

Statement

This project investigates how minute alterations within a repetitive crochet system affect the overall structure, and further explores the relationship between regularity, error and control in handcrafting. I view crochet as a system governed by logical rules; during the experiment, I used the same stitch pattern for every 10 groups, introducing a fixed alteration on the fifth stitch of each group to observe how local changes gradually influence the overall pattern, texture and structure. Through 100 iterative experiments, I sought to explore: what visual outcomes arise when a highly repetitive and ordered system is subjected to continuous, subtle disturbances? Do 'errors' in handcrafting necessarily signify failure, or can they be retained and become an integral part of the work's structure? Throughout the experiment, I analysed the relationship between repetition and the material by documenting, comparing and categorising the various outcomes of these variations, and by using different colour to indicate the degree of change, for example, cool colour representing subtle changes and warm colour representing significant changes—thereby enabling a more intuitive analysis. Through this process, I have reconsidered the potential of crochet as a systematic design method.

Reference

2 references from reading list

Blauvelt, A., Maurer, L., Paulus, E., Puckey, J. and Wouters, R. (2013)

Conditional Design Workbook. Amsterdam: Valiz.

- The design methodology proposed in the book emphasises process rather than the final outcome, the designer's task is not to create the final visual result directly, but to establish a set of rules, conditions and operational logic that allow the result to emerge naturally during the process. This perspective is highly relevant to my project methodology. In my crochet experiments, I did not predetermine the visual appearance of the final product. I first established a clear set of rules: the same stitch pattern was used for every 10 rows, with a fixed variation introduced on the fifth stitch

of each row. Under this rule, the overall result undergoes constant change as the process is repeated. Through 100 iterations, I observed how minute interventions gradually influence the overall structure, yielding outcomes that cannot be fully predicted.

McLuhan, M. (2001) *The medium is the message: an inventory of effects*. Berkeley: Gingko Press, pp. 8-26.

- The Medium is the Message puts forward the idea that ‘the medium is the message’, emphasising that the meaning of a message derives not only from the content itself, but is also influenced by the form of the medium. This theory has helped me to rethink why my experiments must be carried out through the medium of crochet, rather than merely involving changes in visual patterns. In my project, the same rules apply: the same stitch is used for every 10 groups, with a change occurring on the fifth stitch. If this were to take place within a digital programme or in graphic design, the result would be entirely different. The softness of the crocheted material, the temporal nature of the hand-made process, and the inevitable errors inherent in the making all directly influence the final visual and structural outcome. This reference helped me realise that crochet is not merely a method for carrying out the experiment, but an integral part of the work’s meaning. The tactility, traces of labour and uncertainty inherent in the material itself have become a crucial aspect of my exploration of repetition, control and variation.

Reference -- related to my project in its topic

Albers, A. (1936) Ancient Writing

(<https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/anni-albers/exhibition-guide>)



Figure 1: Albers, A. (1936) Ancient Writing. [Pictorial weaving]. At: Hartford, CT: Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art.

- Ancient Writing explores the potential of weaving as a visual language through recurring geometric structures that resemble symbols, codes and written forms. In this work, Albers transforms textile patterns into a system of communication: repeating units create rhythm, whilst subtle variations introduce complexity. This relates directly to my own project, in which I treat crochet as a rule-based system. In my experiments, every tenth stitch follows the same pattern, but the fifth stitch is deliberately adjusted to observe how subtle variations affect the overall structure. Similar to Albers work, my focus lies on how repetitive textile units function like a coded language, and how minute interruptions within repetition create new visual effects. Her work has prompted me to rethink crochet, viewing it not merely as a craft technique, but as a structured visual system built upon repetition.

Reference -- related to my project in its medium

Zilboorg, A. (2015) *Knitting for anarchists*. Revised edition. Mineola, New York: Dover Publications.

- Knitting for Anarchists challenges the traditional approach to knitting, which strictly adheres to established patterns and fixed rules. Zilboorg encourages knitters to break free from their reliance on standard patterns and to reclaim control of the knitting process through personal judgement, improvisation and experimentation. She views knitting as a more liberated and open form of creation, rather than merely manual labour involving the repetition of existing templates. This perspective has a direct connection to the methodology of my project. In my experiments, I established a set of fixed rules: using the same stitch pattern for every 10 rows, whilst altering the fifth stitch of each row, to observe how minute changes affect the overall structure. Although my experiments also rely on rules, I constantly disrupt the established order through deliberate intervention. This book has helped me rethink the potential of knitting as an experimental method, and has made me realise that errors, variations and uncertainty can equally be integral to generating new outcomes.

Reference -- demonstrates a critical position

Parker, R. (2010) *The subversive stitch: embroidery and the making of the feminine*. New edition. London: I.B. Tauris.

- The book explores how embroidery and needlework have historically been linked to female identity, domestic labour, and notions such as 'patience', 'precision' and 'obedience'. Parker points out that textile crafts have long been regarded as decorative domestic labour rather than genuinely creative artistic practice, which has led me to reconsider the social and cultural significance inherent in crochet as a medium. This reference relates to my project primarily in terms of medium and production methods. My experiment involves repeating the same crochet stitch and introducing a variation at the fixed fifth stitch, to observe how such a minor intervention affects the overall structure. In this process, crochet is not merely a method of production, but also a medium that requires repetitive labour, physical engagement and a high degree of control. Parker's research

prompted me to consider whether 'errors' in handicrafts must necessarily be corrected, or whether they can be retained and become part of the work. It has helped me to reinterpret the relationship between labour, control and resistance within crochet.

Wild card reference

Molnár, V. (1973-1976) Hypertransformations [Computer-aided drawings; ink on paper].

(<https://digitalartmuseum.org/molnar/hypertransformations.html>)

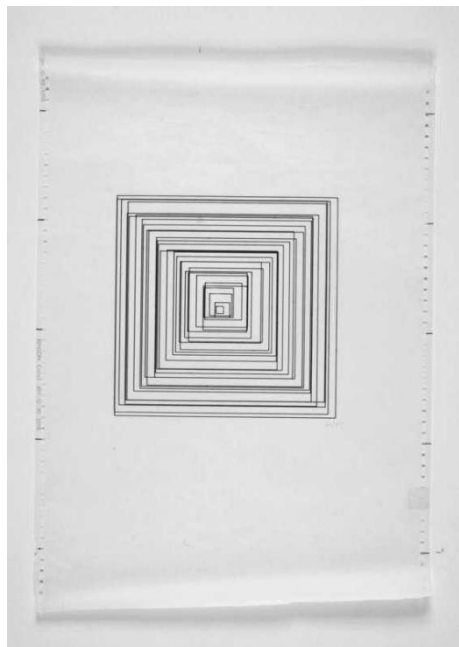


Figure 2: Molnár, V. (1975/76) Hypertransformations. [Computer graphic, ink on paper]. Each +/- 20 x 20 cm.

- Vera Molnár is a key pioneer in the fields of generative and algorithmic art. Her work is often based on straight lines, grids and repetitive structures, using subtle perturbations to disrupt the original rational system, thereby producing unpredictable visual outcomes. This approach resonates strongly with my own project. In my crochet experiments, I similarly begin by establishing fixed rules: using the same stitch for every 10 groups, whilst altering the fifth stitch in each group, to observe how local changes gradually influence the overall structure. Molnár's work has made me

realise that minute deviations are not a disruption to the system, but rather a vital means of generating new outcomes. Although she employs digital algorithms whilst I use hand-crochet, we are both exploring how variations within a system of rules generate new visual possibilities. Her practice has helped me reinterpret my project, viewing crochet as a manually generated system that operates in a manner akin to an algorithm.