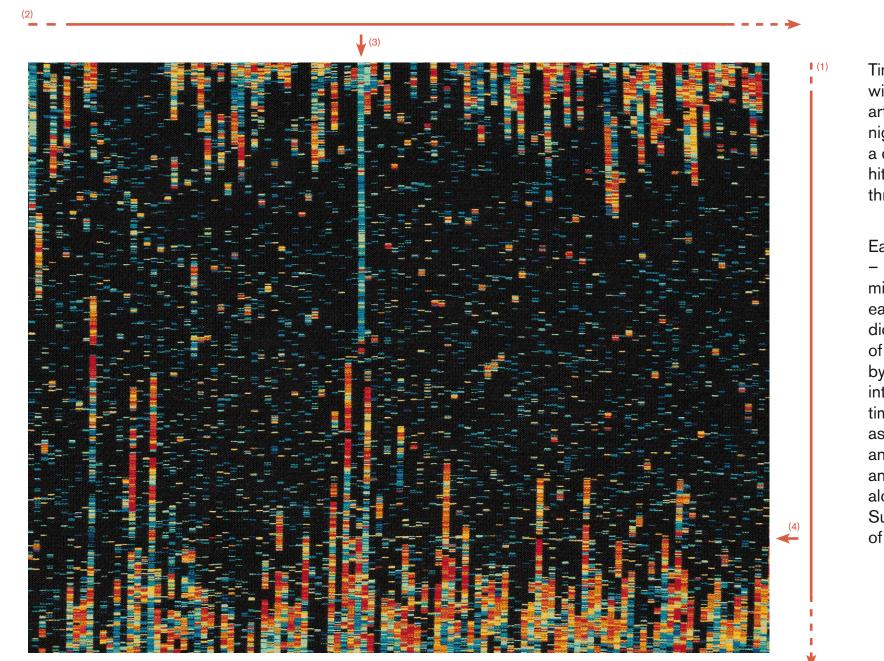
Sundial: Night Watch

The tapestry to the right of this notice, SunDial:NightWatch Sleep/Wake 2010, is one of a planned set of five (three of which have already been woven). Newly configured for the Shuffle festival on the site of the old St Clements Hospital, the tapestry records the artist's sleep/wake patterns over the course of an entire year. It is woven on a Jacquard Loom from data collected on an Actiwatch, a device used by scientists tracking sleep disturbances, and which is worn on the artist's wrist. Of this work, art historian Margaret Iversen has written:

The acti-watch's data is used to create graphs that are indexical traces of a subject's periods of waking and sleeping; they chart in multi-coloured displays, periods of 'being' and 'fading' over time. Dr. Katherina Wulff, a researcher at Oxford with whom Morris collaborates, has described our sleep patterns as being akin to our fingerprints: unique and individual. Morris converts the recorded data directly into coloured thread and lets the loom do the computing. As she remarks, 'the bright colours are the trace of my activity "in the world" and the dark areas (the shadows) are when I'm "out of it", sleeping and, quite probably, dreaming'. It is thus possible to think of this work in relation to automatic writing - or drawing - and to consider the graphs as involuntary, diagrammatic, displaced self-portraits.

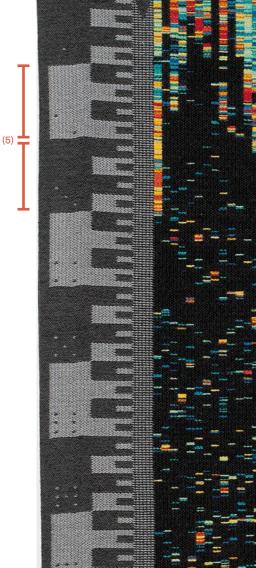
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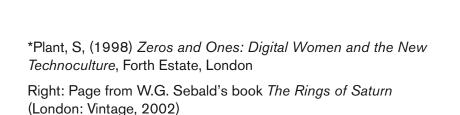
Time runs vertically⁽¹⁾, with night down the centre, and with the days as columns going from left to right⁽²⁾. As the artist explains, 'the long blue line is when I stayed up all night working on a paper⁽³⁾. The "slip" is when I went into a different time zone, and the horizontal line is when I kept hitting my alarm clock in the morning and not getting up, all through the Autumn months of that year (4)'.

Each weft thread – the smallest component of any tapestry - translates a minute's worth of activity. There are 1440 minutes in a day so the thickness and material used for each of the 1440 yarn threads going across the loom dictates the resulting height of the tapestry. The width of the piece is dictated by the width of the loom, divided by 365. A border has been added which continues the internal logic of the tapestry's construction and shows the time of day down the left hand side. Each minute is shown as either a dark or a light grey thread, with fifteen minute and one hour time periods also alternating between light and dark grey blocks of colour⁽⁵⁾. The months are counted along the bottom edge with the seasons, and where British Summer Time begins and ends, displayed along the top of the piece.

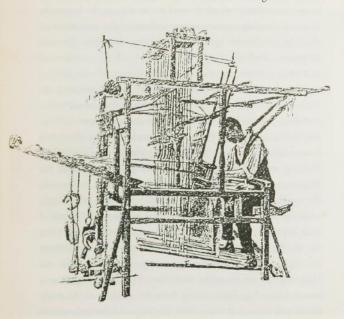


The invention of the Jacquard loom led directly to the development of the technology with which we organise much of our lives and that, to various degrees, organises us. Media theorist Lev Manovich has described the relation between the computer and the loom as follows:

Around 1800 J.M. Jacquard invented a loom which was automatically controlled by punched paper cards. The loom was used to weave intricate figurative images, including Jacquard's portrait. This specialised graphics computer inspired Charles Babbage in his work on the Analytical Engine, a general computer for numerical calculations. As Ada Augusta [Lovelace], the daughter of Lord Byron and the first computer programmer, put it "the Analytical Engine weaves algebraical patterns just as the Jacquard loom weaves flowers and leaves. Thus, a programmed machine was already synthesizing images before it was put to process numbers."*



of labour have always gone hand in hand. If today, when our gaze is no longer able to penetrate the pale reflected glow over the city and its environs, we think back to the eighteenth century, it hardly seems possible that even then, before the Industrial Age, a great number of people, at least in some places, spent their lives with their wretched bodies strapped to looms made of wooden frames and rails, hung with weights, and reminiscent of instruments of torture or cages. It was a



peculiar symbiosis which, perhaps because of its relatively primitive character, makes more apparent than any later form of factory work that we are able to maintain ourselves on this earth only by being harnessed to the machines we have invented. That weavers in particular, together with scholars and writers with whom they had much in common, tended to suffer from melancholy and all the evils associated with it, is understandable given the nature of their work, which forced them to sit bent over, day after day, straining to keep their eye on the complex patterns they created. It is difficult to imagine the depths of despair into which those can be driven who, even after the end of the working day, are engrossed in their intricate designs and who are pursued, into their dreams, by the feeling that they have got hold of the wrong thread. On the other hand, when we consider the weavers' mental illnesses we should also bear in mind that many of the materials produced in the factories of Norwich in the decades before the Industrial Revolution began - silk brocades and watered tabinets, satins and satinettes, camblets and cheveretts, prunelles, callimancoes and florentines, diamantines and grenadines, blondines, bombazines, belle-isles and martiniques - were of a truly fabulous variety, and of an iridescent, quite indescribable beauty as if they had been produced by Nature itself, like the plumage of birds. - That, at any rate, is what I think when I look at the marvellous strips of colour in the pattern books, the edges and gaps filled with mysterious figures and symbols, that are kept in the small museum of Strangers Hall, which was once the town house of just such a family of silk weavers who had been exiled from France.