METROPOLITAN

LUXURY MAGAZINE

PALM BEACH

FEBRUARY 2023

FASHION ISSUE

RETRO-FUTURISM

BY VISUAL ARTIST FRANCK GERARD

$20.00 USD

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FEMINIST APP #SOPHYGRAY

By Nadja Verena Marcin

A feminist app by Nadja Verena Marcin, available for mobile devices worldwide, launched in collaboration with Onassis Stegi as part of the EMAP residency

(NEW YORK, US & ATHENS, Greece) We are pleased to announce the worldwide release of #SOPHYGRAY – A Feminist Audio-Bot, immediately available for mobile devices in the iOS App Store and Google Play Store. Try the online demo version <www.sophygray.com> of the app, and listen to the accompanying 2-minute podcast for more context.

Talk with SOPHY about art, feminism, and daily life. Listen to SOPHY and learn
her thoughts and ideas. Share feminist ideas and help SOPHY learn yours.

#SOPHYGRAY is an audio bot that answers questions in a surprising, philosophical, and humorous way from various feminist perspectives. She/he/it challenges assumptions about virtual assistants and their typically feminine-sounding voices that often reinforce stereotypes, gender roles, and power hierarchies reflecting the culture that developed them and the impact of virtual assistants in everyday life: the distorted portrayal of women in the media and the objectification that comes with the use of gendered technologies.

When you talk to #SOPHYGRAY, you train her, you shape her, and teach her new knowledge. #SOPHYGRAY's creators are committed to creating counter-narratives to overturn gender biases embedded in today's technologies, and the stereotypes enforced by common language use. A moderated knowledge base and learning features are put in place to capture and disseminate intersectional feminist thinking and theory globally.

Using philosophical quotations from bell hooks, Donna Haraway, Silvia Federici, Audre Lorde, and Anna Lowenhaupt-Tsing, and others, the conversational capabilities of the audio bot are continuously developed by the artist Nadja Verena Marcin and a team of changing authors including Sonja Borstner (Gropiusbau), Leon Menschede (Burg Giebichenstein), Anthony Huffman (Brooklyn Rail), Shuang Cai (NYU), and Monique Machicao (Kleine Humboldtgalerie).

This app was developed by artist Nadja Verena Marcin together with programmer Alex Stachowiak. The prototype version of the app was created with a team of developers from the sponsor NOVATEC, and its content library is written by a growing list of creative writers and theorists mentioned in its database. During the EMAP residency at Onassis Stegi in Athens, several workshops were held where the public was invited to write text contributions that were later added to the content library. This will be continued at upcoming exhibitions at WRO Biennial: Fungible Content in Wroclaw, Poland, in May 2023 and Glitch Aesthetics at Digitalvilla in Potsdam from March to June 2023.

#SOPHYGRAY is named after South Africa's first female architect who designed and built more than 40 churches in the 19th century. Her pink button refers to HAL 9000, a computer with a human personality from the film 2001: A Space Odyssey by Stanley Kubrick.

We are indebted to our sponsors. #SOPHYGRAY is made possible by the EMAP residency at Onassis Stegi, co-funded by Creative Europe program of the European Union, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature, the Ministry of Culture North Rhine-Westphalia, NEUSTART KULTUR by the German Federal Culture Commissioner, Stiftung Kunstfonds in Bonn as well as sponsored by IT company Novatec. The artwork is fiscally sponsored by the New York Foundation for the Arts.

iPhone App