

healing sounds **a project on medical agency**

MEDICAL AUTHORITY

Our medical system is based on authority and history of institutionalized knowledge. Procedures, that we ourselves cannot fully understand or control, are being done to our body, data is being captured and analyzed and potions are being injected into our organisms. This creates a bio-political power relation between doctor and patient.

MEDICAL AGENCY

In our project we tried to approach this medical authority question and create an individual therapeutic tool, that should allow the patient to heal own body through a somatic sound experience. With the help of repetitive movements and sounds, the patient enters another mode of body / mind reciprocity and regains agency over personal healing process.

REFERENCES

We started our try-outs with woven pieces, hand made bandages and sport protection to explore which sound-movement connections we can introduce. Further, inspired by aesthetics of medicine and care items, we developed an idea of a piece that is meant to resemble a patch or a bandage, which is so close to the body that it becomes invisible and merge with one's own skin. The mapping of different body areas with different sounds and stories was motivated by body heat and emotion maps as well as by the eastern medical philosophy of accupoints, where specific points on body are responsible for healing specific organs and illnesses.

TECH

As working material we have chosen silicone for its aesthetic and stretch qualities. The stretch and touch sensitivity were introduced by piezoelectric thread and yarn correspondingly. They were placed across the whole upper body area and then the silicone was casted into a flat form to produce fabric-like material. The fastening principle was chosen to be that of a corsage. We did small holes on the back of the piece and used chains to get the needed tension. We used this method to be able to flexibly adjust the garment to different bodies. The chain was not only an aesthetic choice but it also was more gentle to the silicone in comparison with the normal thread that was tearing the holes when put under stretch tension. To let the skin breathe and to achieve a more organic look we implemented some additional holes by placing stones and wooden laser-cut pieces inside the silicone liquid.

The final garment consists of a set of three pieces, upper body and neck corsages and an arm sleeve that have in general 10 sensors. We connected 5 sensors to the machine learning audio patch in Max. The two yarn triggers on the chest and on the arm were controlling breathing

and noise frequency , the three stretch sensors – two on the upper body and one on the neck were controlling the narrative track, the background abstract sound and the heartbeat correspondingly. The narrative story represents an excerpt from Byung-Chul Han's book "psycho politics", that highlights our idea of body relationships with existing social institutions.

INTERACTIVE HEALING

The garment induces self exploration, that we hope could open new forms of body expression and body dynamics for the patient. It can also be shared with others who want to repeat the healing procedure. As ultimate goal we would like to be able to create a procedure and an interface, where individualized healing sounds could be uploaded by patients and prepared by the experience designer/medical personal.