

LIFE CHRONICLES OF DOROTHEA ĪESJ S.P.U.

a project by ALMARE

curated by Radio Papesse

promoted in collaboration with Timespan

Life Chronicles of Dorothea Īesj

S.P.U. is a sci-fi audio novel with video subtitles in three episodes. Written and directed by ALMARE, it is curated by **Radio Papesse**, promoted in collaboration with **Timespan** and produced thanks to the support of the **Italian Council** – a program to promote Italian art by the Directorate-General for Contemporary Creativity of the Italian Ministry of Culture.

The work will be acquired by **MUSEION** | Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Bolzano. A podcast produced by Radio Papesse and ALMARE will be issued in autumn 2023 and distributed by **NERO Editions**.

Life Chronicles of Dorothea Īesj

S.P.U. will be touring throughout Europe and it will be presented at **Errant Sound**, Berlin; **Sound Studies Lab**, Copenhagen; **IUAV University**; Venice, **Loop Fair**, Barcelona; **MUSEION** | Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Bolzano; **Sandretto Re Rebaudengo Foundation**, Turin; **National Museum of Digital Art**, Milan; **Auditorium Parco della Musica**, Rome. In spring 2024, an **exhibition at Timespan**, an art and cultural organisation in Helmsdale, Scottish Highlands (UK) will close the cycle.

The Plot

Set in the future, in a fictional society, the trilogy *Life Chronicles of Dorothea Īesj S.P.U.* is an audio-diary that follows the adventures of researcher Dorothea as she extracts (and resells) sounds from the past. Thanks to a technology called E.C.H.O., it is possible to analyse the sound waves that have been engraved on every surface over the centuries. E.C.H.O. reveals the audio traces imprinted in matter, allowing any sound to be recovered.

Dorothea Īesj receives a scholarship financed by the war industry and the powerful university association 'Societas Paleoacusticæ Universalis', better known as S.P.U., to analyse sound artefacts related to military actions, which she then smuggles with a group of colleagues.

Preface

The trilogy is inspired by pseudo-scientific theories developed in the 19th century, at the same time as the growing development of recording technologies. These included archaeoacoustics, which suggested the possibility of tracing acoustic

phenomena of the past that remained “engraved” in matter.

Extracting sounds is currently impossible, but plausible: this hypothesis prompts reflection on its consequences in terms of social control and monitoring.

Life Chronicles of Dorothea ĩesj S.P.U. investigates the link between data capitalism, technology, and value creation, reflecting on the use of archaeological artefacts, archives, and memory as instruments of power and control.

The narrative structure of Dorothea’s trilogy develops from certain premises that are already current in our socio-economic system, such as the use of voice data, non-consensual recordings, and voiceprints. Self-tracing is already a reality, and our recordings are already part of the archaeological realm, as they begin sliding towards gradual obsolescence just as they happen.

The medium: between audio and video

Life Chronicles of Dorothea ĩesj S.P.U. is an audio narrative, with subtitles in Italian and English in video format, and therefore stands at the frontier of radio, film, and literature formats, in a hybrid genre that has a long artistic and cinematic tradition in videos without images.

The script is written in a dystopian language that mixes ancient and contemporary Italian. It originates from the exchange of emails and messages between the members of ALMARE, and openly quotes and alters extracts from essays, novels, film

scripts, and video games.

The artistic residency

During the artistic residency at Timespan, ALMARE was able to research and explore the historical, political, and environmental context of Helmsdale and the Scottish Highlands, through meetings, walks, and field trips. In particular, the collective studied the People's Mobile Archive (PMA), Timespan’s ever-growing sound archive, which for almost forty years has been preserving the intangible cultural heritage linked to the Highlands, including oral histories, folklore tales, historical reenactments, and folk songs.

Founded in Turin in 2017 by Amos Cappuccio, Giulia Mengozzi, Luca Morino and Gabbi Cattani, [ALMARE](#) is a collective dedicated to contemporary practices that use sound as an expressive medium. ALMARE works between artistic and curatorial practices, through writing, research, sound and music production, concert organisation, performance lectures, talks and exhibitions. In 2020, ALMARE inaugurated the production of the audio series Life Chronicles of Dorothea ĩesj S.P.U. In 2021, it contributed to founding the network project The Listeners, which it is a member of along with Metamorfoosi Notturme and Cripta 747.

[Radio Papesse](#) is a web radio and online audio archive devoted to contemporary art. Founded in 2006 and curated by Ilaria Gadenz and Carola Haupt, it produces and distributes documentaries and interviews. Using radio as an artistic tool and language, Radio Papesse works with museums and cultural institutions to talk about contemporary art processes and practices. It hosts and commissions experimental sound and radio works, inviting artists and audio makers to renew the rules of broadcasting and audio storytelling. Between 2018 and 2020, it was an associate researcher at Pratiques d'Hospitalité - Platform for critical research and political imagination, and is a member of the scientific committee of the Interdepartmental Research Centre in Radiophony at UNIRSM - University of San Marino.

[TIMESPAN](#) is an arts and cultural organisation in Helmsdale (Scotland, Great Britain) founded in 1987. Its activities include a contemporary art programme, a programme for the promotion and conservation of cultural heritage, a local history museum, an educational programme, herb and geology gardens, a bakery, and a café. Through a holistic and integrated approach, the organisation aims to use culture as a weapon for real social change that follows the principles of justice, equality, and inclusion. In 2021, Timespan was selected for its work as one of five finalists for the Art Fund, an annual award given to the best British museum.

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