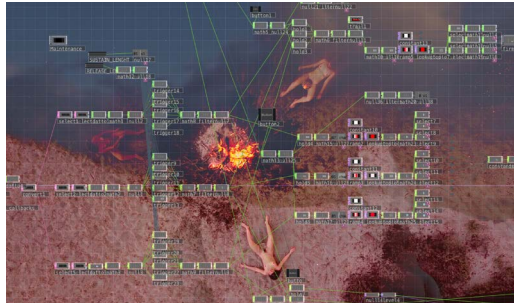
The narrative of the performance is a journey that explores contrasting elements, such as pain and pleasure, individuality and collectivity, and primal and technological elements. The performance is centered around the electronic bonfire, which represents the three different stages of transcendence. Three different light sources are activated through the EMG vagina muscle sensor-we ignite the fire, we channel the beams, and finally we open the celestial portal.

image credits: Emma Grima, Marlot Meyer
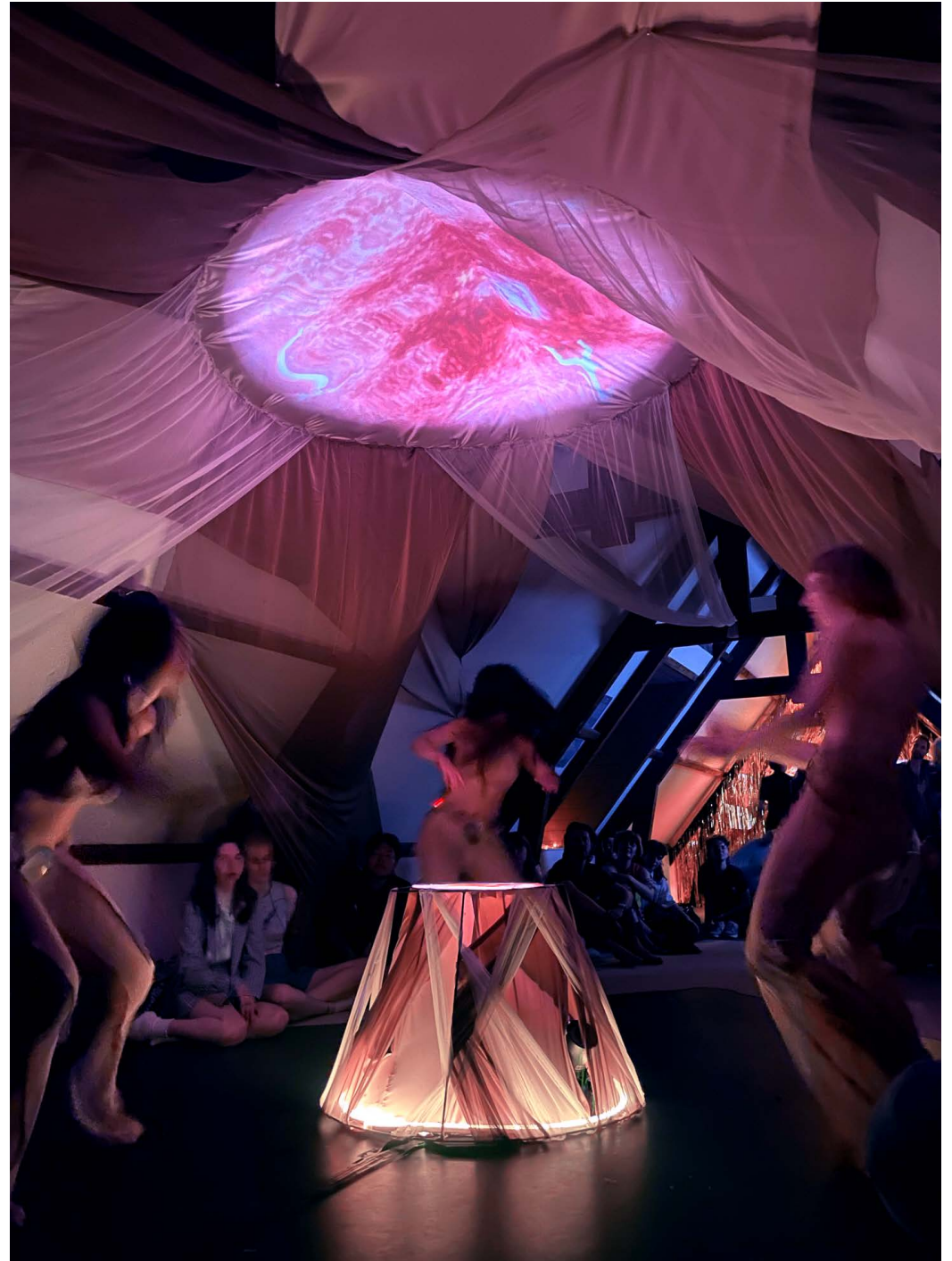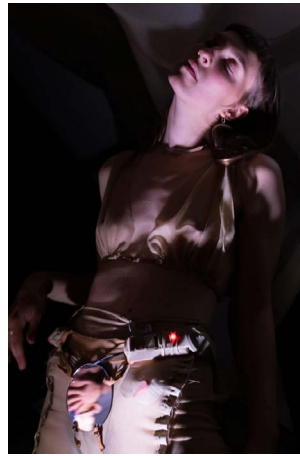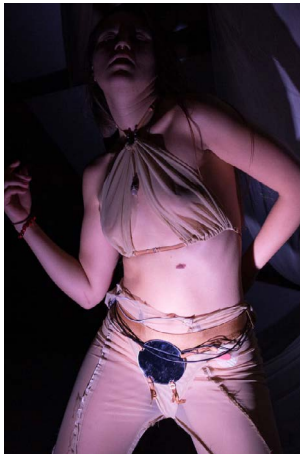
The technological system that *lichti@* operates with is called *net-ktar*. This is a cyber-instrument that we created to enable us to connect to our creations using telepresence, therefore, crossing the boundaries of reality and virtuality, and building a relationship between these spaces for our performances. Both live and cyber performances use the same components in activating the space; however, with the cyber-instrument, we are able to connect to the web, automating our machines, sounds, and visuals from a distance, be it a few meters to a thousand kilometers.

image credits: ella hebendanz, Marlot Meyer, Lars Dorren
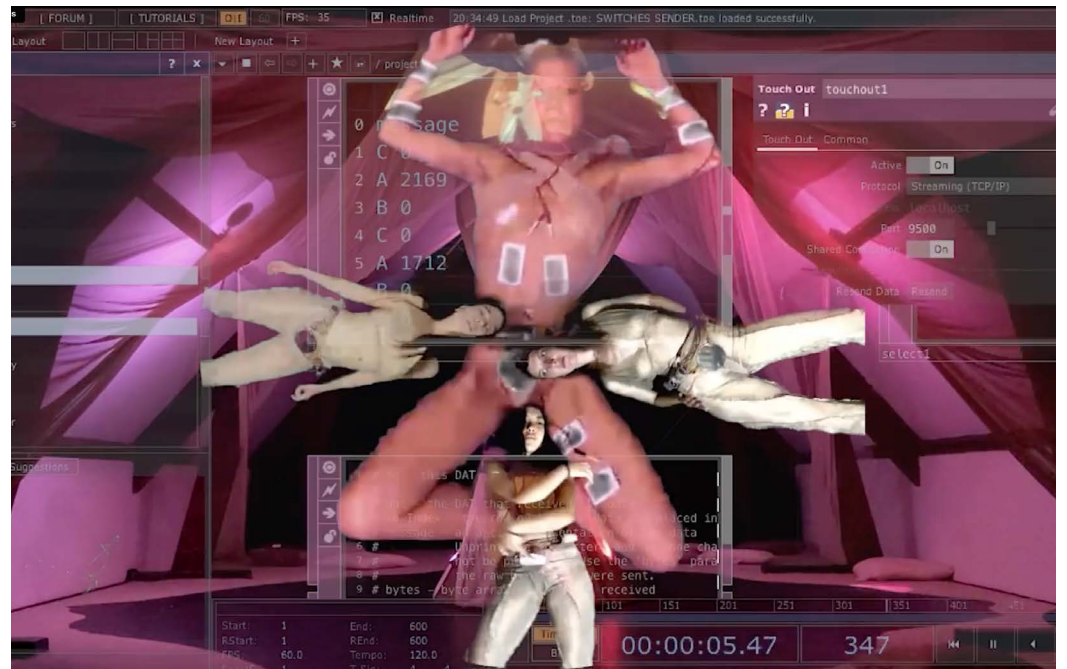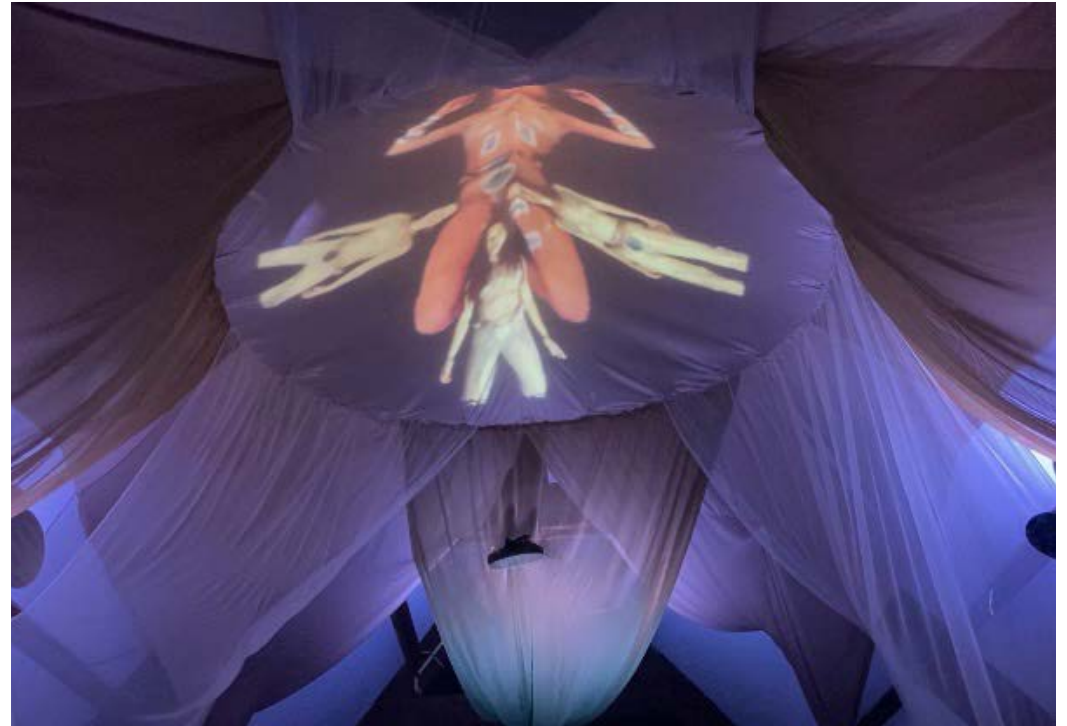
fl0wr@liå

{ workshop / performance / interactive installation }

fl0wr@liå is a communal sound sculpture in the form of a maypole that was activated through an interactive, collective dance performance. This project is an exploration and reappropriation of the May rituals, questioning the Christian influence on the pagan tradition and thus queeryfing the maypole, breaking the patterns, and inviting an alternative narrative of communal rituals.

Crafted with conductive materials, it tells the participants' unheard stories of sexuality, sensuality, pleasure, and intimacy. The materialisation of this instrument was co-created within the workshop program at iii in a *tECkhnO*-crafting workshop* where participants fabricated the ribbons and filled them with their own thoughts. Throughout the duration of the exhibition, we held sessions inviting those who were open to weave their voices into the installation and thus transforming the interactive sculpture into a sonic archive of intimacy that could be listened to by the visitors.

video: fl0wr@liå ↗

created by sWitches	*participants / performers* Ines Borovac Viktoria Nikolova	*presented at* every moment a junction Nest, The Hague
concept + artistic direction + *technology + performance* ella hebendanz Ines DeRu pamela varela	Christine Hvidt Nursinem Aslan Veronika Matkovska Viktoria Arvayova Sophia Bulgakova Georgina Pantazopoulou	05 - 07 / 2023 *software* Teensy Arduino Ableton Live Stretch Sensors
in collaboration with iii Wxtch Craft Studium Generale Myra-ida van der Veen Georgina Pantazopoulou	Carlota Garcia Cherry Kim Inaya Bsau Ella Hebendanz pamela varela Ines DeRu	*media* Sound Narratives Electronic Ribbons Wooden installation Stones

image credits: Hans Poel

The workshop was held over the course of two days, during which participants were first introduced to the basics of electronics on the first day and then had the opportunity to weave the sensors into the fabrics while sharing their personal stories.

image credits: Naomi Lionheart

During the opening of "every moment a junction" at Nestruimte, we
danced and shared and crossed our bodies and stories. In the form of
a (may)pole dance, we celebrated the beginning of the exhibition and of
the warm season. Taking inspiration from the art form happening, we let
spontaneity and improvisation lead the dance, while our unheard stories
on sexuality, sensuality, pleasure and intimacy were spoken out loud.

image credits: Hans Poel
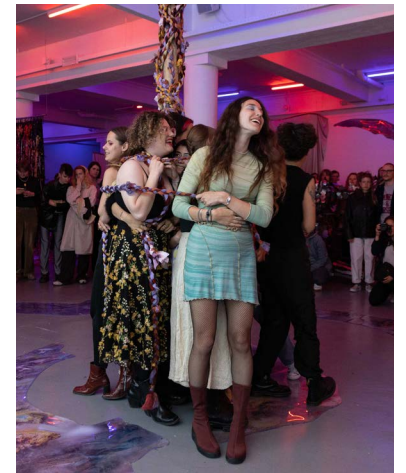
The interactive installation invited the audiences to experience the stories over a period of two months as well as to discuss their own thoughts in a separate workshop session.

image credits: Charlott Markus, Viv Li, pamela varela
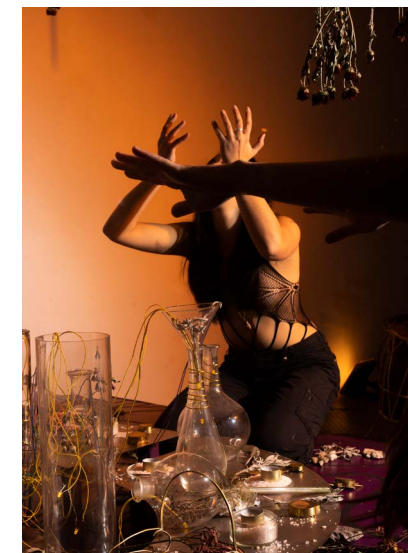
lunåticå

{ interactive, sensoṅial performance / installation }

Embracing the chaos of the untamed, unruly and uncontrollable jungle, the~sinners~fighters~daughtXrs of the moon enliven their roots by activating the threaded networks that animate the elements of the land. It is time to awaken from the spirals of our shadows and voices of the unheard souls, and to regenerate the decaying mainframe and corrupted memories. Through dance, voice and touch, we synergise our tECkhnO spirits to celebrate the sounds of the living and the dead.

created by
sWitches

concept + artistic direction + technology + performance
ella hebendanz
Ines DeRu
pamela varela

sound art
Hilde Wollenstein

presented at
Jam-Pod
Sign, Groningen, NL
11 - 12 / 2021

software
Ableton Live
Arduino
Max/MSP
Touchdesigner
Milumin
After Effects

media
Sound Narratives
Conductive Ink
Metall Installation
Natural elements
Glass Altar
LED Lights
Performance
Video Storyline
Electronic Sensors

image credits: Emma Grima

image credits: Emma Grima

Marked by the magickal passage of time, lun@ticǎ was
presented as a series of performances and an installation.
The vernissage was in a new moon, and the finissage in
the next one, symbolizing a cycle of closings&beginnings,
decay&growth, dark&light.

image credits: Emma Grima

ănim@

{ transmedia performance / immersive environment }

a sensorial, communal universe where our spells generate a ritualistic act of resistance, formed by 3 chapters:

son tra mi ona, Ines DeRu: A sonic gathering that embarks us into a deep listening journey where elemental sounds of nature are carried via the voice through vibrational instruments of healing.

transcendence - trance 'n dance, pamela varela: Performance exploring dance as a tool of bodily reappropriation, where the artist fights against the politics of a colonialist, patriarchal, and capitalist society.

compositions of unbroken flows, ella hebendanz: Inspired by the craft of pottery and clay's symbolism of matter, mechanised turning wheels are used to compose a swirling dreamscape that contextualises research on bodily entanglement.

created and performed by
sWitches

presented at
Sign Project Space,
Groningen, NL
11 / 2021

Gogbot Festival,
Enschede, NL
09 / 2021

Royal Academy of Art,
The Hague, NL
07 / 2021

in collaboration with
Surojo
Berk Duygun
Lennart Heiner
Camila Chebez
Montserrat Balmori
Victoria Martínez
Anna Arov
Marlot Meyer
Maarten Keus
Adriaan Wormgoor
Sofía Irene
Taide Martínez
Jill Wilkinson
Bob Verhoeven

Lucien Nicou
Fazle Shairmahomed
Dennis Slootweg
Davide Amato
Hilde Wollenstein
Xiaoyao Ma
Sorin Angeleanu
Hilde Barwegen
Lara Santos
Arthur Codier

image credits: Astrée Duval, Sorin Angeleanu, Melle De Groot

The ă with breve and a dot below comes from the old hebrew alphabet 'aleph' = 'eleph' = 'ox'. The Ox has been worshiped for centuries in many religions, and was important in agricultural societies. It symbolises fertility, strength and abundance. The @ represents the technological entity and cybernetic system in our realm.

image credits: Marlot Meyer, Melle De Groot, pamela varela

void void void
setup

{
prisoners of patriarchy, capitalism, subordination
feeling anger and sharing frustration
the fire of their souls burning
toxins raising, exhaling from their bodies, spreading:
viral

sie ist das Virus, dass das System verändern wird
ellXs son el virus que alterará el sistema
saya adalah virus yang akan mengubah sistem
we are the virus that will disrupt the system

call her
witch bruja hexe
slut puta schlampe
cunt perra hure
whore zorra fotze
bitch loba flittchen

shX is
mothXr madrX muttXr
sistXr hermanX schwestXr
daughtXr hijX tochtXr
friendX amigX freundXn
goddXss diosX göttXn
}

1n1t1@t10n

{ interactive performance }

1n1@t10n is an audio-visual movement performance that explores the convergence of technology, nature and sexuality, while testing new potential spaces of collective and empowered co-creation.

We perform our poetic-political *manifestX* by exploring our bodies as kinetic controllers. Using conductive ink and electronic circuits on our skin, we narrate our lyrical code through visuals and voice, touch and intimacy. We make use of our diverse origin and creative approach as a way to link back to our own roots, while creating a new circuitry.

(video: 1n1t1@t10n ↗)

created and performed by
sWitches

presented at
Life after the Warmup,
Grey Space in The Middle
The Hague, NL
12 / 2019

media
Conductive Ink
Electronics
Spoken Word
Performance
Visual Projections
Textiles

software
Arduino
Unity 3D
Ableton Live

image credits: Janine Huizenga

image credits: Janine Huizenga

Using the conductive ink on our bodies, we were manipulating sound and image, expressing our manifestX. We projected an alternative universe at the ceiling, where our words, bodies and landscape fused into one cosmos; controlling it from below, transcending above.


void void void
update

{
we are cyberwitches
in this hybrid space
transforming codes into complex networks
mirroring patterns as above, so below
we embody the souls of the divine goddXssXs
daughtXrs of the moon, MüttXr der Sonne, hermanXs de la tierra
sexual beings, spiritual beings, earthly beings
exploring our bodies as our own territory
entangled in the roots, linking us to the matriX

as the current unites us
our power allows us to re-engineer the world
healing
fire, water, earth, and air will we fuse
burning, wetting, reconstructing, deconstructing

the flowers of justice bloom
the fruits of freedom ripen
ready
for shaping a world which prejudice claims no more victims
ready
for reclaiming the corrupted system

ecstatic, in trance, celebrating
shouting together:
in the current void
we are the future voice
}
X

image credits: ella hebendanz
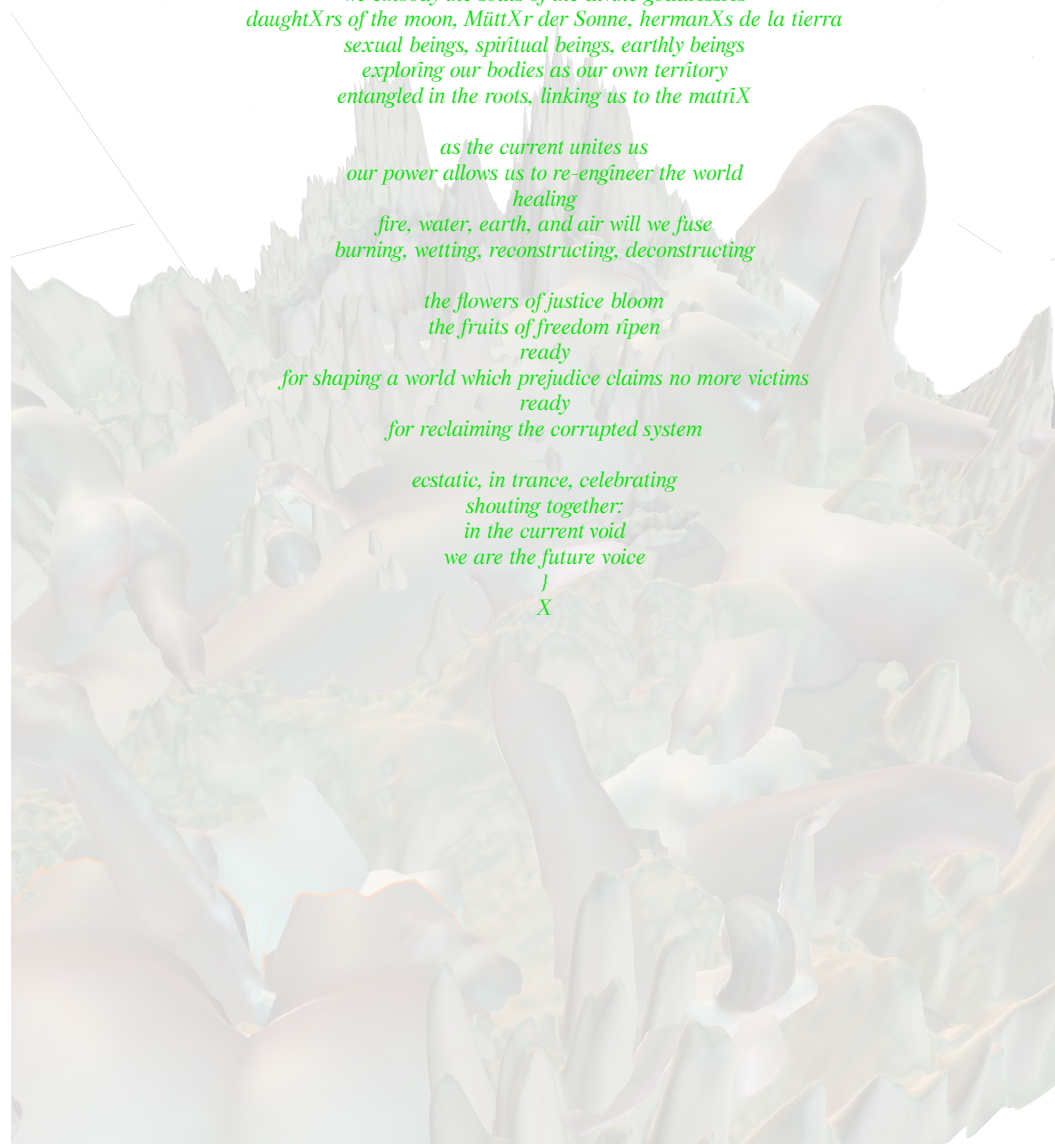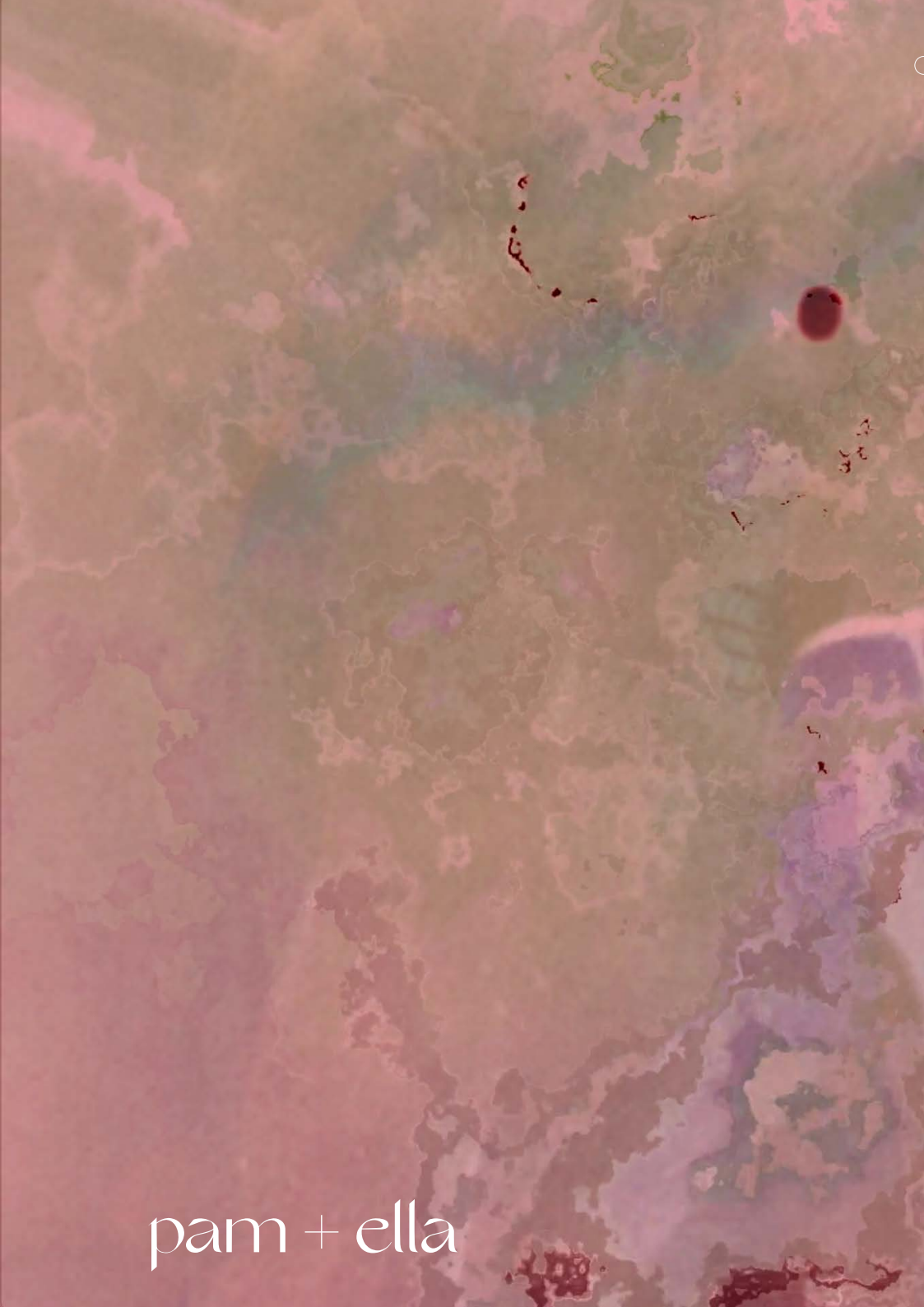
pam + ella

From 2023, pamela varela and I will be working together as an artistic duo and sub-collective of *sWitches*, which will further explore the body and land in regards to the symbiosis that Latin America and Europe share, explored by an array of dualities that fall within the arts and sciences.
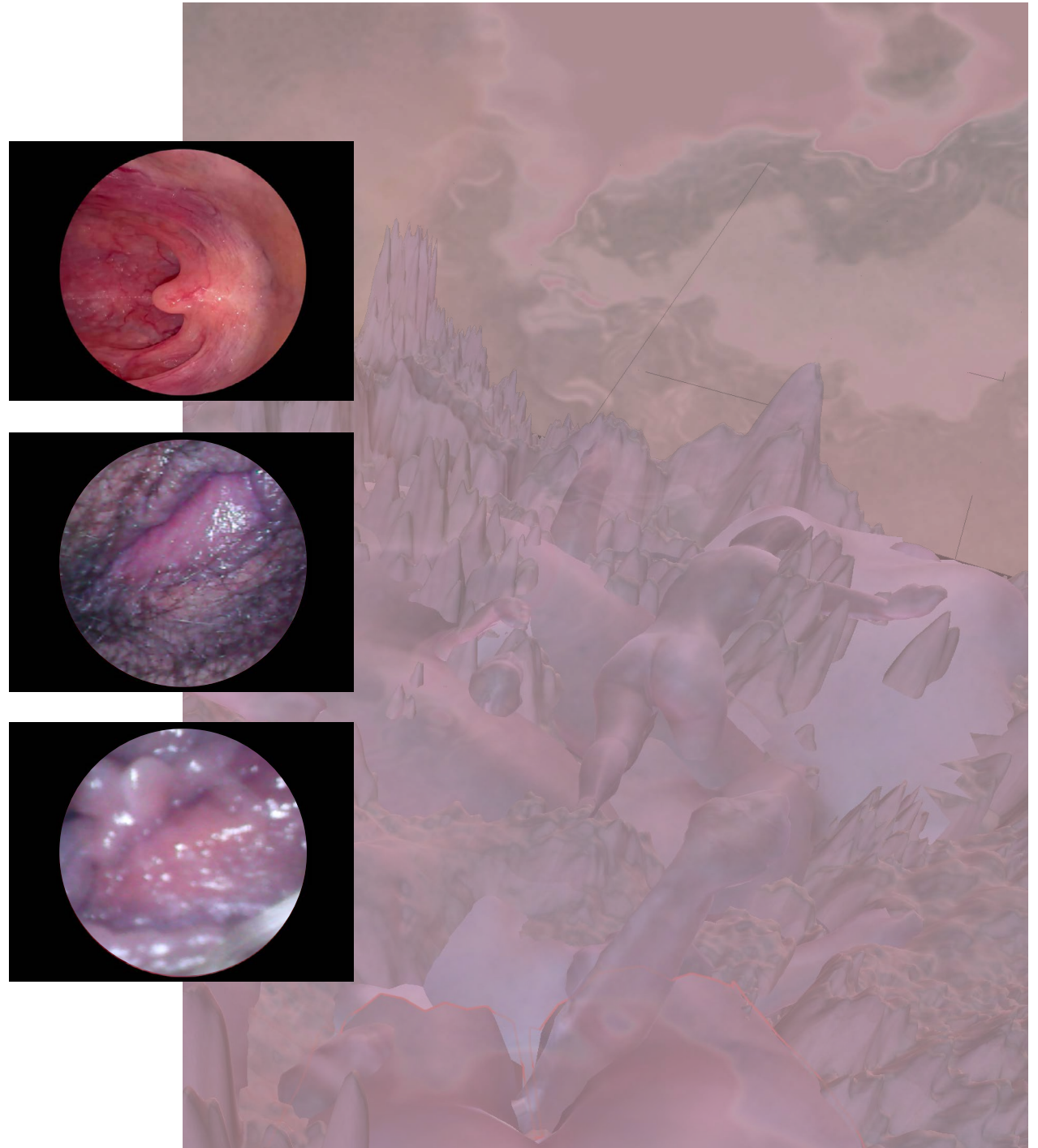
re-c(O)unting

*{ ongoing artistic research / performative lecture }*

re-c(O)unting is a kaleidoscopic investigation, an intra/ outra journey on the transgenerational trauma that our bodies store—told, seen, and shared from the viewpoint of the cunt's orgasm. Analyzing the manifold interconnections between nature and culture, science and spirituality, body and land, pleasure and pain, we zoom out and into the complex relationship that Europe and Latin America share.

By creating a half experimental / half documentary visual and performative narrative, we delve into our— quite literally—deepest insides, and interweave images taken from inside and outside our bodies with diverse narratives that portray the body as an ancestral archive.

This project is still in development and part of an ongoing collaboration with my friend and co-creator pamela varela. We are planning to further develop it within the coming months and pitched the research proposal within the framework of BAD Award and got selected to the next round.

conceptual research + development   *pitched at*
ella hebendanz   Bio Art Design Award 2023
pamela varela   Eindhoven, NL
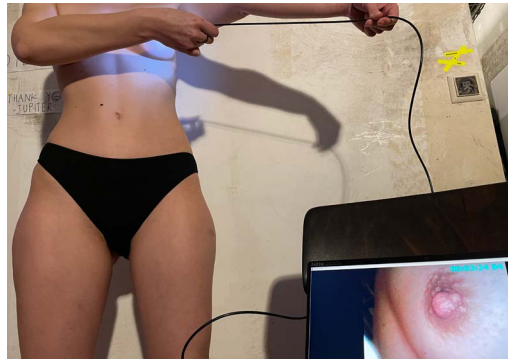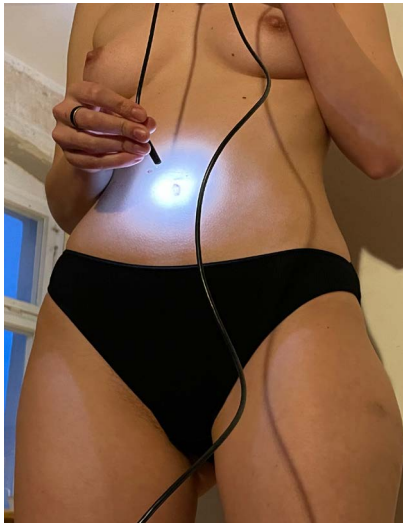
re-c(O)unting comes from diverse linguistic associations. "Cunt" is used to refer to the vulva but is also a swear word. "Count" means to take something into account. Its equivalent in other languages, i.e. "contar" in Spanish, also means "to tell". Lastly, it means to determine a list of numbers, so it is etymologically associated to "computation". Therefore, what we mean with this term is to retell a story of cunts that has been mistold, so taking them into account and reclaiming the negative connotations of the word. By exploring the concept through computation, we reclaim a field that initially was barely at the reach of women. We write it with an O in parenthesis to refer both to "cunt" and "count", while simultaneously alluding to the "big O", which is a term associated with the orgasm but also used in mathematics to analyze algorithms. As well, the shape (O) symbolizes for us a tunnel, a passage: a hypnotic, inductive shape, as well as a vagina. re-c(O) unting encompasses the stories to be retold, the cunts to be acknowledged, the "arts numériques" as media to be explored, and the states of heightened awareness to be experienced—all in the form of a mixed / multi / unstable / trans / new / digital / interactive media exploration. While delving into an assemblage of artistic and scientific practices, we aim to create a visual journey accompanied by a live performance—influencing the visual narrative with the use of electronic sensors.

Drawing inspiration from our backgrounds—ella from Germany and pamela from Mexico— we have had conversations about the European explorers who went to the Americas to research the land, often claiming it as their discovery, and how this is relatable to the men who—often violently—investigated the female body and named parts of it after their own name, i.e. fallopian tubes (after Gabriele Falloppio, Italian priest). In parallel, we also saw associations in the fact that Hofmann—the synthesizer of LSD—took samples of the magical mushrooms María Sabina—Mexican shaman—was using. The fungus appears as a cohesive device that links the land with the vagina and with the hallucinatory imagery we want to create. We want to further explore the fungus as a being whose macro/ micro network connects these topics within a framework of artistic-scientific research, leading up to a performative presentation of our findings.