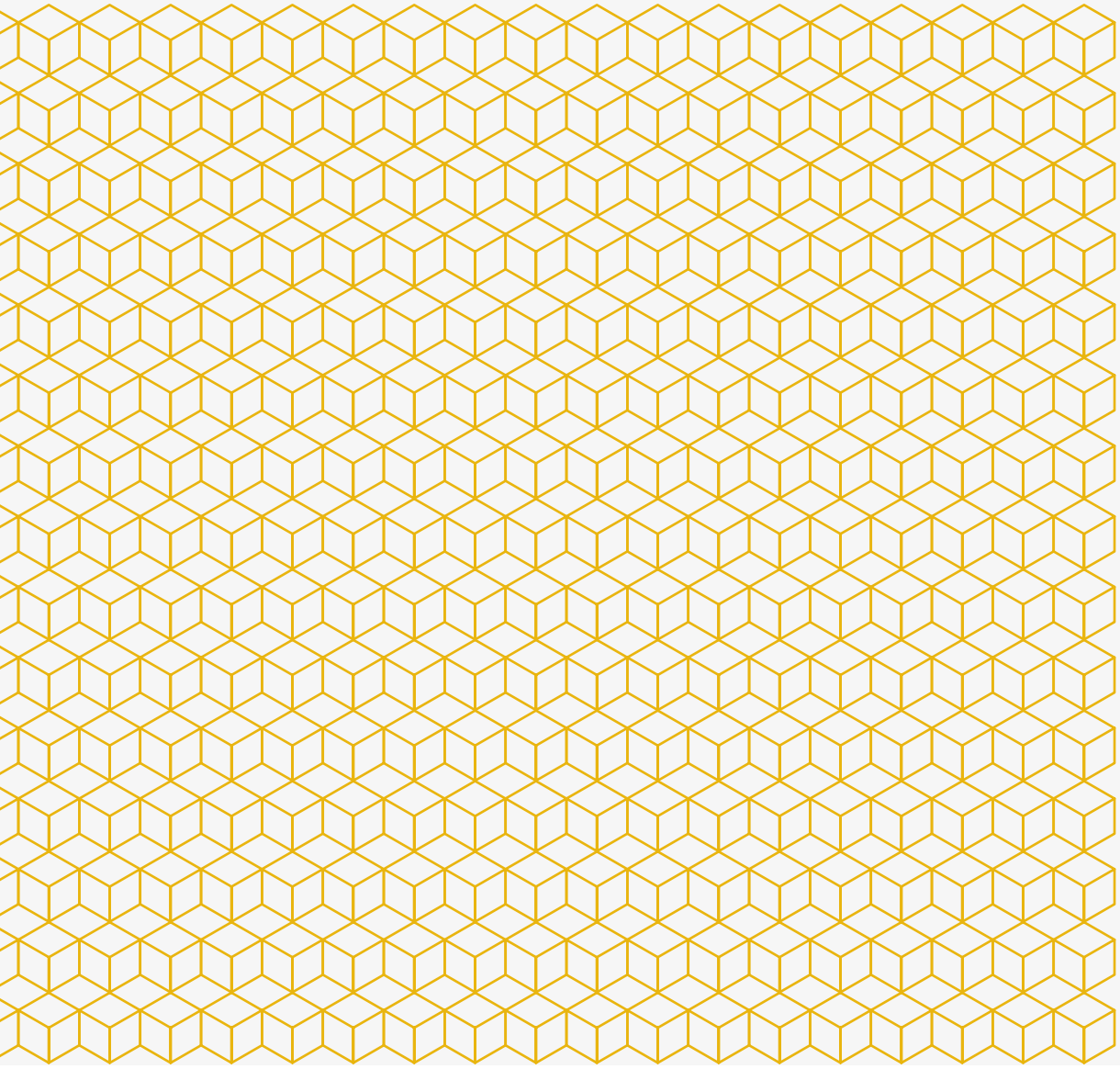
DALab.

MINING LABOUR

STATEMACHINE // 2018



We will reimagine
the fashion activities
chain free of
market forces using
blockchain technology.

Digital Anthropology Lab Proposal

CONTENTS

06 ..... *// PROPOSAL //*

08 ..... *// SUPPORT MATERIALS //*

10 ..... *// RESUME //*

12 ..... *// BUDGET //*

Mine: "exploit, use, profit from, take advantage of, capitalize on"

DALab.
MINING LABOUR
STATEMACHINE // 2018

+

Context

The legal and economic factors that go into the exploitation of labour in the fashion industry are complex and largely understudied. Over the last few decades the fashion industry's production processes have become quite complicated. The global chain of activities required for the lifecycle of a product include design, production, buying, selling and occasionally recycling. Understanding the dynamics of labour exploitation requires an understanding of the legal and economic processes that underpin all of the activities in the chain. Insuring that a worker received a living wage, for example, requires greater integration between the different parts of the chain. However, it is yet unclear how such an integration can be made possible.

Our aim is to employ blockchain technology to investigate the economic and legal structures that are involved in integrating the chain of activities within the fashion industry. We will begin with an assumption that the best way to study the economic and legal structures that effect the exploitation of labour is by attempting to set them aside.

Proposal:

We will reimagine the fashion activities chain free of market forces using blockchain technology. We will design and build physical representations of each of the activities in the chain. For example, in order to add the activity of sewing into the blockchain we will build and attach a recording device to a sewing machine. The recording device will automatically add any sewing activity into the blockchain. Each of the activities will be reimagined and represented in its own and unique way. The main objective of the blockchain is to keep the fashion activities chain outside of the market economy and its laws.

Concept:

In the essay "It is value that brings universes into being" Anthropologist David Graeber claims that in a society driven by the market economy the only labour that is considered of value is wage labour. However, the value that wage labour, as Graeber describes it, represents is economic value alone. The general term 'value' is conflated with a specific type of economic or market value while all other types of value are described as 'values'. An example of other forms of 'values' that Graeber gives are 'family values' whose labour—housework or reproductive labour perhaps—is underpaid and undervalued.

The design of our fashion activities blockchain stems from this analysis of value vs values. The blockchain technology and the blockchain ledger has been hailed as a means of creating new forms of value and new institutions. Accordingly, all the activities in the fashion activities chain will be rewarded according to the 'values' they produce as opposed to their economic value.

Exhibition:

The garment in its various stages will have both a physical and an online presence which will form part of the exhibition. The online or on-screen part of the exhibition will show the inner workings of the blockchain ledger. It will also show the relationships emerging between the various participants.

The activities will capture the exhibition audience's imagination and invite them to play.

The general term 'value' is conflated with a specific type of economic or market value while all other types of value are described as 'values'

// ASSUMPTIONS //

HOW IT'S GOING TO WORK

The creation of the fashion activities blockchain will occur during the exhibition and will assume the following points:

1

Playful Simulation

The different activities involved in the blockchain will have unique physical representations e.g a garment made out of felt, sewing machine recording, textile making simulations a well as distribution.

2

Imagination

The activities will capture the exhibition audience's imagination and invite them to play.

3

Blockchain

Each individual audience member has a chance to become a participant and take part in the activities. They are then given a unique ID via the blockchain.

4

Values not value

Participants are rewarded for the work that produces 'values' rather than market value.

5

Community

A blockchain community will emerge from the activities and the people involved in them. Participants engage in the creation and distribution of a garment.

6

Manifesto

The participants, in that sense, form the community through the social relations that are produced through the work on the garment. The community is also encouraged to write its own manifesto for a garment.

Knitting or weaving the fabric on a knitting machine or loom

// SUPPORT MATERIAL //

FASHION PRODUCTION ACTIVITIES

1. Design: Designer comes up with the idea, decides exactly how they want it to look, does sketches, moodboards, trend research, etc.

2. Develop: Designer chooses the fabric and trims (zippers, buttons, etc) that work with the aesthetic and functionality of the style, within the budget needed to hit the desired final retail price for the garment. They also pick colors, either from what's already available, or by telling the fabric mill and trim manufacturer exactly what custom color they want. Designer works with technical designer and/or factory to hone in on the construction details: what type of stitching to use; how the interior is finished; what type of lining; etc. etc.

3. Fit: Designer and/or technical designer provide the samplemaker/factory with measurements for the first sample (prototype). The prototype is usually made in a size that is in the middle of the size range (e.g. if size range is XS-XL, the sample will often be a Medium). Factory sends the prototype; designer and technical designer fit on a "fit model," a person who has been designated as a perfect Medium for the brand. Designer/technical designer note problems with fit and possible solutions, and send notes to factory.

Often washed at this stage, as per the specifications of the designer/technical designer or fabric designer

87%
Women

60%
Underage

All design, development, and fit sketches and notes are recorded in a document called a "design spec" or "techpack."

4. Size Run/Salesmen Samples: Once the fit is approved on the base sample, the factory makes a run of samples in the correct fabric and trims, usually in one of every size, often called "Salesmen Samples." The difference between each size is determined by the designer, the technical designer, and perhaps others involved in the design/sales/marketing process, to meet the needs of the customer base. These salesmen samples are used to photograph the product and sell it to wholesale buyers, often at tradeshows.

5. Bulk Production: Now the factory is ready to produce "bulk," the full order of clothing manufactured for sale.

// SUPPORT MATERIAL //

THE FUTURIST MANIFESTO

Futurist Manifesto of Men's Clothing
by Giacomo Balla
Manuscript. 1913

We Futurists, in those brief gaps between our great struggles for renewal, have spent the time discussing, as is our wont, very many subjects. For quite some time now we have been convinced that today's clothes, while they may be somewhat simplified to suit certain modern requirements, are still atrociously passéist.

We want Futurist clothes to be comfortable and practical

WE MUST DESTROY ALL PASSÉIST CLOTHES, and everything about them which is tight-fitting, colourless, funereal, decadent, boring and unhygienic. As far as materials are concerned, we must abolish: wishywashy, pretty-pretty, gloomy, and neutral colours, along with patterns composed of lines, checks and spots. In cut and design: the abolition of static lines, all uniformities such as ridiculous turn-ups, vents, etc. Let us finish with the humiliating and hypocritical custom of wearing mourning. Our crowded streets, our theatres and cafés are all imbued with a depressingly funereal tonality, because clothes are made only to reflect the gloomy and dismal moods of today's passéists.

WE MUST INVENT FUTURIST CLOTHES, hap-hap-hap-hap-happy clothes, daring clothes with brilliant colours and dynamic lines. They must be simple, and above all they must be made to last for a short time only in order to encourage industrial activity and to provide constant and novel enjoyment for our bodies. USE materials with forceful MUSCULAR colours - the reddest of reds, the most purple of purples, the greenest of greens, intense yellows, orange, vermilion - and SKELETON tones of white, grey and

and black. And we must invent dynamic designs to go with them and express them in equally dynamic shapes: triangles, cones, spirals, ellipses, circles, etc. The cut must incorporate dynamic and asymmetrical lines, with the left-hand sleeve and left side of a jacket in circles and the right in squares. And the same for waistcoats, stockings, topcoats, etc. The consequent merry dazzle produced by our clothes in the noisy streets, which we shall have transformed with our FUTURIST architecture, will mean that everything will begin to sparkle like the glorious prism of a jeweler's gigantic glass-front, and all around us we shall find acrobatic blocks of colours set out like the following wordshapes:

Coffeecomhou Rosegreebastocap transpomotocar legcutshop blueblackwhitehouses aerocigarend skyroofliftyellight anomoviesphot barbebbenpurp.

Human beings, until now, have dressed (more or less) in black mourning.
We are fighting against:
(a) the timidity and symmetry of colours, colours which are arranged in wishy-washy patterns of idiotic spots and stripes;
(b) all forms of lifeless attire which make man feel tired, depressed, miserable and sad, and which restrict movement producing a triste wanness;
© so-called 'good taste' and harmony, which weaken the soul and take the spring out of the step.

We want Futurist clothes to be comfortable and practical
Dynamic
Aggressive
Shocking
Energetic
Violent
Flying (i.e. giving the idea of flying, rising and running)
Peppy
Joyful
Illuminating (in order to have light even in the rain)
Phosphorescent
Lit by electric lamps.

Pattern changes should be available by pneumatic dispatch; in this way anyone may change his clothes according to the needs of mood. Available modifications will include:
Loving
Arrogant

The activities will capture the exhibition audience's imagination and invite them to play.

Persuasive
Diplomatic
Unitonal
Multitonal
Shaded
Polychrome
Perfumed.

As a result we shall have the necessary variety of clothes, even if the people of a given city lack the imagination themselves. The happiness of our Futurist clothes will help to spread the kind of good humour aimed at by my great friend PaIazzeschi in his manifesto against sadness.

// RESUME //

BEHIND THE DIGITAL ANTHROPOLOGY LAB

Technical Coordinator

Gareth Foote

Gareth's practice involves exploring the underlying aesthetic and flows of power within software paradigms and computational culture. This has been realised in his critical personal projects.

http://www.moccguide.net/about/
http://garethfoote.co.uk

Research Fellow

Douglas Atkinson

Douglas' research can broadly be categorised as exploring the ways in which the digital can be used to infer and represent the most intangible, sensory and emotional aspects of human experience.

http://ruthcatlow.net/?works=time-is-speeding-up

Research Fellow

Maria Dada

Maria's research is placed within the fields of design and material culture. She investigates the possibilities of new/future materials in reconfiguring socio-political and economic structures. A PhD candidate in science and technology studies at Durham University she holds an MA from the Centre for Research in Modern European Philosophy.

https://www.mariadada.com

Digital Anthropology Lab

History

The DALab is an emerging research centre dedicated to understanding the intersection of digital technologies with fashion, textiles and the body by critically applying design and coding methodologies.

Contact: m.dada@fashion.arts.ac.uk
http://www.digital-anthropology-lab.com/

https://www.blasttheory.co.uk/projects/my-neck-of-the-woods/

http://www.digital-anthropology-lab.com/events/research-with-us/

Director

Woktel Tusz

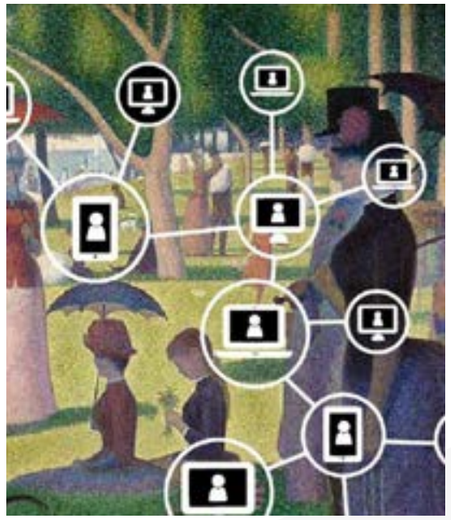
Wojtek holds a Master of User-Centred Design degree from IIT Institute of Design in Chicago. He specialises in developing new methods and approaches for design research. Prior to joining the DALab he led the design research practice at Doblin EU, the design and innovation wing of Deloitte.

BUDGET SUMMARY

STATEMACHINE // 2017

//BUDGET //

HOW THE BUDGET WILL BE SPENT



The fee of €5000 will be divided among the following

Equipment Costs (including machines to run the Blockchain)	**€2,000.00**
Material Costs (including felt, sewing machine, RFID tags, RFID reader, textiles, various electronics etc..)	**€1,250.00**
Exhibition Installation Costs (screens, projectors, stands, transport etc..)	**€1,600.00**
Domain + Hosting Costs	**€150.00**
TOTAL	**€5,000.00**

THANK YOU