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READING MATERIAL

While textiles have long been considered a storytelling medium, there is a specifically linguistic logic to knitting. For example, knitting is documented by way of knit notation, a series of symbols that describe actions. Many have studied the relationship between storytelling and weaving throughout history, while knitted pieces are not often explored conceptually beyond a utilitarian purpose as garments. Reading Material is a body of work that rejects knitting for garmentry, instead delivering an exploration of tactile language, book making, written language, and translation. After researching narrative and functional interactions between textiles and text, the opportunity arose to create a collection of knitted material experiments as meditations on language. Reading Material studies find meaning in a cross-industry hybridization by applying a knit process to everyday language related tools, including: paper, a book, a digital font, and a packaging material.

Reading Material applies two years of graduate level knitting knowledge to less familiar disciplines. Initial studies delve into the relationship between paper and fabric, and the reasoning behind replacing a paper printing press with a knitting machine. These concepts are presented as a book. Notation font takes knitted loops into a purely digital space as a typeface. Some studies explore Airless Bubble Wrap and the process of translating its production from one piece of technology to another for the sake of its successful industrialization. The surfaces engineered for Reading Material derive their form from atypical knitting fibers including: monofilament, spandex, paper, and digital code. Then, just like any artifact, each exploration works within the framework of era-specific resources including STOLL machinery, software and a digital font making service. Reading Material's December 2021 exhibition at Thomas Jefferson University displayed the textiles as studies, artifacts, and field notes.