

Cyberfeminism Mutates

Cyberfeminism is a mutating word with a nebulous history. Its evolution is less a single root system with multiple branches than a network of entangled rhizomes, constantly and multidirectionally moving.

Coined in the early 1990s by the British cultural theorist Sadie Plant and artist collective VNS Matrix, the word cyberfeminism takes on its prefix “cyber” — recast from Cybernetics, a 1948 book by Norbert Wiener, and “cyberspace,” from William Gibson’s 1984 novel *Neuromancer* — as a provocation. This cyberspace of the 1980s was stocked with and characterized by cyberbabes and fembots, a techno-utopian imaginary of the male gaze. “Cyberfeminism” prompted women and marginalized communities to imagine how a reoriented cyberspace could look. By now, three decades after its origination, cyberfeminism has shifted from a loose artistic movement exploring the emancipatory potential of cyberspace towards a collective drive to provide software, hardware, and wetware education and to get marginalized groups online. Today, with questions of technology more and more clearly “bound together with questions of ecology and the economy,” as noted by Cornelia Sollfrank, the term is self-reflexive: technology is not only the subject of cyberfeminism, but its means of transmission. It’s all about feedback.

WETWARE showcases nine artists to celebrate and support their work and the upcoming publication [CYBERFEMINISM INDEX](#), slated for an October 2022 release with Inventory Press. Drawn from the terms “hardware” and “software,” wetware, by definition, applies to the computational ability of biological life forms, though the term has become slang for biotechnologies. Here, we twist the term, calling WETWARE to focus on the embodied, slimy components of technology, and the organic, rhizomatic nature of networks. Shown in chronological order, we present seminal cyberfeminist artworks from the early 1990s to pornographic and techno-spiritual pieces from the early aughts, and contemporary adaptations and brand new commissions from 2022. Each artist is also featured in the publication CYBERFEMINISM INDEX and suggest a wide web of cyberfeminism’s continuous evolution.

Preorder the book: <http://www.inventorypress.com/product/cyberfeminism-index>

À la recherche de l’information perdue

In the original performance of “À la recherche de l’information perdue” (Bergen, Reykjavik, London, Leipzig), the artist takes us on an adventurous trip into the realm of zeros and ones, of data and pure information, of ciphers, signifiers and figures. On the other side of reality, we encounter suspected heroes, leaks and phreaks, engineers of escape who control our secret desires. Rape can be performed in many ways. In a state of total transparency: what shall we eat, when society feeds upon the repressed?

The performance (2018) is a technofeminist comment on the WikiLeaks case and Julian Assange’s confinement following a rape accusation. Instead of making a moral judgment, however, the performance uses and combines sources from information science, psychoanalysis, cultural studies, feminist studies, and activism to embed the case in a wide cultural landscape in which gendered structures become more than obvious. The performance is divided into nine chapters with headers—Information, Organization, Zeroes & Ones, Binary Worlds, Pure Difference, Cyberfeminism, Gender & Technology, Naked Information, and Transparency—and creates a captivating atmosphere by the use of sound and visuals.

The image on offer is a digital collage (2022) that is composed of elements of forensic evidence (photo of ripped condom) as included in the official police report of Swedish police dated 25 October 2010.