

Hello, thank you for having me here to listen to my presentation.

I would like to start by guiding you through the multiple connections between the first and second year. I will look at the projects and focus on a little detail that reconnects with the graduation work. Then, I will move on to the second part, explaining the starting point, the thesis work and the journey till the production of the final publication, and will conclude a sketch of how my work will appear in the graduation show.

We had 3 special issues.

(5minutes)

SPECIAL ISSUE 16

The SI16 is a project on vernacular language processing called Learning How to Walk while Catwalking, a toolkit to play and experiment with language. All of us worked on individual tools and I analysed patterns to create new versions of texts.

In particular, I created "the impossible process" website, a website and tool for vernacular translations. I created a Python function to mix different translations of the same poems and I used the Annotation Compass, that has been created for a different purpose and I readapted it to gather translations from users (in this case, asking my classmates to translate from their language back to English). The final publication for the public to interact and understand the Python function I created was the "envelope", an activity that would reproduce what happens in the function and ask the user to do it by hand. This recalls what I am making in the Second-Year project with the following question: what happens when you mirror digital interactions into a physical movement? In both cases, I reckon, it's been a very interesting way to make people who know nothing about coding, experience what is happening.

COLLECTIVE TEAMS: I was part of ADMIN TEAM: creating the meetings, schedules, keeping track of the work; I was part of LAUNCH TEAM: event coordination, organisation and user experience for the launch day; I was part of FRONT-END TEAM: support during the creation of front-end of the website, advices and considerations; CONTENT GROUP.

SPECIAL ISSUE 17

The Special Issue 17 explores concepts of the world of video-games, like slow-thinking, delayed rewarding, gamification processes, competition, individuality, productive environment.

For this special issue I translated a form of research into an activity and an event, to involve the public: the crosswords game, that was part of the collective publication and the launch day, offering two different ways of interaction, created by using the Glossary of Productive Play we worked on as a group during the trimester.

Inside the box, users find these little post-its and they have to position them in the space they're in through the use of a grid they find inside. After creating the grid, they can read the definitions and complete the crossword. During the event, this happened on the bar counter to allow people get their drinks after getting to know something more about our theoretical research.

I like the idea that an audience can interact with what is shown to them: everyone has different learning methodologies, and it's our job to put everyone in a situation where they can get the best out of the experience.

COLLECTIVE TEAMS: I was part of LAUNCH group: visuals and communication with the public. Price of the box, Texts for the launch, Documentation and presentation of the work, Prints and plotting, name tags, Plexiglas letter game for the launch.

SPECIAL ISSUE 18

The last issue offered us more space for our interests with a series of weekly sound releases. We experimented with annotation systems, annotation methods and distributive practices, which grasped my interest quite a lot. I am happy how I managed, as a caretaker, to go deeper into my personal interests, to see how contributors reacted to the proposals (7&5) and the possibility that my ideas will change after other people experimented with them or created their own way out of it. I am pleased to see how we could influence each other and evolve in very different ways with every method we've been using and the person we were working with.

My participation in the editorial proposals brought up topics like collective writing (for which I created the Dragg-able, a tool to drag and drop and create different versions of text and audios) and a piece called "unfolding implicancies" that needed the participation of others to function. Everyone contributed with their collectively written and recorded and then we organised the release with a projection on the ceiling during which we unwrap the interface all together. The creation of a welcoming space for receiving the content has been a key feature in my work (week 5 and 7).

(15 minutes)

Research and Thesis

Introduction:

I will now present my research project titled "Paper Notebooks: From an Industrial Model to a Tool of Expression." The aim of this project is to explore and understand how the structure, shape, and functionality

of paper notebooks can influence note-taking practices, frequency of use, and overall efficiency. By combining theoretical research and practical methodologies, I have analysed paper notebooks to understand how different prompts and activities can change users' mindset, while inviting them to produce personalised DIY notebooks in their personal practice.

I will use my publication to present the methodologies and production choices, to show how the theoretical and practical work has been transformed into this kit. Throughout the presentation I will read excerpts from the book and show pictures.

Starting point:

Before XPUB, I have always been making my notebooks. In march 2022, I started questioning my notebook's practice and tried to build new paper devices that would satisfy better the needs of my brain in that moment. I started to play with my own notebooks to understand how I could make them more comfortable for me. I used some of them for months, some for a few weeks, I modified them, got rid of the ones that were not supporting me.

CARD: PROCESS NOTES: the past

The main concept of using leftovers to make notebooks was born while I was making a book as a Christmas gift for a friend: it was late and I could not go and buy anything so I used every type of paper I had in the house. Different papers, with different weights, different colours, everything kept inside an Amazon box's cardboard. I realized how interesting it was to create books from waste and finding ways to make it work. I then wondered: Why are we all using a device with the same structure? And how creating our personal tools would help users to understand better themselves and their needs?

So then, my research question became: *How can I, through research and explorative sessions, discover more about the topic and create a generative structure that can be interpreted by every person in their own way to promote creativity and self-expression?*

The importance of making to produce personalise tools and spaces is central to the work. In the moment we start making with our own hands, we are participating in the narrative around us. Objects are part of our existence. It does matter if you go to a shop and you buy a notebook every six months and not use it. Or you make your own with features and properties that fits your needs. There are reasons why people do not finish notebooks, and this is what I have been researching about while talking with others, making with others, listening to other people's stories.

The thesis:

Next to the practical methodologies that I will explain after, the thesis has been a report of my practice: it charts a historical and contextual overview on notebooks, so how they developed through time, following society's needs and changes, with a focus on the importance of making and the physical act of taking notes on paper notebooks. The text then presents the development of the project through the different methods and the findings that will lead to the creation of a physical outcome. This took the shape of a guide or kick-starter kit to help others to analyse their own practice and to start questioning it, as well as to encourage a hands-on approach.

CARD: thesis excerpts: the spatial memory

A process takes place when we take notes and the type of interface we use to do it makes a difference: "The hippocampus is crucially involved not only in memory encoding and retrieval processes but also in spatial memory itself" (Umejima et al., 2021). (...) Throughout my research, I discovered how much it is important, for recovery and reviewing reasons, where I specifically write words or sentences. Recently, I found myself scared of forgetting because the pages of an unfitting notebook did not allow a proper instinctive positioning of the content while taking notes.

Research Methods:

Now I would like to present my practical methodologies, that helped me delve deeper into the topic and gather opinions of others:

My Personal Notebook Process: This is the most introspective method. It consists in the creation of different prototypes to analyse and question my use of notebooks and to discover how to modify them to adjust them to my needs.

CARD: PROCESS NOTES: a personal notebook process

A personal notebook process is the ever-changing process a person can go through, by analysing and keeping attention to their individual note-taking activity and their use of paper notebooks to understand themselves and their needs.

I finished my notebook and started a plan to build up a new one. I then produced different prototypes to play around with the concept of adapting notebooks to my needs. I tried to distribute notebooks prototypes around and realised how it was not possible that I would create the notebooks. My classmates started experimenting with their own and I saw what was happening was much more interesting than me looking for a perfect notebook, that obviously does not exist as our needs change depending on who we are and in which situation we need the object. [show prototypes]

CARD: NOTES ON PROTOTYPE: the first one

+it occupies less space but offers bigger pages

+the additional lateral wings allow modularity: the user can move the wings to connect with multiple pages at the same time

+if the user forgets something the wings give more space to write

-the fact that it's folded means it's thicker and it's difficult to write if it's too big

+PICTURE OF THE FIRST ONE

- The ring: a5 shape didn't represent my needs: all the notes are lists of things and would not allow the connections I would instead create using the notebook with folded sheet;

CARD: NOTES ON PROTOTYPE: the metal rings one

18.01.2023 I feel restricted in the moment I have to write on a flat a5 page. I feel like the content is never organised because I can write in every direction and most of the time I use visual note-taking, or note-making, especially the circular method (have starting points in the middle and then move around it), I get lost in the space because I have no interruptions or limitations. + **PICTURE OF RING ONE**

NOTES ON PROTOTYPE: the metal rings one

18.01.2023 It feels better to have metal rings and the chance to position every sheet where I want.

CONS. I am very unorganised. At the moment I am always writing everything that comes very fast, in whatever position in the page. This leads to a big amount of content without a structure/any entry point. It is not accessible after some time I wrote things down.

- This is the letter one: It was a gift we had to prepare for each other in groups together with the midwives; the idea emerged from a comment of a participant to the CES (show notebook of mitsa), that commented on how a very long sheet would allow them to write thoughts down very fast and without fear. The long sheets come from leftovers, cutouts of prints I found in a stationary in Amsterdam [read comment from kim: *"I was pleased to find your gift which was at once a letter, an envelope and a notebook inviting me to answer back. Tied with a bow and sewn with care, the compact square of thick paper unfolded to an arm's length notebook. The few first pages were covered with your hasty handwriting from which I could perceive the physical effort that demanded this free-writing exercise. Before I computed that this (of course!) made sense with what I know of your project, I was seeing myself annotating your letter and answering it already in the form of unfinished thoughts. Having this conversation on the surface of your notebook disinhibited the formulation of my thoughts, thank you for that."*]

CARD: NOTES ON PROTOTYPE: the letter one

20.03.23 From the first CES°, I had this recurrent idea in my head: one of the participants made this very very long strip-notebook, underlining how much the narrowness of the paper would help them to free their mind and free-write. Therefore, I bound this *letter notebook* with a little string to close it so that it would resemble a gift. I folded it, so that the length would be discovered just after opening (surprise effect). Then I free wrote both letters: they came out quite different from each other. + **PICTURE OF THE LETTER ONE**

- The notebook kit: I will talk about this later in the presentation as it connects with the final structure of the publication; together with this one, I will explain the triad one and the first prototype for the final publication.

CARD: NOTES ON PROTOTYPE: the notebook kit

09.11.22 I tried the concept of the notebook kit I made for supi° on myself. It has been helpful to reorganise thoughts in very small sheets of paper. This obliged me to describe a concept in a little amount of words. The second characteristic is that it allows me to move the sheets around and then attach them together when I finalise decisions. It was helpful for the purpose, but the overall idea is that it's very fragile and not very usable if not sitting at a desk. It can help to explain concepts and ideas but it is of any use as a portable notebook. +**PICTURE OF NB KIT**

Gathering and Analyzing the Work of Other Users:

The aim was to understand how others approach the same process. I worked specifically with Supi and Erica have been my case studies: throughout the year I could follow their choices and reasoning on their use of notebooks.

For example, Supi has a very strong connection with the tool, her Muji pen and does not like to work with bindings, therefore she tried to find alternative ways to keep the paper notes together. Erica instead, has a very strong connection for time-based notebooks and scattered notes that come together when needed, so she experimented with very different notebooks to be used in different situations.

CARD: NOTES ON PROTOTYPE: supi's notebooks

29.09.23 Supi° presented me some updates on the use of her notebooks. Supi noticed how much a different tool/pen has a different result on her way of working, drawing or thinking, how much it makes a difference in the act of playing with the use of the pen (the way you interact with the pen, an object that teaches her through the act of drawing - notebooks as discovery space). In this case, the pen has a substantial impact on the results, so that often pen and paper goes together. +**PICTURE OF SUPIS NOTEBOOK**

Their work was essential to demonstrate that others can go through this process by themselves. I really saw in them the potential of the project and how interesting it is to have these discussions.

Discussion Groups (Preparatory Sessions):

These sessions have been a platform for collecting opinions, engaging in conversations, and exploring questions related to notebooks' role in people's lives. The insights gained helped shape my research and led to new ideas and perspectives.

I organised three preparatory sessions in which I brought up specific questions and discussed them together with the participants. The main aim of these sessions was to discover if notebooks are part of their lives and if I could use this specific object to incite a certain type of thoughts and associations to promote self-expression and creativity.

CARD: CONVERSATIONS ON NOTEBOOKS: describe your notebook's practice

[]

Soft-cover

anxiety from messy notebooks, don't wanna play with the notebook

NEED line-paper, calendar and space for notes

nice soft paper + perfect pen

page with sticky notes to use for no-set things

needs to be big enough

must stay flat

NO stream of consciousness

YES anchor points

Collaborative Explorative Sessions (C.E.S.):

These sessions served as a collaborative playground, where participants engaged in various notebook-making exercises. Inspired by generative design research, I aimed for the participants to engage with creativity and self-expression, by guiding them through the iterative process of notebook creation.

The session and the final toolkit are starting points/initialiser for them to test scenarios to see what works better (the CES are for me, the toolkit is for the people, made by me as a researcher together with the participants).

What is nice about this project it's that it combines questioning and reasoning on ourselves and making.

Making is a great part of the project, both when I make them myself, both during sessions when everyone is concentrating on making their own. We ended up with a series of prototypes that shows how much people can engage with making and how making can participate in the research of the self. Making notebooks can be a very individual practice, but what I discovered through time is how much exchanging ideas and looking at each other's work and implementations, really helps to open our minds and make more radical notebooks..

Show prototypes FROM CES

The Final Outcome

CARD: PROCESS NOTES: what i would like is

18.04.23 I would like to create (active) makers, not consumers. The final outcome needs to be something to be used to make, not only to receive/consume. I want the users of this work to participate in the act of making notebooks against capitalism and commodity practices. I want to expand the spaces of this medium.

What is nice about this project is that I am not only trying to discover and question the notebooks, but finding ways to help others to express themselves and make something new or edit a notebook they already own.

Therefore, the research culminated in the creation of a guide or kick-starter kit designed to help others analyse their own notebook practices and encourage a hands-on approach. This modular notebook alternates between informational sections, activities for making notebooks, and reflections on the notebook practice itself. Its purpose is to make notebook-making more accessible and serve as a tool for self-expression.

The final project aims to achieve two results:

- A) **Involving others**, to make notebooks' making more accessible/a tool of expression
- B) **How to publish a notebook making practice?** How to make a notebook public? (and accessible by others) → include and edit zoomed scans of notebooks and private notes inside the publication, editing the materials to. The digital notes feel less private and personal, it feels less uncomfortable for me to share them with others when they are printed out.

CARD: Q: What makes a notebook a notebook?

05.04.23 When something gets printed, does it stop to be a notebook?

Clara° and I discussed about the limits of the pages, how paper books do not allow annotation because of the little space in the margins. We tried to define what is a notebook for us. I said that for me it's something that accompanies you in certain situations and offers a support. Clara° said they are periodicals. They are positioned in a specific location, and during a certain period of time, where and when the user goes back recurrently.

The goal was to create a kit for making notebooks that could be read, but also used to practically make notebooks. The content originates from my reflections and both digital and handwritten notes. I used my

existing collection of texts, conversations, images, thoughts spread across 128 (256 sides) cards connected by a spine. They can be read as a continuous flow, but each card is designed to stand alone. To help the user to navigate the publication, I added an overview of colors and quantities of cards per section.

Content: my use of the wikis and my hand notetaking practice was essential to produce all the material that was necessary for this publication to work. I only had to choose the content wisely to fit in the little cards, being careful to make the cards work independently not to overwhelm the users and allow them to make their personal connections; in practice, I scanned all the notebooks, selected materials that could reflect the process of making notebooks; excerpts of thesis to give some theoretical overview; pictures of the prototypes made by me and others; went through all the wikis and selected material.

Script and design: A Python script was developed for this project to embrace alternative methods for design and approach web-to-print. When I imagined the publication for the first time, I visualised how by making a script, I could've distributed the content in the way I wanted and that using patterns that are present in css and html, I could make the best out of this experience. The materials are spread into 4 sections (the 4 rows of the book), and for every row there are two folders that contain left and right cards content. The content mixes within the same row but not between rows to avoid contradictory connections (the game). The script then collects the content from the folders and insert it into an A4 layout, consisting of 8 cards per page. The script also allows to generate a different positioning of all the cards every time is run. All the prints made until now are based on a different pdf.

CARD: NOTES ON PROTOTYPE: this publication

03.05.23 The final publication is selected content organised and split into little cards. This content, through a python script, get inserted into an a4 template and can be printed as a booklet. Ideally, every time, the PDF comes out differently through random choice. The content mixes only in the same row, not between rows, to avoid contradictory connections (the user will be able to move them around by themselves afterwards anyway).

Production:

- The prototypes created during the research process shaped the material concept of the notebook. The first prototype is the **Notebook Kit** adjustable and editable notebook inspired by index cards, allowing for smaller, standalone content. The concept of modularity led to the creation of the **Triad Notebook** with three browsable rows for recreating connections.

CARD: NOTES ON PROTOTYPE: some new ideas on how to play with the structure of the notebook

30.09.22 This idea works on the concept of modularity: reconnecting content between the three sections of the book, making possible to have an overview of the content even when the space on the column is finished. By choosing a specific method (that could be colours, page number, or even a personal one created on the go) it should become intuitive to move in the space of the *triad notebook*.

- The spine of the notebook enables 360-degree rotation, connecting content between rows and experimenting with different structures. Customizability is a key aspect of this spine, allowing users to interact with the notebook and participate in its use and creation. Users can mix their own pages with the provided ones or remove all the provided pages to fill in with their own, allowing for the creation of new notebooks. The pages can also be used as cards without the spine, raising questions about the definition of a notebook.

CARD: NOTES ON PROTOTYPE: this publication

02.05.23 I want to make the binding "openable" because, in this way, the entire book can be taken apart and become a notebook. Or the rings can be used for something else and the prints can be moved around or used as cards, or attached on walls or anywhere. It opens up a bit the concept of book and re-connect it to a "printed" notebook. It also gives the freedom to completely tear it apart. I like the idea that a book is something "stable" and in this way this publication is more similar to a notebook. I left space for others to contribute or make their version of it.

- Every decision and way I chose to do things in the production and making part of this publication, tries to reflect the values of the project.
- The back cardboard and the intro-texts spread at the back are made from waste/leftovers from the studio.
- The publication is printed on A4 layout to minimize paper waste.
- Costs of production and the use of all the facilities possible to save money.
- Inside the book, I added a bookmark where instructions on how to cut the spine are given.

Why a printed publication?

First of all, a printed publication allows for physical interactions and movements that mirror digital interactions. The reader becomes the one determining how to navigate through the rows of cards, adding a sense of control and anticipation. The physical act of turning pages and the feeling of paper contribute to the

overall experience. The act of turning pages and the spatial layout of text enhance reader engagement, understanding, and memory.

Inside the book, I inserted excerpts from the thesis to provide further insights into the significance of physicality in reading and note-taking.

Website

In addition to the printed publication, I also created a website to make the project accessible even after the prints are finished.

The website offers different features:

- A digital version of the cards. In this case, the cards are spread throughout the screen space in a grid. The user can zoom in and have a better look at single cards, or open multiple at the time and mix them up. I added a legend on the side to understand the different contents, as it happens in the printed publication.
- The website offers a printable version, coded to be ready to fit in an A4 sheet. The idea would be to add multiple generated HTMLs so that people can reload the page and access a different pdf.
- The third page is a video showcase of me scrolling through the notebooks and the final publication. In this way, it is possible to see and experience my notetaking practice.
- The website also provides an online notebook's ideas generator, where the GAME offered inside the printed publication is replicated with JavaScript.
- The website gives access to a pdf of the thesis and to my wiki pages where more insights of the project are presented.
- Finally, a gallery of prototypes and a contact page. It would be nice to add on the contact page places where people could buy the printed publication, as well as some pictures to show how the final print looks like. This could be an art space like the PrintRoom or Page not found, or the grey space in the middle in den haag, as well as stationary places, where normally people go to buy paper and materials. It would be nice that the book would become an inspirational guide for people interested in materials and making.
- To share the website, I am renting a VPS, that I will go on using after graduation.

Grad Show

For the upcoming grad show, I am planning to organise a session to try a new setup to see how it can adapt in such a place and situation. This could become useful for the future of these sessions. The idea, still to be developed, would be to have an open table for making, where I will be sitting while making notebooks. This space will be an invitation for others to join me in the making, but also as a conversation starting point. I will have the publication on the table, which I will use for the "how to make a notebook that" game included, to give a hint of how this could work.

In the shop, I will sell both the book and the printed thesis.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, my research project explores the potential of paper notebooks, aiming to disrupt traditional formats and foster individual expression. Through various research methods and the development of a modular notebook and printed publication, I have sought to engage others in the process of making and questioning their own notebook practices. By embracing a hands-on approach, we can expand the boundaries of this medium and gain a deeper understanding of ourselves and our tools.

Thank you for your attention.

possible questions:

How can you more precisely articulate your own values and concerns in this work?

- a) I am concerned that people do not use notebooks with consciousness and do not see the impact this medium can have on their lives
- b) with my research, I can work with the knowledge I am creating, through research and sessions, and make it accessible to more people
- c) I do not only want to rely on my own opinions therefore I decided to invite other perspectives on this topic by organising the CES and open discussions on the topic with different people

The translation of materiality to web publishing could be worked on further.

I think what I found the most interesting was creating something physical through the use of digital interfaces: as already mentioned before, how to mirror digital interactions into physical movements. After doing this, I tried the opposite again, how to mirror physical movements into digital interactions?

What is the website adding? It creates a digital space that gives access to

What are some impacts of not being conscious on what notebook you use?

Easiest way to respond is to speak from her own experience: for me when a sheet of paper is folded: an example of the different ways you write: the materiality and the design of the notebook influence the writing, and the free writing and whatever

connection between the purpose of taking notes and how this is materialised?

Examples in the prototypes

what is the role of note-taking? Giving more examples of moments when the format of a notebook influences the note taking would be good, it really helps to understand her point.

Note-taking is the activity that happens when using a notebook.