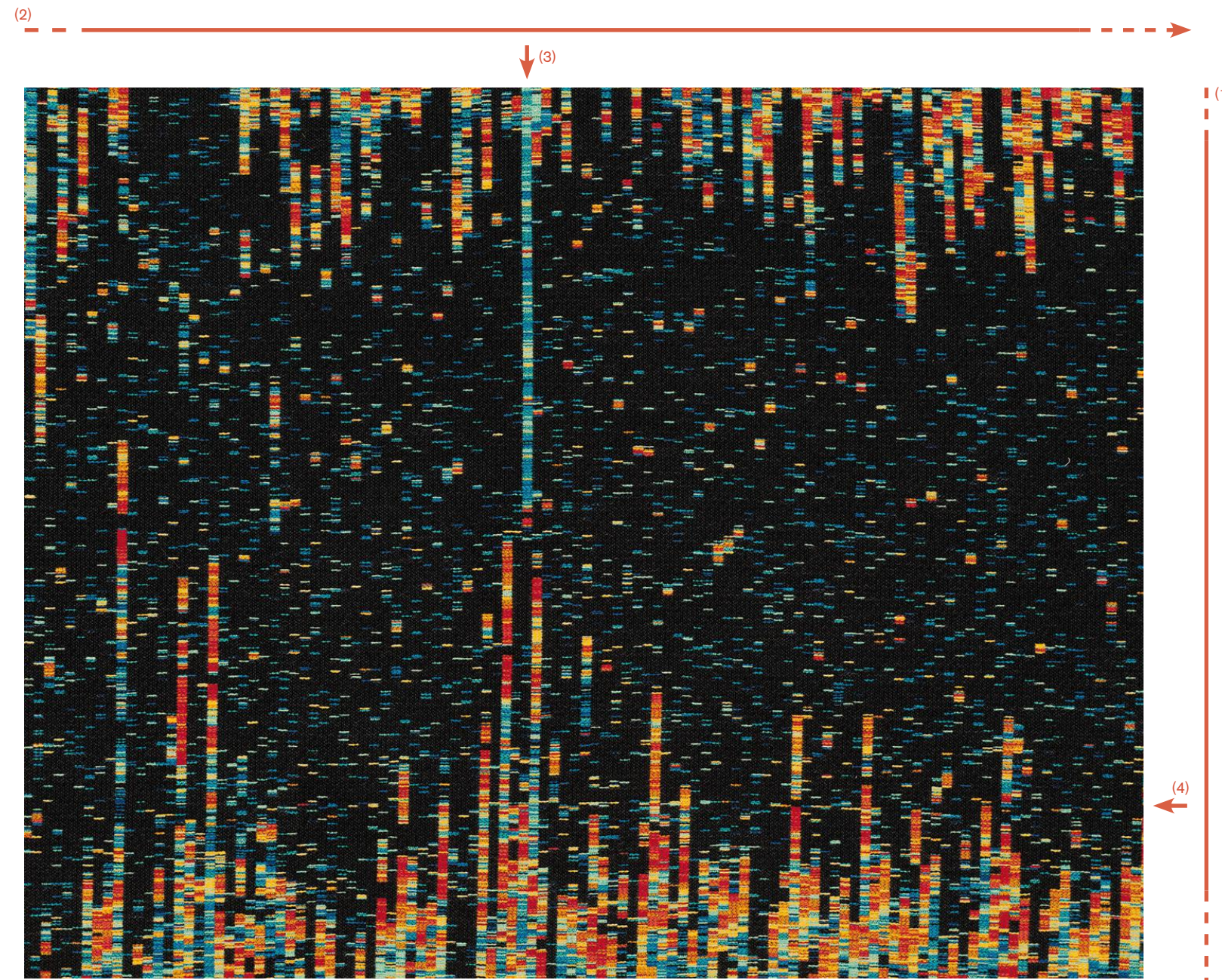


Sundial: Night Watch

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:

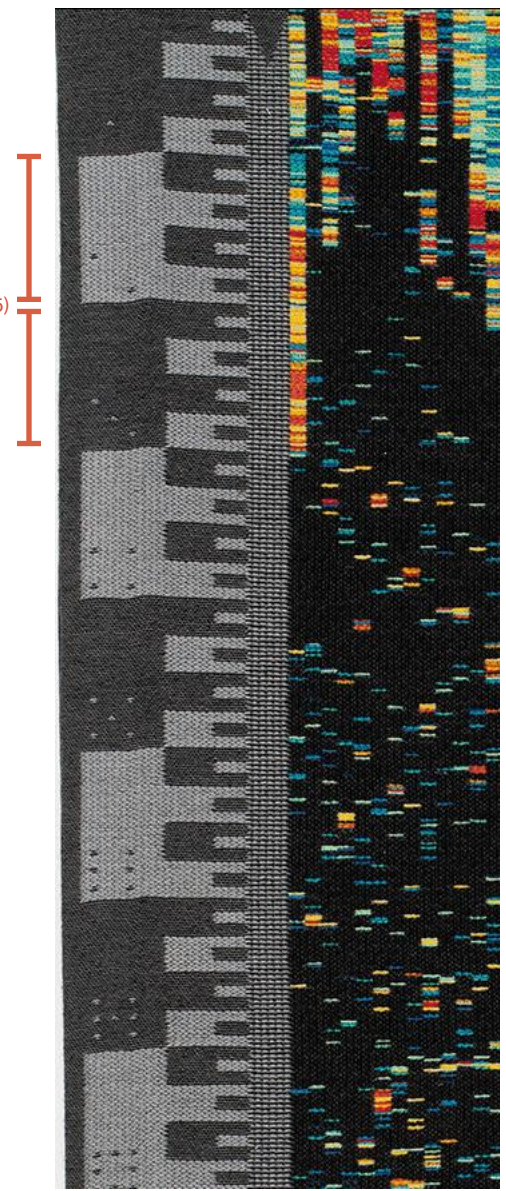
The acti-watch's data is used to create graphs that are indexical traces of a subject's periods of waking and sleeping; they chart in multi-coloured displays, periods of 'being' and 'fading' over time. Dr. Katherina Wulff, a researcher at Oxford with whom Morris collaborates, has described our sleep 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."**

*Plant, S, (1998) *Zeros and Ones: Digital Women and the New Technoculture*, Forth Estate, London

Right: Page from W.G. Sebald's book *The Rings of Saturn* (London: Vintage, 2002)

