

Exploring the field of net specific expression (language)

Extracts/some pieces on c.re.ations

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1. INTRODUCTION

Working on the Net since 1996 I have pursued the idea to explore and develop “the language” from inside the medium, in a practical way, by *creation*. In fact the process was/is an interplay of creation and reflection – developing and checking ideas in realization.

My intention was to fuse different media in Net-art pieces by “using” net-specific possibilities. Often ideas develop out of the tension between different media, i.e. text and picture, image and animation (static and in movement), visual and audible.

2. ASPECTS/KEYWORDS

- possibilities/experiences in/of collaborations (creative communication, working methods, limits and 'broken' borders).
- (importance, conjunction and difference of) mechanical (mouse) and mental interactivity.
- the structure (construction) as a form of expression.
- the timeline - linearity, inter-linearity, poly-linearity and the dissolve in hyper-structure.
- poly-media - conjunction/fusion of different elements (word, picture, sound + interactivity), media and the different meaning/optionalities of the parts.

3. SAMPLES/PIECES

desire, breathe, vib~ratio~n,

e[y]gg[e], frgmnt foUr [01 - 3.3], LaCaRa*BoLa [taste.it.d]

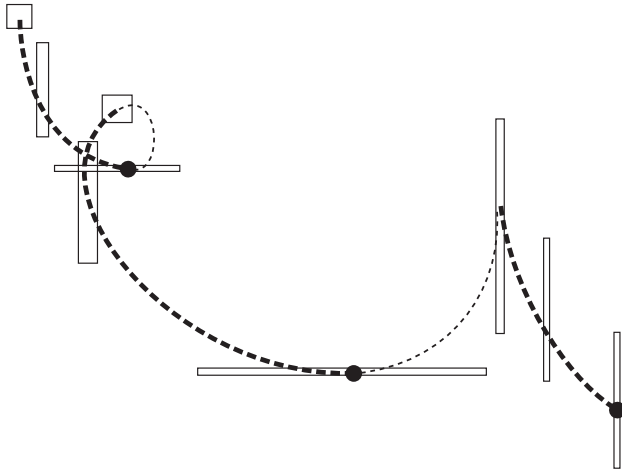
breathe (poem by David Knoebel, 2000)

is a visualized poem or a verbalized picture - the picture embraces the text and the text the picture. Visual elements (form, colour) “open” words of a poem. The mechanical interactivity is set to "onmouseover" completing the line, while "onclick" goes to the next paragraph. The last word of the poem is spoken. At the same time you enter a page with the complete picture, where you can re-construct the poem.

Breathe is a *plateau/plate*. Unlike a “traditional“ hypertext work it is not split into separate html pages, but programmed as one dhtml page with 24 layers. The visual impression of the recipient is that of looking at ONE page, like a picture. The experience of a multiple page work is like browsing, going from one page to another, forced by the change of the visual content of the whole page. A process of “unfolding-inside“ is realized in a *plateau*. The page is not refreshed as a whole but parts change or become visual/are unveiled by user activities.

Beside the onmouseover and onclick action of the mouse, the mouse-movement itself, seen as imaginable lines drawn on the screen, creates an abstract drawing enduring the expression of the piece. The visual part no longer can be seen as a pure interface. While still having the function of navigation, the kind of mouse-action transports ”expression“.

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Germany



mousemovement in *breathe*

desire (text and music by Miekal And, voice by Martha Cinader, 2000)

is a more complex piece, realized in dhtml (24 layers) + Real(streaming)Audio. The linear text of Miekal is broken in different parts, some static, others (Javascript) animated. The movement + background music is used to dramatize. The streaming spoken text contrasts the “inner” reading of the written text (and creates a sense of the personal, a personal touch). At the end a pattern of “unreadable” text visualizes the content of the text.

Like *breathe*, *desire* is a *plateau* work, opening in a separate window. Text-links are used for navigation, unveiling, mixing different paragraphs of Miekal’s text. The streaming text parts open in separate windows in front of the main window, contrasting visually the different qualities of written/read and spoken/heard text. Somehow the navigation (and the mouse looking for links) is jumping (increasingly) like the “random” animated words in the piece.

vib~ratio~n (original photos and sound mix by Bill Marsh and Octavia Davis, fall 2000)

is a poly-linear (Flash) piece. Details of photos are loading (streaming) at the opening of the piece. These details become the function of links. The viewer can start different *events* which can be mixed and generate a fluid picture.

Poly-medial pieces can be seen as modular “constructions“. While i.e. *breathe* is built with colour, form, words, lines, etc., *vib~ratio~n* is arranged in *events* (animated visual + audible sequences) running over a limited amount of time in strings. By combining and overlapping these strings a poly-linear structure is created - a “*cummulation*” of single events.

e[y]gg[e], *frgmnt foUr [01 - 3.3]*, *LaCaRa*BoLa [taste.it.d]* are part of a series called “time-series”.

These flash pieces explore possibilities of linearity in hypermedia - combining linear events with nonlinear elements.

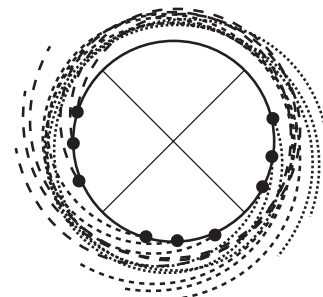
E[y]gg[e] - [*a meditation about time and space on the Net and elsewhere*] (summer 2000) consists of a pure text and a “visual” part (except some spoken words and music). It is split into a “row” of linear events, playing with different forms of mouse-activity (accessibility) and filmic elements.

The text about to be read before experiencing the piece does not explain the Flash components, but corresponds with them, leading the viewer to think in a given direction. The aspects of “time and space” (Walking - The Net is a time- and spaceless environment in which you move), “linearity in film” and “different user habits in the reception” (Gestures - Film, Painting and Net Art), written about in the text, are applied in the interactive work.

The interface with touchable handles “illustrates” on an abstract level the visual changes, sometimes opening other interfaces (i.e. “moving dots”, “shrunked world map”). Onclick- and onmouseover-actions are used in different combinations, opening/closing, starting/continuing/stopping (with different associating metaphorical meanings). Analogous to a “real walk”, every started event has to be closed to continue.

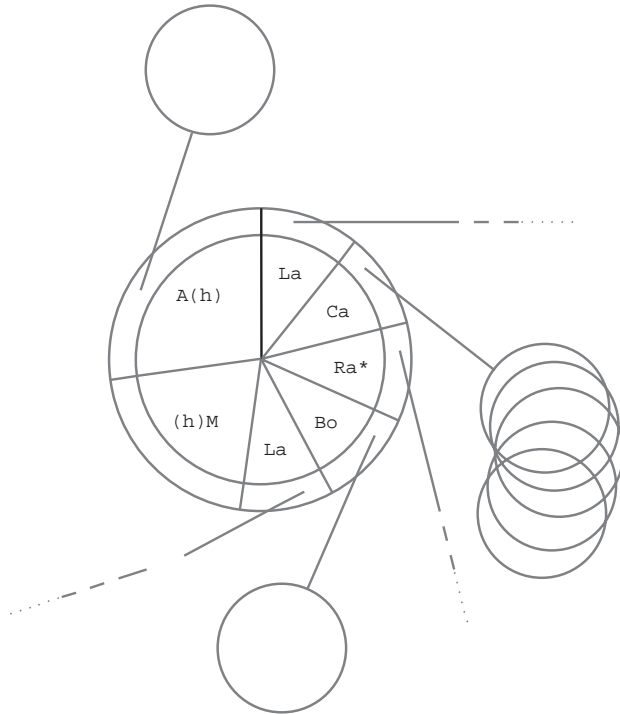
frgmnt foUr [01 - 3.3] (a collaboration with David Knoebel, 2001)

is an open-hyper-structured (streaming) composition, growing over (dispersing in) time. The piece uses a time-based interface, in which the viewer can open different (linear) running streams and combine these. Visual, textual and audible elements are used as independent parts/fragments, opening associative combinations.



structure of *frgmnt foUr*

Like *vib~ratio~n*, *frgmnt foUr* is a poly-linear piece. But this time the interface itself is changing over time, which increases the fluid character of the piece. Interestingly a “shifting in time” experience is created by the overlapping timelines. This corresponds with the structure of the work. Strings running from a loop (circle) form a kind of whirl. Following the mouse-movement, imaginable lines swinging up and down are drawn.



structure of *LaCaRa*BoLa*

LaCaRa*BoLa [*taste.it.d*] (photos sent by Alexandre Venera, 2002)

is a poly-medial and poly-linear interactive-visual-sound-poem where principles of *frgmnt foUr* [01 - 3.3] are used in another way. It was created for Alexandre Venera's (Brasil) *acarambola* project, playing with the syllables of the word "a carambola".

The work is arranged in such a way that it can be experienced in and on different levels. First, as a (dadaistic) sound poem,

repeating the single syllables by touching the letters in the stream (onmouseover); second, by starting events (onclick). While in the fluid interface of *LaCaRa*BoLa* a link only is active at a specific moment (highlighted in the interface), after an event has been started one time (by onclick), it can be influenced by the viewer at every time. The recipient gets all "mixing" options. The poly-linear piece transforms to a mixing tool.

4. SOME MORE IDEAS/NOTES

Looking at Net art pieces *Interactivity* is understood from the perspective of hyperlinks, the character of choices in hypertext pieces, or more generally the manipulation of a piece through user input. The hyperlink opens the way to *hyper-structures* with the option to transmit complex content. Focusing on the "mechanical" action, moving and clicking the mouse, the kind of interaction/"touching" can become a tool of creation. It can endure or enhance expression in an environment where "mental" interactivity (participation of the viewer through reflection) is initiated.

The notion *poly-media* is used analogous to polyphony in music. When building more complex net-art pieces with prose text or movie, linear running (viewed, read) parts are combined. In creating an interactive environment, the idea appears to run these elements/media simultaneously, and a *poly-linear* structure develops.

Like in earlier pieces it is still the method of "cummulation" with the intention to condense content (*condensation*) by piling up. In contrast to a layer construction (i.e. *breathe* or earlier works) the parts themselves submit more complex (on a less abstract level?) "information". *Inter-linear* means that like insert cuts in film, linear running events can be embed in another string (examples: the second link on the sequence below the picture in *e[y]gg[e]* and *the doorman*).

URL: <http://netartefact.de/repoem/creations/>