

Marcelina Wellmer in her generative project *Error 502, 404, 410* (2012-2019) approaches the phenomenon of a server error, enhancing its audio qualities. Rarely noticed sounds accompanying technical errors, are normally not perceived in terms of aesthetics. The embedded microphone the typical hard disk errors or connection failures hearable. This work, revealing the audio side of technical damages is based on customized hard disks. This is an example of “reverse engineering” enabling a translation between media. The noise accompanying the series of breakdowns is revealed and exposed with a scientific approach, having also aesthetical framework. Although the disks turn in the endless loop, their rhythm is disrupted by a randomness factor. It’s not the viewer who decides on how the disks would be turning, but the letters engraved on the surface of the disks. These are the names of the particular errors that make the loop stumbling, being readable only when the disk stops. It is a paradox, that attempting to access the information about the work, we lose contact with it, and while experiencing the artwork, we are unable to read the text. This cognitive dissonance is derived from a reflection on an error as one of the most immanent features of a computer as a cultural machine. If software is a set of formal instructions prepared for a computer to follow and fulfill, this work negates the software functionality. As Inke Arns notices, analyzing the issue of code experiments: “It oscillates in the perception of the recipient between assumed executability (functionality) and non-executability (dysfunctionality) of the code; in short, between significant information and asinificant noise”¹.

Inke Arns, *Read_me, run_me, execute_me. Code as Executable Text: Software Art and its Focus on Program Code as Performative Text*, 2004, http://www.medienkunstnetz.de/themes/generative-tools/read_me/

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