

Ann Lislegaard

*Spinning and Weaving Ada*

2016

3D animation, mirror sculptures, 70 x 70 x 80 cm

Ann Lislegaard's installation presents us with a non-linear, fragmented space in which our mirror reflections encounter a glowing, web-spinning spider. The spider weaves the name Ada Lovelace, a reference to the iconic female mathematician who lived in a time when women were largely excluded from the realms of science and mathematics. In her annotations to an article on Charles Babbage's new calculating machine, Lovelace not only did the first computer programming but also anticipated the decentralised and interdependent hypertexts of the future internet. Greek mythology has given us the story of Arachne, a woman famed for her exquisite textile works who was transformed into a spider by Athena after challenging the goddess of war and handcrafts to a weaving contest — and beating her. Athena's role in this myth reflects the proper norms of textile production and gender behaviour. Arachne's punishment for defying these codes is a corrective that is meant to re-establish the norms. In Lislegaard's installation, Arachne's defiant power is channeled through Lovelace and projected onto the viewer, whose mirror-image becomes part of the installation.

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