

# Live looms- The fabric-action of caring

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## ABSTRACT

While today technological advances enrich everyday practices in health care, humans as the central focus of caring often fade into the background. Within the frame of situated action, this participatory art practice proposes a creative intervention which places the human into an essential part of the construction. Using the basic principles of participatory design in this project, participants- future and present health care professionals and general public- will form a ‘warp’ and perform weaving on a live loom to mimic the essentials of human relationships and interactions in the caring process. The outcome of this project is twofold, one is the experience of the performing stage which could be used as a potential teaching tool for better understanding the position of the cared for, the second is the creative practice that will produce small woven fabrics which will be part of the exhibition of this situated action project.

## Keywords

art participation; co-design and co-creation; fabric-action; caring; collaboration, loom-ing; humanity

## INTRODUCTION

The application of creative practices in health care is becoming more apparent with research documenting beneficial physiological, psychological and psychosocial outcomes [1].

This participatory art project goes beyond of the exploration of beneficial outcomes, it is designed to discover how a participatory art project can be used to better understand certain phenomena. The project was originally framed within the medical humanities and designed for health professionals and students to challenge the notion of caring practices. Today’s heal-

th professionals dominantly practice within the ‘techno-cure’ science where humanity and personality often becomes secondary, yet the main subject of their practice are humans [2]. Participation in this project parallelly strengthens ideas about health care practices in our contemporary world and beyond and highlights the importance of individuals in the caring process. Using the basic principles of participatory design (co-design and co-creation) the ‘live loom’ project mimics a temporary loom where the warp (structure of the fabric) is held by the individuals on which the fabric creation is performed, symbolizing the person who is cared for. The performer has the knowledge of how the fabric- the result of the co-operation- will form. Whilst the live loom reinforces equality on the human level as both participants as both participants play a vital role in the process, it also encourages subjective engagement, collaboration and tactility.

## PARTICIPATION

In this project participants will be invited to form a live loom in pairs with the guidance of the artist coordinator. The live loom is a symbol of an essential living structure which holds the warp of the fabric by one participant’s fingers and toes (see Figure 1). The work of the other participant will ultimately depend on this structure, yet the created fabric will express the creator’s ideas, designs and creations (see Figure 2 and 3). In the context of the conference, the participation in the live loom project will reflect on the situation of a spontaneous encounter of human interactions and collaborations indicating care. This creative action also allows for the participants to swap roles between themselves while working on the same piece of fabric and/or join by other participants and form an interconnected fabric (see Figure 4.)



Figure 1. Live warp



Figure 2. Fabric-action

## RESULTS

The results of this project anticipate that pre-conference participants will gain a better understanding of caring through art participation that highlights the importance of human interaction. Conference participants will also have the opportunity to become part of the live loom participation and produce woven fabric pieces that can be added to the exhibition. The result of this project also will be displayed in the form of short film.

Additionally, the participants of this project will also contribute to the acknowledgement of the native textile culture of the continent where the conference will be held.



Figure 3. Different design



Figure 4. Joined fabric

## REFERENCES

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