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**Introduction - New Media Poetry and Poetics Special
Waxing Lyrical with New Media Poetics and Poetry**

By Natra Haniff

Address: P O Box 850, Robinson Road

Singapore 901650

Email: natra@leoalmanac.orgURL: <http://leoalmanac.org>**Keywords**

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Abstract

LEA leaps into yet another bold foray, this time revolving around the world of new media poetics. Bursting at the cyber-seams, a spiffy collection of essays by myriad authors await. The proud guest editor of this edition in Tim Peterson and he's woven together a marvelous mix of nine essays, and curated an equally exciting gallery showcasing four illuminating artist works.

Waxing Lyrical with New Media Poetics and Poetry

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In *Code as Language*, Loss Pequeño Glazier talks about how in considering "how code can be language one must realize that inscription is not simply about recording ideas but about inscribing language in a specific medium." His discussion meanders through whether writing is in the code or in the displayed language when the "poetics of programming" comes into play. His argument is "if language is defined as written symbols organized into combinations and patterns to express and communicate thoughts and feelings — language that executes — then coding is language."

John Cayley with Dmitri Lemmerman tackle several layers of questions to do with writing projects sited in Brown University's four-wall VR Cave. The most daunting one seems to be "What is, what will be, the phenomenology and aesthetics of text in 3-D space?" With this case study *Lens: The Practice and Poetics of Writing in Immersive VR (A Case Study with Maquette)*, they manage to outline some of their "discoveries and implications for the broader questions. In a sense, the fact of the discoveries, answering formal and rhetorical problems, begins to address, if not necessarily justify or explain, the sociological issues underpinning a novel practice of poetic art in programmable media."

Lori Emerson then dissects digital poems and tries to "adequately describe their behaviour" in *Numbered Space and Topographic Writing*. She looks at "the cultural trend toward the mathematicization of space" and how that has brought about the mathematicization of writing, and explores the argument further with how many poems (whether digital or paper-based) that are kinetic and/or generated "model themselves on mathematical modes of thinking."

Phillippe Bootz' essay *Digital Poetry: From Cybertext to Programmed Forms* first "insists on the importance that the concepts of technotext and intermedia are taking on in contemporary poetry." Taking the role of the computer into consideration, he argues "the digital medium presents new circumstances for communication by

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redefining the role of the reader.” He then investigates the concept of programmed form in order to address new aesthetic layers that introduce specific properties of readability.

In *Concrete and Digital Poetics*, Manuel Portela contends “there is an intrinsic connection between concrete poetics as a theory of the medium (i.e., of language, of written language, and of poetical forms) and digital poetics as a theory of poetry for the digital medium.” The works of Brazilian poet Augusto de Campos and Portuguese poets E.M. de Melo e Castro and Tiago Gomez Rodrigues are showcased as Portela illustrates the adoption of electronic media by concrete poets.

Writing the Virtual: Eleven Dimensions of E-Poetry is Stephanie Strickland’s step-by-step take on the said number of characteristics of networked digital poetry. Issues that are discussed and succinctly illustrated include the recalibration of the writing/reading relations, the nature of attachment at the interaction site and the differing treatments of time and “place”.

Be Mez-merized by the uniquely presented *_Net.Drenching -- Creating The Co[de] [i]n.Text_*. Without being too cryptic, this essay is “written via the polysemic language system termed *_mezangelle_*, which is constructed using digital formats/stylistics derived from mobile, networked + code-based technologies.”

We then dive into Maria Engberg’s *Morphing Into New Modes of Writing: John Cayley’s riverIsland*. She talks about the “convergence of many modern and postmodern strategies in literature” and how it exists alongside “an eruption of digital technologies which today are considered by most to be media, and thus called new media.” John Cayley’s *riverIsland* is employed as “a paradigmatic example of new media poetry as instantiation of many different concurrent strategies and traditions (with highly diverse genealogies) which co-exist now.”

To conclude, Matthias Hillner “discusses the temporal-spatial relationship between the viewer and transitional text information” with regard to the argument that “digital kinetic typography ought to be defined as virtual motion within three dimensions.” *‘Virtual Typography’: Time Perception in Relation to Digital Communication* differentiates between real-time-communication and experiential time, with Hillner later pointing out “the potential of digital kinetic typography to decelerate the communication process.”

The essays flow effortlessly into a gallery of works, also curated by Tim Peterson, showcasing current luminaries of new media poetry who illustrate “examples of what might be described as poems or artworks which use text in ways that engage or foreground aspects of the digital medium.”

Jason Nelson’s multimedia poem *Hymn of the Drowning Swimmer* employs a diverse set of interfaces that the reader has to learn.

open.ended, Aya Karpinska’s piece with Daniel Canazon Howe, offers an experience of reader participation in which the reader helps to write a poem by manipulating two cubes and the words written on them in a three dimensional environment.

MotionText Ferment, mLEKAL aND’s collaboration with Camille Bacos, combines Fluxus and hypertext approaches with multimedia (video, sound) to evoke a planned obsolescence in the battered glyphs that populate their Babylon Ministry of Misinformation. Referencing the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, the location in Iraq which also coincides historically with the source of alphabetic writing, aND and Bacos weave a compelling critique of the US invasion of Iraq as a threat to language itself, that fundamental element of our ecosystem.

Nadine Hilbert and Gast Bouschet’s project *The Trustfiles* demonstrates an equally political engagement with multimedia. Featuring text, photography, video, and a participatory interface that varies throughout, The Trustfiles takes a paradoxically mystical view of political action by transubstantiation of documents from interventions and from the web itself into a beatific homage to networked consciousness.

Prepare to be inundated!

Author’s Biography

Natra’s quest in life is to take insightful snapshots of thoughts in an ever-changing world. She is seldom seen without a notebook and pen, furiously documenting her impressions of the things around her.

After a brief but meaningful career as a media and cultural affairs officer in a particular embassy, and a stint as a media manager in a skincare company, Natra decided to

delve into the world of freelancing and has spent the last two years diving into various writing projects.

This versatile communications-trained professional has contributed to various publications such as *Asian Geographic*, *WE (World Environment)*, *LightBox* and *Today's Manager*. She also continues to dabble in the skincare industry as a freelance copywriter.

Her current role as director of media and communications at Julian W. Photography affords her the luxury of exploring Asia's natural wonders with her photography partner. Theirs is a symbiotic relationship where he takes the photographs and she does the writing.

To accommodate a love for nature that runs deep, Natra also engages herself in many of the Singapore Zoo's educational programs. As a part-time facilitator, Natra works with school children, imparting conservation messages through hands-on activities. She also writes regularly for the zoo and was a contributing writer of *The Field Guide to Singapore Zoo*.

Additionally, she volunteers her time as a Singapore Zoo docent and is a consultant to the Malaysian Elephant Appeal, a non-profit organization that raises funds for an elephant sanctuary in Pahang, Malaysia.

Natra is working on her first book: A collection of anecdotes about the late Sri Utama, the first captive-born elephant in Singapore. She joined the LEA team as its editor in February 2005, and has recently been promoted to managing editor.

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