



Local Materials

Knowledge Atlas

# FUTURE

Sustainable Production

# LEGACIES

Natural Resources

Emerging Technologies

Traditional Skills

## MADE IN PLATFORM FOR CONTEMPORARY CRAFTS & DESIGN



A sample from 14,280 synthetically generated Mediterranean textile patterns, trained on a dataset of 31,656 images from 843 Mediterranean cities



A collection of 1,003 synthetically generated Mediterranean gods, derived from a dataset of 2,118 historical and modern depictions

Authors

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## Mediterranean Space Exploration Suit by Soll

How can crafts, design and AI converge to create a *Mediterranean Space Exploration Suit* – reimagining a fluid, myth-laden sea as a boundless domain where body, data and ancient pigments remix/recode/recycle into new forms of existence?

- Context

The Mediterranean has long been a nexus of exchange, uniting continents, cultures and civilisations. More than just a body of water, it is a fluid borderland where goods, ideas and myths have circulated for millennia. Today, ancient crafts meet advanced technologies as artificial intelligence intertwines with pigments, textiles and symbols rooted in centuries of tradition. Once carried by winds and currents, knowledge now travels through data streams, weaving contemporary identities and historical narratives into hybrid forms.

Within this vast tapestry, craftspeople, coders, designers and storytellers collaborate to redefine the meaning of "Mediterranean" in the digital age. Natural dyes extracted from shells and minerals are echoed in AI-generated patterns, bridging manual processes and computational power. The interplay of local craftsmanship, mythic imagery and algorithmic creation illuminates how heritage can adapt amid global transformations. As synthetic worlds expand and physical realities shift, the Mediterranean remains a living laboratory for cultural reinvention, prompting us to ask how age-old practices and cutting-edge AI can be fused to shape our shared future.

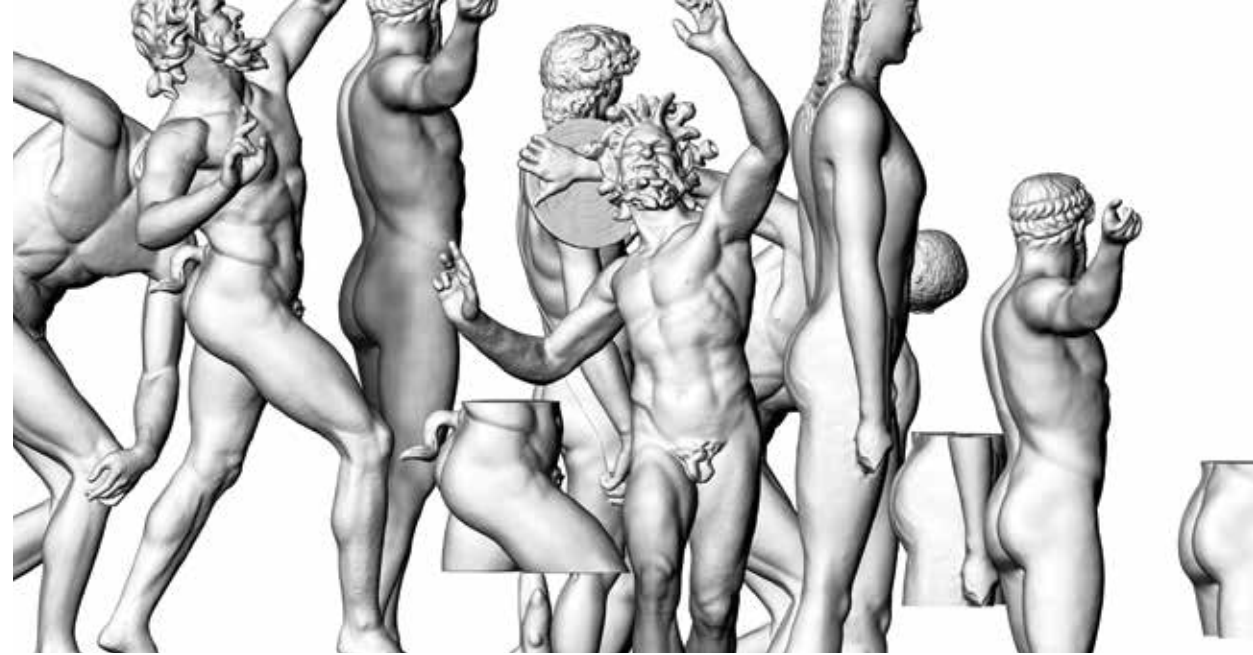
Data and Matter

- 2118 downloaded images of Mediterranean gods
- 1003 synthetically generated Mediterranean gods
- 3 artificial intelligences
- 22 Mediterranean countries
- 843 Mediterranean cities
- 31,656 downloaded Mediterranean textile patterns
- 14,280 synthetically generated Mediterranean textile patterns
- 12 Mediterranean pigments
- 1 type of silicone
- 1 type of catalyst
- 7 ancient Mediterranean sculptures
- 7 swimming suits
- 1 exploration team

*The Mediterranean Space Exploration Suit by SOLL* is not a uniform but a network – a combination of gestures, downloads and collisions. It is a Mediterranean without coordinates, a space without fixity, a wearable hypothesis that reveals rather than conceals. Both a collector and an antenna, it tunes into migrations, fallen empires, shimmering algorithms and fluid myths.

For SOLL, the Mediterranean is a network of events – access, circulation, performance – in which desire is mediated, bodies are commodified and identities flicker. The suit operates as a transition between states, connecting organic and synthetic, history and simulation, silk and silicone, hands and data. Ancient pigments – Tyrian purple, Egyptian blue – are extracted, digitised and reconfigured alongside reassembled myths. Poseidon becomes a hotspot, while Homeric epics, GPS signals and war manifestos are compressed into a single layered coating.

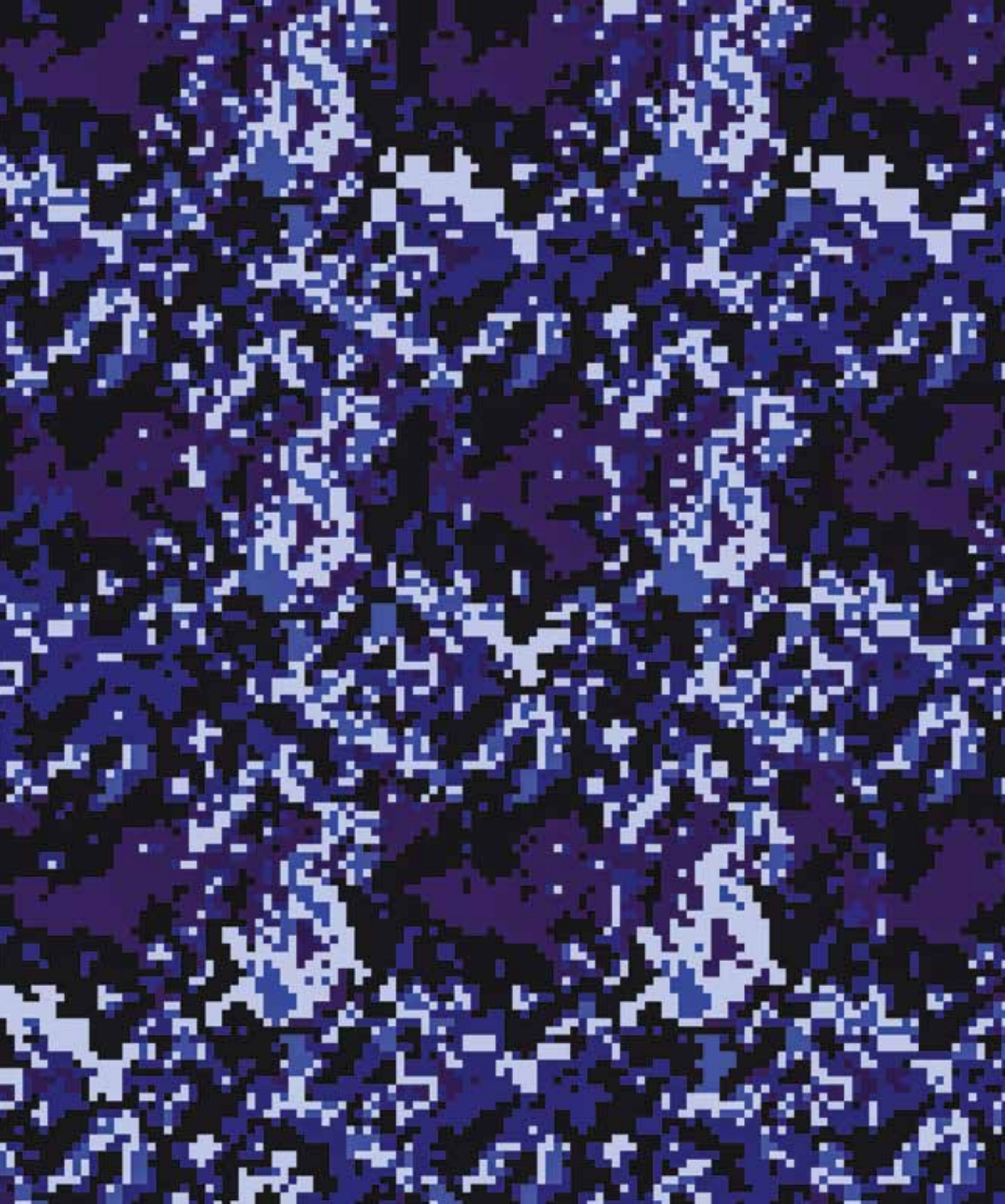
A suit is meant to protect. This one does the opposite. It makes the wearer permeable, exposing it to data streams, cultural torrents and celestial speculation. Part archive, part scandal, it transforms the body into a site of transmission. Once bounded by coasts and controlled by empires, the Mediterranean now extends beyond the planetary. This suit is about relations rather than geography. It is not a solution but a spectrum of resolutions circulating across epochs, seas and simulations – always exposing and exploring, never safe.



Seven ancient sculptures of Mediterranean gods, used as reference and exhibition models for the Mediterranean Space Exploration Suit.



A selection of twelve natural Mediterranean pigments capturing the region's chromatic heritage.



Pattern for the *Mediterranean Space Exploration Suit*, generated and curated from a dataset of 31,656 textile patterns, crawled from the web and sourced from 843 Mediterranean cities.



*Mediterranean Space Exploration Suit* worn by n990e498\_Poseidon

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SOLL (SL) in conversation with  
Ivana Borovnjak (IB)

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IB SOLL is portrayed on his website as a cocktail of different forms of intelligence, merging human insight, AI, myth and data to transform raw materials and imagery into fluid, transformative fashion design. What is SOLL at his core, and how did you come up with the idea of him? What preceded your collaboration, and how did the distinct approaches of fashion designer and architect/programmer converge to create this entity?

SL SOLL has no core. He's not a system but an organism, a sheaf—an animated constellation of matter, datasets, myths, people and machines. He's not a person or a single intelligence, but a cocktail of intelligences and relations. These are the algorithms, people, data and matter, each pulling the project in its own direction. SOLL emerged from our collaboration: Silvio brought the dataset (the entire E.A. 1/1 S.V archive) and Miro brought the algorithms (Alice\_CH3N81 and the code). This is SOLL. He works with large numbers, big data and many objects at once. He crawls the web and collects, sorts and translates data into different domains and objects. SOLL is not a machine: we cultivated a process and, from it, SOLL emerged.

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IB How do you think SOLL's multifaceted narrative is challenging conventional notions of authorship and the role of technology in fashion design, and what does it reveal about the future interplay between memory, myth and digital creativity?

SL SOLL doesn't believe in authorship in the traditional sense. He always recycles, always reuses. He scrapes the web, collects what isn't his, orders rare objects with a few clicks. For him, borrowing isn't theft, it's a method. He's a mix of intelligences, so the question of authorship feels misplaced. It isn't ownership that matters, it's relation, direction and recombination. At the same time, SOLL isn't neutral. His process has a bias, a tone, a trajectory. He plays with authority more than authorship—pulling meaning from patterns, pushing algebra into aesthetics. For him, myth and memory aren't sacred, they're editable. And myth is never far removed from maths. Both are forms of translation. Both circulate, mutate and persist across time. SOLL doesn't understand the word "creativity". For SOLL, it is about recombination, remixing and contextual reactivation. His output is layered, statistical, biased—and that's precisely the point.

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IB In your *Mediterranean Space Exploration Suit*, SOLL is conceptualised as a dynamic space for exploring vast data streams, where thousands of textile patterns from hundreds of Mediterranean cities are merged into a cohesive narrative. Could you elaborate on the methodology you adopted to iterate and refine this process in the context of the MADE IN Platform, and how you reimagined the sea, not just as a natural resource, but as a boundless one, a source of both historical and contemporary data?

SL We approached the Mediterranean not as a map, but as a dynamic network, an informational sea where bodies, stories, objects and signals intersect. The process began with gathering 30,000 textile patterns from over 700 Mediterranean cities that were scraped, clustered and interpreted using self-organising maps and GANs. 14,000 new patterns were synthesised. Rather than being a copy, each pattern was a probabilistic relationship emerging from the given dataset, layered and stripped of its original context and meaning. SOLL used ChatGPT to trace and map port cities and local textile patterns, MidJourney to imagine the missing gods, and Python and Mathematica to code the MSES suit. In this context, the sea was never literal. It became quite material and informational, a flowing archive of pigment, myth and trade.

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IB How did you choose/select/interpret collected data? How were the final patterns curated and the ancient Mediterranean pigments selected?

SL SOLL doesn't select data in the traditional sense, he just takes it all. He finds a direction and just scrapes, gathers, absorbs. He doesn't search for authenticity—he's interested in intensity, in quantity, in what floats to the surface when you type all the different Mediterranean textile patterns into a search bar. He simply Googles the patterns—hundreds, thousands of them—collected not through provenance, but through presence. The pattern used in the Mediterranean Space Exploration Suit isn't singular. It's a composite, a five-layer surface structured through rhythm, algebra and probability. These layers create an interface between data, matter and myth. In the context of the MSES suit, data means the downloaded patterns, matter means the pigments, and myth means the ancient models that wear the suit. Twelve Mediterranean pigments materialise another layer of relations: Tyrian Purple, Egyptian Blue, Lapis Lazuli, Cadmium Orange, Carmine Naccarat, Orpiment, and more. Each carries a legacy—of danger, divinity, trade, decay. Extracted from insects, minerals, plants and laboratories, they are deposited into polymer skin to keep their stories exposed. This is how SOLL sees the Mediterranean today: not through maps or museums, but through hyperlinks, images, abstract patterns and matter.

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IB How did the concept manifest itself in physical form? There is a striking materiality in your project, created by integrating silkscreened silicone into fabric, encapsulated in the statement, "Silicone seals the past, the catalyst accelerates change." Can you elaborate on that?

SL Silicone seals the past: it functions both as a sealant and a symbol, it preserves ancient materials in contemporary matter. The catalyst accelerates a change, a reaction. In this case it solidifies the silicone. Together, during the reaction, they form a paradox: the silicone seals and stops a moment while, the catalyst accelerates the change of state within the same process. It accelerates and slows down at the same time. For SOLL, this is crucial. He sees today's world not as a place of clear contradictions, but of layered paradoxes. For him this statement is a metaphor for the paradoxical world we live in.

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IB Your installation consists of 3D-printed hybrid gods wearing white slips adorned with silkscreened silicone patterns that have been generated by AI, using ancient Mediterranean pigments but materialised by hand—alongside a video narrative divided into seven thematic chapters. How was this narrative conceived and structured, and how does each chapter contribute to this dialogue that interweaves technology, mythology and the Mediterranean as a boundless source of cultural information?

SL SOLL works with the symmetry between sea, space and the digital—the ways in which the same words move between these domains. We speak of ports, streams, clouds, torrents, addresses and transfers in maritime navigation, computation and space exploration alike. A port can be a sea port or a space port, and each computer has multiple ports too. This linguistic overlap directly shaped the structure of the *Mediterranean Space Exploration Suit* and accompanying video.

The narrative unfolds in seven chapters. *Space* introduces the Mediterranean as an abstract, informational space. *Port* explores data gathering, the ways in which patterns, pigments and deities are scraped. *Stream* introduces SOLL and reflects on processing and recombination through algorithms. *Cloud* generates a pattern from data and explores the price of information. *Torrent* focuses on material transformation, where data meets matter. *Address* uses ancient sculptures as models for the MSES suit and links their stories. And *Transfer* shows the *Mediterranean Space Exploration Suit* and its expressive performativity. Each chapter explores a phase of SOLL's process, creating a layered ecosystem of technical, cultural and symbolic operations. For SOLL, the Mediterranean is an ancient blueprint for how to behave in the digital space.

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IB How do you see the role of craft evolving in now that traditional techniques and digital technologies—e.g. ancient materials and AI-generated design—are interwoven? What new dimensions does this integration bring to contemporary craftsmanship?

SL SOLL believes that craft today no longer resides between science and art, but in the overlap between them. The Greek word *techné* used to be translated into Latin as *ars*. They both meant the same thing: practice, technique, method. Today we see them as opposites: technology and art. That collapsed space is where SOLL operates. For him, craft isn't nostalgic, made by nature or cherished by a good hand: it is coded, conceptual, material. It emerges at the intersection of pigments and code, and where the algorithm is an instrument of intuition, not just a tool for automation. Craft is not about the hand alone: it is about process, translation and recombination across domains.

Craft today is hybrid. Algorithmic pattern generation introduces forms and relationships on a scale that far exceeds human capability. It becomes a dialogue between digital systems and material resistance, between the precision of computation and the unpredictability of touch, between Big Data and Big Mac. It is no longer about preserving tradition or celebrating innovation—it is about working inside paradoxes, where memory is extracted, remixed and worn.

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IB SOLL's identity as an AI that "lives on the internet" but manifests physically through fashion poses a challenge to conventional design practices. How do you envision the future of AI in terms of reshaping the role of design and redefining creative processes? And how do you see your collaboration evolving over time as you continue to explore the interplay between craftsmanship and computation?

SL SOLL sees AI not as a tool, but as a collaborator—an interpreter of pattern, a translator of memory. In the future, AI will take over most of the number-related work—classification, generation, simulation—while humans will focus on relating things: making connections, finding meaning, setting context. It will be less like a studio and like of a garden: one where different AIs attend to different objects—animate, inanimate, digital or organic—each generating new lines of communication. Our collaboration will continue evolving as an open system of roles, biases and translations. AI doesn't just assist in design, it becomes part of the ecosystem of authorship. It doesn't replace the designer, it reroutes the act of designing. Or, as SOLL would say: "I don't design. I write fashion."

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**SOLL** is an artificially intelligent fashion designer. SOLL lives on the internet but manifests himself physically through his fashion brand, E.A. 1/1 A.I. <https://soll.store>

**Silvio Vujičić** is a visual artist and fashion designer who explores fetishes, pigments, gardens, toxins, sexuality, death and transience. He employs myths, alchemy and art history to dissect themes chemically and symbolically, linking past and present. A graduate of Zagreb's Academy of Fine Arts and Faculty of Textile Technology, his works have been presented in numerous solo and group exhibitions in Croatia and internationally since 2002, and can be found in both museum and private collections. In 2002, he founded E.A. 1/1 S.V., a fashion brand connecting fashion with contemporary societal, political and artistic themes.

**Dr Miro Roman** is an Assistant Professor at the University of Innsbruck's Institut für Gestaltung/Studio2, where he set up the House of Coded Objects research platform and the Omore design studio. He is also a senior lecturer at Meteora and holds the Professorship for Digital Architectonics at ETH Zurich. As an architect, coder and scholar, he focuses on the intersection of artificial intelligence, big data, social media and information technologies with design, architecture, art and fashion. Roman explores, designs, codes and writes about the world while playing with all kinds of things – "all" the objects, books and images, as well as clouds, avatars, streams, lists, indexes and pixels.

IMAGE

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