

| Touching Imagination |  
*An artistic exploration of tactility within aesthetic processes.*

## **1. Brief formulation of the research question / summary of proposal**

This artistic research inquires into artistic strategies that activate touch(ing)<sup>1</sup> as prominent component within the aesthetic process that locates itself on the crossroad of performance, scenography and visual arts. Through my artistic practice I explore how the sensation of touch can be enabled and critically explored within the production and reception of artworks. The project aims to assemble a contemporary vocabulary and expanded aesthetics of tactile processes that occur within the arts. The collection will be translated into the foundation of a living (an)archive<sup>2</sup>, consisting of a series of tactile relational artworks, accompanied with textual instructions and / or performative interventions, that enables an audience (art professionals and students) to explore and experience what roles and places tactility could occupy within contemporary aesthetic processes.

### **2.1 Research subject (general field of art practice)**

Within the tradition of modern arts<sup>3</sup>, the sense of touch is only modestly addressed. It's the visual sense that is given priority, pushing the other senses to the periphery. This has a long history as the general, optical museum clearly shows; objects are neatly put behind glass or the audience is asked to keep at safe distance from the objects on display<sup>4</sup>. The written discourse on art either omits the description of tactile interaction or presents the recent cultural history of touch in association with irrationality and primitivism. As art critic F. Herring already noted in her article 'Touch-The neglected Sense' in 1949: "most Occidental writers on aesthetic theory regard touch as an unimportant sense, unsuited to serve as an art form or as aesthetic experience".

However, for artists of the 21st century this seems to have changed while in today's art, mostly due to the developments in technology, the sense of touch plays a more important role than ever (think of interactive installations, 'multi sensory' exhibitions, tactile interfaces etcetera)<sup>5</sup>. Within theatre and scenography, the border between performer and audience has been contested for a long time, as the audience nowadays gets often directed in the role of participant / performer, and as such getting to touch and be touched in manifold ways<sup>6</sup>. However, it still seems like touch is not considered to

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<sup>1</sup> Touch(ing) is part of the haptic sense that comprises the tactile, kinaesthetic and proprioceptive senses. Proprioceptors are sensors in our joints, muscles, and fascia, providing information needed to produce coordinated movement. Kinesthetic awareness refers to our ability to navigate space and the awareness of how we move. In this research when I refer to touching, I include the kinaesthetic and proprioceptive senses.

<sup>2</sup> An 'anarchive' is not a static collection of artefacts and information but needs to be revived based on triggers at the moment information is retrieved. The triggers are reactivatable, and their reactivation helps trigger a new event which continues the creative process from which they came, but in a new iteration.  
<http://senselab.ca/wp2/adventure-capital-doas-anarchiving/>

<sup>3</sup> Esp. influenced by Formalism that preferred the functionality of machines, only sight was appropriate within aesthetic processes as it had the most 'distance' from the body (according to the influential art critic Greenberg in: *Sensorium*, C.A. Jones, MIT Press, 2006)

<sup>4</sup> Museums with multi-sensory exhibitions and tours for blind, partially-sighted or deaf visitors:  
<https://vanabbemuseum.nl/en/mediation/inclusion/blind-and-partially-sighted/>  
<https://www.marres.org/training-the-senses/>

<sup>5</sup> Recent exhibitions with focus on touch: <https://archiv.ngbk.de/projekte/touch/>  
Svankmajer: <https://www.eyefilm.nl/en/exhibition/jan-svankmajer>

<sup>6</sup> Participatory performances on touch: Kate MacIntosh: <https://www.frascattitheater.nl/content/many-hands> M. van der Vlugt [http://www.marloekvandervlugt.com/Series\\_Patchmaker\\_No.\\_1.html](http://www.marloekvandervlugt.com/Series_Patchmaker_No._1.html)

be as influential as the other senses concerning the aesthetic process, while the impact of touch(ing) on our affective perception and emotions or its possibilities for (more inclusive) communication is seldom critically addressed or explored.

Moreover the corporeality of the subsequent aesthetic process has for the most part been left to the side of contemporary art criticism. There is little theory that describes touch in relation to art, referring to the experience as well as to the objects and looking into the connections between artists, art and beholders<sup>7</sup>. This absence of discourse and the still dominant code of art spaces 'not to touch' the art<sup>8</sup> seems to withhold both maker and visitor to regard touching itself as potentially poetic, imaginative and meaningful within an aesthetic experience.

I propose that the performative arts offer a unique space for expanding the tactile experience, because in everyday life the unique reciprocal nature of touching is increasingly becoming instrumental, its meaning highly influenced by our repeated interactions with haptic technologies (like the mobile phone), that are constraining and disciplining our bodies based on commercial protocols. This one directional approach is even more apparent in remote touching; as we can now touch other places and beings over the Internet, our touch is returned to us as (visual) data. Socially, we just seem to be puzzled about the reciprocal nature of touch(ing) while cultural and political norms for touch(ing) each other are varying and create a lot of uncertainty (#MeToo). As a result we touch less and by limiting ourselves to eyes and ears belittle our complex perceptive faculties.

Touch(ing) needs to get attention within the current artistic discourse, while as we move toward a non-anthropocentric perspective, the revaluation of tactile interaction with the world around could lead us to 'other ways of understanding' while it lets us explore the relationship with oneself, with other (human and non-human) bodies, and with the environment. The artistic arenas (museums, theaters, cultural spaces) could be *the* locations to experiment with this sense and become explorative spaces, not aimed at resolution but at intuitive engagement, from sites of authority to sites of mutuality<sup>9</sup>.

## 2.2 Key objectives, research questions

This project starts from the hypothesis that it is possible to 'explore and extend' the experience of touch(ing) in an aesthetic manner, exceeding the merely functional, habitual and/or sensual interpretation.

This hypothesis will be substantiated through the following research questions:

What are possible artistic strategies that activate touch(ing) in the aesthetic process that locates itself on the crossroad of performance, scenography and visual arts?

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Chris Salter <http://www.chrissalter.com/haptic-field-v-2-0-immersion-version/>

<sup>7</sup> Relational Sense: Towards A haptic Aesthetics, Jennifer Fisher, *PARACHUTE*, 1997

<sup>8</sup> Touching art was the norm back in the day. The tactile experience of art was considered necessary to fully grasp the beauty of a piece. As Gottfried Herder, German philosopher, argued: "the only real way to appreciate a sculpture is by holding it, in order to feel the artist's craftsmanship. Everything that has form is only known through the sense of touch, as sight reveals only visible surfaces." From: <https://narratively.com/please-touch-the-art/>

<sup>9</sup> Editorial, Towards a museum of mutuality. *Stedelijke Studies*#8

- a. What does it entail to explore touching within artistic creation and reception processes?
- b. How can vision and hearing intensify / support the tactile sensation?
- c. How can an audience be stimulated to touch and be touched by art objects?
- d. How to document the tactile process to disseminate the potential roles and positions tactility can play within the realm of art production and reception (and subsequently in art pedagogy)?

### 3. Methodology

The first methodological pillar of this proposal is situated within the larger framework of artistic research. I research in and through my interdisciplinary, artistic practice: I alternate between creating relational and time-based works at the crossroad of performance, visual arts and scenography, the reading of books, articles, papers, the observation, documenting, reflecting and sharing of the process (writing, filming) and the teaching, presenting, lecturing, co-creating with students and fellow artists. As such the roles of artist, researcher and teacher are totally merged and are part of the same creation process<sup>10</sup>. The variety of methods are practiced in a cyclical and iterative manner – meaning I do not follow a linear preconceived path, some methods are implicated within each other, some are used next to each other, each step will inform the next step and visa versa.

For this project, a live experiential and performative set up needs to be part of the research method to include the actual interaction between objects, persons and context. With the term performative, I paraphrase Butler<sup>11</sup>; she underlined the idea that we perform our bodies, in other words identity is not given but physical acts brings identity to the fore. J. Austin, referring to the active nature of speech, first coined the term, stating the ability of text to change reality. These theories are crucial to take into account in relation to the set up and ‘archiving’ of the tactile processes, while the impact and meaning of tactile interaction with the artworks is culturally encoded, dependent on personal, embodied experiences and on context, and needs to be included in the outcome.

Doing research within a live experiential and performative set up is closely connected to the second methodological pillar of this research, based on Brad Haseman’s concept of Performative Research. Performative research manifests itself by “doing artistic interventions, whereby makers, researchers and audience meet and exchange, and can experience new collaborative forms, share and experiment together.” As the goal of the research is the creation of a contemporary vocabulary and extended aesthetics to communicate about and position touching within the realm of art, it’s implicated that other people (art professionals, artists, art teachers and diverse audiences) are necessary to ‘create’ this ‘live’ in an iterative manner, repeatedly revisiting and revaluating the (an)archive.

The (an)archive needs to be an experiential and performative set up as it will facilitate the participants to overcome the sort of interaction in which subject and object are seen as two separate unities, and surrender to what Barad<sup>12</sup> calls ‘intra action’; where

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<sup>10</sup> Alan Thornton (2013): *Artist, Researcher, Teacher. A Study of Professional Identity in Art and Education*. Intellect, Bristol. > not read yet...

<sup>11</sup> Butler, J. (1988) “Performative acts and gender constitution: an essay in phenomenology and feminist theory, *Theatre Journal* (1988): vol. 4, 40.

<sup>12</sup> Barad, K.(2003) *Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter*.

knowledge is fluid and constantly changing in the moment. The whole process of conception until and beyond the interaction with the audience is, following Barad (2003) how matter starts to 'matter'. In other words, as we touch someone or something, the thoughts that are acted out, are created in a complex collaboration between the object itself, the situation, and the performative moment. That's why I choose a manner of documentation and dissemination that is fluid and keeps changing meaning, in relation to the moment it is addressed. As such when the participants are physically present in the set up, the situation will have the ability to build its own unknown reality. By collecting the participants tactile interactions (their drawings, gestures, movements, collection of images etc.) I hope to transgress norms and habits shaped by our capital driven society.

#### 4.1 Unpacking the Research Goal

The project aims to assemble a contemporary vocabulary and expanded aesthetics of tactile processes within the arts. I will start with unpacking the goal of this research in order to get to the resultant methods.

##### *A contemporary vocabulary*

First, with *a contemporary vocabulary* I mean a thorough description of the agencies that are at work in the coming 'to life' of a tactile artwork: meaning (the relations between) artist, material, space, audience, time etc. I define a tactile artwork as a work that activates touch(ing)<sup>13</sup>. With *contemporary* I refer to the information related to the here-and-now; in other words I will document the textual vocabulary that is used in and assemble the physical movements (video, photos) and responses (drawings, writings) of the audience and myself while interacting with the artworks within different phases of its coming 'to life' (see methods).

##### *An expanded aesthetics of tactile processes within the arts*

The second part of the sentence zooms out and points towards the building of a (an)archive that comprises diverse 'topologies' of tactile art. Here the word *aesthetics* is comprehended as the sensory contemplation or appreciation of an art object, both in the **creative process** and during the **experience**<sup>14</sup>.

*Expanded* means that the aesthetics is not only textually described but will be a combination of:

- a series of (physical) artworks that are created iteratively, some collectively, during the research trajectory,
- a contemporary vocabulary on tactile interaction captured in texts, drawings, photos and videos of physical movements
- (historical) texts from three disciplines – scenography, theatre, visual arts
- process descriptions and artworks of (at least) three other artists
- the description of my own process (captured in texts, drawings, videos of physical movements).

#### 4.2 Research Questions

From the project goal the following RQ's are formulated:

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*Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28(3), pp. 801-831

<sup>13</sup> Touch(ing) is part of the haptic sense that comprises the tactile, kinaesthetic and proprioceptive senses. In this research when I refer to touching, I include the kinaesthetic and proprioceptive senses.

<sup>14</sup> Henk Slager: An alternative engagement with art and philosophy could emerge not characterized by external interpretation but by an immanent process of thinking performed throughout the entire process of art making as intra philosophical effect.

What are possible artistic strategies that activate touch(ing) in the aesthetic process that locates itself on the crossroad of performance, scenography and visual arts?

- a. What does it entail to explore touching within artistic creation and reception processes?
- b. How can vision and hearing intensify / support the tactile sensation?
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#### **4.3 Methods**

Method concerning the research of *my personal artistic creation and reception*:

1. auto ethnographic diary, photos and video recordings of my physical interaction with materials
2. the creation of a series of Tactile Objects of which the formal decisions are based on haptic qualities (see: APPENDIX 1)
3. the performative presentation of these objects at a variety of locations (gallery, theater, conference)
4. video recordings of the audience interacting with the objects. At this point I focus on the duration of their active touching of an object, presuming this means the tactile qualities are activated within the process. I also collect images of their movements, gestures and facial responses.
5. collection of results of the audience 'tagging' responses onto the objects. Each object will have a RFID tag. When the audience scans an object they can draw or write onto a digital image of the object.

Method concerning the research of Artistic creation and reception of other Artists:

6. the 'reenactment' or 'revisiting' of a number of historical and/or existent relational tactile artworks and the accompanying written research accounts of their creators. At this moment these are the tactilist works of futurist artist Marinetti, the social propositions of Lygia Clark and the tactile experiments of scenographer Jan Svankmajer. These artists are chosen while each of them represents another discipline and they have written extensively on the role of tactility within their works. The list will expand during the research period and will include contemporary and / or active artists.

Methods concerning the research of *how vision and hearing intensify / support the tactile sensation*?

Touch(ing) is part of the haptic sense that comprises the tactile, kinaesthetic and proprioceptive senses. It is considered to be a 'proximal' sense, sensing objects that come close to the body. However, it is implicated in distal perception as well as it can sense vibration, temperature, spatiality etc. Touch also plays an important role in sensing the inside of our bodies (felt intensities, gut feeling). Especially the eyes, ears and touch seem to be closely related and implicated in each other.

7. The creation of a series of Knitted Structures (see: APPENDIX 1) that combine touch and sound, in collaboration with Falk Hubner (composer) and Carey Hewitt (IN-TOUCH lab). Multimodality as method.

8. Performative research on the relation of the senses conducted within practical courses, my teaching and the co-creating with students of the *Minor* and the departments *Interactive Performance Design* and *MA Scenography* at the HKU, University of the Arts in Utrecht,
9. Literature review: the history and philosophy of the Sensorium within the Arts
10. Interviews with medically trained people and visually impaired people

Methods concerning the research of how to stimulate an audience to touch/be touched:

10. Interviews with art professionals who
  - create tactile art or have a practice with a strong focus on tactile interaction
  - work at art institutions with multi sensory programmes like Marres in Maastricht, Van Abbemuseum
  - teachers who work at the HKU about the role of tactility within their teaching
11. The presentation of the works at diverse Art spaces and semi – public presentation venues in national and international context.

Methods concerning the research of how to create an (an)archive of tactile interactions?

12. literature review: the reading and (re)formulating of 'tactile' categories and aesthetic ideas originating from recent Art history and philosophy, confronting / augmenting them with actual theories on interactive Art, new Materialities and relational Aesthetics. (see APPENDIX 2 for description of existent categories)
13. visit the SENSE – LAB of Erin Manning, Brian Massumi and explore their approach to documentation and dissemination as (an)archive.

## **5. Relation to previous artistic works / goal of new artistic work**

For the last ten years, I make interactive, performative installations positioning themselves on the cross roads of scenography, visual arts and performance/theatre. These works mainly explored what it means to live in a technology driven, networked world and its impact on the body. They all started from my personal fascination with technological mediated communication and the works invited an audience to experience and 'dissect' their own interaction with technology.

My focus was on critical experimentation with the possibilities of technological mediated communication with myself, with other people and with the world around. I used technology to oscillate between the inside and outside of my body (bio sensors, neuro-feedback, x-rays) and for making 'the invisible visible' – expanding my sensorial capacities, giving shape to memories, duplicating my body with digital versions, traveling through time and space. And on-the-way I experienced the consequences of these mediated forms of communication; the impact on my feeling of 'wholeness', power and privacy issues etc.

The installations had strong visual and auditory components, overshadowing the tactile properties of the touch(ing) and its own experiential 'meaning'. Moreover the visitor/participant had to learn how to 'touch' the sensors in the 'right' manner in order for the communication with the 'other' to develop. As a result the visitor/participant was able to compose an audiovisual narrative or a music / movement composition.

Although the touch(ing) of (living and nonliving) bodies and spaces, mostly via sensors, has been quite prominent in many of these works, I have not researched the affective, relational and material potential of touching itself for creating a sensorial, poetic and imaginative experience, the results I will try to achieve within this project.

With the new artistic work, I aim for what Paterson<sup>15</sup> calls “deep touching”: the seeming immediacy of touch on the skin surface gets time to unfold into deeper, more distanced, even metaphorical senses of touch. Wyschogrod<sup>16</sup> suggests something even stronger: “the decoupling of touch from mere sensation, whereby something more abstract and barely articulable arises within touching experiences”.

I chose to work with materials (APPENDIX 2) that implicate ‘vitality’ and have a ‘dynamic form’<sup>17</sup>:

- the material activates the Tactile eye, defined by Sobchack<sup>18</sup>, meaning the (shape of the) material activates the tactile sense in an imaginative way, for instance through its resemblance to skin or landscapes,

- the material lengthens or intensifies the tactile interaction with the object while the material reacts to skin-to-skin contact, either through changing its shape, through its conductive properties triggering digital media like audio or through embedded soft electronics changing the temperature of the material or executing vibration.

As a result, to get to ‘know’ the object, only seeing is not enough. It’s not possible to predict how the backside looks, without turning it around, to understand what is inside without pressing it or to sense its temperature, predict its weight without picking it up.

I aim to stimulate an audience to take time to ‘observe, listen, read’ their tactile sensations while interacting with the works in order for them to critically evaluate their tactile interaction with the world around, at the same time trying imaginative tactile experiences and exploring the boundaries of what tactility might be.

## 7. Schedule

2019 – 2020 → *Creation of body of works, Documentation*

July 2019:

1. Creation / iteration of Tactile Objects, Knitted Structures
2. Writing text for exhibition / conference day in Helsinki: *I Experience as I Experiment* based on the outcome of the performative presentation in May 2019.
3. Preparation presentation for Nida Doctoral School: Fight the Power
4. Work session with Falk Hubner / Carey Hewitt with the Knitted structures

August 2019:

1. Attendance Nida Doctoral School in Venice.

September 2019:

1. Creation / iteration of Tactile Objects, Knitted Structures
2. Feedback on text of other participant for exhibition / conference day in Helsinki: *I Experience as I Experiment*
3. Writing Paper for conference *Citation* | EARN Conference
4. Work session with Falk Hubner / Carey Hewitt
5. Performative research on the senses with students of the MINOR Creative Design Practices, HKU

October 2019

1. Creation / iteration of Tactile Objects, Knitted Structures

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<sup>15</sup> Paterson, M. (2007) *The Senses of Touch*, Berg, Oxford, UK, New York, USA

<sup>16</sup> Edith Wyschogrod in: idem.

<sup>17</sup> Inspired on Brian Massumi words in: “The Thinking-Feeling of what happens” (2008).

<sup>18</sup> Sobchack, V. (2004) *Carnal Thoughts*, University of California Press, London, England

2. Delivery of text for exhibition / conference day in Helsinki: *I Experience as I Experiment*
3. Writing Paper for conference *Citation* | EARN Conference
4. Work session with Falk Hubner / Carey Hewitt

#### November 2019

1. Creation / iteration of Tactile Objects, Knitted Structures
2. Installation of exhibition in Helsinki: *I Experience as I Experiment*
3. Presentation of Paper at conference *Citation* | EARN Conference
4. Work session with Falk Hubner / Carey Hewitt

#### December 2019

1. Creation / iteration of Tactile Objects, Knitted Structures
2. Presentation at exhibition / conference day in Helsinki: *I Experience as I Experiment*
3. Work session with Falk Hubner / Carey Hewitt

#### January 2020

1. Preparation and presentation of performative installation and research: *Thresholds of Touch* in collaboration with Falk Hubner and Carey Hewitt at Bloomsbury Theatre and Theatre Studio in London. 22-23-24 January.

#### February – July 2020

1. reflection on data accumulated during the four public sessions (NIDA, LEEDS, HELSINKI, LONDON)
2. first research outcomes on Research Platform – working towards Paper 2.
3. Performative research on the senses with students of Interactive Performance Design, HKU
4. writing of application for Funding – Educational Field (NWO?), Mondriaanfonds

#### **2020 – 2021**

*September 2020 – July 2021 – Presentation of body of works <-> professionals / Documentation*

1. Creation / iteration of Tactile Objects, Knitted Structures
2. Visit to Sense - LAB
3. Professionals in Theatre, Museums.
4. Visually impaired, blind and deaf people
5. Writing of paper 3.

#### **2021 - 2022**

*September 2021 – July 2022 - Presentation of body of works <-> international context / Documentation, Dissemination of outcome*

1. Creation / iteration of Tactile Objects, Knitted Structures
2. Visit to Japan – where they have a total different culture with regard to touching objects within cultural arenas.
3. Professionals in Theatre, Museums.
4. Visually impaired, blind and deaf people
5. Writing of paper 4.

#### **2022 - 2023**

1. Finishing PHD



## 8. Funding

Interesting for:

1. Arts practitioners – makers, teachers, critics, programmers, curators
2. Education – creativity – expanding on examples by:

Elizabeth Mayo (1855): <https://archive.org/details/lessonsonobjects00mayo>  
Object lesson box: <https://www.form.de/en/magazine/form272/focus>

BAUHAUS - Josef Albers, Anni Albers: tactile classes led students to a greater awareness of what they are seeing, f.i. paper folding was a tool to experience construction  
<http://arthistoryteachingresources.org/2018/03/learning-and-unlearning-using-hands-on-bauhaus-exercises-in-art-history-classes/>

Maria Montessori: <http://www.infomontessori.com/sensorial/tactile-sense-touch-boards.htm>

3. Care / wellbeing:

tactile sense and dementia - <https://waag.org/en/article/current-research-textilelab>

4. Design

5. Social research – playground for

6. Musea – experience

7. Disabled - Blind / deaf

## APPENDIX 1 – Material Research

The last three years my multi disciplinary artistic practice has expanded as a result of following the Textile Academy<sup>19</sup> where I researched - among other things -, e-textiles, small electronics embedded in cloth, electricity in relation to the body, bio plastics, manual dyeing and other crafts, all with a focus on the tactile qualities of material and their relation to the body. The assignment I got from the Textiel Factorij<sup>20</sup> led me to India to learn Bandhani<sup>21</sup> and resulted in an audiovisual installation, with intimate electronic interaction through capacitive sensing, that I created for the exhibition. This is the background for my choice of materials that I will work / perform with during the Research Period.

### 1. Tactile objects made of Urethane pouring foams \_ polymeer

- squishy's are very popular (<https://borncute.com/best-squishies-reviewed/>)
- memory foam – gives back time – imprint
- material that talks back to you (both in the creation process and in the interaction with it), while the material is not fully predictable; it's partly an invisible chemical process that creates the final shape. It's generic coincidence that happens. The creation process is influenced by temperature, stirring, movement, color pigment, elements added, surface it is pored on etc.
- has no historical references
- can create a variety of tactile qualities to 'read'
- since Leo Baekeland invented this, human being decays much faster than polymeer things... Attractive for its color sensation or disgusted by its disposable beauty?

### 2. Knitted structures of Electric Wire

The field of Touch has been actively researched from the 18th century on. The first research focus was triggered by the discovery of electricity. It was clear that only the human skin was able to register the charges of electric generators and batteries; no other senses were able to achieve this as precise and accurate as the skin. As a result the interest in the physical and psychological mechanisms of Touch was aroused and explored during the 19th century – with the intent of yielding objective scientific knowledge about the operation of the tactual senses. This culminated in the term 'haptics' as the 'doctrine of touch'.

The electricity wire in a variety of knitted shapes is one of the core materials of these series of works, integrating the two research strands (social touch | touch between human – object), as it is the material that connects both fear and intimacy in relation to touch. Fear that is related to touching anything that has current running through it and intimacy that is triggered by the physical act of knitting, think of the homely, family, female emotional qualities knitted surfaces still evoke.

The sensations, thoughts, memories or emotions that are triggered through the touching of the wire can be influenced / changed by its transformational capacities, meaning the capacitive sensing qualities of the wire itself and the possibility to connect the wire to a

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<sup>19</sup> <https://waag.org/en/project/textilelab-amsterdam>  
<https://waag.org/en/event/revisioning-textile-exhibition>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.textielfactorij.org/profile/marloekevandervlugt/>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uKsLSwy5-ug>

<sup>21</sup> Bandhani: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bandhani>

variety of sensors that may translate the (quality, duration or number) of touching into sounds, words, images etc.

The focus needs to be on 'the touching itself' – the touching between the physical skin and a certain living/nonliving object –> not (only) on touching the wire as a medium that will trigger something. For that to happen the wire needs to be perceived as a framing device –> a device that provides a starting point, a question, a word, an invitation for touch(ing) *through or with* it.

### **3. Silk and other conductive textiles with embedded electronics (temperature, vibration)**

- Resembling skin
- Bandhani is a type of tie-dye textile, where cloth is tightly tied into many small knots that form a design. Then the cloth is dyed, followed, by removal of the thread, leaving a circular design on the cloth. After being dyed, the remains of the knots stay visible in the silk cloth as a very clear relief. This structure strongly invites to be touched by the top of the fingers, like reading a story written in braille on a piece of paper.
- conductive cloth / wire
- recent developed materials that change shape or color or temperature

## **APPENDIX 2**

Art historian Caro Verbeek made a subdivision of touch in relation to art (2012):

1. a narrative touch,
2. a documentary touch,
3. a (reciprocal) social touch (leading to awareness of taboos and other social conventions),
4. a mindful sensual touch (that creates awareness of the body),
5. a metaphorical touch parallel to a linguistic system, which consequently takes collective experience and agreements in order to be applied and understood on a larger scale.

Jennifer Fisher (2007) distinguishes categories of contiguous touch in Touch-performances:

- A. a perilous touch (providing pleasure or pain to either artist or visitor)
- B. an immersive touch (visceral engagement of body-to-body contact, involving pressure, weight and temperature)
- C. a recovering touch (focusing present awareness and its role in the therapeutic rehabilitation of trauma)

Marinetti codified modalities of tactility: on the one hand, *contiguous* touch involving the apprehension of cold, smooth, lukewarm, irritating, warm surfaces and contexts: and on the other hand, *affective* "touch" – involving being touched by feelings of excitement, sensuality, wit, will, certainty or abstraction. This led to his description of six categories of touch in his manifesto:

1. an abstract, cold touch
2. a persuasive, reasoning touch
3. an exciting lukewarm, nostalgic touch
4. an almost irritating, warm, and willful touch
5. a soft, warm and human touch
6. a warm, sensual, witty, and affectionate touch