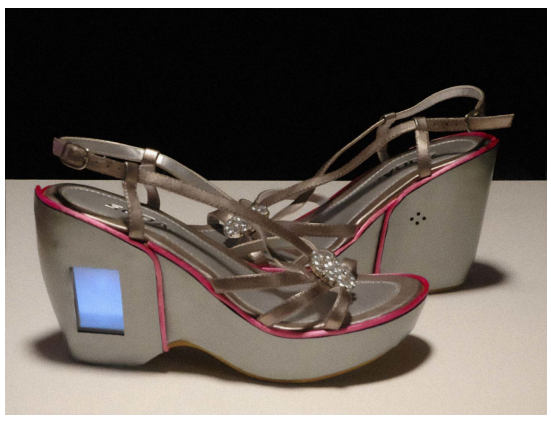

Location
United States

Users
Norene Leddy (lead artist), Ed B. Lepow, Andrew Milmoe, Melissa Gira Grant, prostitutes

Maintained by
Eyebeam Art + Technology Center, New York State Council on the Arts, Experimental Television Center, Rave Wireless, The Feminist Art Project

Duration
2000 - ongoing

Category
scientific, politics, social

Nr. and Title

188

The Aphrodite Project

Initiator(s)
Norene Leddy

Description
In the past, prostitution was intrinsically tied to religion ritual and public policy, and it wasn't considered a taboo. Taking up from the idea of ancient sandals worn by prostitutes, the artist has created platform shoes that specifically focused on their protection and safety nowadays, with a GPS tracker that can send emergency signals to 911 or a sex workers' rights group. There is also a small screen in the platform acts as an advertising and promotion medium through which phone numbers, email addresses, and images can be displayed for client recognition. In addition to these features, an online social network allows sex workers to communicate with one another to track customers. The project include also a belt, corset, and saltire, all of which contain the same technology.

Goals
To debate the moral and ethical attitudes about a taboo industry. The Aphrodite Project aims to raise questions about the social positioning of these marginalized workers: do prostitutes have a right to protection, despite the explicit deviance of their profession? Who deserves new technology and when? Could this technology empower sex workers instead of endangering them? Using an archetypal model, could prostitution be decriminalised, legalised, and regulated once more?

Beneficial outcomes
Prostitutes may work more safely and independently. This apparel will enable sex workers to have greater control of their often-dangerous jobs, whilst also be fostering a community of support and resources. Leddy designed a second version to be 'do-it-yourself.' The latest design would be more affordable and therefore, more accessible for potential use by a sex worker.

Location
United States

Users
Norene Leddy (lead artist), Ed B. Lepow, Andrew Milmoe, Melissa Gira Grant, prostitutes

Maintained by
Eyebeam Art + Technology Center, New York State Council on the Arts, Experimental Television Center, Rave Wireless, The Feminist Art Project

Duration
2000 - ongoing