Making Matters
Making Matters
Symposium
Programme
Making Matters
Making Matters
Bridging Art
Design and
Technology
Through Critical
Making Matters
Making Matters
Making Matters
Making Matters
Making Matters
Making Matters
9—10 May
West Den Haag
Making Matters
Making Matters
Making Matters

Thursday 9 May 2019

09.30	w e l c o m e (c o f f e e + t e a)
10.00	Introduction Critical Making Consortium: Klaas Kuitenbrouwer (Het Nieuwe Instituut), Janneke Wesseling, Lucas Evers (Waag)
10.30	Željko Blaće in conversation with Florian Cramer
11.15	c o f f e e b r e a k
11.30	Presentations: Dyne.org, Constant (Femke Snelting) followed by a discussion
12.45	l u n c h b r e a k
13.45	Presentations: Shailoh Phillips, Pia Louwerens
15.05	Presentation: Dani Ploeger
15.35	c o f f e e b r e a k
16.00	Public discussion: 'Challenges and Consequences of Critical Making Now'
17.00	d r i n k s

Friday 10 May 2019

09.30	w e l c o m e (c o f f e e + t e a)
10.00	Introduction to Critical Making: Lucas Evers (Waag), Klaas Kuitenbrouwer (Het Nieuwe Instituut), Marie-José Sondeijker (West Den Haag)
10.30	Presentations: Frans-Willem Korsten & ginger coons
11.30	c o f f e e b r e a k
11.45	Presentation: Ramon Amaro
12.15	Presentation: Anja Groten
12.45	l u n c h b r e a k
13.45	Book presentation: Loes Bogers, The Critical Making Reader
14.00	Workshops:
	• Hackers & Designers with dianaband
	• Ramon Amaro
	• Thalia Hoffman
	• Pia Louwerens
16.00	Public discussion & wrap up
17.00	d r i n k s

Confirmed speakers include: Ramon Amaro, Loes Bogers, Letizia Chiappini, Constant (Femke Snelting), ginger coons, Florian Cramer, Dyne.org, Anja Groten, Thalia Hoffman, Frans-Willem Korsten, Pia Louwerens, Shailoh Phillips, Dani Ploeger, Janneke Wesseling

Making Matters: Bridging Art, Design and Technology through Critical Making

Making Matters invites makers, artists, students, activists, theorists, designers, humans and non-humans to think about making practices and their critical potential. By offering opportunity for exchange across disciplines, the symposium attempts to shift the discourse of making from maker culture to a wider set of creative practices, thereby proposing alternatives to the solutionism of contemporary techno-creative industries.

Making Matters is the first of two symposia organized in the by the consortium 'Bridging Art, Design and Technology through Critical Making' investigating how Critical Making — a notion originally developed in the context of social research, design and technology — can be adopted and developed in relation to artistic research and (post) critical theory.

P a r t n e r s
PhDArts / ACPA
Willem de Kooning Academy
Waag
West Den Haag
Het Nieuwe Instituut

www.criticalmaking.nl

Ramon Amaro

A b s t r a c t
B l a c k n e s s / A b s o l u t e   V a l u e
This talk examines the ways logical forms of blackness/black being are located in between abstraction and the domains of the 'absolute', or as defined here the distance between social and computational categories (for instance, race and machine learning, or race and data). I first problematise the operation of race as a 'real' or definitive social/technological value. Secondly, I rediscover blackness as instead an act of modulation between these domains, which I argue is already active within the creative practices of the everyday. Finally, the domain of computation is brought forth as a potential vocabulary for this process. The ultimate aim is to think with and through blackness and computation to investigate the potential for new forms of relation between humans and technology, the self and self, as well as the self and environment.

Ramon Amaro is a lecturer in the Department of Visual Cultures at Goldsmiths, University of London and a researcher in the areas of machine learning, black ontologies, and philosophies of being. Amaro completed his PhD in Philosophy at Goldsmiths and holds a Masters degree in Sociological Research from the University of Essex and a BSe in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Željko Blaće, Florian Cramer

A b s t r a c t
Taking queer sports as their example and point of departure, Florian Cramer and Željko Blaće will enter a dialogue about practices at the fringes of art, activism and research, their commonalities and differences with existing concepts of Critical Making and artistic research.

Florian Cramer: reader in 21st Century Visual Culture/ Autonomous Practices at Willem de Kooning Academy, Rotterdam, Netherlands. Recent publications: 'Crapularity Aesthetics' (*Making and Breaking*, issue 1, 2019, https:// makingandbreaking.org/article/crapularity-aesthetics), 'Pattern Discrimination' (with Clemens Apprich, Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, Hito Steyerl), University of Minnesota Press 2018.

Željko Blaće: (in+)consistently working (in-)between fields of contemporary culture and arts, digital technology and media, community sports and activism—by cross-pollinating queer perspectives/practices. He co-founded and curated media projects/exhibitions of Multimedia Institute/MaMa and LABinary in Croatia (1999–2008) and co-instigated sport-culture-activism initiatives qSPORT.info/QueerSport. info (2006) and ccSPORT.link (2015) for "Contesting/Contexting SPORT 2016" at nGbK and BB/K in Berlin. He was a 2018–2019 fellow of Akademie Schloss Solitude.

Constant (Femke Snelting)

A b s t r a c t
The Techno-Galactic Software Observatory
Constant is committed to collaborative situations that generate proximate critiques of and through techno-praxis. The Techno-Galactic Software Observatory and Networks With an Attitude were two temporary research environments where artists, activists, theorists and software developers gathered to think-and-make together. The sessions put trans*feminist methods and Free, Libre and Open Source Software to work in order to develop various forms of undisciplined research of and with digital technology. Constant worksessions interrogate existing practice and experiment with how they might be otherwise. What forms of critical making, for who and with whom, to stay with the trouble of computation and informatics?

The association for art and media Constant is based in Brussels, active at the intersection of feminisms, collective practice and free software. Since 1997, Constant generates performative publishing, curatorial processes, poetic software, undisciplined research and educational prototypes. Femke Snelting explores in various constellations how digital tools and practices might co-construct each other.

Loes Bogers, Letizia Chiappini

A b s t r a c t
The Critical Maker's Reader
The Critical Maker's Reader brings together contributions on emergent practices that take a critical, collaborative and

socially engaged approach to technology-making. Such engagements with technology are propagated across the fields of design, art, humanities and engineering as imperative for coming to terms with pressing complex ecological, political, economic and social issues of our times. The forthcoming publication will feature current state of theory, case studies and pedagogical approaches. It aims to make the topic accessible for students as well as educators, and foster critical debate in the maker community at large. The editors will provide a sneak preview of the book's contents.

Loes Bogers is a researcher and practitioner working on algorithmic bias, maternity data, and critical pedagogies with a feminist perspective. She coordinates and teaches an interdisciplinary semester course on Making as Research at the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, where she's also a researcher at the Visual Methodologies Collective.

Letizia Chiappini is a PhD candidate in Urban Studies (UrbEur Doctorate) at the University of Milano-Bicocca and in the Geographies of Globalization research group at the University of Amsterdam (joint doctorate). In other ongoing projects she investigates the maker movement, crafting, digital fabrication and making more broadly (e.g. FabLabs) as an alternative mode and space of production, starting from initial empirical engagement in Milan. She holds a bachelor degree in literature and philosophy (University of Parma), and a master degree in sociology and social research (University of Milano-Bicocca, co-supervised with Aalborg University, Denmark).

ginger coons

An educator, researcher and designer, **ginger coons** studies and intervenes in the intersections of individuality, mass standards, and new production technologies. She is interested in the place of the user in the production process, and how individuals take control of the goods they use. She has a multidisciplinary educational background: a BFA (2009) in design from Concordia University (Montreal), and an MI (2011) and PhD (2016) in information from the University of Toronto, where she was a member of the Critical Making Lab and the Semaphore Research Cluster on Mobile and Pervasive Computing.

A founding editor of Libre Graphics magazine (2010–2015), ginger is an active advocate for Free/Libre and Open Source Software in art and design. She is currently Course Leader in the undergraduate Graphic Design major at Willem de Kooning Academy, Rotterdam.

Dyne.org

Dyne.org is a non-profit free software foundry with more than 15 years of expertise in developing tools and narratives for community empowerment.

Dyne.org facilitates artists, creatives and engaged citizens in the digital age, sharing tools, practices and narratives for community empowerment.

Anja Groten

A b s t r a c t
T h e W o r k s h o p : A S i t e o f C o n t e s t a t i o n
Drawing from her practice as designer, educator and community organizer, Anja's presentation focuses on collaborative processes of designing technology – more specifically the practice of her collective *Hackers & Designers* (H&D). Looking at the format of the workshop as a case study Anja aims to exemplify specific modes of transformation evoked by making things in a collaborative setting. The workshop brings about temporary public environments, in which making processes are exposed. A shared *making* experience potentially disrupts making processes through reciprocal challenging of assumptions engrained in disciplinary habits of how things are made.

Anja Groten is a designer, educator and community organiser investigating collaborative processes of designing technology. She designs collective moments aimed at discussion, confrontation and contingency. In 2013 she co-founded the initiative Hackers & Designers, attempting to break down the barriers between the two fields by enforcing a common vocabulary through education, hacks and collaboration.

Frans-Willem Korsten

A b s t r a c t
W h a t c a n *m a k i n g* m e a n ?
How can we combine the question of what *critical* means, nowadays, with the question of what *making* means? The questions have become pertinent in times where many people do things without much critical reflection, and many people critique others on the basis of ever refined definitions, without asking whether they are thus *making* something. In this context, the question has become more what *making* means than what *critical* means. Etymologically speaking, *making* relates to authority and to fiction. Yet both notions have been corrupted by perverted authorities and media that invest in disinformation. So what can *making* mean, nowadays, productively?

Frans-Willem Korsten; chair by special appointment 'Literature and society' (Erasmus University), associate professor at LUCAS (Leiden University) and together with Renee Turner running the seminar 'Critically committed pedagogies' (MEiA program of the Piet Zwart Institute). He works on the republican baroque, theatricality, sovereignty and the relation between literature, art and justice.

Pia Louwerens, Shailoh Phillips

A b s t r a c t
M a k i n g T h i n g s S t r a n g e A g a i n
Pia Louwerens and Shailoh Phillips have collaborated in preparing this session, focusing on the complexities of ownership and authorship. They both work diffractively, exploring and blurring the boundaries between subjects and objects. What does it mean to make something, when making also entails being made?

A b s t r a c t
C r i t i c a l   T o o l s
Drones, solar panels, apps, frozen pizzas, maps, neural networks, such wildly different things that populate the 'made' world. Shailoh Phillips will demonstrate some of the methods she works with to unpick, remake and intervene in the complex techno-social systems and the questions that emerge from this collaborative practice. Drawing from cybernetics, reverse engineering, critical pedagogy and tactical media, she focuses on forming temporary assemblies of human and nonhuman actors as an entry point for action.

Shailoh Phillips is a transdisciplinary artist, theorist and educator. Her practice revolves around fostering playful forms of resistance. She is part of the collective Tools for Action, operates from Studio Babel (Amsterdam). She teaches at the Master of Photography and Society (KABK) and Autonomous Practices (Hacking, WdKA).

A b s t r a c t
W h o   a m   I   a n d   h o w   d o   I   d o ?
Pia Louwerens will introduce her research Who am I and how do I do? By performatively embodying her function as a junior embedded artistic researcher Louwerens explores the entanglements of artist, institutions, artwork, event and audience. By sliding between the several professional positions her function entails Louwerens attempts to find a form of criticality which is rooted in embedded proximity, rather than reflective distance.

In the Critical Making consortium **Pia Louwerens** holds the position of *junior embedded artistic researcher*. She researches artistic subjectivity by writing performance-scripts as Pia Louwerens. Using weird or uncanny performative and narrative methodologies she explores institutional entanglements. Who is making, and what would they make?

Dani Ploeger

A b s t r a c t
The Laboratory of Electronic Ageing (LEA)
Due to the widespread, uncritical adoption of key tropes of neoliberal economism, such as 'innovation', 'entrepreneurship' and 'progress' large parts of 'maker culture' lack potential to pose broader, systemic challenges to unsustainable consumerism and the ideology of the supposed immateriality of digital culture. The Laboratory of Electronic Ageing (LEA) responds to this by promoting an alternate approach to 'making' in electronics that engages with the bare materiality of technology while questioning ideologies of infinite growth. LEA promotes artistic experimentation with industrial testing equipment to destroy electronic devices in controlled environments. The lab facilitates both the appropriation of established, industrial grade stress testing procedures for artistic endeavours, and the development of alternative, unconventional uses for the testing equipment. As such, the Laboratory of Electronic Ageing is a maker space for the unmaking of electronics.

Dani Ploeger is an artist and cultural critic who explores situations of conflict and crisis on the fringes of the world

of high-tech consumerism. His objects, videos, and apps emphasize both the fragility and rawness of the materiality of everyday technologies, and question the sanitized, utopian marketing around innovation and its implications for local and global power dynamics. He is currently an artistic researcher at Leiden University (The Netherlands) and a Research Fellow at The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama University of London (UK). In 2017, he worked for Philips to promote 'male grooming' technologies at Europe's biggest consumer electronics trade fair.

W o r k s h o p s

Ramon Amaro

S e l f / B e i n g / T e c h n o l o g y a s M e t h o d
This workshop explores the process of self-exploration as method for research and making in computation and digital practice. We explore the relationship between technology and our senses of self (including the categories of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and so on), as well as how these intensities might inform our perceptions of the world around us. We will look into these relations as a process of self-generation, in collaboration with art, politics and the everyday, to develop new vocabularies that extend beyond common oppositions between humans and technology, concept and aesthetics, or self and 'other'. The workshop will examine how creative practice in co-composition with research and the everyday can help us rediscover the very 'texture and reality-forming capacities' (borrowing from Matthew Fuller and Graham Harwood) of technology, as well as the self. Ultimately, we seek to reveal how these intimate processes can become methods in themselves.

dianaband + Hackers & Designers

W a l k i n g S i g n a l s
When joining a public Hotspot (think of the train, an airport or other free Wi-Fi networks in public spaces) your device usually alerts with a notification. After going through a login or portal page of the Wi-Fi provider you will get a Wi-Fi connection. For this workshop the two collectives Hackers & Designers (NL) and dianaband (KOR) propose to explore the possibilities of mobile Wi-Fi broadcasting, utilizing 'walking' (portable) networking devices.

Participants will be building small digital publications on top of Hotspot login screens, reimagining 'real-live' interactions of network technologies. Content could be audio, text or image files with a limit of around 2MB. Come and explore the possibilities of Hotspot publishing with us!
For tech-savvy and newbie nerds.

The initiative **Hackers & Designers (H&D)** organises extra-curricular, bottom-up, educational activities to investigate technological constructions and their societal implications in collaborative settings. Since the first H&D meetup in 2013, H&D brings together artists, designers and technologists by means of hands-on workshops.

dianaband is an interdisciplinary artist duo, consisting of Wonjung Shin 신원정, Dooho Yi 이두호, and currently based in Seoul. They explore the fields of object design and media art, in order to find imaginary moments in situations of everyday life.

Thalia Hoffman

M   a   k   e   m   e   f   o   o   d
Many times humans identify themselves through the food and dishes they make and consume. Selecting certain ingredients, specific cooking methods and ceremonial eating habits indicates upon personal identifications as well as cultural and historical signifiers. As for that making a dish could be a sphere for critical discussions.

Eat/Feed: The workshop will offer a participatory and performative way to look into making, feeding and eating food as a way to communicate critically through taste and smell. It will divide into to continual parts: The first will focus on making food and its personal and political context. Throughout the second part participants will experience the dynamics of eating and feeding, while exploring the power relationships and the opportunities of communication during the process.

Please bring to the workshop a dish of your choice to the workshop. Something that you would like to eat or feed.

Thalia Hoffman is a visual artist working in film, video, performance. She is an MFA graduate in Fine Arts from the University of Haifa, where she is currently teaching. Hoffman is a PhD candidate at the PhDArts. Hoffman's works have been shown in exhibitions and film festivals around the world.

Pia Louwerens

Becoming / an embedded artistic researcher / From I to we / excavating reality together / at work
In this workshop, *junior embedded artistic researcher* Pia Louwerens will invite participants to join her practice and explore different positions and artistic subjectivities. We will take our time to become embedded together, with the help of some scores for writing and rewriting the moment itself. *Becoming/embedded/From/excavating/at work* will be an exercise in folding the background into the foreground, and the other way around. Staying with the entangled event has never been this personal, or this easy. No skills required.

P   a   r   t   n   e   r   s

Notes

10

12
12