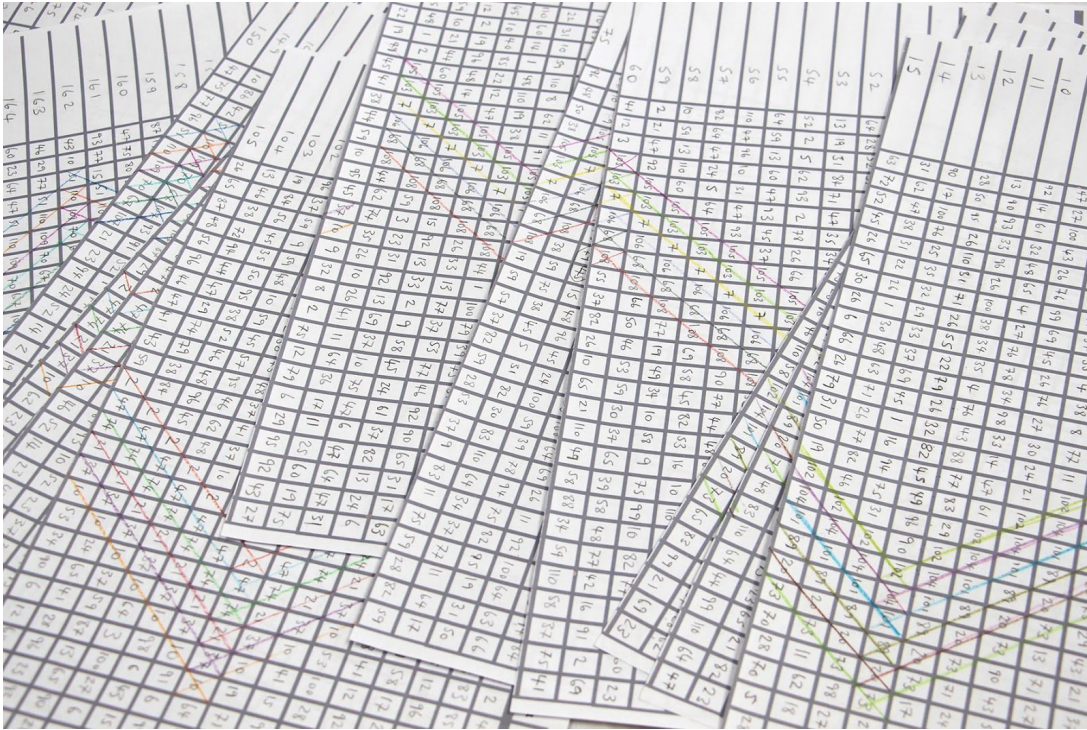


Anna Ray
Loom
Facebook AIR Program
Facebook London Offices
2020



In March 2020 I completed a striking new commission 'Loom' for Facebook London Offices, part of the Facebook AIR Program of International Artists residencies. Siting work in central London has particular meaning and significance for me, as my family on both my mother and father's side are Londoners, and many of them were in creative occupations. On my father's side there is French Huguenot ancestry - some were silk weavers, fancy trimmings manufacturers, stationers, leather workers and cabinet makers, living and working in Spitalfields. The silk weaver Pierre Hoinville emigrated to the UK in 1740 from St. Pierre Le Vigier, near Dieppe. Working silk weavers proudly hung spindles outside their houses in order to identify themselves to passers by. The first to be named refugees, the Huguenots supported themselves by working for the Master Weavers and by selling handmade embellishments for clothing on the side - rosettes, birds and butterflies.





On the same family line, beginning in the 1950s, my grandfather Douglas worked in data programming and with the first computers at Walthamstow Town Hall. It is of great curiosity to me that the punch card system of the Jacquard loom inspired the punched card technology of early computers; that pointillism, pixellation, weaving, beadwork and cross-stitch are structurally and conceptually related. My recent research into hand loom weaving with Dash & Miller and The Bristol Weaving Mill, and a fascination with my own family heritage, has inspired this new work for Facebook. In order to create 'Loom', I made myself work like a computer, assembling data in a sequence. The piece was constructed from a digital pointillist painting, then broken down into a handwritten code. This code was reconstructed exactly and manually, realised in bespoke, hand-cut and machine-stitched cloth. An illusive bargello, flame stitch, zig-zag pattern is embedded in the dazzling, coloured, confetti forms of the wall piece 'Loom', presenting like a pulse.

