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**LEONARDO ABSTRACT SERVICES (LABS) 2010-2011
GENETIC ART AND RECOMBINANTS: INTRONS NON-CODE
AND THE PROTO-ANIMATE CONDITION**

By Andre Brodyk

This thesis examines how a contemporary biological model namely genetic recombinant DNA and technologies can be interpreted to develop new creative art-based recombinant processes and media. This question is investigated through a focus on practice-led research, on materiality and novel methodologies. The materiality centres on the development of new biologically based Genetic art media. These new methodologies entail practice-based interpretations and experimentation of literal and invented molecular recombinant DNA processes. These procedures necessitated working inside molecular biology laboratories as art studios. The idiosyncratic and problematical dimensions of working within a science domain as part of this practical paradigm are presented to contextualize the work relative to more conventional approaches. The conceptual basis of the project is shown to emanate out of the practice that is thinking through practice. This experiential strategy was part of the overall experimental approach adopted for this project whereby creativity emerges from a negotiation of autopoietic material and recombinant tendencies. Accordingly that underpins the practice as research and also forms the conceptual framework and general structure for the written chapters. Conceptually, the broader results were the development of two main concepts for Genetic art. These are shown to be a direct consequence of a shift in the material nature of the project's mature phases of practice. These concepts are the Genetic Portmanteaux and the concept of the Proto-animate Condition. They entail reinterpretations of recombinant materials and process as semi ready-mades and the notion of the inanimate applied to non-coding DNA. This is important in relation to extant and novel DNA code scripts, especially regarding a particular form of biological inanimate material, the noncoding DNA known as introns. In the Proto-animate Condition argument, introns represent a recondite and temporal state, instantiated in a pending or protoanimated condition within a recombinant and emergent environment. The major results and conclusions expressed in creative terms are the development of several novel DNA scripts and the practical materialization of these recombinants via the agency of installation. Seven exhibitions including five installations were created and published within curated forums. Overall they imbue qualities such as the temporal, the recondite, the emergent and the anticipatory state of becoming not characterized by fixed substrates, instantiated as the creative recombinant complexion of DNA material. This is proffered as a fecund area for new media art-based explorations and critiques of interdisciplinary developments in both contemporary art and science both existing in a state of becoming.

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