

## Hole Mending Workshop

By Nicha Keeratiphantawong and Tabea Nixdorff

Taking place at home / in a calm place

Wednesday, July 22nd 2020

10 – 11 AM (CEST)

Max. Participants: unlimited

Requirements: 2 garments (one with hole(s))

### Description for Participants

“Computers have always been a simulation of weaving; threads of ones and zeros riding the carpets and simulating silk screens in the perpetual motions of cyberspace.” (Sadie Plant)

We invite you to join us for a Hole Mending Workshop, to focus on a gesture of repair and “networking” as a literal and tactile activity.

In this current time period, which is full of omissions and ruptures, our dependencies on technical devices as gateways to social interconnectedness has increased even more. What sometimes gets lost along the way is the sense of one’s own situatedness: Following endless digital threads of information and being constantly in touch with “hardware,” it is likely to forget reading one’s own bodily presence. Weavings, just like computer coding, are complex automated nettings. Only the point of rupture—a dropped stitch, like a bug in the code, a systemic error—redirects the attention outside of the machine by requesting a manual intervention. With this workshop, we propose needlework as an analogue form of networking, to feel the impact each detail has on a structure as a whole: Disruptions in the weave of a garment cause holes to grow. By tracing the dropped stitches and patching up obvious dots, we remediate and re-activate unappreciated clothes without erasing traces of our bodies inhabiting them. Remediation: a technique of repair that emphasizes the repairer’s presence. To observe your hands doing needlework is to allow your mind to center and meditate upon connections. We may revisit a personal garment’s story through its wear and tear, and rewrite a habit.

What is it to intervene, to pause the machines or come to a full stop? What is it to continue inwardly instead, to search for a “woven interconnectedness” (Ada Lovelace) through our bodies as telepathic messengers?

Mending holes in garments allows us to relax the senses while focusing closely on soft textures, to contemplate on closure and openness, to explore their tense relation, beyond dualistic thinking. As philosopher Sadie Plant stressed, “zeros and ones of machine code do far more than hark back to the binaries their logical symbols represent. If zero is supposed to signify a

hole, a space, or a missing piece, and one is the sign of positivity, digital machines turn these binaries around.”

How could we take pleasure in holes as also signs of positivity? When sewing, each hole is both a beginning and end, a passage for the thread. While reimagining ideas of interconnectedness, the activity of mending holes may also be an exercise in resilience—we consciously spend time with a “wounded” fabric instead of abandoning it. The current social situation in the world reminds us of the urgent need for healing practices, to not turn away from the wounds and scars in the social fabric but treat them with care.

One way of caring is to actively listen—to a materiality, just like to people’s voices. For this workshop, we recorded our two personal sites for recreation—Vachirabenjatas Park in Bangkok and Sonsbeek Park in Arnhem—to produce a congress of bird songs, winds, rustling leaves, and echoes from two urban realms, a sonic vastness for a domestic and inward activity. These environmental sounds are interwoven with a texture of human voices, reading passages from a collection of thoughts we wrote down during the last months.

The sound piece provides a soundtrack for the workshop activity, as a temporal indicator of the shared space in mind and spanning a thread between all participants, while we are mending separately, each at our respective homes (or a calm place outside).

Afterwards, the (w)hole series will be uploaded online via HDSA’s site as a visual outcome of the workshop.

## Instructions for the Workshop

### Tools

- Please find a minimum of two garments in your home:
  - 1 or more garments in which you wish to mend a hole to activate it again
  - 1 or more garments you no longer want to make some part dysfunctional
- Please find some sewing tools
  - Threads
  - Needle
  - Scissors

(Alternatively, if you don’t have any of these items in your home you can take a pen and paper to draw what you would otherwise do with thread and needle)

### Location

- Find a comfortable place to sit in your home (or outside in a calm spot)
- Have your phone or computer with you ready for playing sound, optionally reading the instructions again and taking some pictures

### Activity

1. Take a picture of the garments (a close up of the holes)
2. Create a relaxing sonic environment for yourself (e.g. turn off notifications on your phone)
3. Turn on the audio file “network\_imaginaries.mp3” at high volume (length 1 hour)
4. Use the needle and thread to stitch closed the holes in the garment you wish to reactivate
5. Use needle and thread to close a functional opening such as sleeve, neck, button hole in the garment you no longer want
6. When the sound piece is over or at any later moment when you wish to stop, take a close up picture of each closure and send them to us via email
7. They will be shown on the HDSA Website and create a collective network of threads

### Invitation (Abstract)

In this current time period, which is full of omissions and ruptures, our dependencies on technical devices as gateways to social connectedness has increased. What sometimes gets lost along the way is the sense of one’s own situatedness: Following endless digital threads of information and being constantly in touch with “hardware,” it is likely to forget reading one’s own bodily presence. Weavings, just like computer coding, are highly complex automated nettings. Only the point of rupture—a dropped stitch, like a bug in the code—reminds us of necessary manual interventions.

We invite you to join us for an (at home) Hole Mending Workshop, to focus on a gesture of repair and “networking” as a literal and tactile activity. To relax the senses while focusing on fixing holes in garments, soft textiles, its interwoven stories of wear and tear.

Disruptions in the weave of a garment cause holes to grow. By patching these obvious “bugs,” we remediate and re-activate unappreciated clothes without erasing traces of our bodies inhabiting them. Remediation: a technique of repair that emphasizes the repairer’s presence. To observe your hands doing needlework is to allow your mind to center and meditate upon connections.

Please note: You will be asked to take close-up photos of two garments with holes. If available, please be equipped with a needle and thread, or alternatively paper and pen. The (w)hole image series will be uploaded online via HDSA site as a visual outcome of the workshop.

About:

Nicha Keeratiphanthawong and Tabea Nixdorff are current participants of Werkplaats Typografie, a masters program in Arnhem, The Netherlands. Their collaborative project to create a carpet for monthly Sonic Meditations was interrupted by the COVID-19 closures. A reconfiguration of the project during quarantine in Bangkok and Arnhem resulted in this workshop and collective writings.