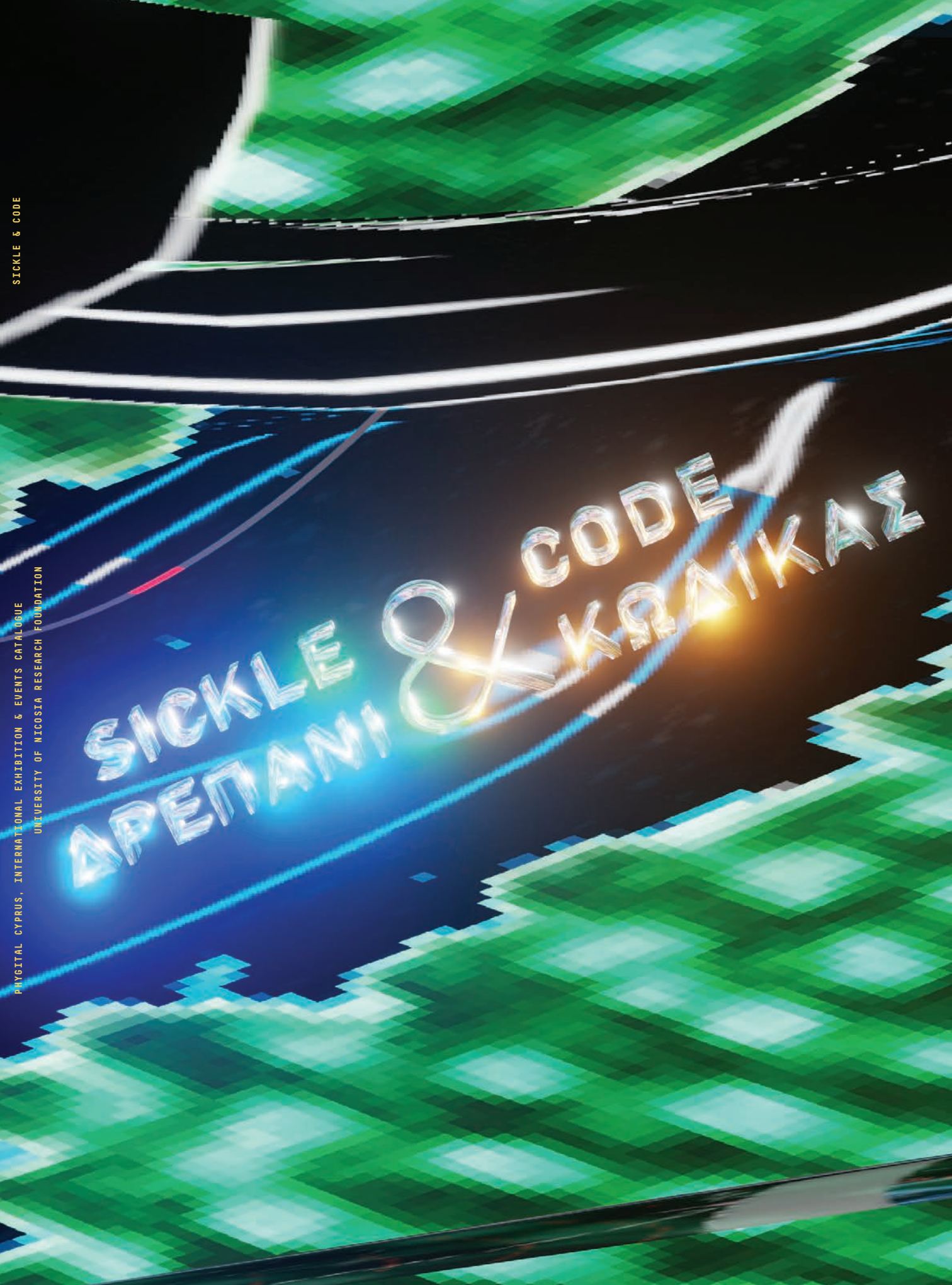




SICKLE & CODE

PLAYGITAL CYPRUS, INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION & EVENTS CATALOGUE
UNIVERSITY OF NICOSIA RESEARCH FOUNDATION

SICKLE & CODE ΑΡΕΘΑΝΗ ΚΩΔΙΚΑΣ

SICKLE & CODE
ΔΡΕΠΑΝΙ & ΚΩΔΙΚΑΣ

**Phygitai Cyprus
International
Exhibition & Events
Catalogue**

Published by
University of Nicosia
Research Foundation
Thkio Ppalies
(P.S. Artist Led Projects)

*Phygitai Project,
Catalysing Innovation
and Entrepreneurship.*

Editorial Team
Evanthia (Evi) Tselika
Peter Eramian
Elena Parpa

Unlocking the potential
of emerging production
and business models.

Design
Studio Nico Stephou

**Interreg Balkan-Med European
Regional Development Fund**

**University of Nicosia
Research Foundation**

**Published in Nicosia,
December 2020**

Funders:



Organizer:



Co-Organizer:



**Implementation
Partner:**



Lead Partner:



Partners:



Supporter:



Open Technologies
Alliance Greek Free/Open
Source Software Society

Peer to Peer
Alternatives
P2P Lab

Human
Environment
Culture

Municipality of
North Zoumerka

University
of Nicosia

5	INTRO Evanthia (Evi) Tselika, Elena Parpa & Peter Eramian
8-13	From the Sickle to the Code: The Potential of the Commons in Reshaping the World We Live In Maria Hadjimichael
14-25	Distributed Agri – Cultures: Notions of Care in Nicosia’s Social Housing Estates Jenny Dunn
26-43	Artworks Showcase
44-51	Zach Blas in Conversation Elena Parpa
52-57	Contemporary Crafting and Making Practices: Exhibiting the Lakatamia Makerspace Prototypes in a Museum of Cultural and Craft Heritage Evanthia (Evi) Tselika
58-63	Phygital Cyprus Prototypes Showcase
64-73	Communication Material Studio Nico Stephou
74-79	Diary of Events & Makeathons
80-81	Educational Workshops for Children
82-83	Epilogue Peter Eramian
84	Colophon

INTRO

Evanthia (Evi) Tselika, Elena Parpa & Peter Eramian

Sickle & Code was the international exhibition, part of the project *Phygital*, which was conceptualised with the scope of investigating contemporary movements related to the knowledge-sharing economy, which reconsider capitalist definitions of credit, labour and production. *Phygital* has been implemented in Greece, Albania and Cyprus, involving the development of makerspaces with a focus on free and open source software driven by local communities.

As a title, *Sickle & Code* suggests a combination of tools: the sickle, an agricultural tool and once a resonant symbol of social revolutions; and the code, the language we develop as a tool in software programming. In contemporary debates coding links through movements, such as that of 'free and open-source software', with the demand, on a practical level, for open collaboration and unhindered re(distribution) of technologies and, on a theoretical level, with the social claim for freedom in access and in processes of making. Although the two tools reference distinct spheres of activity (the physical and the digital), they are both designed in order to shape the world we live in. As such, the *Sickle*

& *Code* drives us to the core of the wider *Phygital* project, which builds on practices that move between the material and the digital, melding older forms of making and co-producing with current methods of fabrication and contemporary notions on the communal, collective and collaborative.

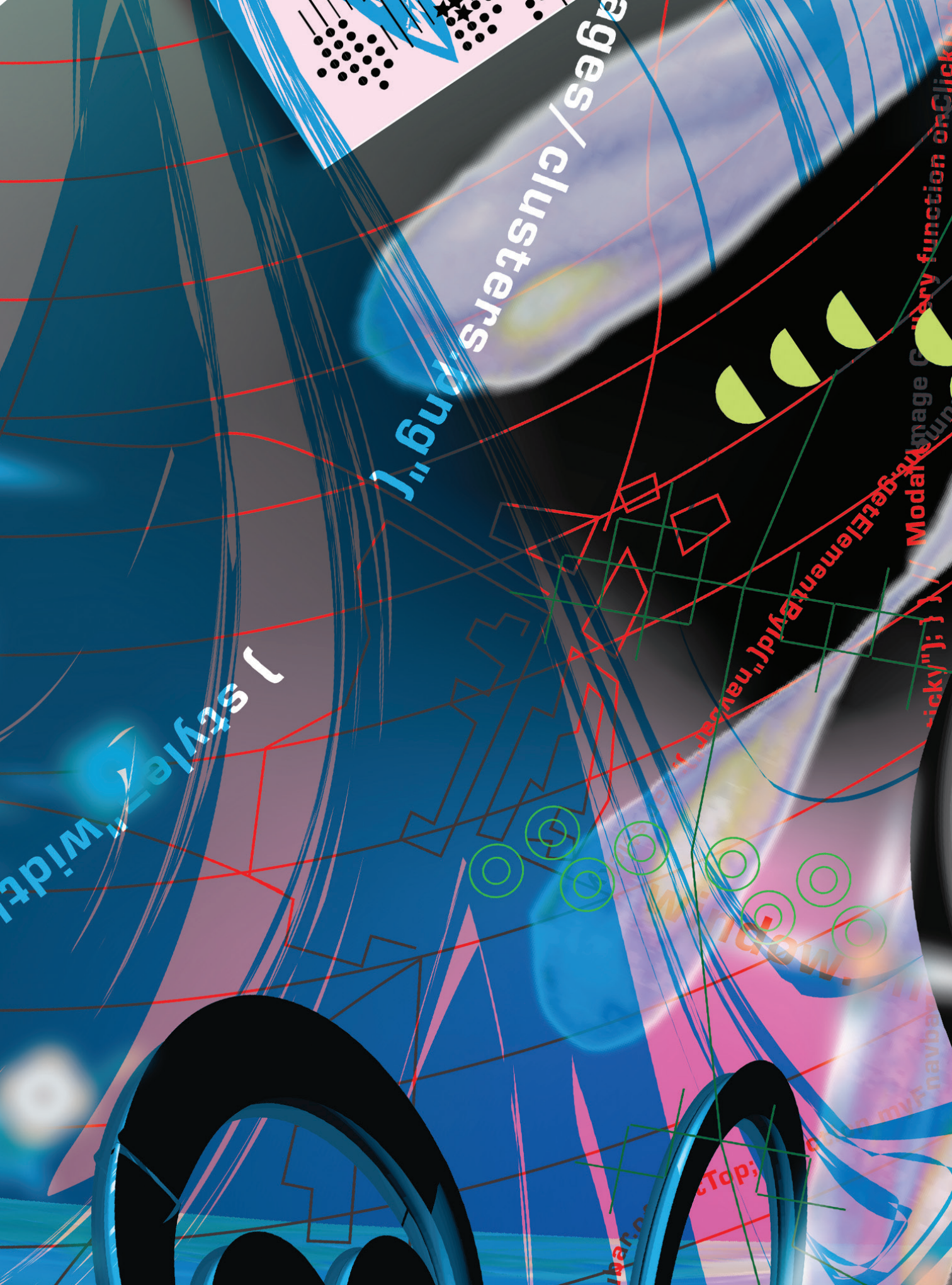
The Museum of History and Cultural Heritage of Lakatamia, in which the exhibition was hosted, is housed in an old, traditionally-built residence that dates back to the British Colonial period (1922), when local materials and vernacular building methods were still applied in architecture across Cyprus. The museum is home to a wealth of objects that range from house furniture and utensils to farming tools, including a now disused sickle, and textile manufacturing equipment, which are meant to uncover the history of Lakatamia as an agricultural society, where life depended on community ties, knowledge sourced from nature and particular technological processes developed for survival. Acknowledging the specificity of such a context and the curatorial challenge of creating discursive links between current maker cultures and past methods of production and survival, the exhibition's display developed its own logic of classification and ordering of objects. Using a ubiquitous system of shelves, what already exists in the museum was reconfigured and recast under a new light in close conversation with what was brought in by the artists,

prototype teams and overall programming of the exhibition.

More specifically, in *Sickle & Code*, Cypriot and international artists presented works that reflect, confront and re-evaluate current models of producing under the conjunction of global digital commons of knowledge. Concurrently, the museum allows us to glimpse into everyday making and living practices of the recent past and became the conceptual testing ground for the five Cypriot *Phygital* pilot projects and prototypes, as the Lakatamia makerspace was being set up in the municipality's community centre. The development of the Lakatamia Makerspace has taken place within a wider emergence, in the last few years, of hackerspaces or makerspaces as community-led spaces, where free and open source software and hardware are utilized collaboratively by individuals.

The Lakatamia Makerspace has been developed through *Phygital* by the Municipality of Lakatamia in collaboration with the University of Nicosia Research Foundation and explored as part of this process the melding of free and open technologies, social arts and maker cultures. Its context, seen in conjunction with the museum and the exhibition, allows us to reconsider our understanding of how we appreciate heritages of technologies, making, living and producing in-common(s) in times of digital and physical (*Phygital*) realities.





FROM THE SICKLE TO THE CODE: THE POTENTIAL OF THE COMMONS IN RESHAPING THE WORLD WE LIVE IN

Maria Hadjimichael

Grounded in the revival and the return to discussions around the broader understanding of the concept of the commons and its linkages with the digital world, the exhibition 'Sickle & Code', as well as the Cypriot case of the Phygital project have opened up opportunities for a dialogue between scholars, hackers, as well as artists. This intervention is for me an opportunity, through a discussion around the linkages between the digital world and the concept of the commons, to share thoughts about the struggle(s) for the future of an essential element of humankind's shared cultural and natural heritage.

To say that the link between the 'sickle' and the 'code' is not always clear is probably an understatement. It is nevertheless something that the Unconference 'Free/Libre Technologies, Arts and the Commons', held between May-June 2019 as part of the

project Phygital, attempted to bring forward. Being (if I may label myself) an activist-scholar in the field of Political Ecology and Environmental Politics, I was often asked how my interests and background related to the theme of the Unconference (for which I was part of the scientific committee). The link was unclear to various people, from scholars, to hackers as well as artists. I have to admit that before entering the broader scholarly world around the concept of the commons, the chances would have been that the link would not be clear to me either. For me, the importance of a struggle to reclaim the commons came about from, on one hand, a gradual association of the elements which has been my scholarly interest for a while, namely the sea and the coastline, with the concept of the commons, and on the other, from my activist involvement in campaigns which fought against the privatisation of the same elements through legal bills as well as private entities. One of the keynotes to the Unconference, Prof. Silvia Federici also wondered why we chose to invite her to give

a talk. She was unsure what her contribution could be *"since it is all about digital commons and if anything I have been critical of the way digital technology fuels the politics of extractivism and the destruction of 'natural' commons"* (Federici, 2020; p. 120). For those of us who chose to invite her, this was part of the discussion we wanted to include, as this is an essential aspect of understanding the struggles regarding the commons. (1)

It is of great importance to not only understand the link between the 'sickle' and the 'code', but also to engage in discussions around these links. Whether we are theorists or practitioners in these relevant fields, we must, on one hand, collectively appreciate the revolutionary potential of the 'code', whilst on the other, we must realise the inherent dangers in the appropriation of the community labor produced by hacker(s) or maker(s) (spaces). This is what Johan Söderberg meant with the title he chose for the keynote speech he gave during the Unconference *'Hacking hacked: The struggle over recuperation*

as a source of innovation'. As he pointed out, "*hacking in the broadest sense, is the promise that humanity now has the technological means to free itself from the powers that be, whatever that is, the state, the firms, monopolies, incumbent forces, whatever*". It is "*the whole [political and social] (2) landscape that is set up to enable these kinds of innovations, to fail*" (Söderberg, 2020; p. 118).

Grasping the political and ideological importance of their 'hobby'/actions and its implication can have significant consequences as to whether or not the hacking becomes hacked. I remember my astonishment over the reaction of a University student during the 'Digital Commons' lecture I taught a few years back, who, considering himself a hacker, did not agree with the theoretical approach over the ideological roots of the free/libre software. "Are you calling us communists?" was his reactionary response.

The realisation over the importance of protecting the digital commons, and maintaining them open and accessible is linked to the process of producing *in common*. It is precisely what the commons are; the social practise which creates them. With the concept of the 'commons' therefore,

we refer to the cultural and natural resources held and/or produced in common. The commons are thus not merely goods or a physical space, but a social practice that generates, uses and preserves common resources and products. It is thus about the practice of commons, or otherwise *commoning*, a term coined by historian Peter Linebaugh (Linebaugh, 2009) to highlight that the commons are not merely a spatial or resource category but rather a social practice.

There is a wider discussion and debate over the ideological conditions of the concept of the commons and though the element of the 'code' has gained momentum in this discussion, one needs to first understand the importance behind the element of the 'sickle'. The concept has become a topic of historical and topical interest in academic and mass media forums following Garrett Hardin's influential article, 'The Tragedy of the Commons' (Hardin, 1968) – a landmark in the history of the management of common goods. The term as well as Hardin's assertions have been adopted in discussions around a number of issues, though particularly around environmental destruction and resource depletion. It has been particularly used to justify the privatization and

commodification of common goods which has been ongoing across space and time. What Hardin attempts is to illustrate the problem of what he calls unregularized individual behaviour against common goods, and argues that when some goods do not belong to specific persons, but to everyone, their exploitation brings individualized gains and collective losses, resulting in their exploitation by isolated individuals. To highlight how much has this become the dominant idea, Boyle (2003) states that nowadays: "*Everyone' knows that a commons is by definition tragic, and that the logic of enclosure is as true today as it was in the fifteenth century. Private property saves lives.*"

It was not until 2009, when the political scientist Elinor Ostrom was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics for her theory on the management of common pool resources, that the ground beneath Hardin's conviction started shaking. Her findings (Ostrom, 1990), based on comparative analyses of case studies of successful and unsuccessful self-management of community resources, triggered the development of new theoretical and political models that aimed, and succeeded, in disarming Hardin's narrative within more widespread circles. Theorists such as Caffentzis (2010) critiqued Elinor

Ostrom in that, her theory proposed alternative models besides individualism and corporatism, but did not strongly advocate against participating in the market, and thus did not offer real alternative options for society. Caffentzis thus included Ostrom in the ‘pro-capitalist commons’ category which does not necessarily clash, but it is rather compatible with and potentiate capitalist accumulation. For Caffentzis, and other scholars (3) (most of whom belong in the Marxist tradition), the commons is an alternative structure to what currently is presented as the structures of which there is no alternative, namely the State and the Market. Though I am part of the school of thought which identifies the commons in that they are an anticapitalist alternative to the State and the market, I am a strong advocate of the importance of appreciating the significance of Ostrom’s work in both that it offered crucial insights that allow the understanding of the collective governance of natural resources, as well as in that it brought this discussion to the mainstream media.

“Enclosure (4) is the historical antonym and nemesis of the commons.” (Linebaugh, 2014; p. 1)

In the pre-capitalist period, land dispossession became

synonymous to the violent enclosure of common areas used by the landless, by landowners and feudal power, which deprived them from access to common resources necessary for their survival — such as the produce of cultivation, the prey, the produce of the forests and water (Hadjimichalis, 2014). Different analyses of enclosure mechanisms can help link the historical with more contemporary processes. Since the 19th century, Karl Marx (Marx, 1967) put forward that land dispossession materialized during the 18th century through the enclosure of the common lands by landowners, and through what he called the process of primitive accumulation. This was depicted as the process by which precapitalist modes of production, such as feudalism and chattel slavery, were transformed into the capitalist mode of production. The concept of primitive accumulation was linked by geographer David Harvey with the concept of accumulation by dispossession by using real world examples to define the neoliberal policies in many western nations, from the 1970s to the present day, and the resulting centralization of wealth and power in the hands of a few by dispossessing the public of their wealth or land (Harvey, 2004).

And what about the conditions that disassociate a community from its commons?

When contemplating Hardin’s narrative, David Harvey grounds the discussion and places it in the context of today’s neoliberalism led societies, and deconstructs the over-simplified statement (Harvey, 2012) shifting the dispute not on the commons *per se*, but rather as an issue around the failure of individualized private property rights to fulfil common interests. Harvey therefore suggests that the problem is the concept of private property itself which has constructed a society motivated by the need to maximize individual gains. Thus, some scholars put forward a different understanding of community failure (often linked with the dissolvment of the commons), making a case that it is linked with the changing of social values and how these are constructed (prioritizing exchange, competition and having to assert ourselves). This is an important issue to ponder upon whilst linking it with the themes dealt by (silently, or rather less explicitly) the ‘Sickle & Code’ exhibition; the importance of the community in making/ creating the commons, as well as the importance of the

juncture at which a community (as a whole or at a more individual level) realises the significance of *their* commons. This brings us back to Johan Söderberg's keynote about 'Hacking Hacked'; it is only through the realisation of the importance of what is commonly owned and/or produced, that a struggle for its protection can succeed. It is just as Tim Rayner (Rayner, 2012) put it forward, "*commoning is the subjective process involved in 'making common'. It is the collective psychological shift implicit in establishing a commons.*"

Making the commons visible and making the concept of the commons accessible to parts of society who are not accustomed to such (as some would say) 'academic jargon', has become part of the 'Sickle & Code' exhibition:

"As a title, Sickle & Code suggests a combination of tools: the sickle, an agricultural tool and once a resonant symbol of social revolutions; and the code, the language we develop as a tool in software programming. In contemporary debates coding links through movements, such as that of 'free and open-source software', with the demand, on a practical level, for open collaboration and unhindered re(distribution) of technologies and, on a theoretical level, with the

social claim for freedom in access and in processes of making. Although the two tools reference distinct spheres of activity (the physical and the digital), they are both designed in order to shape the world we live in." (5)

In the pre-capitalist period, the materiality as well as the awareness of the importance of the commons meant that there was a collective consciousness about the object of the struggle. On the contrary, today there is often no acknowledgement regarding the existence of the commons, or of commoning practices (irrespective of the name this might be given).

The invisibility of the object and the underestimation of its importance leaves room for their appropriation by the State and the market. Thus, the discussions taking place within the Sickle & Code exhibition are attempting to link the creation/existence of a community in the past with today (i.e. how we used to make (communities) in the past, with making today). Discussing about/giving visibility to the practice of 'making in common' creates the framework for potential commons, to materialise into commons. To make this clear, there comes a time during which the commons become the object of conflict, and that becomes the moment that

the community realises the commons as such, as well as the commons as the object of the struggle.

An anonymous English poem still resonates the bitter reality around the struggle over the commons (whether tangible or intangible):

*The law locks up
the man or woman
Who steals the goose
from off the common,
But lets the
greater villain loose
Who steals the common
from off the goose.*

Today, our natural and cultural commons are under attack. In parallel, there is a rise in the number and efforts put by those who chose to resist this attack. Inspired by the Zapatistas in Mexico, the indigenous communities fighting against the Keystone XL pipelines, communities struggling against mining companies or the creation of dams around the world, people are fighting to protect land, water, sky and ocean for future generations.

"We are in the middle of a second enclosure movement. It sounds grandiloquent to call it 'the enclosure of the intangible commons of the mind,' but in a very real sense that is just what it is." (Boyle, 2003)

This is the inconvenient truth regarding the future of the intangible commons today; a category under which the ‘creations’ of the free/libre software movement falls under. Whether the commons produced are being threatened by *“legal fibs and ideological fables”*, or whether the threat comes from within cannot change this. (Linebaugh, 2014; p.1)

Aaron Swartz, a technological genius and a political activist devoted to a free and open internet, attempted to ‘liberate’ data from an academic website and took his own life in the face of a fine of up to \$1 million and 35 years in jail in the US. Chelsea Manning received a 35 year sentence (of which he served 7 before being pardoned by Barack Obama) for leaking documents such as the Iraq and Afghanistan war logs, and a video of Iraqi civilians and journalists being killed by a US helicopter gunship to the WikiLeaks portal. Julian Assange, the founder of WikiLeaks, is still fighting for his freedom following being investigated for computer-related crimes by a court in the U.S. These names all relate to the ‘sickle’ and the ‘code’. They relate to struggles over who controls/ owns the digital space, how that space is being governed, for who and what for. What kind of information is being handled or exists in that space and who has the right to access

that information.

In his 2008 Guerilla Open Access Manifesto, Aaron Swartz calls for civil disobedience against the privatisation of the ‘intangible commons of the mind’. Though he spoke particularly about access to knowledge which is society’s ‘scientific and cultural heritage’, his words are resonant to the work of the free/libre software movement and beyond. Additionally, it is through an activity created through commoning (meaning hacking) that the liberation and the dissemination of all this knowledge becomes possible.

As Swartz (2008) proclaimed in his manifesto, *“there is no justice in following unjust laws. It’s time to come into the light and, in the grand tradition of civil disobedience, declare our opposition to this private theft of public culture.”*

The role of scholarship, as well as art, should involve ways through which the struggle for reclaiming the commons becomes enhanced. Whether this is through the provision of a historical understanding of their existence, their role in society and the way they became enclosed, or whether it is through providing evidence around modern day enclosures. Making the commons visible cannot be done from one’s ivory tower.

Following up from the attempt made by the ‘Sickle & Code’ exhibition, scholarship and art must take up their role as contributors for designing the world we are living in, and be present to defend social claims for freedom, to create, use, and protect the commons, from the land and the sea, to knowledge as well as the code.

Bibliography

Boyle, J. (2003). "The Second Enclosure Movement and the Construction of the Public Domain". In *Law and Contemporary Problems*, 66, pp.33-74.

Caffentzis, G. (2010). "The future of 'the commons': neoliberalism's 'plan b' or the original disaccumulation of capital" in *New Formations* 69(1), p.p.23-41.

Federici, S. (2020). "The politics of commons". In *Unconference Proceedings Free/Libre Technologies, Arts and the Commons*. Nicosia: University of Nicosia Research Foundation, 20-23.

Hadjimichalis, C. (2014). "Crisis and land dispossession". In *Crisisscape: Athens and beyond*. Retrieved from: <http://www.frenchphilosophy.gr/wpcontent/uploads/2013/11/CrisisScapesConferenceBookWeb.pdf#page=171>.

Hardin, G. (1968). "The tragedy of the commons", *Science*, 162(3859), p.p. 1243-1248.

Harvey, D. (2004). "The 'new' imperialism: accumulation by dispossession". In *Social. Regist.*40, p.p. 63-87.

Harvey, D. (2012). *Rebel cities: From the right to the city to the urban revolution*. Verso books.

Linebaugh, P. (2009). *The Magna Carta Manifesto: Liberty and Commons for All*. University of California Press.

Marx, K. (1967). *Capital, vol. I*. English Translation, International Publishers, New York.

Ostrom, E. (1990). "Governing the Commons. Cambridge university press". In Rayner, T. (2012, March 8). *Commoning is making common*. Retrieved from: <https://philosophyforchange.wordpress.com/2012/03/08/commoning/>

Swartz, A. (2008). *Guerilla Open Access Manifesto*. Retrieved from: <https://archive.org/details/GuerillaOpenAccessManifesto/mode/2up>

Söderberg, J. (2020). "Hacking hacked: The struggle over recuperation as a source of innovation". In *Unconference Proceedings Free/Libre Technologies, Arts and the Commons*. Nicosia: University of Nicosia Research Foundation 116-119.

Endnotes

1. These points will not be discussed in this article without this being in any case an indication of being less important.

2. My additions in brackets.

3. See for example, Silvia Federici's work 'The Calibal and the Witch' for a feminist/historical perspective, David Harvey's 'Rebel Cities' and Stavros Stavrides 'Common Space: The city as commons' for an urban perspective.

4. Enclosure is the process through which a good (natural resources, means of production, knowledge, as well as functions of life) which are a communal ownership of a community turns into individual or state ownership.

5. From the 'Sickle and Code' exhibition text.

DISTRIBUTED AGRI-CULTURES: NOTIONS OF CARE IN NICOSIA'S SOCIAL HOUSING ESTATES

Jenny Dunn

Introduction

The land around us is rich with meaning, tales to tell and future possibilities. Our stewardship, caring for the soil and plants, and the reciprocal care through this process of ourselves and neighbours tells a story of who we are as humans, as communities and our two-way relationship with the more than human.

This chapter is about my time spent in Cyprus over the period of a year, discovering the narratives behind food growing in the *sinikismoi/sunvoikiomoi* (social housing estates) and through this process of deep mapping, how I developed my own knowledge and intimacy with the trees of the island.

'Growing Home' was a project I started whilst doing an Erasmus work placement at the University of Nicosia and working on the project 'Phygital'. I had taken a break from design work in the UK, including a socially engaged art project I had developed on the estate where I lived in East London. The project, entitled

'Community Making', explored how we as a residents group could bring people together through acts of communing, making things together, from building mobile carts, to gardening and cooking food. (1) Through this project I was first introduced to the significance of care. That these small acts, of teaching new skills, of growing seedlings, or making food, have a ripple effect of the sense of agency that is felt by a community.

Social housing in the UK is not usually associated with the word 'care'. A neo-liberal agenda has striped all institutions and social capital that existed out of these places over the years. As a result, community organising and artist projects are on the up, with food growing, cooking and sharing at the heart of these projects.

So when I was introduced to the gardens of the *sinikismoi* refugee housing estates in Nicosia, and their abundance of fruit trees and olive trees, and the narratives and social history behind that, I wanted to explore this space in-between ecology and community further.

Notions of care

Growing one's own food connects us to our 'primordial' sense of being (Jepson, 2006). It connects us to something beyond ourselves, the more-than-human, the roots of our existence. It is a form of earth care and at the same time a form of an extended self-care through the food we grow, and for anyone we share our bounty with. Talk to any gardener and you will find them speak about the mental health benefits of getting your hands in the soil and how rewarding it is to eat and share the food you have grown. It is a two-way relationship; we put in the work and so does mother nature, together we care for each other.

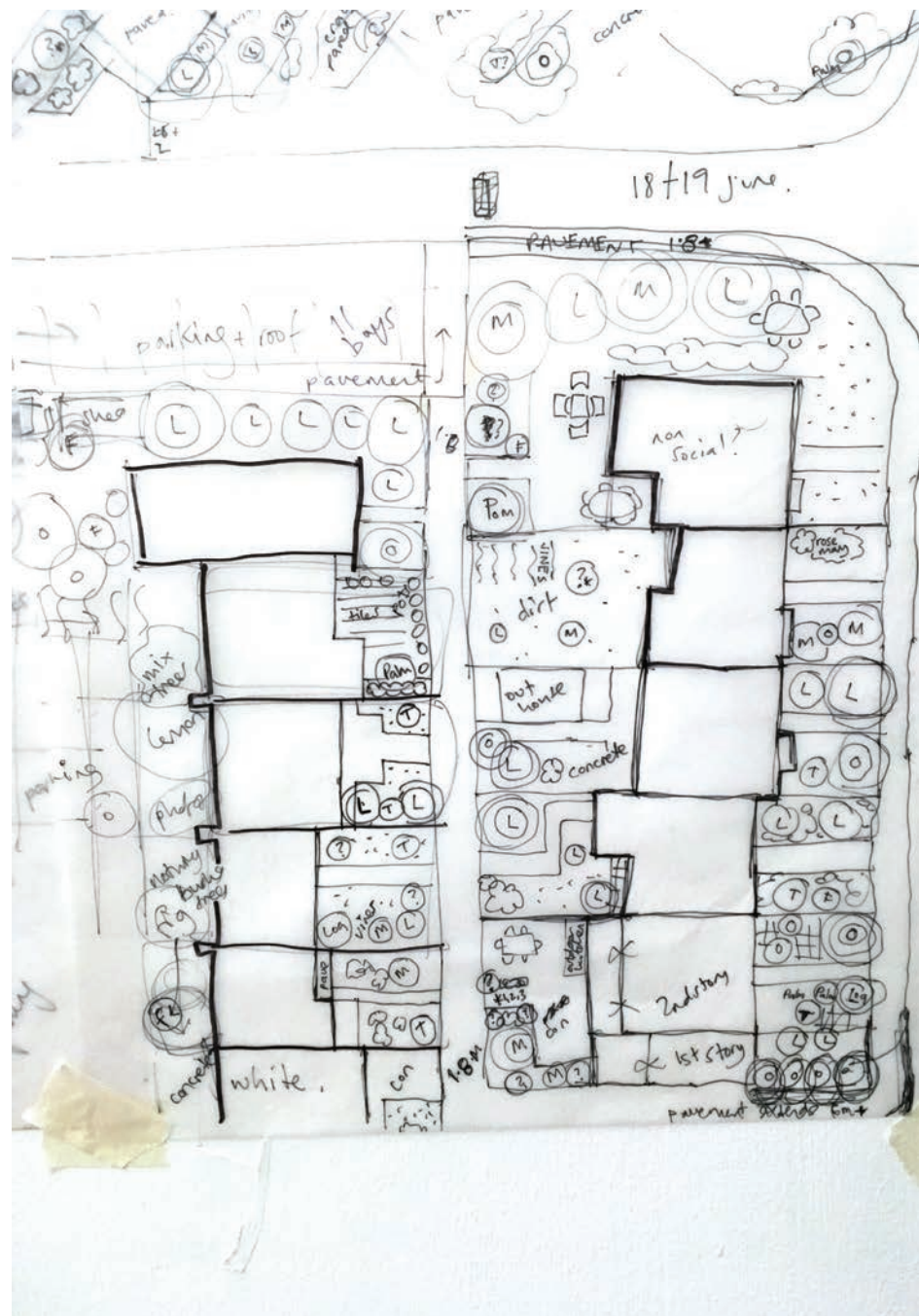
In Cyprus, food forms an integral part of the culture. Families of multiple generations still gather together on Sundays to share a big meal and it seems to be what holds them together. As well as the shops selling kebabs and halloumi wraps, there are traditional tavernas serving what was described to me as 'grandmothers' cooking.' I was told never to

show up at a Cypriot's house empty without an offering of something sweet, but on arrival the host always had a plethora of sweets and pastries prepared. The virtual food museum has archives on recipes, traditional tools, cooking methods and modes of production. (2)

Whilst interviewing my friend's grandmother as part of my initial research she described to me in great detail the effort she goes to make jams, sweets and of course lemonade. She had worked just as hard in getting the fruit to grow, mapping out for me the journey from seed to tree and the years and years of watering and pruning.

"My lemon and orange trees, they're getting so big, so we prune them all the time. That's why they look small. I water them regularly, especially now that the weather is hot and I also add compost. I make lemonade from lemons, you should try some. In January before the lemons are mature, I cut them and make the lemonade in order to be more flavourful. Would you like to try or give you some to take with you? I use lemons in all sorts of foods and sometimes I drink it because it's really healthy."

"In a few weeks, I will prune the trees that have started dropping their



Mapping the species of tree in the Ayios Mamas *sinikismos* in Lakatamia in June 2019. Mapping done by Jenny Dunn, Elisha Cox and Nafsika Demetriou. Photograph by Jenny Dunn.

seeds and leaves. If I have time, I love taking a walk in my garden and if it's not too hot I will pull out the weeds and clean the area around. If I didn't like spending time maintaining my garden, I wouldn't plant so many trees by myself. I made this

garden from scratch and I take care of it as much as I can."

"When I planted the olives they were small like every other tree. You plant a seed in a small pot like you would do for any other seed and you water it every week



Photograph from the *sinikismos* in Lakatamia, Nicosia. Photograph by Jenny Dunn.

and add fertilizer once a year. That's how you get a nice big tree. You prune it when needed."

- Maroulla Ioannou (April 2019),
personal interview.

We left my friend's grandmother's home that morning full of homemade lemonade, homegrown olives and frappé, all lovingly prepared by her. We had spoken of the things she makes for her family and how they in turn help her in the garden and in the house. Resonating the stories I'd heard in the UK, she spoke of the pride in her community and the estate

where she lived, the opposite to a rhetoric of negativity that usually surrounds social housing estates. When communities go through struggle together, whether that is a minority group in the UK, or the 'refugees' of the *sinikismoi*, there is a solidarity that is formed, often out of necessity.

"I always prepare a few more jars to give to my daughter as well. She brings me the herbs, I wash them, I pad them dry and then I crush them and remove the stems."

"That's Kallis and his wife's house, they are really good people, they always have my back. Also, this is Maro's house, what a lovely neighbour. We always offer food or even sweets to each other when we cook or bake. She comes over for a coffee and gossip as well. I can't complain, I live in a lovely neighbourhood."

- Maroulla Ioannou (April 2019),
personal interview.

The practices I discovered at the *sinikismoi* and the villages wouldn't be defined as commoning, most land and the means of reproduction are privatized. However, there are similarities with the concept of the commons and permaculture principles of people care, earth care and fair share. Silvia Federici defines the commons and the relationship to the land as "the idea of placing one's life in common – of responsibility also towards the earth, it is the idea of not only taking, but caring for." (Federici, 2019) One woman we spoke to had grown cotton in the fields in the north. Her village had used it to stuff mattresses

cleaning and drying the seeds — a gardening tradition that is the embodiment of care and cooperation.

The roots of care and food growing in the *sinikismoi*

The social housing in Nicosia was built to rehouse refugees from 'the north' after the Turkish invasion in 1974. The estates or *sinikismoi* that were created included large amounts of green spaces, both communal and private. The Greek-Cypriots that moved into these settlements came from towns and villages in the north where they had had land and practised growing

the children of the family to create an income in addition to that of the men who worked away from the house.

"Before the citrus, when I was at elementary school it was beans. I have so many memories of the growing of these beans. There was a very big field, a large piece of land, where we could walk. We had a very serious job to do there. My cousins and myself were there every morning to keep the birds away from the black-eyed beans. So, the birds were trying to get the beans, so we had to kick them away. We stayed there from morning to night. We played. We ate there."

"For the shooing away of the birds we used sheep bells. But there was a special bell that belonged to my Grandfather. And there was always a fight in the morning as to whom would get to use the special bell. But it was quite amazing when we went around the field and did the bells. It was not one or two bells as you can imagine. No birds would come anywhere close to our seeds of beans."

"The best time of the day was late in the afternoon, when the adults arrived to pick the beans. The content of the beans, when we returned home, was piled



Photograph from the *sinikismoi* in Lakatamia, Nicosia.
Photograph by Jenny Dunn.

which they sold. Nowadays she grows a few cotton plants in her garden for her own use with cosmetics. She also shares seeds with her neighbours,

not only their own food, but in many cases farming the land to create extra income to support their families. This work was mostly done by the women and



Photograph from the *sinikismoi* in Lakatamia, Nicosia. Photograph by Jenny Dunn.

up in the house. It reached the ceiling. And the next morning it was put in sacks and left for the market. It was my very best experience in the village. A very pleasant memory from this."

"Well, the men, my uncles worked somewhere else. For example, the uncle who owned this special property, the beans, he worked with the department of antiquities, a very interesting job, I remember I would always

sit down to hear his stories. But the women worked really hard in the fields, they had to look after all these things, such as the children. There was much more to do in the village during the day, it was fun in the fields, it was great fun. Nothing like Nicosia, which is why I run to the villages every summer."

- *Theognosia Demetriou* (May 2019), *personal interview*.

Whilst interviewing people at the local market and in their homes, they talked about planting mandarin and lemon trees when they first arrived on the estates, the same trees they might have grown back home in the north. Anne Jepson has written about these practices and how tending to the garden was one of the first acts they did, before they did much to the house itself (Jepson, 2006). She goes on to describe the act of gardening



Photograph from the *sinikismoi* in Lakatamia, Nicosia. Photograph by Jenny Dunn.

in this Cypriot context, the physical act of one's hands in the soil and the traditions of care, as a practice of nostalgia and memory, "a form of low key memory work. It is a close range, sensual, and supremely personal endeavour." (Jepson, 2006, p.160)

"We were refugees and stayed in different locations until we found this house. Due to the fact that I'm from Kithrea and had lots of trees, we decided to bring some here at our new house."

- Maroulla Ioannou (April 2019), personal interview.

"Groves of lemon trees, this was our income. In September we picked the first ones, then we cut more. Seven times we picked the lemons. A mountain of lemons. Oranges and mandarins, we only had a couple of each for our own use. For export we had the lemons... we lived near Kyrenia. Forty-five years we haven't been back there. My husband died with this heartache of never going back. Some people used to go (to the occupied area), some of them every week, and socialize with the Turks too. We haven't been because it upsets me. Because we

had acquired a lot of property and then we lost it. We toiled a lot and didn't get a chance to enjoy it."

- Polly, a lady from Ayios Mamas *sinikismos* (June, 2019), personal interview.

Walking around the *sinikismoi*, you will find that most gardens are full of trees; lemon, olive, mandarin, pomegranate, plum, fig and many more. Jepson's text and many others discuss the connection to territory in relation to this practice of reproduction or re-growing; "soil which is the basis of growing and is apparently natural, is



Photograph from the *sinikismos* in Lakatamia, Nicosia. Photograph by Jenny Dunn.

also the basis of territory and a potent symbol of the homeland.” (Jepson, 2006, p.161) However, I am more interested in how she describes the idea of practising care and connection through working the land, this “primordial sense of belonging and attachment, or rootedness.” (Jepson, 2013, p.161)

The intimacy of care

I decided early on in the project that I would use a method of deep mapping which attempts “to give an account of, both a particular geographically located ‘place’ and, simultaneously, a

second *space-between* that both mediates and contests the exclusionary position of the authorizing official networks of culture and knowledge.” (Reddeman, p.49) It weaves together geography and memory to build a story of place through photography, interviews, maps and drawings. Through this process I developed my own intimacy with the *sinikismo*i.

Each morning and evening in June, along with some student assistants, I walked around the streets of the Ayios Mamas

sinikismos in Lakatamia, an area of Nicosia, sketching down and labelling every tree on the estate. At the start we had long conversations about the trees – is that a lime or just the unripe fruit of a lemon tree? By the end we felt like experts, having built up our own situated knowledge – we had identified well over 10,000 trees. Perhaps it was the meditative process of walking slowly and really looking at your locality for two hours at a time or feeling like you are gaining another level of understanding of a place,

but we all talked about how rewarding that process was, how we felt we now had a more personal connection with the trees, now that we had stopped to really look.

Whilst working on this project I listened to Eric Guibert recite his 'letter from the soil,' speaking intimately about their relationship, the everyday reality of the back and forth of acts and reactions (Guibert, 2019). He described it as a tool to "explore an ecological relation. To force humans, and you, to empathise with soil, to develop some form of respect." It was a moving montage scene of their connection, giving voice to the earth around us. It made me wonder if others could be inspired to understand their connections with the land, however distant that might seem, we might be able to bring the two together and shift the way we think about the soil and land as something we take from only. Not long after the climate group Extinction Rebellion UK also created their own book of 'Letters to the Earth: Writing to a Planet in Crisis'. There was obviously something in this.

I started by asking some students to write their own letters to the land, although this didn't seem to create the connection and perspective I was looking for – we needed to get out into the gardens.

The 'Letters to the Land' event happened as part of the Sickle & Code exhibition and events programme in early October. We walked around the Ayios Mamas estate drawing, collecting and talking to residents – of course we also got some homemade lemonade! After gathering our own bounty of things to make a *sinikismoi* altar of sorts, our discussion became our own version of the letter to the land. Local participants talked about visiting the *sinikismoi* for the first time and being able to explore the ecological richness properly, not knowing that it existed before. We spoke about the disconnected world we lived in and the need to do more.

The loss of situated knowledge

Whilst most small gardens I saw in the *sinikismoi* somehow seemed sufficient to grow a forest, huge fig trees watching over lemon trees layered over smaller pomegranate trees, next to olive trees and mandarins. Some people I spoke to said they "only had space for decorative plants, not all the trees they were growing in Larnaka tis Lapithou." Perhaps this move to growing more decorative plants is a cultural one more than a pragmatic one. Anne Jepson talks about this aspirational middle-class notion of a garden; of neat pathways and

trimmed hedges (Jepson, 2006). It would have certainly made sense for people coming into these estates in sub-urban Nicosia to move towards a more metropolitan idea of a garden, either to fit in or to fit in with their new lifestyle.

However, it is precisely this move from village to urban area that is a threat to the situated knowledge of food growing and practice of care; "older forms of knowledges, the knowledge, for example of medicinal plants, that is lost in the process of urbanization." (Federici, 2019) On walks around the estates, my Cypriot guides, from younger generations than those that moved after 1974, spoke about the process of grafting another citrus tree onto a lemon tree trunk as though it was a mystical creation, without a grasp of the practicalities of this traditional method. The older generations described learning gardening and cooking techniques and a culture of community "from [their] parents of course."

We are in danger of losing these knowledges, skills and traditions alongside these older generations. Our modern societies are completely detached from this way of life, from the land itself. We no longer value this alternative knowledge that is outside the boundaries of capitalism. Federici

argues that “it is important to recuperate these histories, these memories also to realize what we have lost in the process of capitalist development and not assume, as many do, that outside of capitalism there is no knowledge and no social wealth.” (Federici, 2019)

“I learnt from my parents of course. We were planting tomatoes, okras, watermelons, zucchinis and every day we watch them grow. We chuckled every day, watered once a week and used fertiliser. When the plants got mature, we could harvest fresh vegetables straight from our garden.”

- Maroulla Ioannou (April 2019), personal interview.

I was naively surprised when I arrived in Cyprus of the extent of the globalisation of Nicosia, beyond the old town, a sprawling city of large American coffee shops and bars and urban highways. I suppose in a country that regularly reaches 40 degrees in the summer months it makes sense that almost every student I was teaching has a car and that nobody walks anywhere. It reminded me of LA. The disconnect with where our food comes from feels very apparent in the scale of the Alpha Mega supermarkets and global corporations. This is of course the same all around the world, our capitalist systems promote this separation with the natural world around us.

No longer do we have time to make our own jams or tomato paste that lasts all year. Modern technology has patched the gap – the wonders of the fridge – but also allowed us to spend more time at the office and less time at home in these practices of care. Rampant capitalism has sold us a world of convenience over connection with the natural processes around us. The production of our food has become completely separate to our lives.

“Yes, you have your own tomato paste in big jars and you’d just take one spoonful and that was it. You do not have to go buy it and you do not know what you are buying nowadays. My mother used to make a lot of jam from a fruit which ripens, its wild and it’s on trees. It grows on trees and it is wild, and we used to go out to the trees and bring them back to her and she would make jam. This was at no expense at all.”
 “Yes, now I just have a lemon tree. We used to have grapes, a vineyard at the side of the house. We grew big quantiles of the grapes. In fact, every single house in Nicosia used to have vineyards. Big ones, they grew very big. Every summer we had tons of grapes actually, I don’t know why but gradually all of the grapes are gone. Not too many families will grow

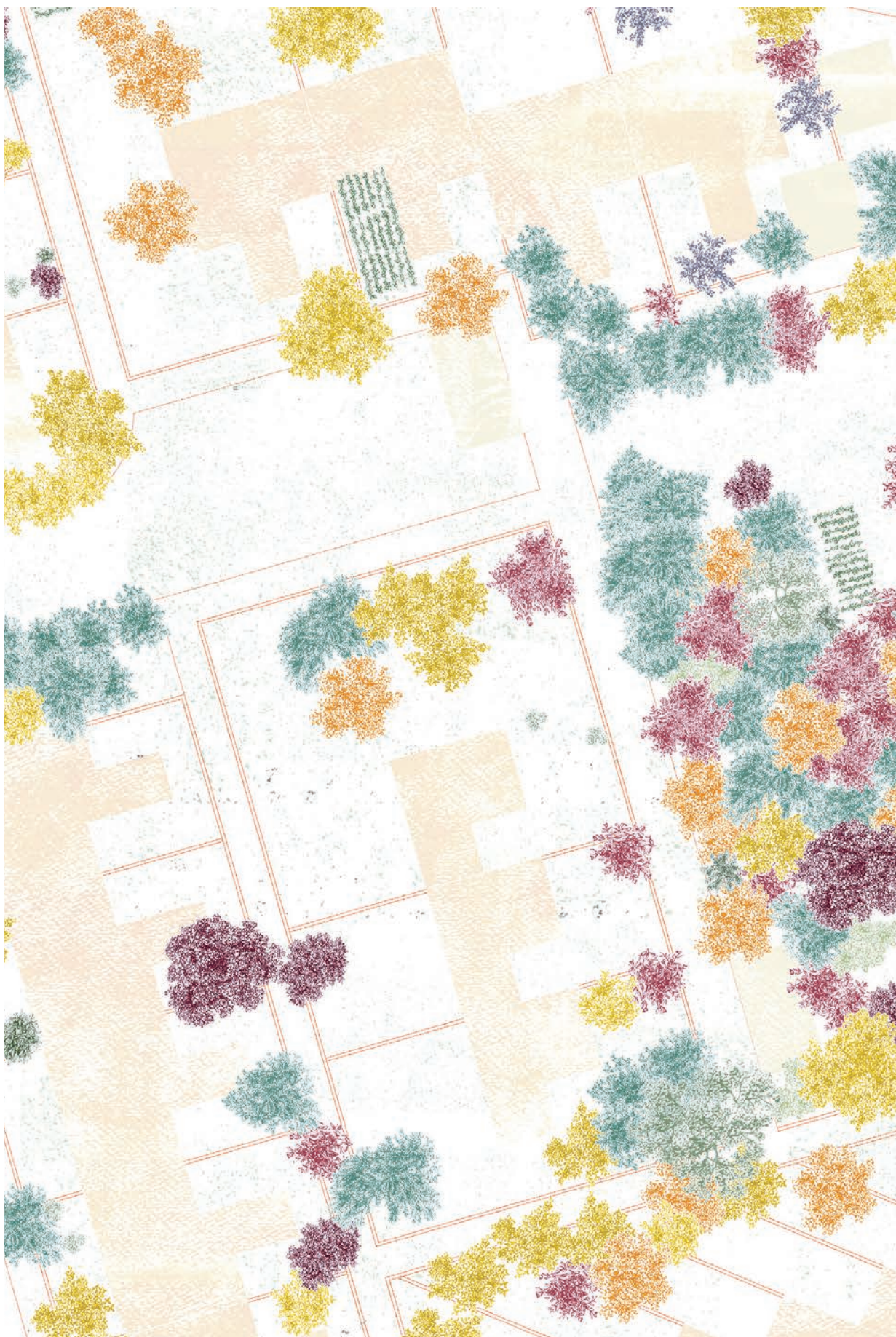
vegetables actually.”

- Theognosia Demetriou (May 2019), personal interview.

“Lemon tree, orange tree, olive tree. Don’t you recognise them? That’s a laurel [bay leaves]. Figs, all kinds of trees. We eat the fruit. They are not sprayed with chemicals either.”

[On life in the sinikismo:] “It’s not like in our village. People from many different villages went by going to their jobs. We just greeted them. People in Kyrenia were friendlier, the natural environment shapes our personalities. Near the sea people are happier. I finished the University of life. The more hardships you have, the more you learn. And I used to read a lot of books. Religious, history and national books.”

- Polly, a lady from Ayios Mamas sinikismos (June 2019), personal interview.



Maps drawn of the species of tree in the Ayios Mamas *sinikismoi*.

A new form of radicalism

In contrast to the hyper-commercialised and globalised side of Nicosia is a younger community deeply involved in re-connecting with their heritage, with the land and with traditional modes of production. The *Agora* project, an artist-space in the old municipal market building, is a place of experimentation that includes a growing space that serves homemade breads and fermented products once a month, a women's co-operative making jams and jewellery, and hosts a regular celebration of arts and dance aimed at migrants. This resurgence of community and traditional production are not done out of pure necessity but as an experiment with doing things in a better way; more ecologically and equitably. David Boyle's essay 'Back to the Land' politicises these acts as a "new kind of radicalism, where a younger generation interested in change [are] interpreting their radicalism in terms of growing things or farming or raising goats." He goes on to say "people are angry globalism has developed, how multi-nationals and supermarkets control and restrain us as consumers whilst exploiting natural and human resources in dangerous measures. Growing your own vegetables becomes a political act, a defiance of the monopolies that dominate our lives." (Boyle, 2015, p.112)

I'm sure these older generations in their gardens don't see what they are doing as 'radical' or 'political' at all and yet in the face of a global climate crisis there becomes an urgency to politicise these acts of care. Recently a group has formed to plant 300,000 trees in Nicosia alone. Showing care to the earth is showing care to ourselves. We can't go back to the past and nor should we want to, but we do have to embrace our 'agri-cultural' heritage and these situated knowledges of ecology, of collaborative support, before they die out and before too much damage is done. As Federici so beautifully describes it, there is a great need to 're-enchant the world' with these practices of care and collaboration. (Federici, 2019)



References

Boyle, D. (2015) *Back to the land*. In K. Böhm, M. Pope (Eds.), *Company: Movements, Deals and Drinks* (pp. 111-125), London: Jap Sam Books.

Federici, S. (2019). The politics of commons. *Unconference Proceedings Free/Libre Technologies, Arts and the Commons*. Nicosia: University of Nicosia Research Foundation.

Guibert, E. (2019). Monsoon [+ Other] Grounds Symposium, Westminster University. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MsdDyQX7BD8>

Hope, A., McInnes, J., Michael, K. (Eds.) (2019). *Letters to the Earth: Writing to a Planet in Crisis*. London: Harper Collins Publishers.

Jepson, A. (2006). Gardens and the Nature of Rootedness in Cyprus. In Y. Papadakis, N. Peristianis & G. Welz (Eds.), *Divided Cyprus: Modernity, History, and an Island in Conflict* (pp. 158-175), Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Reddeman, C. (2016). The Deep Mapping of Pennine Street: A Cartographic Fiction. Roberts, L., *Deep Mapping*, (pp.49-85).

Endnotes

1. See more about the project 'Community Making' at www.Jenny-Dunn.com and read the paper I wrote on the project for the Phygital Unconference Proceedings.

2. <http://foodmuseum.cs.ucy.ac.cy/>

1

Adonis Archontides**Heads (2019-ongoing)**

Polylactic acid vases, plaster, wheat, soil, dimensions variable

A series of 3D-printed replicas of Adonis Archontides head. This is a continuation of his research into his namesake, Adonis, the ancient Greek vegetation deity whose worshippers planted wheat in small pots. Wheat held an important role in the life of the Ancient Greeks; it fed them and was involved in almost every part of their religious existence. It symbolised the human condition, a middle point between the bestial and the divine, between incense that is burned and lettuce which contains little nutrients; between passion and marriage, life and death, reckless abandon and duty.

Heads are sculptures that repeat themselves forever. An experiment in the loss of information through time, it employs concepts found most commonly in image-related data compression. Each version is a 3D scan of the previous one, with some information lost through the compression algorithms. Combined with the history of wheat, the work attempts to tell a story about humankind.

2

Angelo Plessas**The Eternal Internet Brotherhood/Sisterhood Promo 1-6 (2012-2017)**

Deste Prize Winner, 2015

Six-screen video installation

Courtesy of The Breeders, Athens

The Eternal Internet Brotherhood/Sisterhood 1-6 Promo Statements are six video screens showing the video statements of the six consecutive editions of the *Eternal Internet Brotherhood/Sisterhood* that happened between 2012-2017 in different locations yearly. These videos were made as video essays to explain the project in each edition. They were written by the artist himself and communicated to the different invited participants of the project such as artists, writers, architects, and designers. They were also used to promote the project in social media and crowdfunding platforms. The videos are comprised of images from the artist's work and are copyright free.

3

Bahar Noorizadeh**After Scarcity (2018)**

Video, 31:51

Sluggish materialism gave way to broadband idealism — Colossal corporations pipelining all sorts of things via regulated networks of highly efficient data transfer. This

Utopia is neither about stamina nor grit—High-speed capitalism melts solids and, in the bargain, time. Fiber-Optic-Future-Forward: Time has changed.

After Scarcity is a sci-fi essay film that tracks Soviet cyberneticians (1950s – 1980s) in their attempt to build a fully-automated planned economy. If history at its best is a blueprint for science-fiction, revisiting contingent histories of economic technology might enable an access to the future.

A production of the Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève for the Biennale de l'Image en Mouvement 2018, with the support of the Fonds d'Art Contemporain de la Ville (FMAC), the Fonds d'Art Contemporain du Canton de Genève (FCAC) and In Between Art Film.

4

Elena Savvidou**a shadow running under shade (2019)**

Performance, selected objects, print

// a shadow running under shade; A feeling;

(var A = a memory;

in this house; A let this = feeling() => {

var str = "She was a visitor"; str. repeat(2).replace("A"); }

return;

She was a visitor She was a visitor {

this.place : re-place; this.time : re-time; } ;

Without a doubt, a new ; anew New - ew (w Me - O w);

this.feeling();)

a shadow running under shade (2019)

5

Emiddio Vasquez**Lack Fine Pose (2019)**

Polyurethane positives from Ikea's LACK series furniture, variable number and dimensions, white LED's, single-channel video shot on 16mm film narrated by text-to-speech AI-voice, 12:49

Close your right eye, can you spell for me... the fifth from the bottom word? 'L-A-C-K'

Close your left eye, can you spell for me... the fourth from the bottom word? 'F-I-N-E'

Close both eyes, can you spell for me what you see?

"Everything returns, and so did we. Only this time there are no plenums. There is only foam."

Lack Fine Pose is about images, vision, 'chair-fetishism' and the commodification of the familiar. Like a bad search algorithm narrated by AI-voices, the film draws references and paradoxes from the history of computer vision and links them through disparate sources: Clyde Beatty's lion taming techniques, Donald Judd's late work and his definition of "specific objects". The title of the installation is derived from a computer vision computational technique that is used in computer vision used to 'recognize' specific objects from 2 dimensional photos and reconstructed in 3D.

6

Helene Black & Yiannis Colakides**Loop (2001)**

Digital video, 6:00

Digitally created in 2001, during the early times of the Web 2.0, *Loop* explores issues including those of corroding identities, commodification of personal data, precarious labour, and privacy in the digital era, later intensified by social media, such as Facebook, which was launched in 2003.

The original text appearing in the video reads:

Look at me / Read my face / The mirror has a memory / Identity is fiction / Dissolve the image / Identity is image / Image is not self / Self is a membrane / Remember your history / Mystify your past / Reveal your future / Destroy your present / Experience time / Imagine the possibilities / Progress without meaning / Change your past / Erase your memories / Remember your movement / Digitize your reality / Virtualize your life / Forecast your past / Shape your friends / Permanence is temporary / Experience life / Kidnap happiness / Forget the time / Enslave yourself / Accept your future / Stop working / Click your life / Press quit to exit / Read my screen / The screen is your mirror / View the screen / Hide in the light / Subjectify yourself / Objectify data / Dream in pixels / Record your life / Remember in bytes / Cross the real / Press repeat / Narrow your search / Store your memories / Stop thinking / Strip / Start clicking / Look / Listen / Click again / Absorb / Feed

7

Jenny Dunn**Growing Home
Lakatamia (2019)**

Digital print on canvas, ink on ceramic plates, ink on tiled wall, soil, plants

The land around us is rich with meaning, tales to tell, and future possibilities. Our stewardship — the reciprocal care between ourselves, our families, soils, and plants — tells a story of who we are as humans, as communities, and our complex dependency on the more-than-human.

Through mapping, interviews and 'happenings', *Growing Home* captures the processes and narratives of growing, sharing, and eating food together in an area of social housing in Lakatamia, Nicosia, built to rehouse refugees from 'the north' after 1974. The Cypriots that moved into these settlements came from towns and villages where they used their land to grow food for themselves and to subsidize family incomes. Today in the *sinikismoi*, fruit trees including olive, lemon, and orange can be found in almost every garden. Through the physical act of one's hands in the soil, and the traditions of care, practices of nostalgia and memory are enacted.

Maria Andreou

S(h)ifting Through Materials (2019)

Pigment, paper, AI creative tools, 40x40 cm

S(h)ifting Through is a pigment drawing that replicates an AI generated image using text input. A product of a digital image (that depicts nothing that ever existed in the world or that is remotely recognisable) is reproduced on paper. The keywords used in the text input reference impending astrological aspects that suggest a shift and a re-prioritisation in the hierarchy of social values (some keywords used were: COLLECTIVE, AIR, EARTH, VALUES, SOCIAL, HIERARCHY, SHIFT).

In this process the work diverts from the usual 'diagnostic' approach to a 'prognostic' one and proposes that the digital and physical dimensions we encounter do not need to negate each other. Rather, either of them can be the other's extension, a layer or as states to be simultaneously occupied. Alternatively, the piece summons an entirely new state where materiality is flexible and variable, optional yet omnipresent.

Nihaal Faizal

Sci-Fi Drawings (2017-on going)

Ink on paper, pencil on paper, found frames, 29cm x 42cm each

"I do drawings every day but I never know what they're of." AVA VERSION 9.6 in *Ex Machina*, 2015

The images presented in *Sci-Fi Drawings* are copies of drawings that originally appeared in popular commercial science fiction films. Within each of these films, the drawing was originally created by an artificial intelligence (most often a robot, but sometimes also operating systems).

Within the films, the act of drawing serves as a way by which the A.I. presents its humanity. Through the act of re-drawing, I bring these diverse set of images under the authorship of a single individual, one that is human, but one that ultimately fails in reproducing the drawings even remotely as well as his A.I. counterparts. The drawings are put in frames found at the Museum of History and Cultural Heritage of Lakatamia.

Olga Micińska

Warping Board (2017)

Clay, cement, dimensions variable

A typical warping board is a constellation of poles used by weavers to measure equal lengths of thread which is then installed as a warp on the loom. It is a device of a very simple construction, essential in the preparatory phase before the actual weaving process. It implies on the user a cyclical and repetitive gesture.

When approaching things and technologies through the lenses of DIY (punk) movements opposing such ideologies, which project or impose possible futures, I decided to delve into techniques based on a circular motion, resulting in bodily and mental concentration on the matter placed directly in the maker's hands.

The work is made with Cypriot clay, cement and incorporates one element printed with ABS plastic. The intention was to combine materials from traditional, industrial and hi-tech realms. The visible imperfections or mistakes of both the manual and machine production reveal the process preceding the final result and expose some integral properties of the substances or tools applied in the course of making.

The installation functions as an architectural intervention by redrawing lines and angles within the room and interacting with other artefacts located around.

11

Raissa Angeli

Eternal YouTube
sunsets (from Hey Tom
'The Future is not
what it used to be')
(2017)

Edited YouTube sunset, car sun
shield, clay in plastic, dimensions
variable

Courtesy of the State Gallery of
Contemporary Art Collection

Tom woz here (from
Hey Tom 'The Future
is not what it used
to be') (2017)

Fired ceramics in acrylic, dimensions
variable

Both works by Raissa Angeli are from
the series *Hey Tom 'The Future is
not what it used to be'*. The title of
the series is taken from one of Erkki
Kurenniemi's films. Kurenniemi
was a Finnish designer, engineer,
nuclear physicist and artist, who
explored the potential of virtual
reality and interactive computer art.
He is considered a pioneer of early
electronic art and music.

12

Tabita Rezaire

WWW GLOBAL COM (2014)

SD video, 3:42

WWW GLOBAL COM explores
electronic colonialism and the
resulting control, domination and
exploitative structures that rule the
Internet. By looking at the export of
behavioural patterns spawned via
social media on the African continent,
the works question the idea of a global
digital culture.

Rezaire writes: "The power dynamics
behind the genuine use of technology
reflects a political agenda of exclusion
and Western cyber domination, yet
interesting aesthetics stem from
African interpretations of these
technological diapositives."

13

Zach Blas

Contra-Internet:
Jubilee 2033 (2018)

HD single-channel video, 30:52

Contra-Internet: Jubilee 2033 is a re-
imagining of scenes from filmmaker
Derek Jarman's 1978 queer punk film
Jubilee, starring queer icons Susanne
Sachsse and Cassils. *Jubilee 2033*
follows author Ayn Rand (Susanne
Sachsse) and members of her
Collective, including economist Alan
Greenspan, on an acid trip in 1955.
Guided by an artificial intelligence
named Azuma, they are transported
to a dystopian future Silicon Valley.
As Apple, Facebook, and Google
campuses burn, Azuma reveals
that Ayn has become a celebrity
philosopher to tech executives, as her
writings foster their entrepreneurial
spirit. Amidst the wreckage, Rand
and The Collective are introduced
to the internet, observe techies
being captured by anti-campus
groupies, and bear witness to the
death of Silicon Valley elite. Once
inside an occupied office of Palantir
Technologies, the group encounters
Nootropix (Cassils), a contra-sexual,
contra-internet prophet, who
lectures on the end of the internet
as we know it. Seeking respite, Rand
and The Collective find themselves
at Silicon Beach, where chunks of
polycrystalline silicon mix with sand
and ocean.



1

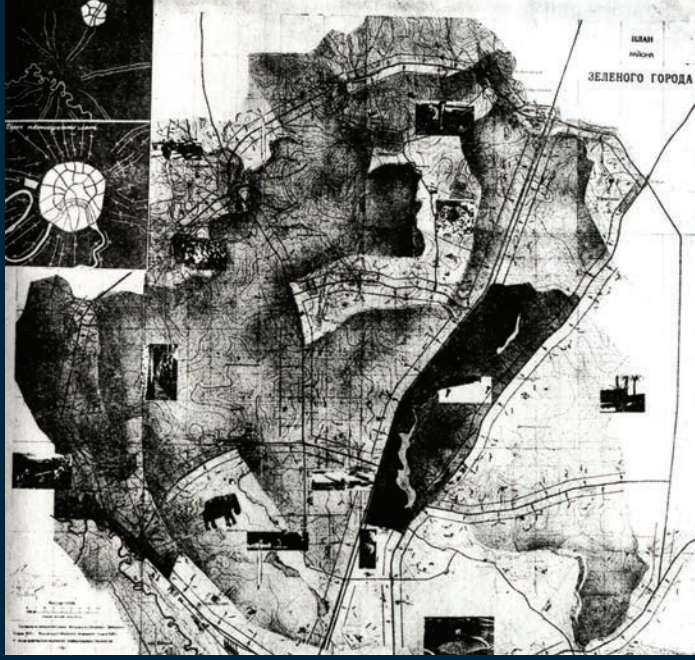


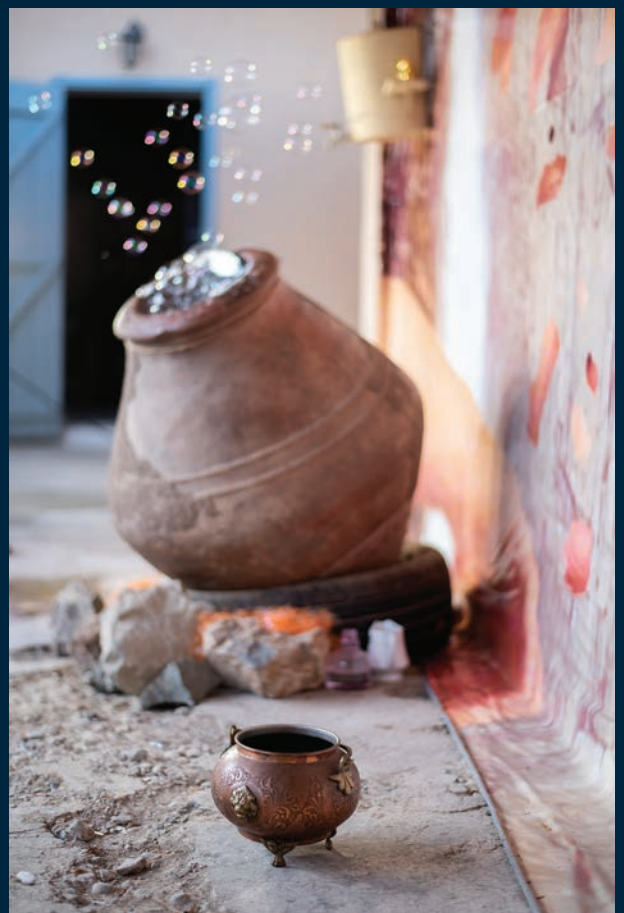
2

Deste Prize, 2015. Photo by Yorgos Sfakianakis.



Image courtesy of the artist.





4



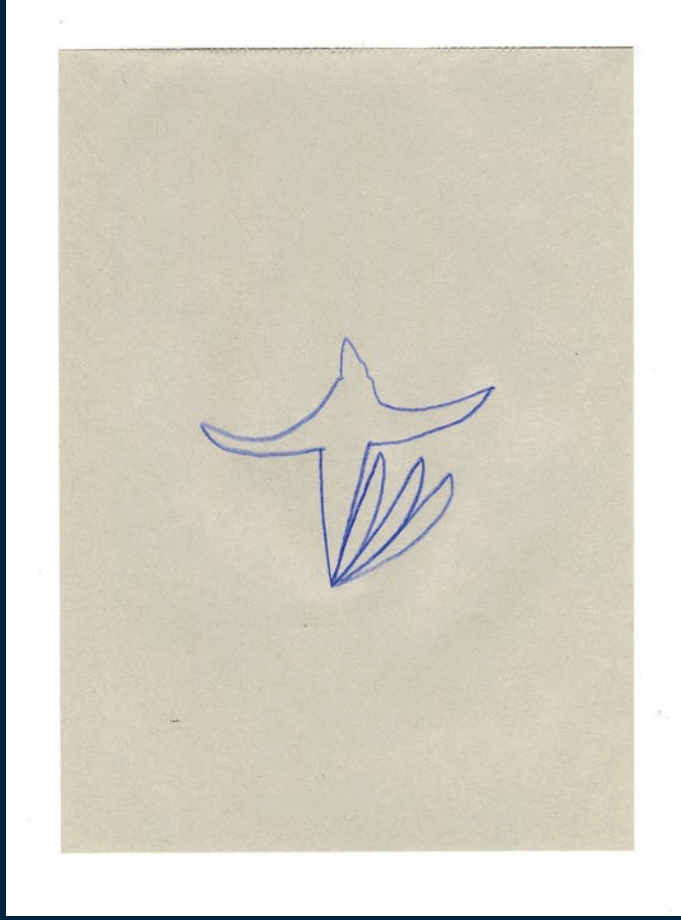








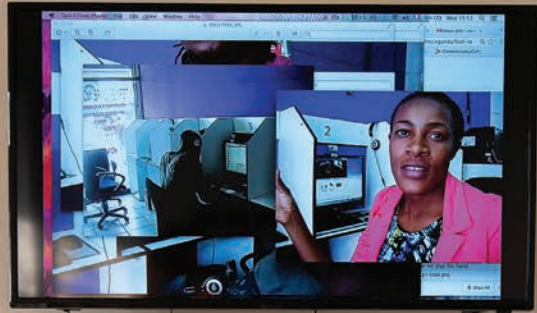
Image courtesy of the artist.



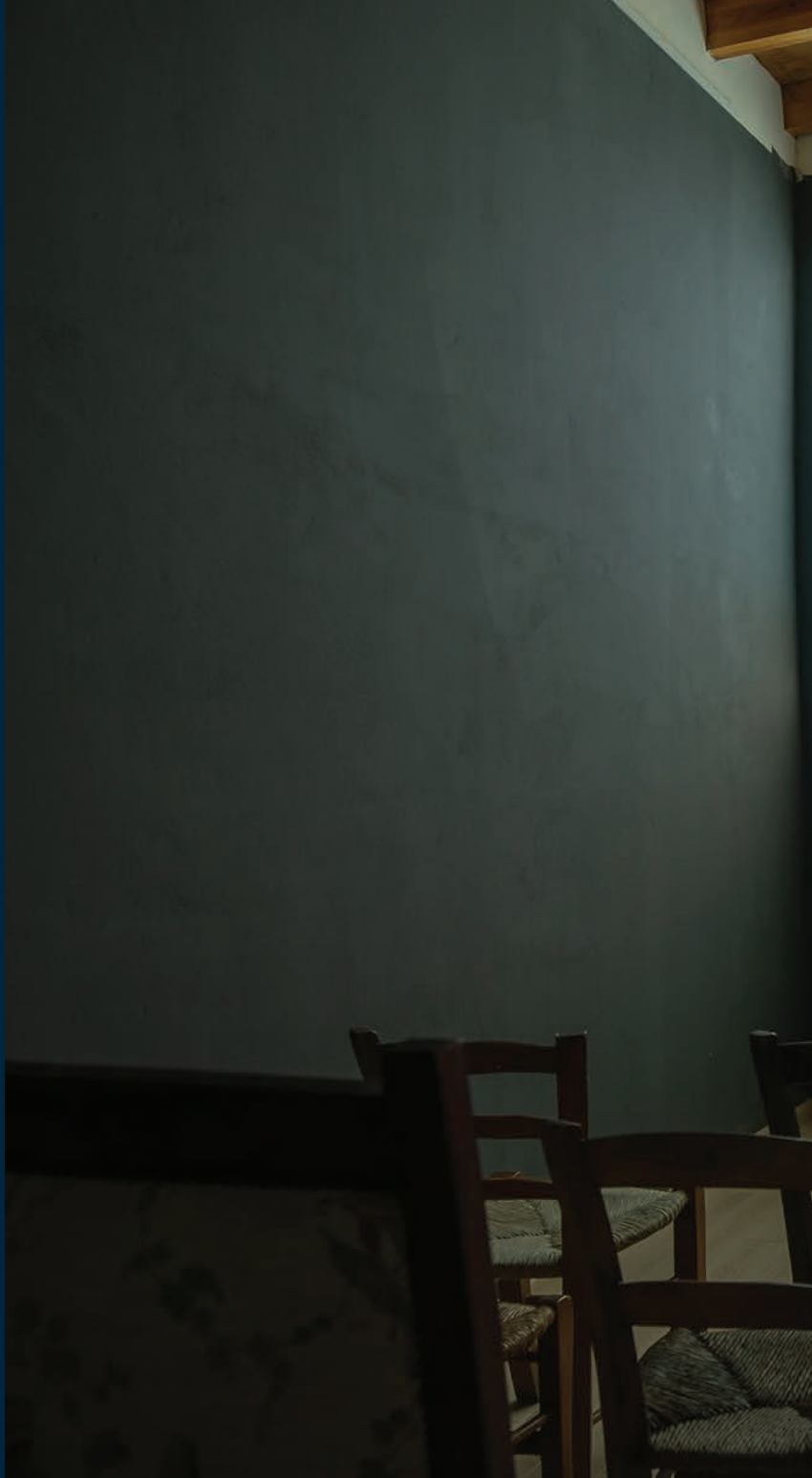


10





13





All photos, unless stated otherwise, by Mirka Koutsouri.

ZACH BLAS IN CONVERSATION

Elena Parpa

Elena Parpa (EP): In the exhibition *Sickle & Code* you participate with *Contra-Internet: Jubilee 2033* (2018), a film that examines the mechanisms of control in current uses of technology and the internet utilizing queer and feminist methods. I am wondering, what does a queer approach to technology entail?

Zach Blas (ZB): A queer approach to technology has meant different things to me over the years. To give you an example, in earlier projects, such as *Queer Technologies* (2007-2012), I was questioning the way certain hetero-normative elements formalize in technical architectures. Plugs, for instance, are gendered male and female, suggesting that for electrical activity to occur you need to have a male and female plug connecting to each other. I wanted to push against this way of conceptualizing technical functionality, which we often take for a given. Who questions a plug? As I've gone on, in works such as *Face Cages* (2013-2016) and *Facial Weaponization Suite* (2011-2014), I explored how

technology submits people to rigid conceptions of identity.

EP: In *Contra-Internet: Jubilee 2033* (2018) would you say that there are queer interventions at the conceptual and imaginative registers of the project?

ZB: The film re-imagines scenes from Derek Jarman's *Jubilee* (1978), which tells the story of Queen Elizabeth I time-travelling in the 1970s. Jarman is a queer filmmaker, artist and activist, who really influenced me from a young age, and what I love about his film *Jubilee* is that it's like a queer, avant-garde, sci-fi, time-travelling masterpiece that questions power and resistance with much humor. I worked with this film's narrative structure — and spirit — in order to tell a story about the Internet, the Silicon Valley, its kings and queens. In my version, instead of Queen Elizabeth I, I chose to bring in Ayn Rand, whom I think as the philosophical queen of Silicon Valley. Rand was a novelist and philosopher who was fiercely pro-capitalist and also popularized a kind of 'rationalism' of radical individuality — what she

termed "the virtues of selfishness" — an approach to living that refuses any kind of altruism. Today, it is well known that her stories and theories, which became known under the moniker of Objectivism, have been highly influential to Silicon Valley and the tech industry broadly, as her writings support a vision of technical innovation fueled by capitalist competition and heroic feats of individualism. The casting decisions I took were in the queer spirit of Jarman's *Jubilee*. For the role of Rand, I cast Susanne Sachsse, a highly celebrated German actress and a queer icon. It was a casting decision that brought a wonderfully needed tension to the role. The same can be said for Cassils, a trans artist based in Los Angeles, who plays Nootropix, a contra-sexual, contra-internet prophet.

EP: How else do we experience queerness in *Jubilee 2033*?

ZB: We experience it through desire. The film is exploding with libidinal energy. A queer theorist who influenced my thoughts on desire is José Muñoz. In his book *Cruising*

Utopia (2009), he focuses on the concept of queer futurity and remarkably argues that we have never been queer, putting forward the idea that queerness is a horizon to move or long towards. The present is not enough, he tell us; it is painful, and due to this, it ignites our desire for an alternative. Thus, his idea of a queer utopian aesthetic and sensibility concerns reaching out towards that horizon and touching the possibility of something else. These ideas resonated with me strongly. When I first began the *Contra Internet* project, to which *Jubilee 2033* belongs, I was interested in raising a simple question: Can we imagine an alternative to the internet as we know it? The internet is now a commercialized, corporatized, surveilled place. I am by no means a techno-phobic, but is there an alternative to this particular configuration of a global communication infrastructure that is not submitted to governance and control?

EP: These are important questions, which are addressed in the film through a layering of different references. Jarman's *Jubilee* is the most apparent, but there are others, less obvious, such as your allusion to J.K. Gibson-Graham's *The End of Capitalism (As We Knew It)*, when Nootropix delivers a lecture from a book called

'The End of the Internet (As we Knew It)'. Is this layering of readings, writings, films a methodology in your artistic practice?

ZB: I spent time as a student at the University of California, San Diego, studying with Ricardo Dominguez. Dominguez is a co-founder of the collective Critical Art Ensemble, which developed some provocative artistic methodologies in books the collective published throughout the 1990s. In their first book, *Electronic Disturbance* (1994), they suggest the idea of utopian plagiarism, arguing that since they did not have time to write theory, they would take from existing concepts and would alter them so that new ideas emerge. They did this quite elegantly with Henry David Thoreau's concept of 'civil disobedience', by which Critical Art Ensemble came up with a practice termed 'electronic civil disobedience'. For some time, I have been interested in utopian plagiarism. When Nootropix is reading in my film, they are engaging in an act of utopian plagiarism of J.K. Gibson-Graham's book. Certain parameters were set: every time the word 'capitalism' appears, I replaced it with 'internet'; every time the word 'economic' appears, I replaced it with 'network'. The result is part mind-blowingly lucid,

part nonsensical. But that was the conceptual experiment with the text, and I also did the same with Paul B. Preciado's *Countersexual Manifesto* (2000), replacing the word 'sexual', with the 'internet,' for instance. So, the whole *Contra-Internet* project developed out of a series of acts of utopian plagiarism, from J.K. Gibson-Graham to Paul B. Preciado to Derek Jarman.

EP: Is it important that the viewer understands these acts of utopian plagiarism? I am asking because from a curatorial perspective, when putting up *Sickle & Code*, we had to deal with the question of how to engage a larger audience? How to overcome the conception that art is self-referential, exclusionary or elitist? Do you ever think of such questions?

ZB: More and more, I am concerned with my work reaching a broader audience. I'm not exactly setting out to make Hollywood films, but I aim for my practice to be intellectually, conceptually, aesthetically, and emotionally resonant with the various struggles in the world today. I like to think of accessibility through different layers of encounter with works. Personally, I respond well to seduction, so I tend to mix intellectual interests and philosophy with pop aesthetic — an eye-candy to lure people.



One may not gather all the discursive bits swirling around a work, but there is something worthwhile to be gained from that surface, pop layer — at least I hope! If someone wants to take a deep dive, there are conceptual and formal ladders in the work that will guide you on this path. Also, I often create lecture-performances, which enable me to directly share the various discursive elements of my work. I don't think an artwork stops with the work itself, as art exists in a broader discursive frame.

When I'm exhibiting a work, I'm only showing a little slice of something that belongs to an on-going research stream. I'm working on certain ideas for years and years, which I develop, re-shape, and extend from one project to the next.

EP : In *Obedientx3*, the lecture-performance you gave in Cyprus, I came to realize that you put a lot of research in what you do, which pushes the meaning of your work into

both factual and imaginary narratives. In this lecture, for example, you discussed your installation *The Doors* (2019), documenting at the same time the use of psychotropic drugs in California from the 1960s by the counter-culture community for entertainment until the present when the tech industry micro-doses on nootropics for cognitive enhancement, yet engaging all at once an imaginary vision of the future.



ZB: If I had to boil down this project, I would say that it is primarily concerned with the visionary. The point of taking psychedelic drugs in the 60s, whether LSD or mushrooms, was about acquiring an altered state of consciousness that would permit some kind of vision or experience — perhaps of the future. Here, an underlying question emerges for me, which is who gets to have visions of the future and under what conditions? And who gets to put these visions into play and practice? Whose

visions of the future dominate and whose visions are ignored or considered superfluous? With *The Doors*, I wanted to raise these questions in relation to California and the Silicon Valley in particular, which occupies, of course, a relatively small geographical location, yet has global impact. Whether Hollywood or the tech industry, California has such a profound cultural impact around the world. I am also interested in connecting historical points, in thinking about shifts or

recursions. Silicon Valley is in Northern California, part of the San Francisco Bay Area, which is where the psychedelic movement was happening in the 60s. Now, all these years later, right in the same geographical spot, tech workers have made popular micro dosing on LSD for enhancing worker productivity. I find this such a fascinating historical linkage to think about, which concerns the continuation or the re-imagination of the psychedelic project. There is this book by



Fred Turner titled *From Counterculture to Cyberculture: Stewart Brand, the Whole Earth Network, and the Rise of Digital Utopianism* (2006) which provides a thorough historical account of the hippie movement in San Francisco along with the emergence of its tech culture. One of Turner's main arguments is that these groups are often assumed to be highly divergent from one another, but in fact, there is a much overlap and interplay between hippie and tech innovators

and entrepreneurs. A hippie sensibility did not necessarily stand in contradistinction to a proto-Silicon Valley disposition. This point is also supported in *The California Ideology* (1995), an essay by British theorists Richard Barbrook and Andy Cameron, who argue that California launched techno-utopianism, a combination of neoliberal, free-market values matched with a techno-positivist attitude. My work *The Doors*

examines these historical links as well as the contemporary re-engineering of what the psychedelic experiment means today. At the same time, it is asking viewers to think about how the future is seen and put into play.

EP : Your work also looks into the tech industry's fascination with fantasy and magic or with forms of esoteric knowledge. I'm thinking of your recent work *Icosahedron* (2019), an



artificially intelligent crystal ball that predicts the future of prediction, but in relation to the revived interest in the occult that we are currently experiencing. Astrology has made a comeback as has yoga and terms such as the “chakras”. You can also observe this fascination in contemporary art practices that increasingly take the forms of rituals that bring ancient symbols together with digital technologies.

ZB: My initial interest in such ideas came about through

Derek Jarman. When I was working on my film *Jubilee 2033*, I watched Jarman’s film over and over again. The more I did the more I started paying closer attention to how mystical it is. At the same time, I began to notice more and more that Silicon Valley is obsessed with magic and fantasy. For example, the company Palantir Technologies is named after the crystal ball in *The Lord of the Rings* books, and their company mission statement even comes from this fantasy

world: ‘Save the Shire’. I’m writing an extended essay on this right now, which comes out of *Metric Mysticism* (2018), a lecture-performance I developed some years ago. There are quite interesting books exploring these relations today, like the Italian philosopher Federico Campagna’s book *Technic and Magic*, which makes the point that technology and magic are always related; the re-printing of Erik David’s book *TechnGnosis* (1998) that looks at connections of magic,

spirituality and technology; and *The Politics of Divination* (2016) by Joshua Ramey that discusses neoliberal ideology, theology, and risk. For my work right now, I think fantasy is a key word. I'm at work on a trilogy — the first part being *The Doors* and *Jubilee 2033* the prologue — that looks into the fantasies and beliefs that drive and motivate tech culture today. The second work in the trilogy focuses on AI and religion. It explores growing fantasies — and religions! — of AI as a coming god, as a new form of messianism. Part of this project has been inspired by a church in California that is organized around an AI godhead, which matches well with California's long history of fringe religions and cults. The work also takes up Michelangelo. There is this silly meme of Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel fresco *The creation of Adam*, in which God's hand is replaced with the hand of an AI robot. I think of this meme as belonging to the elite or 1%, because it is a fantasy of AI extending and reinvigorating human life. It reminds me of people who want to be downloaded into machines and live forever. But there is also the fresco of *The Last Judgment* in the Sistine Chapel. I'm attracted to this story of the casting of judgment over humanity, as it seems to tell a religious fantasy of AI for most of us, as AI becomes a judge or arbiter

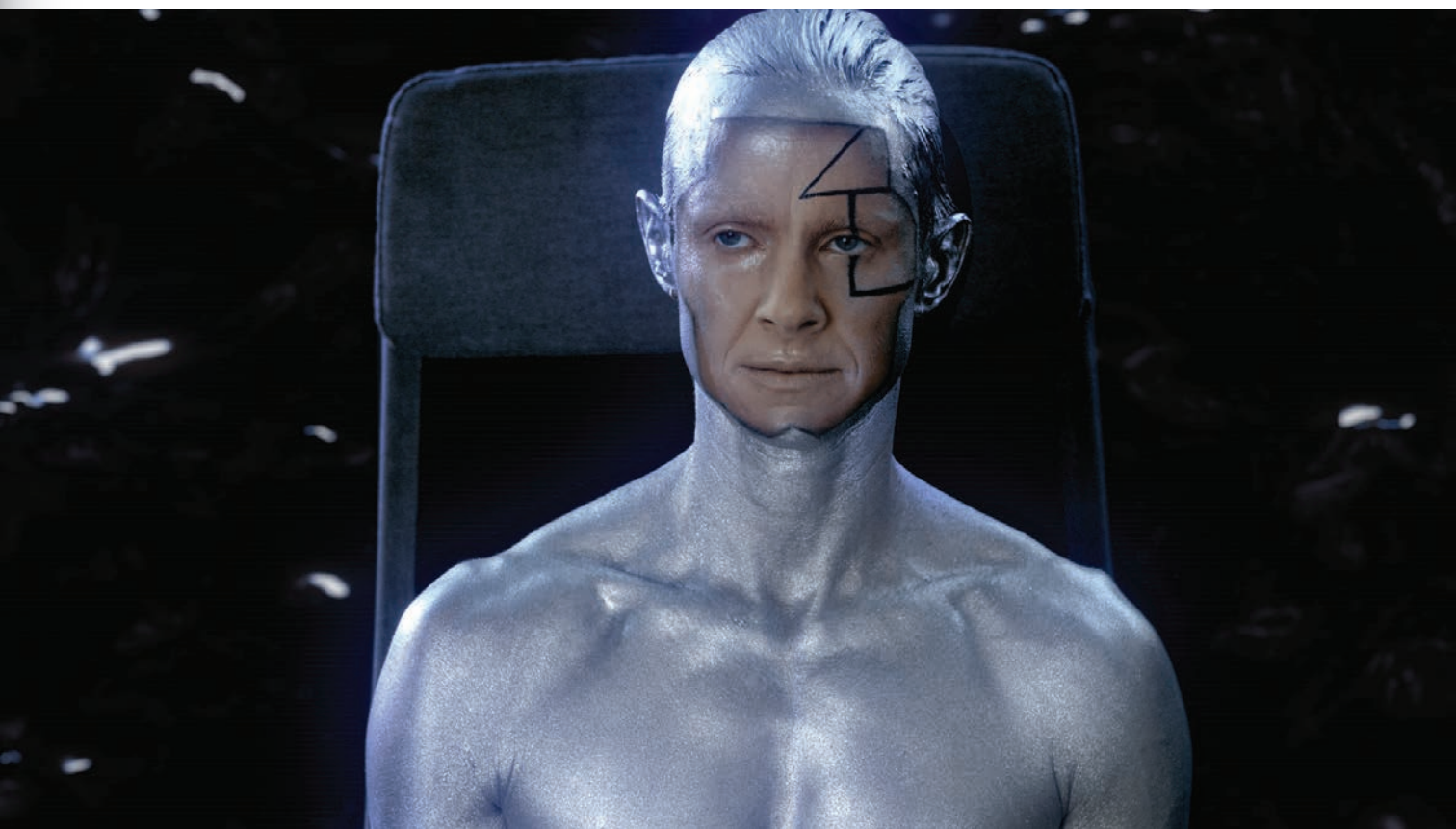
of much of contemporary life, from job eligibility to “the truths” our faces may bear. Part two of my trilogy is like a sci-fi re-imagining of Michelangelo's *The Last Judgment*. Think Kenneth Anger's 1969 film *Invocation of my Demon Brother* meets Anthony Levandowski's *Way of the Future* AI church.

EP : Your description of the piece makes me think of what you mentioned earlier about wanting your art to critically reflect on matters of power and control, yet in relation to where you come from. This reminds me of the kind of debates currently underway in Cyprus, where artists demonstrate a renewed interest in connecting with their locality.

ZB : I think this interest I have in California relates to an awareness of the forces that inform my viewpoint. I lived in California for a good part of my 20s, and it dramatically shaped and impacted my view of the world. Now that I haven't been living in US for some time, I am drawn to explore how my view on California has altered. California — and America in general — is so culturally dominant, and of course one is made more viscerally aware of this once stepping outside the borders of empire. There

is an essay I like to go back to regularly — Donna Haraway's “Situated Knowledges” from 1988. In short, Haraway argues that objectivity is only found in the acknowledgment of situated partial perspectives. I hold this point close. I realize I am not in the business of producing scientific evidence, but the argument reminds me to always reflect on how my own positioning as a queer American living in London impacts what I research and make.

*
All images courtesy
of the artist:
Zach Blas,
Contra-Internet:
Jubilee 2033,
HD film still, 2018.
Commissioned by Gasworks,
Art in General, and MU.



CONTEMPORARY CRAFTING AND MAKING PRACTICES: EXHIBITING THE LAKATAMIA MAKERSPACE PROTOTYPES IN A MUSEUM OF CULTURAL AND CRAFT HERITAGE

Evanthia (Evi) Tselika

The computational and digital technology revolution, together with the boom in network communication, in the later part of the 20th century has had a huge influence in every dimension of our material, virtual and perceived realities. This is observed both in processes of collective fabrication cultures and in the material cultures negotiated by museum environments. As our lives oscillate between the real and the virtual, a renegotiation is being played out in our relationship with material reality and its cultural representation. The pervasiveness of digital technologies within our everydayness and cultural, productive, learning and social habits has brought forth new questions which call for novel interpretations of how we go about living and making communally. In this chapter and wider project, the relationship between collaborative and cooperative structures of making — both within a socially determined contemporary art production and within peer-to-peer learning processes of the

Free Open-Source Software movements — are negotiated.

Drawing from such principles, the Phygital project had explored the processes of individuals or groups engaging in do-it-yourself (DIY) activities via access to digital fabrication tools made available at community-centred makerspaces in Tzoumerka (Greece), Nicosia (Cyprus) and Korytsa (Albania). In its Cypriot iteration, the project has thematically delved into how commons orientated collective hacking and making approaches relate to social art practices through a series of actions developed by the University of Nicosia Research Foundation. These include a series of thematic workshops (1), the *Free/Libre Technologies, Arts and the Commons Unconference* (Tselika & Sioki, 2020) and the exhibition and events programme *Sickle & Code*. Each action offered thematic directions for the development of a municipal makerspace hosted in the premises of the Lakatamia Community Centre, where the pilot prototypes were produced. (2) An emergence of new makerspaces has taken place in Cyprus during the last few years since 2017 when this project began: *Youth Makerspace Larnaka*, *Makers will Make* and *Rise*

Makerspace. Accompanying other pre-existing private and University owned makerspaces, fab labs and digital fabrication studios and shops. This is in line with a wider global burgeoning of makerspaces and hackerspaces that has been observed in recent years, organized as community-led environments where free and open source software and hardware are utilized collaboratively by individuals.

In Cyprus the project has explored such processes — drawing from the wider makerspace ethos and the principles of openness and sharing advocated by the FOSS movements — in conjunction with past and present processes of art, craft and making where ideas of community, production, heritage of fabrication, digitality, materiality, crafting and maker cultures are negotiated. The Museum of History and Cultural Heritage of Lakatamia — where the *Sickle & Code* exhibition was hosted — and the Lakatamia Makerspace are both municipally run. Presenting the Phygital pilot prototypes together with the artworks within this museum context — a space already loaded with its own narratives and objects — was a challenge in exploring practices and their relationships between the

material and the digital. Via the melding of past forms and methods of making and co-producing with current methods of fabrication, notions regarding the communal, collective and collaborative facet of maker cultures and traditions became evident.

Cultural/folk heritage museums in Cyprus usually include a melange of crafted artefacts that showcase (and often theatrically simulate) communal and quotidian life as it might have been in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Cyprus. Such museums are often encountered in cities as well as villages across the Republic of Cyprus, as shown by Stylianou-Lambert and Chrystalla Antoniou (2014) in their museum mapping guide. The Lakatamia Municipal Museum is one such museum. Its collection has been shaped by the donations of residents and is housed within the cluster of housing named Kato Lakatamia, which can be seen on the first trigonometrical map created by Lord Kitchener in 1883 in the early years of the island becoming a protectorate of the British Empire (Kitchener's survey of Cyprus 1878-1883).

The Museum of History & Cultural Heritage of Lakatamia was previously a home constructed in 1922 using local architectural methods and materials. Its collection comprises of a diverse range of objects on loan from the Lakatamia community aiming to provide insight

into collective production and living practices in Cyprus during its recent past history. A wide array of objects are exhibited, such as: farming and textile manufacturing equipment, bread baking utensils, weaved baskets, kitchen and decorative wear, as well as beautiful embroidery and textiles. The museum and its collection enable a glimpse into how locals interpret and converse generationally with their recent agricultural past and making processes. The objects displayed offer themselves to the recreation of narratives related to local community ties and the understanding of our reliance on locally sourced materials, highlighting how new technological processes were adopted over the generations. Ranging from hand carved farming tools to intricate fine lace, the objects were reordered and placed on industrial storage shelves following a typological format proposed by the curatorial team (Elena Parpa, Peter Eramian and I). Clusters of objects from the museum were drawn together (as seen in the images) in a reordered display which alludes to the function of museums as 'storage spaces' of our past and present material realities. By reclassifying the museum artefacts a more nuanced narrative arose, connected with the central concepts negotiated by the exhibition itself, such as: communal ties, gender roles and perceived colonial pasts, the integration of the industrialized object into Cypriot productive processes manifesting the shift from an

agrarian society, the marks of modernisation, as well as the overall dimension of materiality and making in the past in parallel with current digital crafting possibilities.

Presented together with the reordered museum objects and artworks by the fifteen invited artists (3), the Lakatamia Makerspace prototypes demonstrate how contemporary digital fabrication processes and how community access to both specialized tools and training via makerspaces are transforming the ways we can go about producing what we envision. The pilot prototypes, which were displayed during the *Sickle & Code* exhibition, and their makers are presented in the following pages demonstrating a material and metaphorical interweaving and melding of free and open technologies, past and contemporary crafting processes, and maker-cultures. These prototypes have been shaped in the local framework, welding principles of the Open-Source/Free-Software movements, the *design global manufacture local* structure of production, as well as contemporary art, design and making processes featuring the commons. They include: a public art installation with recycled bicycles marking the start of the pathway by the Pedieos river, created by staff from the Lakatamia Municipality; an ecological ocean monitoring tool 'Underwater Glider' for Cyprus' waters, by Ehsan Abdi; making ceramic production tools more accessible via

‘Pottery Wheel Reinvented’, by Costas Tsangarides; creating tools to ease digital fabrication processes such as the ‘Robotic Arm’, produced by Odysseas Economides; experimenting with algorithms and movement sensors in ‘LED Matrix’, by Charis Charilaou; and recreating the ‘Meshworm’, by Maria Toumazou, as part of the artist’s process and research “on industrial design and its visual codes as a method of enquiring into and expressing contemporary pathologies.”

The prototypes have been created by a group of people formed over the years via the wider Cyprus Phygital programming. Members and leaders of the teams are: officers from the Lakatamia Municipality, two members of #hack66 (the collective who put together the Phygital proposal for Cyprus) — engineers Ehsan Abdi and Costas Tsangarides — , tech entrepreneur and educator Odysseas Economides (Robo CY), high school student Charis Charilaou and contemporary artist Maria Toumazou. These pilot prototypes shaped by this team of people were developed in parallel with the Lakatamia Makerspace and a series of community events, makeathons and workshops organized by the Municipality of Lakatamia.

References:

Kitchener's survey of Cyprus 1878-1883: The first full triangulated survey of the island of Cyprus. Digitized version by Harokopeio University and Sylvia Ioannou Foundation. Retrieved July 3, 2020 from <https://gaia.hua.gr/kitchener/>.

Tselika, E. & Sioki N. (2020). *Unconference Proceedings Free/Libre Technologies, Arts and the Commons*. Nicosia: University of Nicosia Research Foundation. Retrieved July 2, 2020 from <http://www.unrf.ac.cy/files/unconference-proceedings-phygital.pdf>.

Stylianou-Lambert T. & Antoniou C. (2014). *Cyprus Museum Guide*. Limassol: The Visual Sociology and Museum Studies Lab of the Cyprus University of Technology.

Endnotes

1. Run by Natalia Rozalia Avlona, Melita Couta, Jenny Dunn, Maria Hadimichael, Makers Will Make (Eva Korae, Eleana Alexandrou and Arianna Marcoulides), Paschalis Paschali, Leandros Savvides, Niki Sioki and Christina Skarpari.

2. Makerspaces or hackerspaces are collectively run workshops of varying styles and set-ups where members can use tools and equipment that they would not usually have access to. As social spaces, knowledge and skills are learned and shared amongst members, while projects can be collaborative. In this way, the makerspace is a supportive community. There is a global digital network that connects local makers across the world. Making can be high-tech or low-tech and include 3D printing, laser cutting, sewing machines, electronics, woodwork, upcycling materials, computers or a combination of these. (UNRF Cyprus Phygital info flyer, 2019)

3. Maria Andreou, Raissa Angeli, Adonis Archontides, Helene Black & Yiannis Colakides, Zach Blas, Jenny Dunn, Nihaal Faizal, Veronika Georgiou, Olga Micińska, Bahar Noorizadeh, Angelo Plessas, Tabita Rezaire, Elena Savvidou, Emiddio Vasquez.







Photos by Mirka Koutsouri.



Sky Bikes

Team leader:
Marios Malais

Team:
Demetris Fragkou, Gregoris Panayiotou, Antonis Tsirakis, Christoforos Christoforou, Kypros Alexandrou and Yiannis Charalambous

A public art installation produced by administrative and technical staff of the municipality at the Lakatamia

makerspace using the tools available. Repainted discarded bicycles were used to decorate a metallic tube structure in the shape of a tree leading upwards. The structure was installed at a roundabout close to the Lakatamia Makerspace in order to highlight its construction. It also marks the start of the Nicosia Linear Pathway, used by cyclists and pedestrians, which spans several kilometers via the municipalities of Lakatamia, Strovolos and Nicosia, along the Pedieos river route.

Marios Malais is an agriculturist and agronomist responsible for Municipality of Lakatamia matters relating to the environment. He oversees issues relating to green spaces, parks and landscaping; pruning, tree planting and the creation of new parks; water storage, irrigation systems and water recycling processes; as well as collaborating with different municipal services and the wider community regarding the placement of structures and art in public spaces.



Underwater Glider

Team leader:
Ehsan Abdi

Underwater gliders are autonomous marine robots used to learn all there is about our oceans. This has become especially important today, as the public is at last becoming aware of the vital role oceans play for our planet's health. As a result, the public demand for monitoring and protecting the oceans is increasing. Gliders are perfect tools for long-term monitoring of the oceans but, unfortunately, their cost is prohibitively high and is

not affordable to citizen scientists. Fortunately, after the advent of successful open-source drones and 3D printer projects, underwater gliders are also joining the open-source journey and people around the world are beginning to build DIY versions and share their experiences with each other. Drawing on my several years of experience working with commercial versions of these instruments, I joined this project by building an open-source glider and testing it in Cyprus waters.

Ehsan Abdi is an Electronics Engineer and a maker, holding a Bachelor's degree from University of Nicosia and a Master's degree in Embedded Systems from University of Stuttgart. He has previously worked at SONY, designing Radar Sensors at 77GHz. Since 2015, he has been involved with the operation of autonomous underwater vehicles and sensors, especially Kongsberg Seagliders, around the world. This includes the planning, deployment and recovery of several size vessels, ranging from RIB boats to ultra deep water drill ships, from a variety of sea states. As well as repair/maintenance and several new and challenging glider sensor integrations.



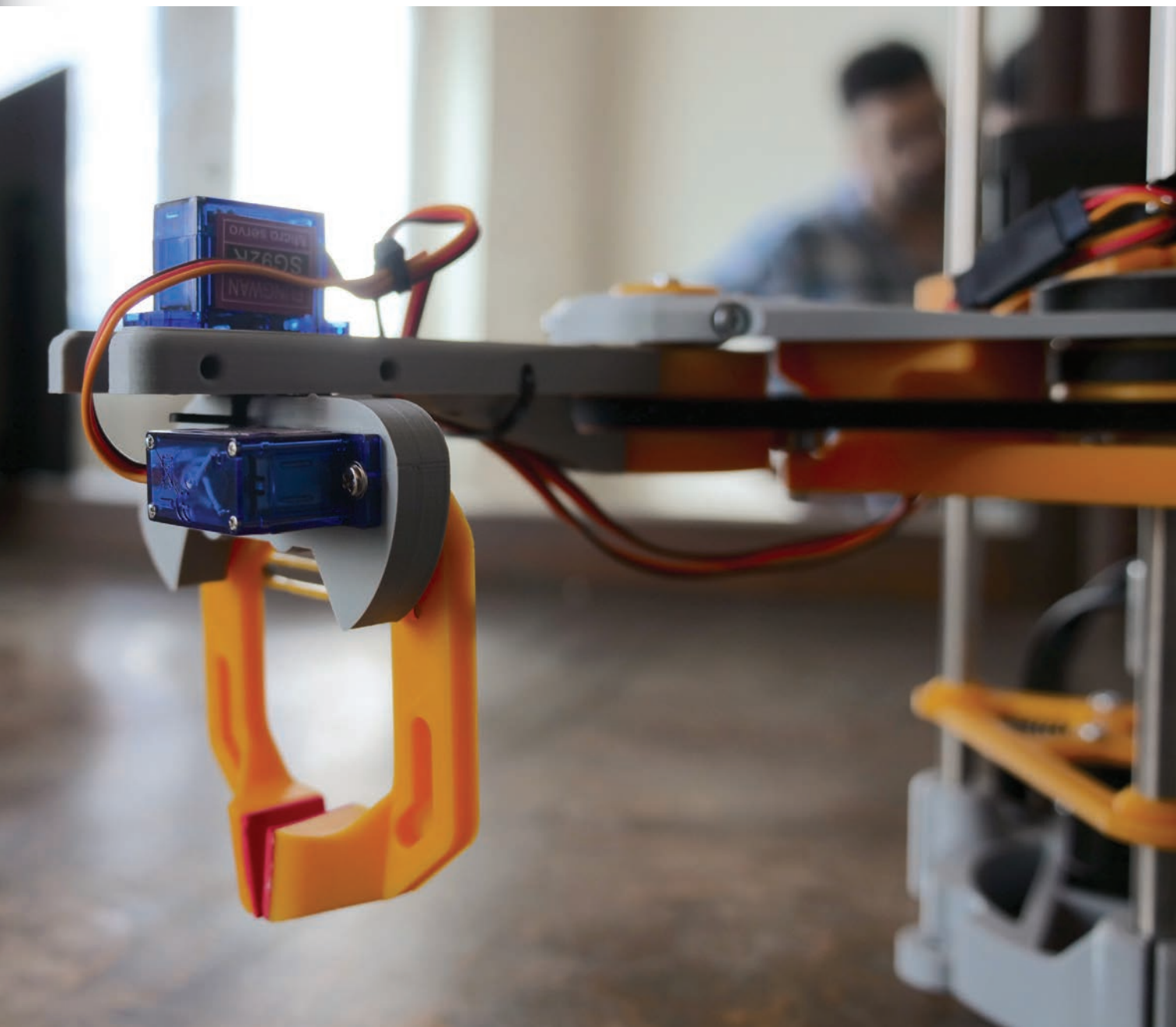
LED Matrix

Team leader:
Charis Charilaou

Team:
Savvas Savva, Marios Kailis,
Christos Charalambous and Odysseas Economides

The LED Matrix aims at creating a display made of smaller neopixel matrixes. A camera can detect if a person approaches and, using a small computer, remove the background, leaving only the person in the video. Using algorithms, the display sketches the figure of the human in real time, in various art styles.

Charis Charilaou is a student at the G C School of Careers. In his spare time he likes to code different projects, including games, programs and AI codes. Charis also enjoys building computers. He works at a network consulting company in the summers setting up both internet and local networks. He spends two days a week at Stem Freak, learning about programming and Arduinos, as well as many other things, where he enjoys sharing his interests and learning from others.



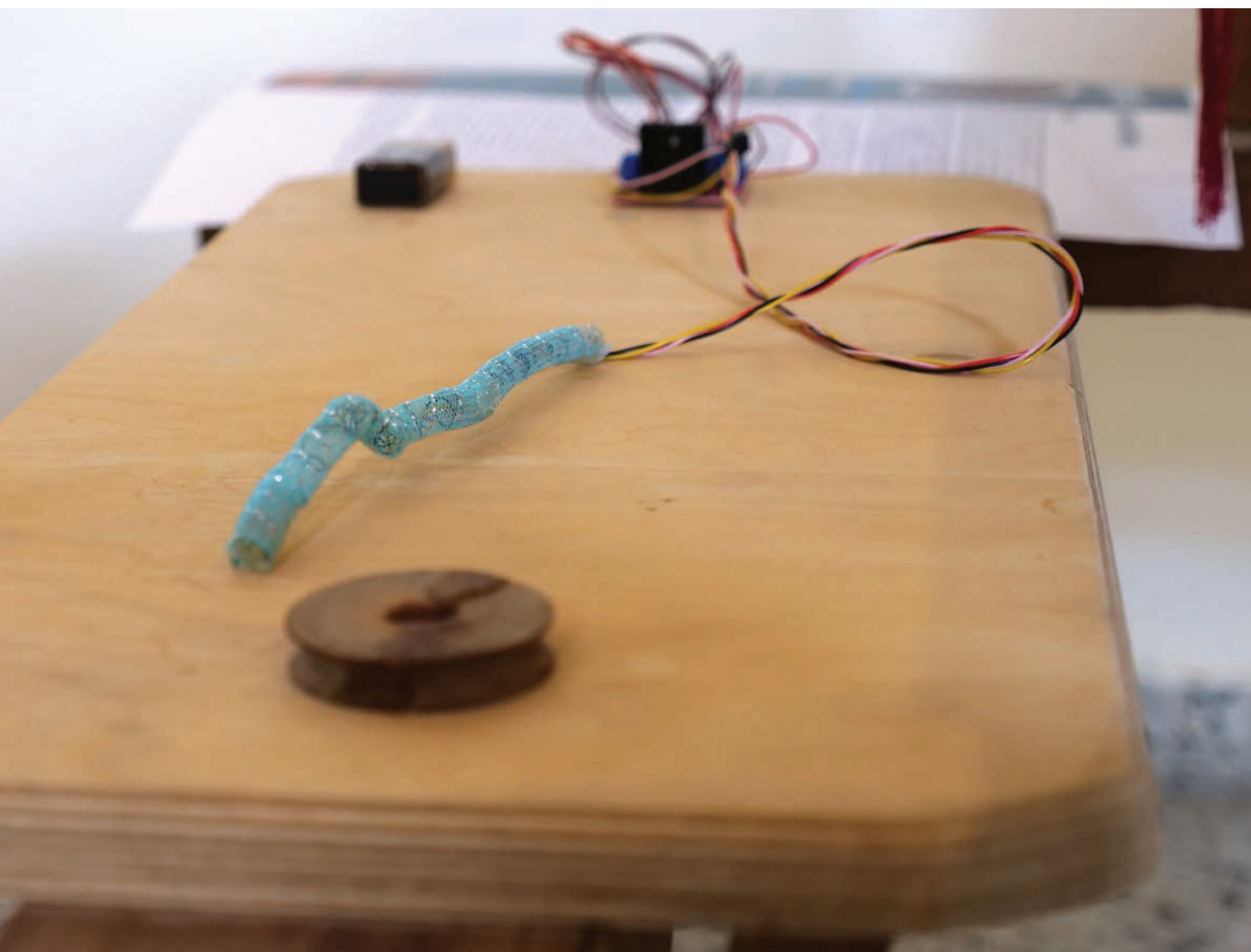
Robotic Arm

Team leader:
Odysseas Economides

The “Robotic Arm” prototype is a robotic arm that can cooperate with a 3D printer in such a way that, after the 3D printer completes a print, it removes the print and places it in a nearby box, allowing the 3D printer to proceed to its next printing job. The

arm recognises the different prints and places them in different boxes. By achieving this, one can have an automated mini-factory right on their desk. The idea was implemented by taking an existing open-source robotic arm design and building it using 3D printed parts and sourcing the electronics. The robotic arm is connected to a camera, computer and 3D printer. The computer coordinates the 3D printer and the robotic arm via the camera so that they can cooperate as described.

Odysseas Economides has a strong background in electronics prototyping using Arduino and ESP microcontrollers combined with 3D printing. He is the founder of Teemby and Robo.com.cy. Odysseas loves coding and creating innovative projects.



Meshworm

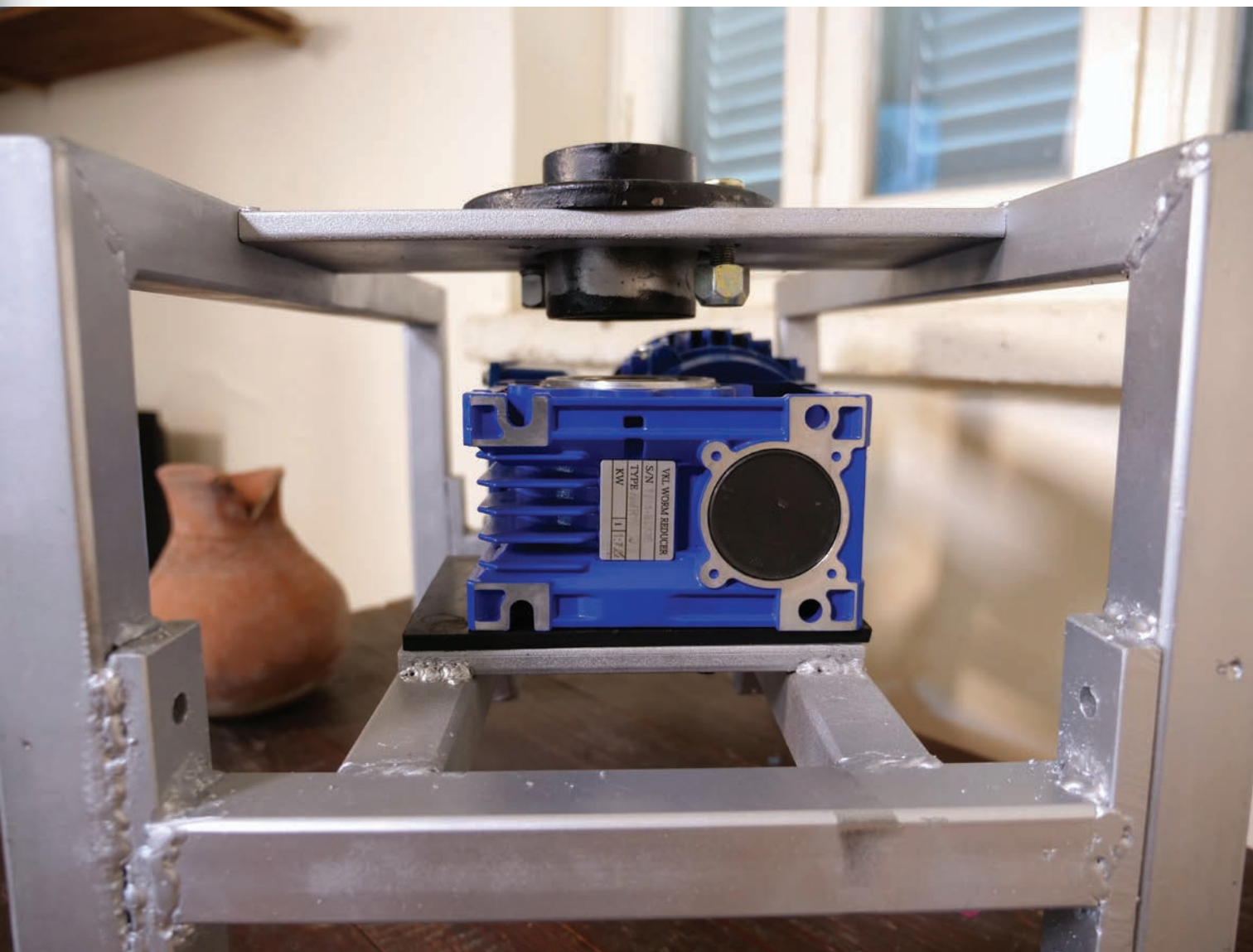
Team leader:
Maria Toumazou

“Meshworm” is a robot using artificial muscles and peristalsis to inch across the ground. It was first developed by a team of scientists from MIT, Harvard and Seoul National University as a next-generation robot which, unlike most mechanical parts that are rigid and fragile at such smaller scales, is resilient, fibrous and flexible. Using the paper “Meshworm: A Peristaltic Soft Robot with Antagonistic Nickel Titanium Coil Actuators” published in the journal “Transactions on Mechatronics” (October 2013) as a guide, as

well as video documentation of the robot prototype published in 2011, Maria worked with a team of specialists in order to create her own version of the meshworm. Even though research into the meshworm was initially funded by DARPA, with potential use in military technologies, there are many creative and educational possibilities for “the humble earthworm”. The materials required are widely accessible, using craft-making mesh, smart wire and any computing platform.

Maria Toumazou is based in Nicosia, Cyprus. In her practice she deconstructs contemporary and traditional Cypriot working culture. Her works, usually sculptural or text-based, are often shaped by the moment when an object’s autonomy is altered through a renegotiation of its framework and

usage. This shift is also extended to Toumazou’s treatment of the spatial and social. She has worked on several collaborative projects that consider various modes of production. In 2013 she co-founded Neoterismoi Toumazou (Neo Toum) – a project space and art collective based in Nicosia. Neo Toum’s interdisciplinary programme brought together poetry, performance, music, fashion and object-art. The collective participated as guests in the Cyprus Pavilion curated by Jan Verwoert, *The Future of Colour*, at the 2017 Venice Biennale. Toumazou is also the co-founder of the publishing imprint MARIA† editions, based in Nicosia and New York. She holds a BA in Art Practice from Goldsmiths College, London, an MFA from the Glasgow School of Art and is a graduate from Professor Haegue Yang’s class at the Städelschule, Frankfurt.



Pottery Wheel Reinvented

Team Leader:
Costas Tsangarides

Team:
Christina Socratous
Loizos Groutas

The goal of this project was to design a functional prototype of a pottery wheel suitable for young artists that is cheap to produce and affordable to buy. It was conceived and developed as a versatile and easy manufacturing process in order to assist artists, enthusiasts and students/educators

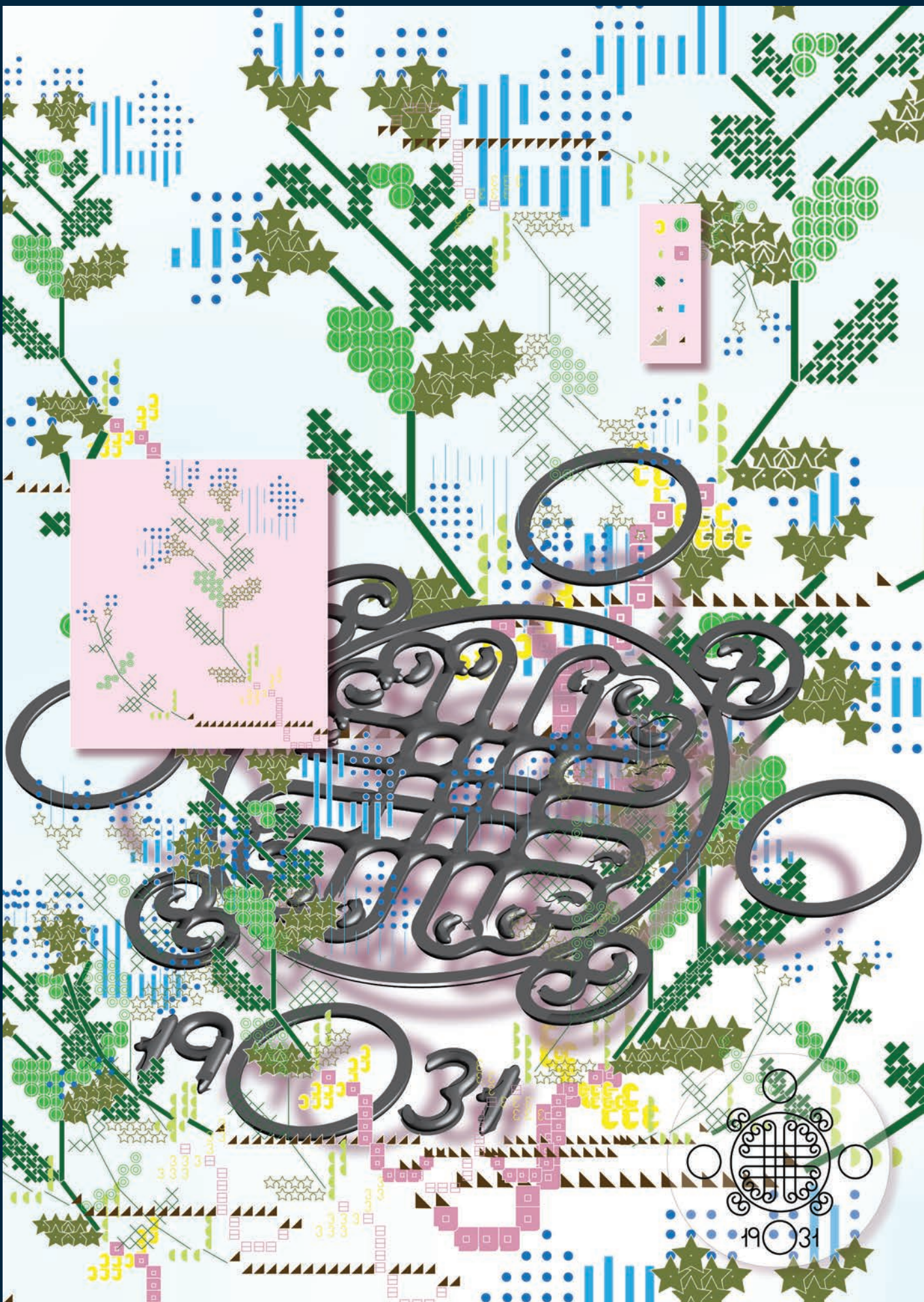
to create their own pottery wheels at the lowest cost. To produce this “DIY” quality pottery wheel using design optimization methods, a poll within the community of both professional and hobbyist potters and artists was carried out addressing their concerns and problems with their current pottery wheels. This was a method to define the characteristics and features of the new pottery wheel. A complete set of 3D designs and STL files with schematic 2D drawings with all the calculations for the machine element have been created, as well as a set of instructions on how to make the actual pottery wheel and a small manual with instructions for the proper use and service of the pottery wheel.

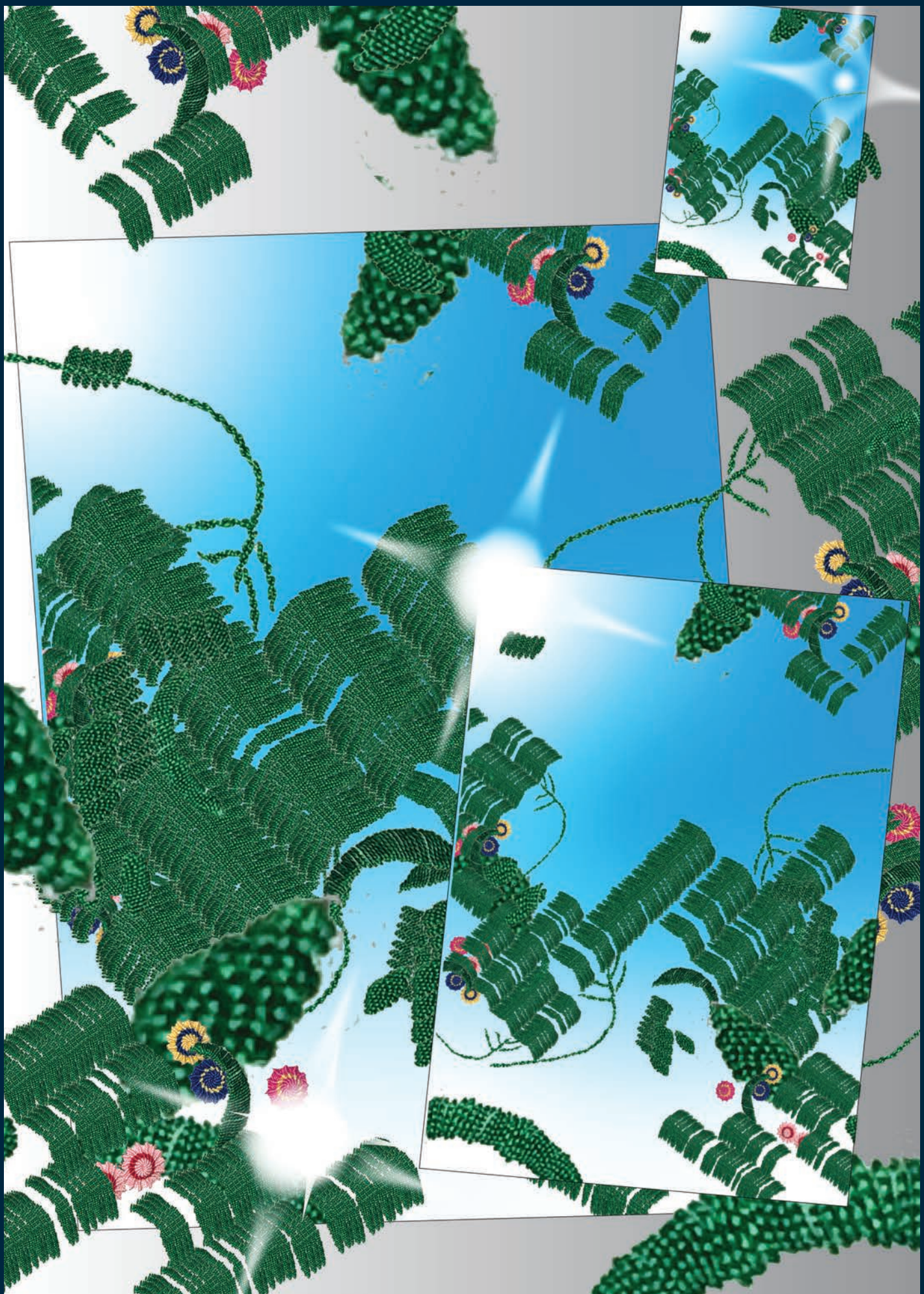
Costas Tsangarides is a maker with a background in mechanical engineering, as well as a drafter and 3D modeller mechanical designer, with knowledge of manufacturing processes, CAD/CAM Systems (AutoCAD, Solidworks, EZ-CAM) and experience in machine shops and welding. He is fluent in 3 languages (English, Italian and Greek) and a member of the do-ocratic group #hack66 hackerspace/makerspace. Past projects include *The MAN*, *an Inflatable Sky Dancing Tube* made by #hack66 members at Hackerspace Limassol for the Carnival Festival in 2016 and a #hack66 collaboration with artist Maria Toumazou for her exhibition *Fair-face Elysée*, 2018.

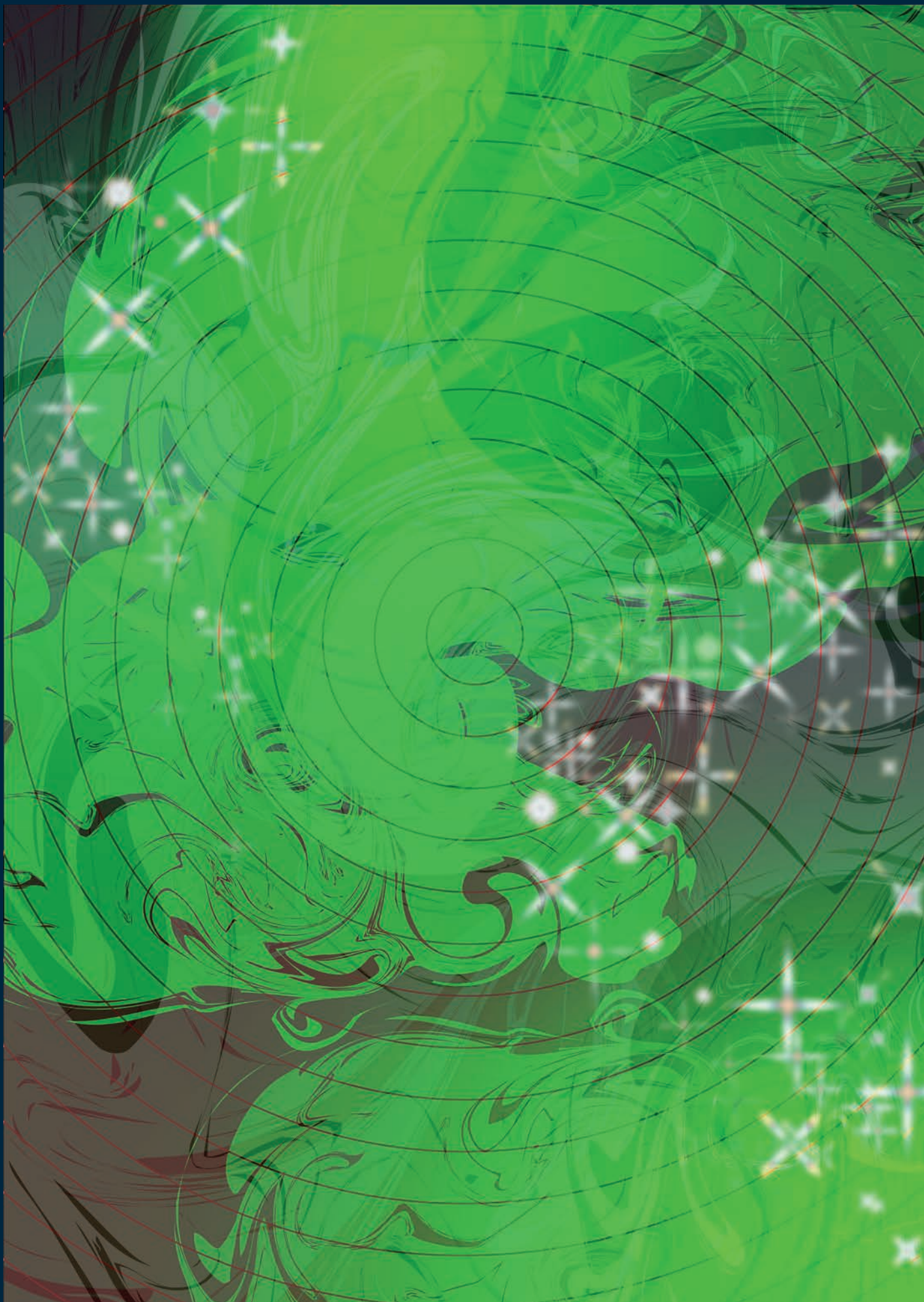
**Studio
Nico Stephou**

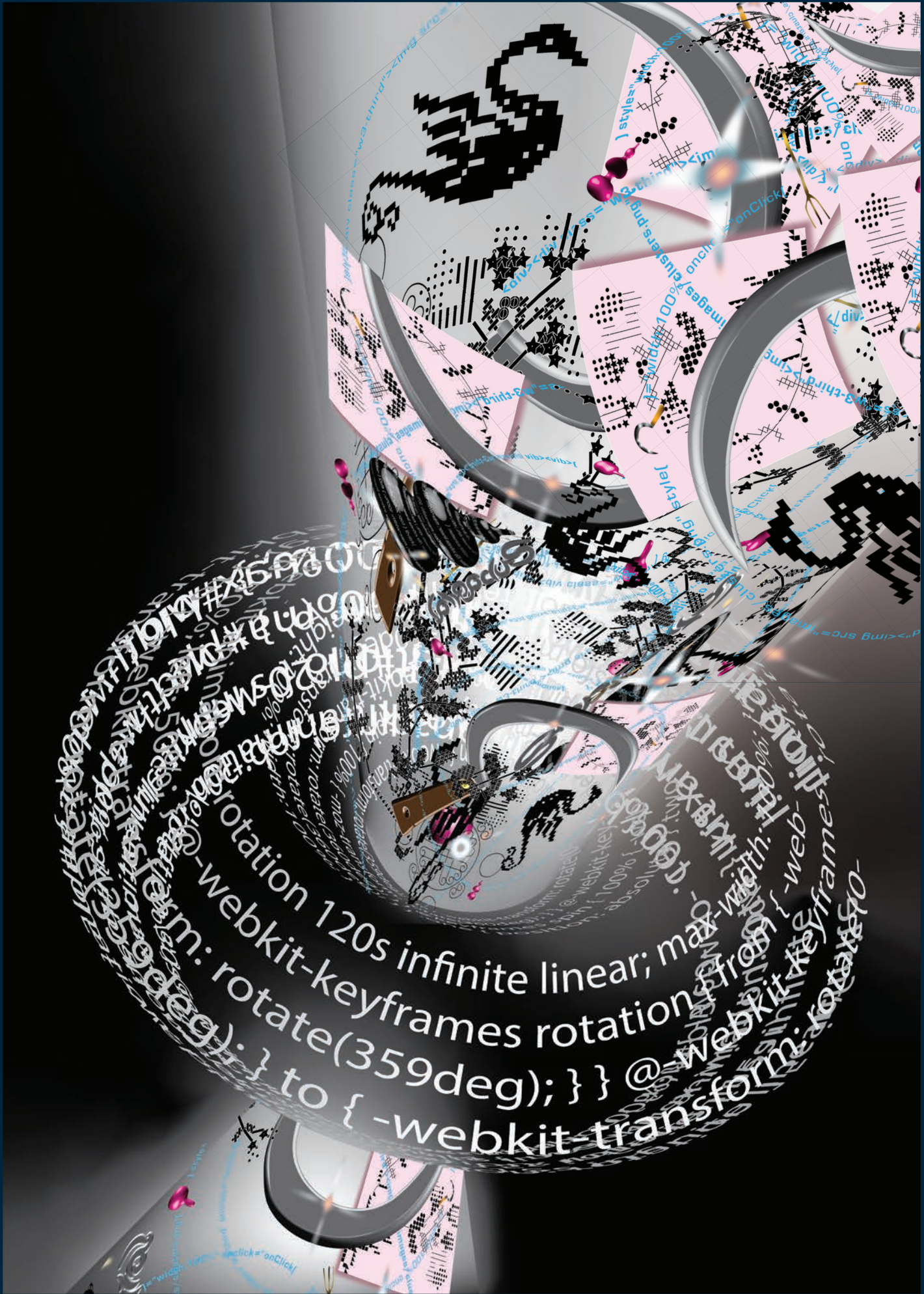
Most of the posters,
stripped of typography.





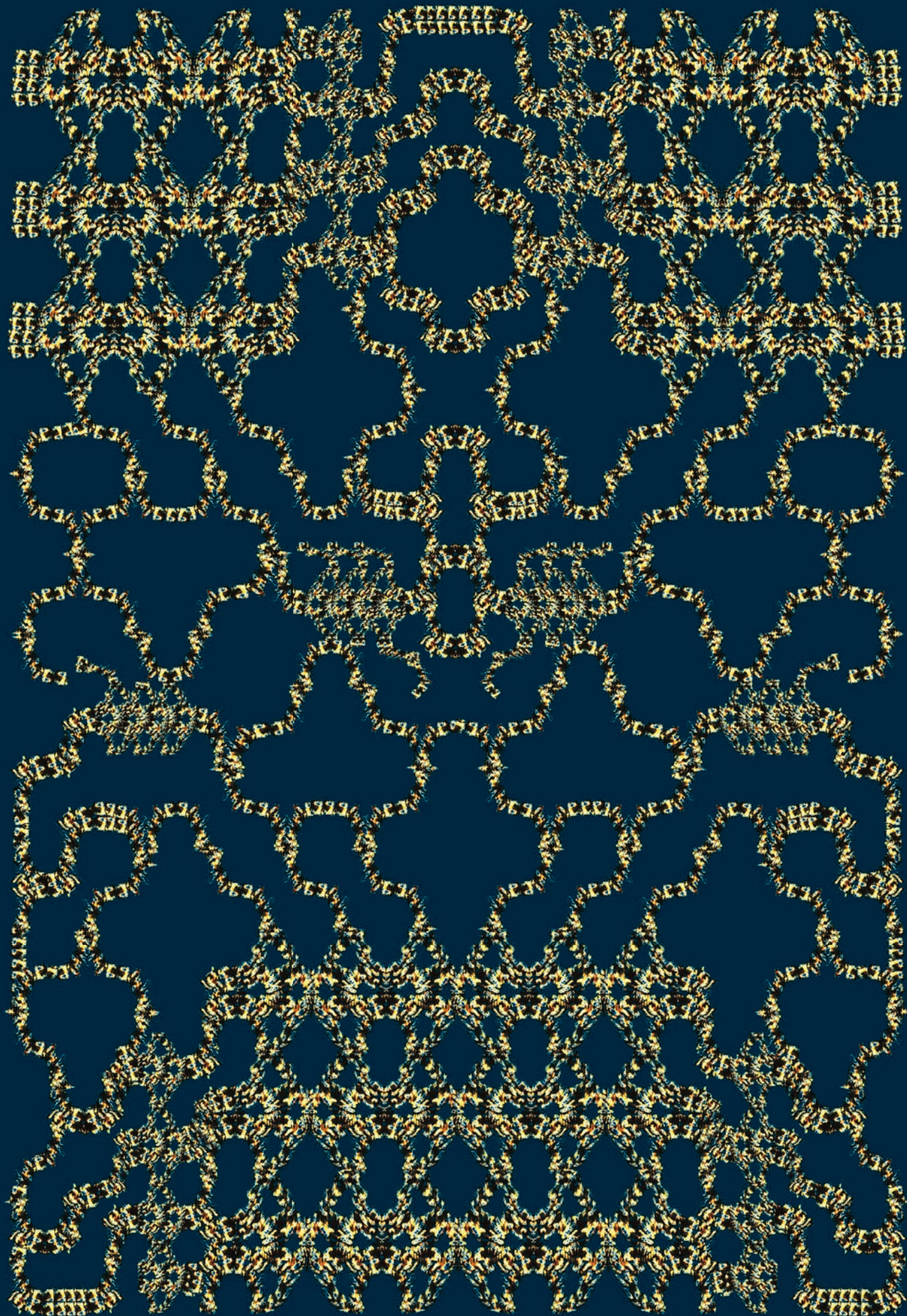












DIARY OF EVENTS & MAKEATHONS

Evagoras Karageorgis: KENTHMATA

MONEDA

30 July 2020, 19:00

Yfantourgeio/Weaving Mill The Workplace

Moneda presented its inaugural record release: a vinyl edition of Cypriot composer Evagoras Karageorgis' KENTHMATA. Arguably the first electronic music album by a Cypriot composer. The event began with a listening session of the record, followed by an open discussion with the composer. This was also the concluding event for the Sickie & Code programme. As KENTHMATA is a work that distils precisely what happens when traditional techniques and new technologies merge, it was the most appropriate way to bring the series to a close.

Moneda is a record label, event series and publishing initiative founded and directed by Emiddio Vasquez. Currently operating between Cyprus and Arizona, Moneda critically flirts with the aesthetics of money by interrogating the conditions under which value reproduces itself in social, material and semiotic forms. In doing so, it recognized the singular value of KENTHMATA and funded the vinyl edition of the work which has now materialized into its first official release. (MON001)

KENTHMATA

Evagoras Karageorgis was born in 1957 in Tsada, a village in the district of Pafos, Cyprus in a family of musicians and instrumentalists, which exposed him early on to traditional Cypriot music. Having learned various instruments he decided to pursue Composition studies at Queen's College (CUNY). Between his studies and working as a musician in Astoria, Queens, he also composed KENTHMATA. Firstly,

between February 1987-88 at his home studio and then rerecorded between August-September 1988 at Harmonic Ranch Studio, the album was kept mostly secret until it was self-released 30 years later, in 2017, on CD.

There are many reasons why KENTHMATA never received the attention it deserved, despite the fact that Karageorgis went on to distinguish himself as a pioneer of Cypriot new music by — amongst other things — being one of the few songwriters to use the Cypriot dialect in his work. These range from the personal circumstances of the composer to the historical and cultural conditions that defined, and continue to define, the relationship between the so-called 'center' and 'peripheries' of artistic production.

fact. In other words, we feel that this album remains as relevant as when it was first released, and will continue to be so in the years to come.

The instruments used — at times rudimental digital presets and signature sounds from the heydays of FM Synthesis and sampling — have to say much more than what initially meets the ear. Perhaps the beginning of Cypriot electronic music could have only taken shape in the way KENTHMATA did: somewhere abroad, in a studio that carried the technology for composing in isolation, leading to mechanical repetition and by reinterpreting the tropes of traditional Greek dance and Cypriot folk songs while dreaming about home. As Karageorgis himself recounts, the repetitive technique and melodies of KENTHMATA reminded him of his mother's embroideries.



Rather than getting into the specifics of the already contested, and overly-debated, historical narratives that have reduced modern Cyprus, and its culture, to a limited set of interpretations; or giving in to the industry's "revivalist" temptation of repressing as a way of rectifying said narratives, we have chosen instead to look at the re-release of KENTHMATA as a new work in its own right. A work that oscillates between its time of production and the time of its revival, weaving together past and present, myth and

It comes as no surprise, then, that Karageorgis' title of choice for the album alludes to the repetitive, pointillist moves that a work of embroidery is made of. One only needs to step back to see and appreciate the bigger picture that KENTHMATA is.

Text by Emiddio Vasquez

Evry1w1come

SUBAERIAL

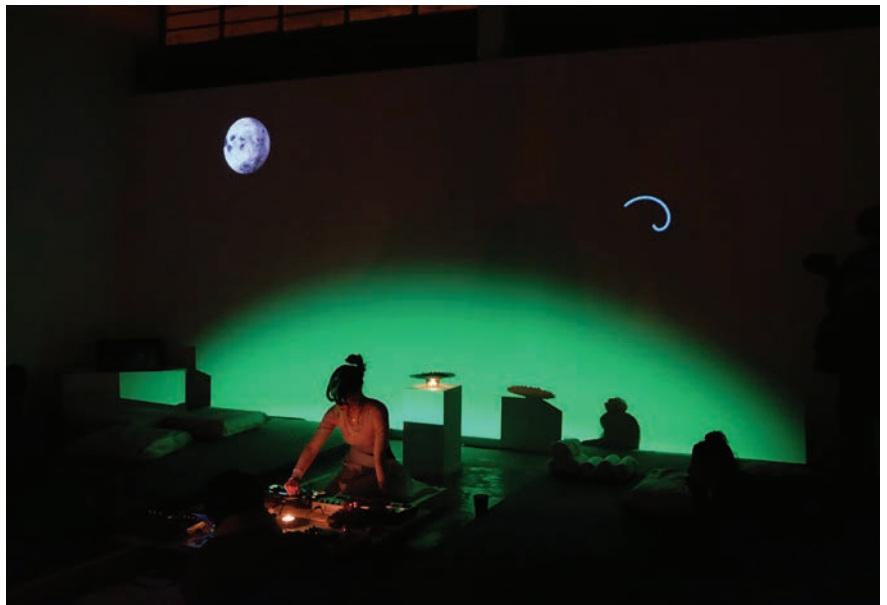
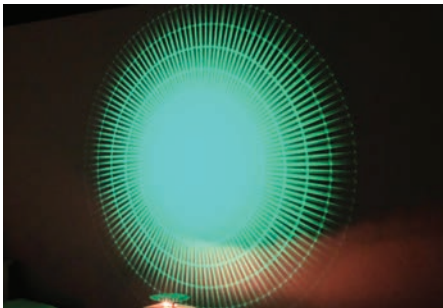
28 December 2019, 20:00

Thkio Ppalies

***Conscious listening.
Less auto-pilot,
more wakefulness.***

“Evry1w1come” was a collaboration with artists Androula and Uvglov to experiment and marry healing frequencies with psalms and spoken word compositions. 528hz and 639hz are specific sound frequency

positive effect on the mind and body. Everything is in a constant state of vibration, and therefore everything that is vibrating has a sound. Everything also has its own optimum rate of vibration, and this is called resonance. Emotions and mental states have their own optimum resonance and with the recognition that every organ, and every cell, absorbs and emits sound, we can therefore understand how specific sounds and frequencies can be used as powerful healing tools.



formulas compiled as an attempt, in two separate binaural live meditation sessions that were presented in the first act. The hackathon concluded with two long-form ambient sound collages by Juniper & Dittany and Mohama Tajalof.

Organised by Veronika Georgiou, Subaerial is a series of ambient, experimental micro-ceremonies that have been established in Cyprus since 2018. These nourishing, quadraphonic experiences attempt to musically elevate the soul whilst providing a grounding space for the body to feel supported through unique, site specific installations. Subaerial chapter one was about gratitude. In chapter two, the artists were invited to work with specific healing “solfeggio” sound frequencies, used in ancient healing chants, that are known to have a

Obedient x3

Zach Blas

28 November 2019, 18:30

University of Nicosia

The work of artist Zach Blas examines technologies of control through the lens of queer and feminist politics. In recent years, his projects have addressed biometric capture, psychedelia and AI, the crystal balls of Silicon Valley, airport security, and dildos. For this artist talk, Blas presented a suite of these works, including *The Doors* (2019), *Icosahedron* (2019), and *SANCTUM* (2018). The presentation was followed by a discussion responding to key ideas resulting from the artist talk moderated by Dr. Elena Parpa with guests Evagoras Vanezis and Faysal Mroueh, curatorial project *Formworks 02*. With the goal of creating a glossary of virtuality, *Formworks 02* took the form of a participatory exercise in creative writing and was realised in collaboration with the exhibitions *Sickle & Code* and *Birdland*.

Zach Blas (www.zachblas.info) has exhibited, lectured, and held screenings recently at the Walker Art Center, 2018 Gwangju Biennale, Matadero Madrid, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the 68th Berlin International Film Festival, Art in General, Gasworks, and e-flux. Blas is currently co-editing the anthology *Informatics of Domination* and writing the book *Informatic Opacity: The Art of Defacement in Biometric Times*. Blas is a Lecturer in the Department of Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths, University of London, a 2018-2020 UK Arts and Humanities Research Council Leadership Fellow, and a 2019 Mercator Fellow in "Configurations of Film" at Goethe-Universität Frankfurt.

Formworks is an experimental curatorial format, tailored for Thkio Ppalies and curated by Evagoras Vanezis, which aims at the creation of environments for collaboration and participatory events. These environments, exercises in alternative (spatiotemporal) spacings, are mediums of communication

coagulating in diagrammatic matrices formed from latent potentialities and future horizons.

Faysal Mroueh explores how narrative functions in three-dimensional space and the resulting potential for investigating themes through fiction. Controlled scenographic elements are utilised in physical and virtual space to illustrate literary techniques and allow the work to exist between immersive installation and roaming theatre.



The Eternal Internet Brotherhood/Sisterhood & The Red City of the Planet of Capitalism

Angelo Plessas & Bahar Noorizadeh

23 October 2019, 19:00-21:00

University of Nicosia

Angelo Plessas presented *The Eternal Internet Brotherhood/Sisterhood* & Bahar Noorizadeh discussed *The Red City of the Planet of Capitalism: Mythopoetics of Free Enterprise, from Soviet Disurbanism to Hong Kong*. Facilitation of dialogue by Elena Parpa & Evi Tselika.

ABSTRACTS:

The Eternal Internet Brotherhood/Sisterhood

Angelo Plessas

The Eternal Internet Brotherhood/Sisterhood is an independent project I founded and curated in 2012 every year in a different place in the world. This is usually an historic site surrounded by splendid nature. It is a meeting place of artists, writers, architects and various cultural practitioners. The project offers participants an opportunity to expand and develop their practices and proposes new relationships between people and place, between work and leisure, artist and audience. It offers a wide range of activities such as performances, various workshops, writings and readings but it is a starting point for individual future projects. The key themes revolve around the effects of hyperconnectivity and solitude, re-evaluation of life in urban areas and spiritual re-connections with antiquity and other eras taking into account primarily the place and its history. The duration of the project is about 7 to 10 days. The 1st *Eternal Internet Brotherhood* took place at Anafi, an island with a rich ancient Cycladic culture. The 2nd *Eternal Internet Brotherhood* took place in April 2013 in Xilitla, Mexico in the surrealist park of Las Pozas. The 3rd edition

happened in an abandoned military base in the North Dead Sea area in the West Bank while the 4th edition happened at the Castello Malaspina in Fossdinovo, the residence of poet Dante Alighieri during his exile. The 5th edition happened near the ancient royal palace located on the rock of Sigiriya in Sri Lanka in October 2016. The last and 6th edition happened in May 2017 in the pagan area of the Dornberg Nature Reserve in Germany and it was part of my project for Documenta 14.

Angelo Plessas (www.angeloplessas.com) lives and works in Athens. The central aim in Plessas' work is to highlight the ambiguous approach of spirituality with technology opening up themes on the human condition, social relations, identity and freedom of speech. Plessas' activities range from performances to artist residencies; from self-publishing to interactive websites; from neon sculpture to quilting. Over the last years, he has organized the annual, weeklong gatherings of *The Eternal Internet Brotherhood/Sisterhood of The Experimental Education Protocol*. He is the founder of the space P.E.T. Projects in Athens. His work has been exhibited internationally in large-scale exhibitions and art institutions, such as documenta 14, both in Kassel and Athens; The Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago, the Jeu de Paume, Centre Pompidou, Paris; the DESTE Foundation, the National Museum of Contemporary Art, Athens; Frieze Projects 2013, London. A Fulbright alumnus, he has been awarded the DESTE Prize in 2015.

The Red City of the Planet of Capitalism: Mythopoetics of Free Enterprise, from Soviet Disurbanism to Hong Kong

Bahar Noorizadeh

As part of the artist's long-term research program around material genealogies of network design, this lecture revisits proposals for a communist sprawl in the 1929 Soviet Union (Disurbanism), tracing these blueprints to the contemporary global city. From an epitome of social housing in the 20th century, to the most lucrative property market in the world today, Hong Kong's unusual story meets the Disurbanist past outside tired historical dichotomies. The lecture discusses how Hong Kong's crucial role in writing the free market folklore is the product of a double-colonial project. To dispute the validity of the neoliberal narrative, one should look no further than the space itself: city design, urban policy, and their derivative chronopolitics.

Bahar Noorizadeh is a filmmaker, writer and platform designer. Her current research examines the intersections of finance, contemporary art and emerging technology, building on the notion of "Weird Economies" to precipitate a cross-disciplinary approach to economic futurism and post-financialization imaginaries. She is pursuing this work as a PhD candidate in Art Practice + Theory at Goldsmiths, University of London.



Gardens of Resistance

20 October 2019, 18:00

**Phytorio,
Visual Artists
Association Cyprus**

A discussion hackathon coordinated by Elena Parpa in the context of the exhibitions *Look Under the Hood* by Maria Loizidou and *Sickle & Code*. Participants included Adonis Archontides, Jenny Dunn, Despo Pasia, Danae Stylianou and Evanthia (Evi) Tselika. The discussion was accompanied by the screening of the short documentary *Olga's Garden* (2019) directed by Danae Stylianou in collaboration with Maria Loizidou. The exhibition



Look Under the Hood was realised in collaboration with the Lefteris Economou Cultural Foundation and it connected with 22 spaces with which Maria Loizidou has worked with in the past.

Letters to the Land, Lakatamia

Jenny Dunn

11 October 2019, 14:00-18:00

**Museum of History
and Cultural Heritage
of Lakatamia**

During this artist led walk and makeathon with Jenny Dunn we visited the gardens of the Sinikosmos of Ayios Mamas reflecting on the importance of growing in Cyprus' culture. Afterwards, over a shared lunch, we co-created a letter to the land through creative writing and drawing to explore our relationship to the soil around us and how we feel about it.

This workshop was part of *Growing Home*, a project about the narratives of growing, sharing, and eating food together — in order to confront global issues around food. Our stewardship — the reciprocal care between ourselves, our families, soils, and plants — tells a story of who we are as humans, as communities, and our complex dependency on the more-than-human. Through mapping, interviews and happenings, *Growing Home* highlights the potential and importance of urban growing and our two-way relationship with the land.

Jenny Dunn's practice (www.jenny-dunn.com) involves working collaboratively with communities to explore and experiment with alternative realities where more democratic, ecological and creative ways of working can be practised. Her research and collaboration with people and place is multi-disciplinary, using drawings, spatial interventions, co-design and co-making to test the boundaries of urban political ecologies and the commons.



How to Make Flubber

Nihaal Faizal

28 September 2019, 17:00-20:00

Thkio Ppalies

Drawing from how-to-make-Flubber videos available online, this lecture-workshop makeathon explored the history of Flubber, a semi-fictional substance popularized by a series of Disney films between 1961 and 1997, unpacking it as an ideological object.

Initially appearing within a short story from 1942, Flubber is a substance that shares an intimate relationship with the various timelines and contexts in which it emerges. Shifting across a variety of roles – from that of an artificial

inventor. Using common household ingredients, the participants in this workshop produced batches of Flubber, while exploring its various historical roles, desires, and functions.

Nihaal Faizal (nihaalfaizal.com) is an artist whose work responds to already existing documents from a variety of technological sources. In the past, these have included stock videos, desktop backgrounds, forged antiques, family photographs, popular films, and online videos, amongst others. In responding to these documents, his work addresses questions around authorship, technology, cultural memory, and materiality. He recently attended the *Home Workspace Programme* at Ashkal Alwan (Beirut, Lebanon) and founded *Reliable Copy* – a publishing house for works, projects, and writing by artists (reliablecopy.org – Bangalore, India).



rubber, a substance of military utility, a children's toy, a super-fuel, a substance to control the weather, and a sentient, intelligent being – Flubber's conceptual transformations echo the aspirations and desires of its fictional, as well as commercial, producers.

In response to Flubber's slimy materiality and Disney's packaging of it as a friendly and harmless substance, Flubber is today most popularly known as an object of play. As the how-to-videos emphasise, this play is no longer in just the handling of the material, but is also embedded in the processes of making this substance – in playing the role of the

EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS FOR CHILDREN

A series of educational and creative workshops were carried out by Evanthia (Evi) Tselika as part of the exhibition for students from primary schools of Lakatamia.





Peter Eramian

During the course of the *Sickle & Code* project a global event (1) occurred that interrupted our scheduled programme and exhibition. In just several months this event, still ongoing at the time of publication, has wrecked havoc and disrupted the fundamental socioeconomic systems and technologies much of the world has become so dependent on. Though we've grown accustomed to the idea that our minds are connected via the internet, it has now become strikingly evident that our bodies are also connected via complex global webs that include much more than just other humans. The corporeal interconnectedness of globalisation has been explicitly revealed and felt. Presumed demarcations between human/nonhuman agencies, mind/body and digital/material, that were taken for granted, have received a cataclysmic blow, transforming our worldviews and global psyches. The world we live in today is very different from the world before COVID-19.

Across the planet, lockdowns and quarantines due to the pandemic have been either suspending or significantly downsizing transportation, production and consumption habits. As a result, global CO2 emissions and pollution

levels have seen drops as patterns of energy demand drastically altered. The magnitude of this decrease in the first half of 2020 was larger than during previous economic downturns or even World War II. (2) It is now more apparent than ever that perpetual economic growth and extractivist economies are environmentally unsustainable and can be causally correlated to global warming. This entails the urgency to critically rethink industries and technologies dependent on these processes. Further, the nature of the virus as zoonotic, following a long series of similar cases over the last century (such as Ebola, HIV, malaria and bird/swine flu), is urgent proof that modern models of agribusiness and large scale industrial farming are neither ecologically (deforestation and methane emissions from livestock agriculture) or epidemiologically sustainable.

Tech giants, such as Amazon, Apple, Facebook and Google, and streaming media service providers, such as Netflix, have been profiting enormously from the pandemic by exploiting our propinquity to the internet and the fact that they are already installed in our homes, devices and psyches. Working, schooling, shopping or socialising from home via the sterile

environment of the internet is becoming a viable alternative to physical presence, accelerating tendencies towards digital dominion, while public spaces are either closing or policed and physical gatherings either discouraged or banned as preventative measures to contain the spread of the virus.

Most importantly, the pandemic has highlighted how poor and underfunded social care systems across the world really are and how urgent acting and thinking communally is. It has also become clear that governments are unable to handle crises on such scales and that corporations are simply out to profit from them. If it were not for collective solidarity initiatives and individuals volunteering to help out, whether by delivering shopping to the elderly and disabled or supporting migrant workers, the fabric of our societies would have undoubtedly crumbled.

The term 'allostatic load' refers to the physiological cost of chronic stress on our bodies, mind, and emotions. For many, the fear and uncertainty fuelled by COVID-19 has resulted to extreme pressure, breakdown, and burnout. (3) During lockdowns, the ability to remain housebound has largely depended on whether

one can afford to. Workers in such trades as construction and care work have had to carry on venturing outside whether they like it or not. The hardships of poverty and precarity make millions of people vulnerable to infection and the added hardships of lockdowns make their situations worse. “This crisis has broadly separated us into the exposed poor and the shielded rich.” (4)

Yet, for some who can afford it, the break from anxieties and rush of modern life during lockdowns has been profoundly enriching. Rather than binging on Netflix and social media, simpler pleasures are sought, such as spending time with loved ones, reading books, taking walks, reflecting, gardening or starting a hobby. The prospect of de-growth, or going back-to-basics, suddenly feels necessary. As everything unexpectedly stops, the degree to which our leisure time and mental health are colonized by the economy, internet and mantra of productivity is made evidently clear. These realisations, although limited to those who have the privilege to remain housebound without great cost, are profoundly valuable and should not be disregarded.

When we set out to develop the *Sickle & Code* project we could never have imagined that an event of such enormous worldview-changing proportions would have interrupted our programme. Yet, this interruption has only emphasized the relevance and urgency of the very concerns we were already dealing with,

such as the pervasiveness of the digital into our everyday lives as work patterns shift, the need for more local production initiatives and the urgency to subvert and exploit technologies to form more physical (Sickle) as well as digital (Code) collective initiatives to resist the catastrophic global effects of capitalism.

1. According to Alain Badiou, an event succeeds in representing something previously unrepresented. This unfolding of new representations produces new truths, subjects, and social systems. It is traumatic but also exhilaratingly transformative, akin to a rip in the fabric of being and/or of the current social order.

2. *Near-real-time monitoring of global CO2 emissions reveals the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic*, <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-020-18922-7>, accessed: 18/10/2020.

3. *Coping with Fatigue, Fear, and Panic During a Crisis*, <https://hbr.org/2020/03/coping-with-fatigue-fear-and-panic-during-a-crisis>, accessed: 18/10/2020.

4. *The pitched battle over lockdowns is missing the point: Covid-19 is a class issue*, <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2020/oct/18/pitched-battle-lockdowns-covid-19-uk-coronavirus-crisis-inequalities>, accessed: 19/10/2020.

SICKLE & CODE ΔΡΕΠΑΝΙ & ΚΩΔΙΚΑΣ

Phygital Project Exhibition

University of Nicosia Research Foundation and Lakatamia Municipality

Implementation Partner

Thkio Ppalies Artist-Led Project Space

Location

Museum of History and Cultural Heritage of Lakatamia
7 Agias Paraskevis, Lakatamia, 2311

Exhibition duration

24 October 2019 – 07 March 2020

Parallel programme of events

28 September 2019 – 30 July 2020

Curatorial team

Peter Eramian
Elena Parpa
Evanthia (Evi) Tselika

Participating artists

Maria Andreou
Raissa Angeli
Adonis Archontides
Helene Black & Yiannis Colakides
Zach Blas
Jenny Dunn
Nihaal Faizal
Veronika Georgiou
Olga Micińska
Bahar Noorizadeh
Angelo Plessas
Tabita Rezaire
Elena Savvidou
Emiddio Vasquez

Phygital prototype team leaders

Ehsan Abdi
Charis Charilaou
Odysseas Economides
Marios Malais
Maria Toumazou
Costas Tsangarides







