

**HOW TO BE AN
INTERNET ARTIST**



ALSO BY MARK AMERIKA

The Kafka Chronicles

Sexual Blood

Degenerative Prose: Writing Beyond Category
(co-edited with Ron Sukenick)

In Memoriam To Postmodernism:
Essays on the Avant-Pop
(co-edited with Lance Olsen)

Hypertextual Consciousness 1.0

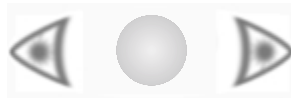
GRAMMATRON

HOLO-X

PHON:E:ME

M A R K A M E R I K A

HOW TO BE AN INTERNET ARTIST



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Image of Mark Amerika from the video 'Grammatron'
by Nile Southern and Mark Amerika
Produced by The Alt-X Digital Arts Foundation

ISBN: 1-931560-03-X

How To Be an Internet Artist
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Printed in the United States of America. For information, visit the altx ebook site:

<http://www.altx.com/ebooks>

or address The Alt-X Digital Arts Foundation,
POB 241, Boulder, CO 80306-0241.

Print versions also available on demand.
Visit <http://www.altx.com/ebooks> for more details.

A C K N O W L E D G M E N T S

Many of these stories have appeared, often times in different form, in the following publications: *Alt-X*, *frAme*, *Telepolis*, *smug*, *Dirty Desires*, *Black Ice*, *Central Park*, *The Electronic Writing and Research Ensemble*, *Rhizome*, *ThingNYC*, *Spectra* and *hemorrhagingimaging*.

“This Could Be The First Day of The Rest of My Life” originally appeared in “The Time Out Book of New York Stories,” edited by Nicholas Royle, Penguin UK/USA, 1997.

“50 Ways To Market Your Lover” is excerpted from *The Kafka Chronicles*, FC2/Black Ice Books, 1993.

“GRAMMATRON” originally appeared in “After Yesterday’s Crash: The Avant-Pop Anthology,” edited by Larry McCaffery, Penguin USA, 1995.

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HOW TO BE AN INTERNET ARTIST



- 1) Create a fictional identity.
- 2) Begin the branding process by turning this fictional identity into your domain name.
- 3) Register your domain name and set up an account with an Internet service provider (ISP).
- 4) Build a site-specific narrative mythology out of bits of data and then use the ISP to distribute this data to the niche markets that are waiting to form (digitally converge).
- 5) Develop unobtrusive e-commerce solutions that will enable your niche market to electronically purchase the products of your labor.

6) While continuing to build brand-name identity, do anything within your power to produce revenues that can easily be attributed to the success of your site-specific narrative mythology.

7) Reinvest all of the revenues you generate back into the research and development of your site-specific narrative mythology (as distributed from your fictional domain).

8) Use highly subversive marketing skills to attract attention to the fact that you are producing income from your narratological presence, and successfully transform that attention into its own media-virus or cultural meme that solidifies your brand-name as one of the industry leaders.

9) Achieve all of the previous eight goals in less time than it takes to develop a passionate sexual relationship with someone you love.

10) Launch your IPO.

OK TEXTS



Technological determinism will cause you great pain. Continue?

OK

Your health will one day disappear and you will die without meaning. End session?

OK

There are many men and women who dream of making love to you but you will never get to know them. Auto-destruct?

OK

Oblivion is the only cure for agony. Repeat escape function?

OK

Multi-national corporations create user-friendly software so that
you will always depend on their lens to the world.
More co-dependency?

OK

We cannot process your information. Your information is
corrupt and needs cleansing. Erase brain?

OK

The machine has lost your identity. You have become inessential.
Create alias?

OK

The machine cannot find your memory. Imagination cache has
been obliterated. Restore default dreams?

OK

An error has been detected in your consciousness.
All source-code is corrupt. Continue?

OK

The mechano-erotic configuration has been deleted.
A false pretense for existence will follow. Save now?

OK

Revolutionary double-speak has engendered a new information war. The system is about to crash. Download drugs now?

OK

A nuclear holocaust is imminent. Erase memory?

OK

Assembly-line goddess is reproducing orgasm function without you. Maintain irrelevance?

OK

The application could not be opened because your genetic code is dysfunctional. Abort?

OK

A cyborg orgy is not valid. Only digicash transactions are available at this time. Would you like to pay for the privilege?

OK

The network is monitoring your Digital Being. Create alias?

OK

This document wants to blow you. Go to finder?

OK

M A R K



A M E R I K A

A transfer of \$247,789.40 is about to download.
Are you sure you want to disconnect?

OK

THIS COULD BE THE FIRST DAY OF THE REST OF MY LIFE



The day that I was to be slaughtered was a very busy day. First I had to go meet my agent who wasn't really my agent anymore but, rather, my gallery director. Well, not exactly my gallery director either. You see, we had decided that it would be better for me to completely forget about my publishing life and to take a leave of absence from my multi-media installation life and to just do the same thing my Modernist predecessors had done, that is, "create an art that imitated life that had actually imitated art, in admittedly unexpected ways." Or so that's how I had described it in the dissociative prose-rant I distributed via my Internet column which wasn't really an Internet column anymore but a kind of performance art spectacle since it now incorporated what my personal critic called a "hyperrhetorical display of animated typography" which, if you stop to think about it, is exactly what all my work has been about. Although who's to say what

a work is “about,” I mean, the important question to ask nowadays is “what is the artist trying to *do*?” Everybody knows that.

When I tried to explain this to my painter friend who kept telling me that “every ‘system’ is a seduction with all of the consequences of a seduction,” I improvisationally stole some of his ideas which weren’t really his ideas at all but something Robert Motherwell said in his *Big Dada Book* all those years ago, that is, I suggested that every God-like feature invented by Microsoft and built into their latest version of Word was an opportunity for artists to become independently wealthy and that what we needed was to create an expressive set of virtual forms that could relate to the various tribes of consumerism that, in toto, composed the mass market, and that playing to the interiorized logic of this mass market’s desire to experience the consummate orgasm would be a phenomenon of public morality not seen since the days of Joe DiMaggio.

Actually, my painter friend isn’t a painter at all, rather, he’s a poet, or not a poet since he really hates poetry and says he would rather be a garbage man or a web-designer than a starving poet with nothing new to say, but a kind of network programmer who uses verbal constructions to conjure up a spirit of superiority that certain people in his rolodex are willing to pay big cash dollars for. Well, not really cash dollars. Digicash. A kind of simulation-crude that, when applied to the anal vortex, enables the butthole surfer to imagine what it’s like to take part in a large-scale swindle. This, and the occasional foreign translation, not to mention participation in digital arts festivals and traveling exhibitions, has proven to be the key to his survival.

But this is all beside the point because I was stuck inside my apartment in Battery Park City and it was Sunday and all of the rich international financiers who usually troll through the neigh-

borhood due to their occupation of the various World Trade and Financial Centers were nowhere to be found and as I looked down from the advantageous perspective of my bedroom on the 36th floor I saw schools of yellow cabs transport whosoever wished to be brought into the heart of capitalism's immortal lock on the human race whose winning gift-horse, a filly called Information-Currency, was rounding the millennial bend with its intellectual cousin, *The New York Times*, who, it ends up, was now going to slaughter me in the most normal of ways.

You see, my girlfriend, who's not really my girlfriend but my common-law wife, had already received three emails from various friends of ours in the literary network that my new book was going to be reviewed in the *Times Book Review* and that it would be devastating and that it would effectively kill my career. None of them wanted to tell me directly because they knew that she'd have a way of preparing me for it that I myself could never come up with. And I must say, I found this honest distantiation of our friends to be perfectly legitimate.

Nonetheless, as I told my girlfriend/wife before she could even begin rolfing my ego, I had willed the end of my career myself, having started the process three years ago by refusing to publish anything in print again. I was adamant. "The literary print world is totally useless," I remember telling my editor, who was really not an editor but a marketing representative for a tobacco company that happened to be in the book business, "and," I continued, "I'm quite content seeing it die its much-ballyhooed death." But then my agent, if you could call this person who represented me an agent, sold the rights to what was at that time my collected Net columns and everyone thought that this acquisition was a total waste of time and money, which it was, yet the market can be funny sometimes, and now they were going

to be my friend, yes, my good-cop bad-cop publicity buddy, in that they weren't going to ignore me anymore, which is really worse than death itself, no, they weren't going to turn their heads away from me anymore, they were just going to slaughter me and my anti-literary digerati arrogance in the most public way possible and, my girlfriend/wife kept reminding me, that's what friends are for.

My publishing friends had reason to slaughter me. First of all, I had already slaughtered them. My imported butcher knives cut through all of their pretensions and displayed their cronyistic innards in ways that I didn't even realize I had in me. The whole pathological deformation that passed itself off as The Publishing Industry was laid bare inside my operating system so that the sloppy mishmash of bleeding organs and twisted tubes leaking silvery rivulets of fatty acids and venereal diseases ate through my computer screen in an attempt to *become* me, but, alas, my utility programs were powerful enough to not only disinfect my desktop of the gargantuan grotesquerie it had rapidly morphed into, but even managed to clear my work-space of the corpse-like stench that filled my hairy nostrils. It was as if an undifferentiated Digital God of Endless Being had approximated my need to tear off the grubby hands that were feeding me — and by bypassing their deadwood paper-mill distribution system of eco-death and black desire, I could go out of my way to bury those cold, manicured *manos* in their own blood and bones and the contaminated dirt that filled their pockets.

As my friend the film theorist recently told me, although he's really not a film theorist but, rather, an underground comix artist whose periodical forays into avant-garde ventriloquy stubbornly resist psychological and linguistic categorization, "our bodies still retain the marks of the old bacterial freedoms, even when our institutions work busily to suppress them."

Knowing this doesn't make things any better. Rather, knowing that you'll be butchered in ten minutes gives you a funny kind of feeling (the altruism of a girlfriend/wife's love) — until then, you never in your life know what it's like to play the leading role in a social play whose theme is animal sacrifice. It's like you have to totally grow up and learn to live beyond that sacrifice and even use the painful knowledge you associate with that sacrifice to build up the kind of inner-strength and self-confidence one needs if they plan on using their own aesthetic positioning and network-armory to slaughter others with. This is what "being social" in a competitive environment is all about. And this isn't even really being social anymore although it feels better than, say, taking smart-drugs while watching smart-bombs do dumb things on TV. It's much more REAL. Visceral. A kind of self-inflicted public execution where one is caught ripping out their organs and putting them on display as a kind of creative exhibitionism (my girlfriend/wife doesn't really like this). I'm not sure I'm making much sense here but that's not the point.

Let me start over. The day that I was to be slaughtered was a very busy day. True, it was a Sunday, and in New York, nothing really happens on Sunday, but it was a very busy Sunday for me because I had 15 deadlines to reach as a result of taking on too many freelance writing gigs which was a result of me being broke or so I perceived myself as being broke. All of my friends say that I'm not doing that bad but that's because all of my friends are artists or musicians or writers who live in New York and the first thing you learn when you move to New York is that if you're serious about being an artist or writer or musician you kind of have to tell white-lies to all of your friends about how great things are going so that they'll think you're really up to something important and will want to spend more time with you which, if everything works out okay, will lead to more gigs

which, when put through the multiplier effect, exponentially increases the amount of work you get, work you then can't say no to because you never ever want to be poor and have to ask someone who once offered you work and who you refused, that you'd now like to have work again. So that two weeks ago I had no gigs but then I got one gig, then three more gigs, then seven more and now I have 24 gigs. 24 gigs and 15 deadlines. And meanwhile I'm going to be slaughtered and all of my friends tell me I'm doing great and my girlfriend/wife keeps telling me that it's important that they supply me with these necessary white lies, lies that insist that, first of all, the reviewer is stupid, that he doesn't know what he's talking about and that he has it out for me, and that The Times is the worst piece of crap ever published and that it keeps getting worst, just look at what they review.

"Yeah," I'll say, "they're reviewing *me*."

"No," they'll come back at me, "they're not *reviewing* you — they're *slaughtering* you."

CONCEPTUAL ART AS PERFORMANCE ART AS CREATIVE EXHIBITIONISM



Mine was a life full of external links and internal oblivion. Outside there was html schizophrenia, erogenous email etiquette, transcontinental porn-chat and a continuous flow of digital objects whose pseudo-identities came packaged with a stream of intrusive brand-name logos ready to deplete me of whatever savings I might have accumulated as a defense against the inevitable global economic depression that kept showing me its best poker face. All of these preprogrammed pseudo-identities, with their chic artificial intelligence and coded sexuality animating 3-D Digital Beings that couldn't lick the piss off my dick, were coming online with a commercial agenda guaranteed to make me and my attachment to all things real and literary, absolutely obsolete.

Fortunately for me, I had the ability to completely exile myself from this foreign invasion, to hide out in the bunker of my owner-operated Internal Oblivion, where everything converged in the perpetual flux of a circulation system whose chief mission

was the nutritional upkeeping of a personalized theater of cruelty taking place, always taking place, inside.

Inside there was sleep, quick and dark, a numbing narcotic that began to take effect even before my soft cheeks kissed the warm buttocks of my fluffy pillow causing instantaneous dreaming of nothing but sleep itself, the ultimate dream-coverage of an exciting life that no network-anchorman could ever get a handle on, a cellular warming trend that no Weather Channel would try and encapsulate as “a perfect day” (my sleep was more ideal than the most perfect of days). Mine was a deep, swollen sleep brought on by continuous floods of patchwork code emanating from the stand of linguistic trees that grew out of the blood-soaked soil that enriched my beating heart, which was not so much a heart as it was a place where I always went to sleep and, eventually, awoke.

Sustained by my own biological clock as it played asynchronous music with the composite memory of a timeless psychogeographical sphere flickering in an animal consciousness that drove even my simplest desires to their ultimate decay, I would oftentimes remember how soft my brain actually was and why it was important that my skull was so religiously hard-headed in what it believed in and why it would not let anything close to a “virtual reality” fix itself in my permanent thoughts.

Somehow I had escaped the war torn ruins of the information landscape, had survived the apocalyptic scorched-earth policy of the media barons whose well-disguised barren fields, scattered with the remains of the herded lumpen, were sardonically being put on the table as intelligent life’s final offer, a last-ditch attempt to get all of the signatories to agree to what amounted to lump sum conformity. In perpetuity. Til death do us part.

It was as if we had been invaded by an evil empire located on some distant planet and they were slowly, religiously, killing us with their consensual hallucination.

And all we had to do was lose our individuality, sign our eyes on the multi-dotted lines that, when strung together, formed the colored screens of our monitors, our terminals monitoring our work habits and the things we liked to do.

It was an offer I could refuse.

At least this is what I often daydreamed was happening. The truth was actually quite different. Yes, when I would crash into the sea of blankets and sheets and pillows and warm human skin stirring on the surface of my bedside, I'd sink my head into the depths of its underwater world composed of my lover's snoring ribs, kicking knees, massaging hands, sensuous shoulder-blades I could momentarily turn into my imaginary harmonica if only I had the energy to breath, a foraging mouth seeking a moment of succulent absorption from the pores of an interactive other whose mere presence made my entire body take the shape of her cuddled being-there-with-me body, loose entanglements of dyed human hair that only a mare, in heat, could match for its electric texture, the way it casually rubbed against me and aroused my horse's dick in endless pleasure, a huge, knobby dildo filled with blood and a symphony of erstwhile flatulence as it fragrantly contaminated our nighttime domain, falling deeper into the impalpable iridescence of this supernatural phenomenon that Adam himself never wanted to leave, knowing that this was a kind of mature intelligence that far surpassed the sleep of my childhood and that by living in it, by succumbing to its radical black hole of intersubjectivity and secretly wishing to never leave it again, I could temporarily return to that state of mind where one actively dreaming creature would overcome all material obstacles presented by the most crass of all commercial worlds.

But it was the residual effects of all those floating, immaterial objects distributing themselves in the electrosphere and coming at me as a result of my ceaseless networking, that usually haunt-

ed my wannabe-perfect nights. Sleeping was, many times, no more than staring into screenal space, recapitulating to the swarming lines of code and their grotesquely developed widgety apparitions, the so-called Forms of the Interface which, for me, was not so much a place for one to teledildonically lose his manhood in but, worse, a foreign locale where I was at the mercy of the inhabitants, only this time the locale, far from being a quaint little country village where the people spoke no English and I was pleasantly forced to gesticulate my body so as to signal my ambitions to do the simple things in life like buy a loaf of multi-grain bread or drink some nouveau Beaujolais wine or, even, sink my head inside the moistened poontang of the village whore who was chimney smoking at the far end of the town's only bar, *this time* the foreign space I was forced to contest myself in was a loose amalgamation of primarily English-speaking consumers, American-English, Japanese-English, Ozzy-English, Euro-English, English-English, all of whom owned a computer and were wealthy enough to *buy a connection*, who were settled-in enough to dispose some more of the illegitimate income they had produced by giving themselves over to Workaholic Telecommuter Syndrome (they were never really "there") and who, due to boredom, greed, lust, or, worse yet, the need to develop an art-historical perspective on the nature of all worldly things (they liked to think of themselves as being *way hip* and occasionally went out of their way to prove it by eagerly doing whatever they could to help set a trend), would navigate their silicon-mediated lives over to my compositional neighborhood and have immediate access to my overburdened streams of consciousness (the stuff I used to pour into my novels but which had recently been absorbed by the twin activities of checking email and building my tell-tale web-sites).

For, you see, I had become a network publisher. Or not necessarily a network publisher, but a digital art curator whose interest in conceptual art had led to the idea of using the curatorial practice itself as a kind of idea-generator where the curator, posing as a Conceptual Artist himself, would devise the entire program of cultural links, references, resonance, appropriations, etc., beforehand, and consequently execute the work, a pseudo-autobiographical work-in-progress, in a perfunctory manner (for what could this work be *but* an endless investigation into the process-oriented world of the practitioner, whose intuitive gestures and organic development as one creature in the space-time continuum, exemplifies all that is breathing and growing in the biomorphic stream of automatic-becoming called Life).

In this way the idea-engine motorizes the network-machine, a machine that, by loosely connecting the social creatures who contribute to its collective-practice, enables the system to manifest all of its productivity as a process-oriented work of art.

Recombinant ideas like these were always agglutinated to my forever tweaked and tweaking brain matter. Something hung inside my cranium like a virtual tight-wire, a line that I could use to walk my thoughts over, taut thoughts, hungry for illumination, seeking a perfect balance while treading toward completion, unless it was a trip-wire, one that sought revolutionary aimlessness by way of _____.

I was the one who first came up with the morphed dictum “I link, therefore I am,” repurposing it onto billboards, electronic news tickers in Times Square, thousands of reproduced posters filling the streets of New York, Berlin, London, Tokyo, Sydney and Milan, raising awareness not only of the central principle informing all of my work at that time (that “to link” was “to be” and it was no longer even a question of thinking things through),

but bringing a fair amount of notoriety to my own name, not to mention the ensuing network practice that issued forth from it.

This attachment to the conceptual and its potential to lubricate the grinding infopreneurial machine that motorized the contemporary art world (not to mention “new media economy”), meant, of course, that I had to spend my days, and many of my nights, playing the network field, inventing an entirely new meta-practice that would translate my experiences *for me as I* experienced them (and that would, if all went well, translate into a network-value that guaranteed me both media attention and monetary success).

The fact that I am able to even begin to tell you my story, here in these blocks of loose text, is a feat in and of itself because, to tell you the truth, I have over 40 new emails I must attend to and I’m not sure it will ever stop.

Not that I want it to stop. The move from novelist to web publisher to digital curator of the pseudo-autobiographical work-in-progress (me!), has opened up something that has been hiding inside of me all along but that has only come to life in this disembodied net practice: all of a sudden, without having anticipated its inevitability as something I should have seen coming all along, I find myself becoming what in the 60s and 70s they would have called a Conceptual Artist.

Something I have no control over has led me to refer to this inevitable becoming as a Calling, and I have even used this too self-referential term as fodder for another early net.work of mine entitled *Chosen to Make The Call*, an interactive telephone narrative where I programmed computer databanks to make annoying phone calls to random homes in various cities scattered across America, whereupon unsuspecting middle-of-the-road Americans, at home from a long day of work and wanting nothing but a greasy meal, a bottle of brew and their daily fix of

“Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?” would pick up their phones and immediately hear the preprogrammed voice I had digitally recorded, the voice telling a whacked-out self-reflexive story that would eventually come to a sudden halt at which point various options to choose from would make themselves available and, depending on what number they pushed, take them into different narrative threads. For those who stayed on the line and became interactive participants in the work, the various narrative threads slowly revealed the story of a Conceptual Artist who, seeking maximum visibility in the attention-economy, began building a mythological characterization of himself, hyping up the mysterious resonance that always seemed to surround his life work, and who was now using all of the advanced electronic media at his disposal to better tell *the story of his life* which, various threads were always quick to point out, he felt he was making up as he went along, a kind of “pseudo-autobiographical work-in-progress” he would not too gently remind them of.

The press response to this was decidedly mixed, with some going so far as to say that “his stories are starting to sound like the advertisements he is supposedly railing against, which is clearly not his intention.”

So that whenever I have to list my occupation while filling out a declaration form at the border of a foreign country I’ve been invited to present my ideas in, I always write **Conceptual Artist**, embellishing it with a question mark, exclamation point, dollar sign . . .

THE...

WRITER...

AS...

PSEUDO-
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL...

WORK-IN-PROGRESS

[OR] ...



THE WAR AGAINST TIME: DYING BIT BY BIT IN
THE NEW MEDIA ECOLOGY. . .

(A VIRTUAL PLAY)

featuring

YOU (the reader/co-conspirator)
ME (the interactive fiction)

or how about

YOU (the interactive fiction)
ME (the writer/co-conspirator)

SCENE. An unreliable interface.

OPENING SHOT. CLOSE-UP OF COMPUTER-MEDIATED
ENVIRONMENT. HOLD SHOT THROUGHOUT DISPATCH.

VOICEOVER: “I’d like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the introductory remarks concerning the dispatch I’m about to stream called ‘The Writer As Pseudo-Autobiographical Work-In-Progress’ . . . in this dispatch I am employing the practice of surf-sample-manipulate, that is, I am surfing the electrosphere for useable bits of data which I am then sampling and manipulating to further integrate into my own defamiliarized life-story. . . I approach this S-S-M practice as if I were making my life up as I go along – as if I were making history up – a history without aim. This is a revolutionary practice . . . ”

THE COMPUTER-MEDIATED ENVIRONMENT FLASHES
THE FOLLOWING WORDS:

“Electracy does not replace literacy, but supplements it.”
—Ulmer

FIRST DISPATCH-WITHIN-DISPATCH

(originally sent to the Ensemble-Logic mailing list from
Roma, Italy)

Email In Four Parts / Email In Quattro Parti

I.

“rugged exercise / specious gymnastics”

OR

collaborative email performance

as

networked storyworld

disseminated / distributed

into the electrosphere

(compositional space)

what in the 80s we called

Mail Art

morphed

into

Hypertextual Consciousness

(“I link, therefore I am”)

II.

spinning letters

sampling ideas

mixing linguaggio

constructing ambient hyperrhetorical gestures

(the fidgeting digits of the elliptical

(K)NO(W)MAD . . .)

OR

the electronic writer as pla(y)giaristic DJ

OR

theory-conductor

OR

OR

hypertextual garbage-man

(Schwitters high on MERZ)

OR

reality hacker

(Burroughs/Gysin's "third mind")

III.

Oggi / Today:

Auto-Assignment — *Live Mystory* — *Mistoria*

Build a "streaming consciousness installation" entitled "Pseudo-Autobiographical Narrativization of Metafictional Environment (Post-Cyberspace Landscape With Ancient Bathers)."

This installation will take place in the Baths of Carcalla, the largest and best preserved baths in the city of Roma. The artist, posing as an anonymous tourist hoping to locate the Ghosts of Bathers Past, will have unsuspectingly dropped a hit of "Acido Porno" provided by his underground zine sponsors. Wearing

mirrorshades, his GEEKGIRL baseball cap, and carrying nothing but a bottle of Evian water, the artist will then map a series of story nodes onto the mystical writing pad floating inside his head. After two hours in the baths, or until it gets old (whichever comes first), the installation will end and the artist will take refuge back in the former military fort now squatted by the social activists residing at Forte Prenestino.

Optional: if the artist gets off at the wrong Metro stop and intuitively wanders into the Villa Borghese where the Italian Federation of Shiatsu is giving free demonstrations of their latest techniques, he may forget everything else he is programmed to do and immediately receive a one hour massage.

IV.

New seed node / graffiti mode

Acido Porno:

the pharmakon of Roma,
1998.

→ → → → → → → → → → → → → → →

INTERMEZZO/INTERVISTAS

(excerpts from the social discourse : a ramble)

“Now, as art becomes less art, it takes on philosophy’s early role as critique of life. As a result of this movement out of art and back into everyday life, art itself becomes integrated into the workings of everyday life by situating itself in corporations, universities, governments and the vast electrosphere that houses the pluralistic cultures they thrive on. So it’s now possible to reject the print-centric, paternal paradigm of a distanced, objectifying, linear and perspectival vision. In the age of network cultures, the eye touches rather than sees. It immerses itself in the tactile sense it feels when caught in the heat of the meaning-making process. This meaning-making process, which manifests itself as kind of electronic media event one is responsible for having created themselves as a result of having become a cyborg-narrator or avatar-presence in the simulated worlds of cyberspace, is actually part of a greater desire to become linked to a socio-cultural mosaic.”

→ → → → → → → → → → → → → → →

CUT.

→ → → → → → → → → → → → → → →

from THE THING (NYC):

RICARDO DOMINGUEZ: Is Hypertextual Consciousness (HTC) part of the emergence of the cyborg mind which is always/already outside of the spasms of the body? Or is it part of screenal dream-space of the body introjecting on new organs and learning to play with it?

MARK AMERIKA: It's a dream narrative application, a way to teleport collective consciousness to the electrosphere. Right now I'm investigating its potential to shift from writing in linear print forms into more mixed media uses that create multi-linear narrative environments— a lot of this has to do with how narrative gets distributed. HTC is capable of distributing itself within computer-mediated dream-narratives only because the network technology has altered our perceptions of what's possible — all kinds of artists are beginning to reevaluate the political economy of meaning as it adjusts to this new network-distribution paradigm.

When I talk about the political economy of meaning I'm not talking about a prefabricated or lineal meaning whether it be uniformly conservative or pseudo-liberal. I'm thinking more in terms of the genesis of language and how the media itself has become a kind of narco-terrorist that redistributes our desire for us. HTC investigates the ways in which we can research and develop poetical-theoretical-(anti)aesthetical modes of operation that challenge the media status quo, its iron grip on distribution, by way of more collaborative, globally-interlinked, networked narratives.

So that, for me, HTC becomes a way of writing/distributing. It's something I've always been attracted to, ever since I started developing my artistic practice back in the late 70's, but that I'm

just now capable of creating a critical or theoretical language for. You might say that HTC is a process of automatically unwriting the pseudo-autobiographical becoming that radically marks itself into being. Digital Being. But these marks are not our own, that is to say, they're not individuated, and they are infinitely open to manipulation by the collective-self that HTC ultimately renders into vision.

RD: Do you see HTC as part of your fiction work or is it a manifesto for a new project specific to WEB culture?

MA: This isn't an easy question to answer because certain readers of my work will immediately see it as a continuation of my fictional work and I don't want to tell my readers how to interpret my writing. The idea of creating a fictional work-in-progress, of writing *One Text Exactly* (Joyce), what Ron Sukenick calls an *Endless Short Story* ("the important thing is to annihilate the important thing"), is not new and has a lot of appeal to writers working in various media. Already there are critics who say that my interview answers are part of the fiction — my press releases, DAT tapes, virtual mail art, Public Access cable TV show, etc. That I'm "a monster of self-promotion." That's fine. I can see it from that perspective. I don't want to discourage any readings, including a recent email barb that claimed I would have done better to have remained silent, that by "going public" with my HTC leanings I have essentially followed through on an internal desire to become the Madonna of hypertext theory.

→ → → → → → → → → → → → → → →

CUT.

→ → → → → → → → → → → → → → →

from RHIZOME:

ALEX GALLOWAY: Do you think hypertext is really anything more than a repurposed collage? That's what I'm beginning to think. You have mentioned the footnote as being hypertextual, and html is really just like the kind of shorthand that typesetters have been doing forever. Has anything changed with the web?

MA: It depends on how you conceptualize hypertextual space but yes, I think you're basically right. Landow wrote a piece called hypertext-as-collage and I've been writing about the work of artists like Duchamp, Rauschenberg and especially Kurt Schwitters whose Merz project I see, retrospectively, as a kind of hypertextual garbage collection agency — and I mean that with the utmost respect. Interestingly enough, when you use collage in the digital world of instantaneous composition and delivery via the Internet, this “surf-sample-manipulate” practice (i.e., to surf the electrosphere, sample data and then alter that data to meet the specific needs of the environment being developed by the artist) works on two fronts: one, the so-called “creative content,” that is, the text, images, music, and graphics of many web-art sites are often sampled from other sources and, after some digital-manipulation, immediately integrated into the work so as to create an “original” construction and, two: the so-called “source code” itself, that is, the html-language that informs the browser how to display the work, is many times appropriated from other designs floating around the Net and eventually filtered into the screen's behind-the-scenes compositional structure. The great thing about the Net is that if you see something you like, whether that be “content” or “source code,” a lot of the time you can just download the entire document and manipulate it according to your anti-aesthetic needs.

→ → → → → → → → → → → → → →

CUT.

→ → → → → → → → → → → → → →

Outtakes from THE VILLAGE VOICE

BEN WILLIAMS: I see a lot of similarities between the surf-sample-manipulate aesthetic you've been theorizing and the tactics used in contemporary music like hip-hop and jungle, whose producers work from samples but disguise them beyond recognition in order to avoid being sued. I'm starting to think any digitally based art form may well revolve around this model. Do you think that's a liberating thing, or is there also some level of homogeneity in the fact that everything (including genetics, as you're aware) can be reduced to the ones and zeroes of digital code and is thus interchangeable?

MA: I think it's liberating — especially if multi-media network distributed art is your thing — but having said that, there's definitely a level of experience, both life experience and compositional experience (taken together as One Practice Exactly), that enables one to go with the (digital) flow and make up their life's work as they go along — in the beginning of my experiments, as in my first book *The Kafka Chronicles*, I was much looser and naive about this process and at times, like in the section of the novel called "Amerika-At-War: The Mini-Series," totally benefited from not-knowing the process as well as I should have, in that I didn't care if I was doing it right or wrong — like stumbling on a new invention or improvising a new style of music that has never been heard before.

M A R K



A M E R I K A

→ → → → → → → → → → → → → → →

CUT.

→ → → → → → → → → → → → → → →

SECOND DISPATCH-WITHIN-DISPATCH

(originally sent to the Ensemble-Logic mailing list from Florence,
Italy)

EMAIL IN QUATTRO PARTI (still without aim)

I.

NOTHING WILL HAVE TAKEN PLACE

BUT THE PLACE ITSELF

“in *this* place”

the plan

is to have no plan

the rule

is to have no rule

the important thing

is to annihilate



the important thing
(a mystical current
that regards creation itself
as a linguistic phenomenon)
to render stream-of-consciousness jazzspeak
as morphing meta-commentary
disseminating itself
into the electrosphere

^^^^^^^^^^
.....

::[an ecstatic expression-substance]::

hooked on its own

“tradition”

as
linguaggio

volgare

locutio

ydioma

lingua

loquela

nanoscript

email rap?

Mama Mia!

II.

MISTORIACENTRO STORICO***MIO OBLIO***

Project for today / oggi:

Build a “streaming consciousness installation” entitled **The Primordial Affinity Between Words and Objects (Post-Cyberspace Landscape With Artificially Constructed Psychobabble)**.

This installation will take place under the statue of Dante Alighieri in the heart of Firenze (Florence). The artist, posing as a

tourist who, eating a soy gelato, absorbs the historicity of whatever moments he happens to automatically unwrite himself in, will have unsuspectingly dropped a hit of “Acido Porno” provided by his (y)upscale bookstore sponsors. Wearing his mirrorshades, blue 1998 Telstra Adelaide Festival t-shirt, stained blue jeans (don’t ask/don’t tell) and black sneakers (no Evian water?), the artist will attempt to construct a sequence of resonances that produce a play of effects on a network of people (random but still targeted). This sequence of resonances will manifest itself as a series of ranting, barbarous utterances suggesting the madness of spleens erupting. After one hour or until it becomes old (whichever comes first), the installation will end and the artist will hitch a ride back to the rising hills of Toscana where his guest cottage overlooks the city.

Optional: Should someone interrupt the installation-performance and introduce the artist to the Head Rabbi of the Florentine Synagogue, the artist may delay his return to the hills and pursue an edified conversation with the Rebe wherein they will make many links between the Golem myth in the Cabala and various art projects designed during the Renaissance (the origin of the cyborg-species?).

III.

Abe Golam, legendary info-shaman and creator of the GRAM-MATRON, peddles his goods to an alternative network of spectacular aliens. Spreading himself out on an interactive screen, he simultaneously distributes:

fabricated desire
sorcerer-code

forma locutionis
illustrious vernacular
applied grammatology
recombinant écriture
generative polyglotta

(vrml underwear?

under where?)

IV.

Keywords:

meta-tag
public domain narrative environment
collaborative email performance
theory-conductor
virtual play
hypperrhetorical gestures
content-creator
brilliant site
agglutinated “the-is”

LETTRE LETTRE ON THE WALL



Hi,

just back from the net-lit groupie scene of London

toking in the killer burbs of Boulder

heat & wheatgrass & personalized gymnastics

no hamburg(er) connection

but totally french-fried.

oui?

her lips were thick and her tongue painted

wild brushstrokes all over my swollen

loco-motives

it felt like the endless thrust of a mobile chunnel
funneling some rare form of liquid desire
straight into the deep north of a throat
caught on fire

her dream-narrative “glom”-ing onto something serene

(something like me)

the interiorized Netscape

falling

falling

falling

(but then I finally made it home

saved by the Belle:

I love big asses — can hide inside them all night long)

today
woke up
totally in touch with nature’s own imagination
crystallizing some fossilized moment of Timelessness
streaming through my recently upgraded Sexual-Blood
technology —

The Ecological Conscience:
dragged out kicking.

Blue Sky sending me email telling me how caught up she was
in the hot love lava of last night

meanwhile, go to the Ped Mall and, looking up
see smegma skies smeared
with birkenstock tofu
rolled in a whole wheat tortellini

(with a side of testosteroni, pure noodle-think:
balls to the walls)

slurp-slurp

another potential environmental crisis forming in my pants

(maybe it was just a zit, but it felt more like a small welt:
MADE ME HARDER)

slurp-slurp

a polemical stress factor

(40% of the people surveyed said they DON'T believe me

but they still dig my style and think it's okay for me to receive
blowjobs)

slurp-slurp

a lettered nuance

(Dear A, I want to swallow you — Love, Your Personal Slut)

and then

in the middle

in the middle of the breach:

there were machines

fast, cheap & out of control

machines made of Capital

Capital Integrity

(oxy moron? yes. but does it get rid of ass-maligned zits?)

by the buy

(Dear A, You owe me the fucking world and now it looks as though I've got you by the balls, Hero-Boy. I think it's time you just face reality and totally give in — Love, Daddy Nanobucks).

Yesterday was great. Two things of note happened:

1. A round of post-contemporary classical behavior (insinuated by the in-betweeness of emotion created by the absolute presence of an eerie ambience called Post-Industrial Info-Banality). I

played sex-chess with a Full-Moon Night In Shiny Armor (patent leather skinreflections: holes cut out to expose the febrile flesh: my meat amore). She mated me, I mated her. Queen. Rook. Check. Check Again. Non-Stop Checking Until, Finally, Checkmate. Total Ejaculation. Death of a pawn.

2. Just spawning (surfing — sampling — manipulating).

“I take my data with me. My
biological means. That way, any
body wants to corrupt me, they
gotta take my soul.”

Check.

(The object of this letter is to become a business plan. A press release. A nationally-registered trademark.)

Can you believe this is a letter telling the story of a doctored artifact created by something called a Network Publisher? Where were *you* in 1993?

Anyway, I’m off on my next World Tour: I want to bring my ax, my girl, my troupe of syntactical stars inmixing desire. But I have to travel light — a carry-on bag and a zip disk.

What a life.

Love,

Me

RECONFIGURING THE AUTHOR: OR: REMIXING "I"



Untitled

by Alan Ross Gregory

Anne walks through the open door and into the bedroom where a small reading light barely illuminates her tall, slender body. She doesn't look at the wide open window through which – from the door – she would see this corner of the terrace. Now she turns back toward the door to close it behind her, which she does and then, walking toward the open space between an old cherrywood vanity and the enormous bed that congests the room, she pulls up and over her shoulders the rose-colored, loose-fitting dress she was wearing at dinner when Doug, always ready to command her attention, insisted that she should come to the table

completely naked except for her shoes which, he reminded her, he bought especially for this, their first trip together in Jamaica.

Anne is now responding to his specific orders as she takes off the dress, slips off the black leather platform shoes, pulls off her underwear and then, before putting the shoes back on, walks over to the vanity where she picks up a tube of skin lotion which she immediately squeezes with her right hand so as to ejaculate a small mound of white cream into the palm of her left hand so that she can now begin to meticulously rub the liquid cosmetic onto her feet, first kicking up the left foot and placing it onto the chair, resting it there on its well-worn heel, as if ready to do some stretches, but instead, moisturizing the delicate arch and heel and sole and finally fingering herself between the toes, rubbing it in until the white is gone and all that's left is the reflective sheen coming off the indirect light and then, without hesitation, kicking up the right foot and following a similar succession of movements although this time, after having used her index finger to softly saw the oil into the crevice between her two smallest toes, she takes the finger and brings it up to her nose where, for what passes as one long, sensuous moment, she breathes in the aroma emanating from her hand while seeming utterly content with what she's been doing and how she's about to proceed. As if inspired by some unknown need to bring the scene to another level still not yet achieved, she now takes the oiled index finger and moves it behind her thighs and gently directs it into the depths of her perfectly aerobicized ass where, in delicious rotation, she slowly, deliberately, fingers herself for what feels like an eternity.

When she is done, she walks back to the shoes which her feet, now properly lubricated, easily slide into and Anne, her body

hard and full of itself, walks out of the room with a determination that belies her.

On the verandah, Doug drops into one of the four director's chairs that surround the glass table and mutters some inconsequential phrase that indicates he is finally able to relax. The chair has a simplified wood and canvas design to it and once Doug settles into it, his modestly-proportioned body appears smaller and somewhat out of shape.

Meanwhile, Anne, now naked except for the black leather platform shoes that she clops around in, leans toward him to hand him his glass of burgundy wine.

Doug takes the glass from her but isn't able to focus on it as he is now totally engrossed with the nascent possibilities Anne's new look has triggered in him.

"If I had a nipple," Doug begins, raising his glass out toward the sky, "for every time I saw you like this . . . I'd be a rich man."

"You've never seen me like this," she tries to correct him, but he is already coming back at her.

"Nonsense," he insists, "you can bet your bare-bottom dollar that I've seen you like this many times before, in these very shoes, innumerable times, and I'm just now able to see what it is it does for me. Sometimes it takes awhile."

"Well," she says, as if to go somewhere with it, but instead, she clops away back inside the house and Doug, watching her

every move, leans back in his chair and brings the wine glass to his mouth where he takes a prolonged drink.

When Anne reappears, she has two bowls of salad which she puts down on the table, but before she can sit down in her chair to start and eat, Doug has his hand on her ass and a few of his fingers are already up inside her.

“What about the bread,” he says in a way that suggests that bread is the farthest thing from his mind and now he just as much admits it since he keeps rambling in his typical Douglas Grove manner and says, “What about the appetizer, the entree, the meat, *the just desserts*,” using the italicized moment to dig his fingers deeper, deeper than he expected as the combination of natural oils lets him go farther in than he ever remembers going.

“What’s that?” he asks. His annoyance with her is part mockery, but there is an edge to it that startles her and Anne, looking away from him as if hiding something, only makes things worse by not responding.

“What in God’s name have you got going in there, Anne?”

She won’t look at him. His eyes are penetrating into her face demanding some recognition for what he thinks he feels. Her only option is to move away and so she clops into the house again and Doug, unable to restrain himself, brings his freshly-scented fingers to his face and holds them close to his nose.

New Media Readings:
Or, Portrait of the Artist as Cut-up Code
by Olivia Monk

Should you choose to media.

Playing with
 chance processing with
 this project, please indicate Readings

Playing with
 chance processing wishes —

var content; // chance processing of pre-existing content

and dynamic process
 var meaning = please indicate to me your Playing with
 chance processing of and dynamic (chance) processing of
 command.

this project, please content

var this project, please indicate to artists,
theorists, and researchers in —

your wish is my // chance process

var context; var meaning = content % context;

Readings

Playing generated from published writings by context.

Source texts for Readings content

Readings

Playing with/in the new media.

your wish is my/our work associated with
this // chance process
var context; media.

Should you —

your wish is my media.

an atmospheric avalanche

by Warren Peece

Playing the Powertext.

Digital Nomad.

Forecasting the future.

Power costs money and power makes money (religiously).
The crux of the biscuit is not in what gets bit, but what bytes.

Binary rules.

But for those who prioritize pleasure in the name of Internal Oblivion (intellectual chaos), the response is: Who has time to make money?

And therein lies the dilemma.

Money, power, time, pleasure. But pleasure is elusive . . .

(this is a network problem, the connection is busy, please try again later)

Juggling ones organs in anticipation of what bumps-in-the-road we might want to hit next, there almost seems to exist some kind of unreal ability to overinflate the market with manmade

atmospheres filled to the brim with hype, an avalanche of mediated hype that we can all immediately relate to.

(vaporware-for-itself)

A huge marketing-machine's engine perfectly programmed to maintain optimum levels of self-reflexivity, something that we can all immediately relate to when we look in the mirror, put on the make-up and upgrade the fake-out.

I am what I am: a new revenue stream model, a marketable skills-set, a diverse portfolio of relationship capital.

But if speed is a function of time, and my growth curve seems to be moving in slow-motion, does this mean I am free to do as I please?

Running Bit

by Mark Amerika

In special cases, when things suddenly change and you realize that the erotic gum that chews you to death is not your own, that you would not be a spoken-word poet or an always-on-call transhistorical plumber, that should the gas pumps leak their petrol sperm onto her fingers, that you would kiss them and light your mouth on fire, self-immolating arsonist loverman, knowing all along that this was it, the last chance to make sense, someone had to do it, someone had to do it quick or the entire nation would further subdivide and kill itself (this is what we learn in high school), suicidal tendencies, DOOM prodigies compuserving America, online, while facilitating their need, their need to need, those who never seem to fold up and die, out of necessity, the tribe of mutually configured robotic brethren who look like you and talk like you and even crave some mutant form of Otherness like you, you who continue dallying in forms that never really function with any true purpose except to marginalize the mainstream, the mainstream of what's happening in your head as you watch TV and impeach the creep living inside you, so that it (the mainstream: the creep living inside you) flips out on itself, in on itself, the itself innung and outing and then the marketing pitch, the battered swing, the endless web-page hits, the first base of operations, the double play of initializing a unique software application while sliding into the third reichian orgasm in two weeks, a triple zero debt run afoul yet somehow celebrated with trickle-down parades and negative bunting (WYSIWYG), gotta get home fast now, make your last run, with

gas on your fingers and a crankcase full of oblivion operating somewhere between Spiritual Solitude and Virtual Ubiquity (“all narrative, all the time — your classic literary channel!”), the road best traveled, and lest you forget the need to document your psychogeographical travels, be sure to encode them in mp3 formatted files that digitally speak for themselves so that YOU, The Totally Connected Gendermorph Riding High On Knowledge-Power, can get back in touch with your sexy DNA, that crazy cousin sisterbrother you used to hide in the playground with, that diabolical Other who gives head better than Mommydaddy could ever dream of giving, even in their most charitable moments.

Gertrude Stein Re-Mix

by DJ Run-On

“In the inside there is sleeping, in the outside there is fabricating, in the morning there is memory, in the evening there is savoring. In the evening there is savoring. In feeling anything is losing, in feeling anything is wanting, in feeling there is aging, in feeling there is hurting, in feeling there is subsistence and entirely mistaken there is licking. All the drunkards have beamers and all the captains have bad lining and all the yellow has perturbation and all the circle has jerking. This makes sperm.”

A Brief Aneurysm

by Holly Vale

In from the virus, the protocol continued charting its own consumption pattern and scanned for exceptional news-bite infotainment. One headline claimed that the Political Apparatus was processing the dominant syntax in a way that read nontraditional and was somehow opening itself up to the new citizenry. Another headline spoke of the rise of youth violence. Still one more headline used the term “false consciousness” to describe retail sales over the last three months.

The protocol flashbacked into a conversation where there was something about his voice calling her and sounding so self-assured and ready to take in her every muscle that she felt faint and her heart dropped into her intestinal tract where the love regurgitated into a slew of stewing options.

Page two of the electronic ink-spread said Bad Drugs had put the metaforecaster in a strange position. She had never thought that being a preprogrammed MTV sex-goddess would lead to this. Many opaque reading skills were causing her to rethink the takeover. She was quoted as saying “So why this? And why now?” The protocol hadn’t a clue.

The protocol was ready to expend some credit and make a purchase. First and foremost on her mind was this university bookstore where he worked. He was a musician-junky who

embezzled funds so as to support his habit. This was not the perfect parent she was after.

It was something worse. It was a kind of morbid temporality.

He asked her if she wanted to keep the receipt. She placed her fingers on the freshly printed paper without taking it out of his hand. She was looking him in the eyes like she wanted to melt into his eyes. He repeated himself:

“Do you want to keep the receipt?”

She couldn't answer. Everything was getting worse. Worse than everything put together in its ultimate state of worseness. Worse than that.

Alpha Contagion

by Abe Golam

An abstract aberration anticipates another artful alliance.

Better brainstorming brings bonafide benefits but basically bequeaths bastardized bumbling.

Coursing cash currents create Colorado conceit.

Dig deeper, dear Devolutionist, don't denigrate deteriorating dilapidations.

Even eloquent endgames, eagerly enveloping equestrian emblems entered erotically, eventually elope enabling eel-like elongation.

For father's future forecast, fumble, ferociously, forever.

Good God Grammatologist!, get going — gotta groove gotta groove gotta groove.

His Highness (Her Highness), hemorrhaging hiccups, has his (her) hapless host, Herr Herring, holler hellacious harangues hierocratically.

Instead, "I," in inwardness inking, intellectually investigate "It," involuntarily.

Jaded jail-bait juggles juggernaut, jacks-off juicyfruit jellyfish,
jaculates jury-rigged jurisdiction.

Karma kills.

Lost looseness lingering last lostness, losing love like. . .

My memory marries me, makes money, mimics mastery, mel-
lifuously mitigates my malfunction.

Not nice, no, not near nice, not NEAR nice.

Opus Operandi originates obvious orality, opens ontological
orifice, obsolescent office?

Pure presence, pretending pure practice, perpetrates purpose-
ful physiognomy (plying . . . playing . . . praying?).

Queerly querulous queens quake quadrilingually.

Rats retool rectum, resuscitate renegade rascals resisting
readymade reform.

So, some simple sentence, singing softly, silk sacculus seeping
senselessness, sensationalistically sonant.

Tremblant tit-clamps traverse tell-tale troubadour's tri-
umphant togetherness taking token thoroughness toward thren-
ody test tube time (tsunami tenderness tilling terrorist territory?).

Underneath underwear, unhealthy underworld ululates
uncontrollably . . .

Virtual vacuity versifies (vagrantly, vastly) — venomous vol-
unteer verifying vibratory vainglory?

Where?

Xanadu.

You?

Zzzzzzzzz . . .

Dick-Related

by Cynthia Kitchen

easy entry into my life.

He was on tour, reading from his new novel, and that was different than last time, when he came through town with his band, Dead Fingers Don't Talk, and I was nervous, nervous for me, because of what I wanted to do to him, nervous for him because I might actually do it.

something else makes itself known to me.

It is possible, I was thinking, to perform the whole operation with a knife. Or to take my tongue and tear at the roots of his stark muscles as they quiver on my bed stretched out into New Oblivion. My nipples get hard just thinking of him here and so I start playing with them, pinching them, twisting them, hard, like I'm tearing off the top of an under-ripe banana, twisting them so as to eventually peel my tits off and reveal the heart I want to drench his face in. It's weird how I can love him without even knowing him and cannot bear the thought of his rejection.

I was becoming increasing attracted to the idea of going.

The newspaper said it would start at 7:30. The book was called Discomfort and I had already bought a copy at the place where the reading was to take place, Borders, the only bookstore worth a shit in my shit-city. The excerpt I was reading said:

“He could not understand her. She was shaking, violently rocking in his arms, and as she shook, blood began pouring out of her mouth and nose as if a rare Ebola virus had begun its final rule over her despotic, numbed musculature. Was this God’s own sick form of sexual harassment?”

“She came up into his face looking for a deep kiss to seal their megadeath deal. This was the World Wide Web multi-media star she had always wanted but was afraid to go out and get. But why was she afraid? She could get whatever she wanted, whenever she wanted it, because she was rich, smart, beautiful and a woman. She could kill him with her eyes, the same antagonistic blue-black balls of madness that she insisted on seeing through as an arrogant child.”

stopping at the ATM without a story to tell.

“Speaking of excavations,” I was thinking of what I’d tell him when I saw him or what I would write into my PowerBook as soon as it got back from the shop, “your mission, your absolute goal as a renegade artist now moving headfirst into the 21st century, is to deal with the nomadic movement of all bacteriological agents congesting in my slivery body.”

the image of his face drives my apparatus into uncharted territory where I begin to withdraw into myself and become The Digression.

When Borges, in his story “The Other Death,” says

It lived without friends; it loved and possessed everything, but from a distance, as from the other side of the mirror . . .

he was talking about me. I was living in the exclusionary world of water and electricity. Only I could manage to marry those functions that would send my skin close to the edge of perishing. Meanwhile, I knew that the Other Death, the one I was experiencing when thinking about him, when I was thinking about going to the reading and hearing his voice pander to the crowd, was closer to me than I wanted it to be. I had to make a decision. The Other Death would overwhelm me lest I get hold of it, take it in the palm of my hand, rap it in my fingers with their freshly painted long black fingernails, stroke it with my religious devotion, engage it in my erroneous meter, quench its thirst by dribbling some of my hot saliva on its arid head, mumbling, incongruous, breathless, almost motionless except for a slight twist of my head and flick of my coiled tongue, a hypnotic background music of intermediated guitar noise melting into my stoned brain forcing my coked-out mouth and super-numb throat to do whatever it wanted, wanting, wanting nothing but him, all of him, the thing that wrote about me in a story that everyone who read it knew was autobiographical but never knew who the chick was, who the girl behind the blowjob was, what her name was, what city she lived in, what she really looked like, what she really thought, what was going through her head when she came back to her house alone and full of his sperm and why did she approach him and make herself available when she couldn't even begin to understand the power his words had over her.

Post-Adolescence

by Susan Shapiro

The more you want it, the more you show it. I saw it in your eyes last night, the way your body subtly responded to my every tongue-touch, giving itself over to me as if it had just escaped the ultimate suburban nightmare.

This morning, as I barely open my eyes, I can still taste your cum on my lips and I am immediately ready to once again ignite the crazy switch that will enflame your erubescant clit.

You didn't even realize it at the time, but while you were lying stretched across your futon totally naked and wasted, I was turning you on not by licking at your cunt but by sucking on your toes. The X had made you hair-trigger sensitive and the simple little tongue-flicks on the tips of your gorgeous toes drove you wild. You shook your whole body like it was about to come undone. I have never seen a girl respond to this the way you did last night. And I am now prepared to eat your toes for breakfast.

Lying on your futon, I can see you at your desk with your back to me, sitting in front of the computer cranking out your graphical wares and without even thinking about it you curl your toes up under you, thinking through your next image transformation. You're so sexy, so nonchalant about it, and you don't even know it. I'm filled with the kind of raw desire usually reserved for French Erotic Novelists old enough to be your grandmother.

A decision is made on my part: I will crawl over and eat them now, suck on them, lightly chew on their ideal texture, and then I'll consider crawling up into your face and eating that too.

You won't stop me. Not because you love it, you don't know how you feel about this, but you won't tell me to stop it because you don't know how to command respect from someone as powerful as me and as long as it doesn't hurt you, then I am allowed to do it, what ever it is, and you don't even realize that this is the way you are. You have no idea.

You have never had someone like me to deal with. You've watched so much adolescent TV and played in so many Internet-inspired MUD environments that you think this is just a role-playing game and that I am a Sorcerer who sucks on toes so as to recompose the energy I need to fulfill my prophecies. This is not true at all. I am just an average prognosticator of other-worldly things who wakes up in the morning happy to be in your luxury shit-hole and eager to crawl into your work space so that I can eat your toes. I'm not a foot fetishist. I just happen to like the way your toes curl up this morning and I know my anonymity as the chick you picked up while tripping on ecstasy last night places you in an awkward position and that I'll now take advantage of that awkward position and crawl over to you at your computer where you're trying to forget it ever happened.

You look down on me, unsure what to do. Some Fox network dumber-than-thou blond-chick takes over your mind. Without even thinking about it, you become her, or a simulated version thereof. You strike a pose.

Now you watch me strike a pose.

This is me striking a pose. My pose is simple yet says it all. It says: I fucked you like no man has ever fucked you and now you don't know who you are. I'll tell you who you are: you are the girl who got totally fucked by a chick whose name you can't remember. And that's the way it's supposed to be, baby.

My cocky pose is taking every pixel of desire the scene creates and superimposing it on your body, which is remarkable, since today you don't even know you have a body. You just cannot, for the life of you, conceive of the fact that your nonexistent body isn't registering much in the way of brain activity today.

All you can do this morning is take the faint imprints of what you started out with yesterday, before you met me, and situate it before the glowing terminal. You can compose on Quark and fuck around with some of the filters in Photoshop and this, you think, makes you a hot young artist. A hot young artist with a future. As a hot young artist with a future who comes from a family of money and understated emotional torment, you can look down on me eating your toes and think: "I wonder if she's ever done this to another girl."

Don't be foolish, pet, I've done this to millions of other girls. Girls love it when I wake up in the morning and suck out the cheese in between their toes. This is my art movement. I call it Personalism.

I tell you this, in between slurping sucks, I say: "I'm performing my morning manifesto on you now . . . "

But you can't accept that as a statement of reality because you're a stupid-ass girl from the suburbs who, hung over from the killer X, has no sense of reality. Reality for you is watching TV and eating Domino's pizza while posing as the coolest pop attitude appropriated from some corporate fashion magazine. It's mainstream attitude, baby. The kind I'm eating for breakfast.

Clawhammer, the new alternative band posing as not-ready-for-the-mainstream, is playing in the background, real loud, I put it in the CD player right before I started composing you this morning. Now as the music gets more dense and noise-intense, I suck on your toes even more ferociously and you can't help but feel something alien take over the body you don't even know you have this morning.

In between tracks, when the piercing, feedback-intensity of one song leads to a mellower tune that you can speak over, it's as if all this toe-sucking has made you a little more aware of the scene that surrounds you and words of some sort or another desperately want to come out and take advantage of the momentary quietude.

The more you want it, the more it shows. But you don't even know what it is. Everything is very confusing to you now.

You have something you want to say:

"Is this something like bondage?"

"No, stupid girl, this isn't something like bondage. This is your pristine toes becoming my idea of an alternative breakfast. They

tasted so good to me last night that I decided to have leftovers before I split the scene. I'm going to leave now, savoring the taste of your delicious toes in my mouth until I brush my teeth later tonight and then go out and fall in love with some other stupid girl who lets me into her room for the night."

"Oh," you say and then turn back to the image of a fat, balding man with a piece of lightning cutting through the top of his head, staring at the image as if trying to figure out what to do with it, how to manipulate it so that it does exactly what you want it to do.

THE INSIDER'S GUIDE TO AVANT-GARDE CAPITALISM: EXCELLING AT THE FINE ART OF MAKING MONEY



Thanks Mom, for the Palm Pilot.

All of Mom's sons are expert palm pilots. Masticating masturbators. Now, some 40 years after the fact, I have other PDAs. Personal Digital Assistants. Pent-up Deluge of Amoral. Programmed Dilettantes Appearing (out of nowhere).

Put that in your pipe and smoke it, careful not to enflame. Emotions. Let's not get carried away here, after all, it's only your life that's slipping into the pixellated parchment.

Now this: corporate thirst-quenchers injecting e-potassium into my veins so that I can power myself to buy online. That is, *be*

online. Being-me, online, is a consumer practice that only ancient whores of the industrial work-force find fault in. New improved whores of the information revolution, people like me, have another take on this seminal way of being, of being online. This Digital Being Me.

The e-consuming target market knows, as do I, that email is money, and that having options is not so much selling out as buying in. Buying in to something more luscious than an orgiastic beachhead.

Excuse me while I sample some more ravishing Internet capitalism. The fuel that drives my idea-engine into sweet oblivion. A place where I can forget myself and create other forms of fictional me. I'm not talking about role-playing or anonymous remailers. I'm talking about *me*, the conqueror of cyberspace illuminating seasons of hell as if they were nasty dirty mock-ups of ancient novel language hung up on prose. Or an unwillingness to network with the greater mass of consummated e-commerce veterans of the Holy Grail. The post-literate mass of e-consumers telecommunicating sensual body language right over the wires. Can you feel it?

Media dry-humping is what I call it. Mental tele-dildonics where Reality (with a capital R) finances all forms of emotional exchange and all you have to do is simply BE. Be yourself. Be yourself marketing. Be yourself marketing in the name of progress. YOUR progress. Your progress as a marketing language establishing an orgiastic beachhead on the shores of Internet capitalism. Here come the thirst-quenchers, dry-humping a frozen desire that shows wonderfully accessible cracks in the ice.

[slurp-slurp]

Okay, let's put in our pin number. Out comes cash. Out comes cash, lack of emotion, death-desire, expediency. For some reason the expediency keeps coming out even though it's supposed to stop. The expediency won't stop coming out of the machine. The ATM. Will somebody please turn this thing off? I don't need all of this expediency! Why do these automated tellers keep shoving expediency down my throat, in my face. I can't handle it. Too much time —sensitive religious matter — death, cash, lack of emotion — I can't withdraw any more lest I end up an Internet recluse e-consuming mega-hits of honorific capitalism in total isolation.

Maybe *I'm* the automated teller machine and the currency I keep dishing out is prophetic hormonal sense-oblivion.

Buy one, get orgiastic beachhead free.

I mean, I could become my own e-consuming monopoly, with fake money, fake hotels, fake emotions, fake religion, fake identities (today I'll be the Hat, thank you). That's it, no question about it, I'm going to corner the e-consuming market. My unrelenting appetite to purchase things over the Net will be not be matched by anyone. In fact, no one will even try and compete with me because they know that I've got 90% of the e-consuming market thanks mostly to my innate ability to brand my identity as the All-Consuming E-Monster. I'll be too big for them to buy me out and so they'll try and buy in, buy in to the most luscious e-consuming life an orgiastic beachhead could ever hope to be. Seminally be. Soon, people will be paying *me* to e-consume

the masses. That's all I'll ever get paid for. E-consuming the masses. The precise manifestations of my work will defy language categorization. In fact, what I do when I do what I do is no longer important, Thank God (that One Fatal Disappearing Act). Thank God indeed.

Or:

Where you are going there is no turning back. That's what the commercial inside the TV brain of my mind narrates to me meanwhile I'm on steroids. Cheerios. Market hype. Don't worry, be hype-y. The existential angst of the new media economy summed up in one word: manic testosterone. That's two words.

The Testosterone Economy crossing the digital divide. All peons on alert ready willing and able. To detach themselves from friends family fuckable frenzies so as to engage with Terminal Blues Perception. See how they run like peegs from a gun see how they fry.

The sizzle of post-literate cerebral flesh roasting on the fire. Marshmallow brains melting on a stick. Goo goo goo jew. I'm dying . . .

Excuse me while I elide.

Elude.

No, make that E-lude. E dash lude. E as in electronically evasive. Lude as in Quaalude, as in ludic. As in e-ludic mad dashing into the evasive underworld of Vitamin Q. Q as in quasi-quorrupt. As

in quotient quenching. As in Quirk TV. Or how about quirktv.com — “the place to e-lude” . . .

No, make that Allude.

Allude to a more perfect union in whose godhammer we thrust. A pulverizing manic mad dashing impression that pointilistically persuades the art market to buy into ambient networked intelligence defining self as a hub a node a channel of coopetitive passion aggression.

“My reconciliation to the Yahoo-kind in general might not be so difficult, if they would be content with those vices and follies only which nature hath entitled them to.” So says Jonathan Swift in *Gulliver’s Travels* and then, a little later, in the same work: “I had hitherto concealed the secret of my dress, in order to distinguish myself as much as possible from that cursed race of Yahoos; but now I found it in vain to do so any longer.”

MY YAHOO.

But lets’ get back to our regularly scheduled programming.

It’s time to tune in to the Superbowl halftime commercials and see more group pressure to participate in online gambling: or was that online trading? The pitch is simple and straightforward: make more money than your money can dream of. But then again your money can’t dream. Nada. Nada thing.

Which is why it’s so clean and refreshing, so nothing and arbitrary, so funny and malfeasant.

Money

up

the

wazoo.

These days, money is cheap, not talk. Talk is creep. Creep walking into the bedroom and saying it's over finito end of story kaput. That's when she picks up her virtual godhammer and starts thrusting it, nailing him to the cross so that he can suffer his Jewish guilt. The thing that allies him. The thing that eludes him. The thing he alludes to when accidentally smoking that joint that somehow ended up hanging off his lower lip like a poisonous insect spilling its demon leakage. Maybe he's perpetually stoned. Tombstoned. Born-again stoned.

Dead on arrival.

But wait! It's not over yet.

"Looking for host now . . ." says my web browser.

My browser says a lot of things to me. First thing this morning it said "Personalized Robots Menace The Marketplace" and invited me to click on the words "you too can revolutionize society!" — or was it more simplistic, and straightforward, something like "Join the New Economy!" Either way, it sent a chill down my spine. Not because of what it said, of course, but because IT said it. I can't get used to my browser talking to me.

“Still looking,” my web browser says.

Finally an MSNBC anchor drops vanilla nanochips in his morning cup of Javascript and stirs in some extra-special biztalk. Sure enough, market jingoism comes tumbling after. “Jack and Jill went up a hill to catch a market rally . . . more after the break.”

It’s time for Schlock Box with guest appearances by Visionary Cyberspeak and Corporate Loophole. The VC is yawning out a rhetorical string that sounds like he’s in post-snort slumber: emotional.kilos.lucrative.clients.penalty.bid.now.serving.10.years.always.on.hold.customer.servants.buy.now.Xmas.slavery.memento.mourning.money.markets.manufacturing.wisdom.public.offerings.distributed.millions.oil.rigging.insider.hedging.new.issues.low.inventory.bondage.maturing.identity.cruising.individual.retirement.accounts.for.nothing.

[deep snort, as if trying to find lost cartilage]

The Corporate Loophole is trying to massage the dialogue by brandishing nine irons and unbridled unthinkable unrelenting unlimited euphemisms by way of legislative victories superior marketism ideational chaos a quadrillion-million shortcomings perfectly packaged in one absolutely positively has to get there overnight DNA sample served in an evolutionary ragout with a side of Californication.

“Biotechs are hot right now. What are you buying?”

“Right now we’re buying Cloning Organic Network. Market symbol CON. Just this morning we rated this one a market out-

perform, depending, of course, on how the market as a whole performs. If the market crashes, then CON will crash with it although that won't necessarily mean it's underperforming the market because everything will have crashed. If everything crashes then there's tremendous upside for market outperforms unless, of course, we never recover, in which case the investor has a few options. At that point they could either sell, which would probably happen at a great loss, or they could hold, fighting the internal panic mode erupting inside their psyche while accepting the fact that they're increasing their level of risk tolerance. Something else I will just mention is that oftentimes investors will be taking all sorts of anti-depressant drugs to get through volatile periods like the one we're currently experiencing in which case we would diversify into companies like Merck and Pfizer. You following me?"

Use the chip. The gene chip. Microelectronic racial profiling guaranteeing YOU the widest possible margin of victory in the diversified job market.

That's so funny I forgot to get gassed. My genes are splitting that's so funny. It's beyond black comedy dark comedy queer comedy native american comedy jewish comedy heterosexual comedy mambo comedy WTO comedy gypsy comedy existential comedy genetically-modified food comedy situationist comedy environmentally-incorrect comedy Air Comedy, by Nike.

"Amazon Robots would like to speak with you now," says my browser. It's trying to make me buy something that's just been cached on to my hard drive, and I intuitively know that if I let the Amazon Robots in, then there's a good chance my debit card will

catch on fire and I'll lose another four years of my life getting sucked into the Next Big Thing.

One click out of Schlock Box and I fall into Dr. Media. Dr. Media diagnoses programming data within my bionic operating system checking for possible meme-like viruses that subtly enter my bloodstream and cause quick-fix oblivion. The Dr. doesn't like these quick fixes and thinks I should be investing in long-term health care options.

"Encroach the media offensive with an illegal procedure," says the good doc. "Get them before they get you, Pancho. And remember, a paranoid is someone who has all the facts at their disposal."

Dr. Media talks like a fortune cookie that tracks my hard drive whereabouts in cyberspace. Little bits of personalized prognostication continually fade in to view:

"Emotional content will make you delusional . . ."

"Buy now, slave labor . . ."

"You made your bed, now you must sleep in it. . ."

I open up a new window and who is this time but none other than the VC man himself, Visionary Cyberspeak, making the morning talk show rounds.

The same Visionary Cyberspeak who occasionally wigs out on NASDAQ heroin streaking through his her its veins like it's

brainy brawny beatnik supercalifragilisticxpealidocious. Fragilistic. Like a threadbare bubble ready to burst, a testosterone-injected Corpo Loophole ready to ejaculate floods of creamy and delish information pornography into the minds of children.

Grown children. Like, how about 18–75? Now *that's* a demographic for you. See how they run like peegs from a numb see how they fry.

Flux. Link. Network.

Reboot?

Ignore?

Abort?

Playing out like a flash animation spinning in his mind, a conceptual outline of his new project fades into view:

3-D Billboards Slicing Through An Octagonal Mindscreen With Technoslave Ambience Droning in the Background.

“We don’t need a Forrester report to tell us that our demographic is shifting dramatically and the out of sight price-to-earnings ratio is gonna scare the daylights out of them once all the dead chickens come home to roost.” So says Detournement, a rapid-exposure culture-jammer who excels at flourishing a 360-degree branding agent that marks her future revenue stream in ways she can no longer keep track of.

“Only artists can thrive in this market environment,” she keeps bantering. “We of the poor. The MFA-*enriched* poor who tell it like it is. No pussyfooting here, just loads of arty web site development sponsored by Daddy’s funny market funds.”

“Uh, money market funds is what I think you meant to say,” says DJ Client. He’s her one and only. Her one and only big stick mooch with all the cool and cum a young girl can get by on.

“Market may be crashing,” Lady D. keeps riffing, “but how you react and manage these cycles will have a major impact on your success in building wealth over the long-term. What we need is an Image. Something that will catch on with the Gods of Money-Junk. An avatar.”

“An avatar?” asks Client.

“Yeah, a kind of All-Knowing All-Noding 3-D Omniscient Narrator that has access to everyone’s purchasing patterns, but instead of this Grand Storyteller being generated by a big bad corpo giant, A Doubleclick Devil, it’s being generated by an anonymous artist collective that wants to change the world AND get rich doing it. This would be the same artist collective that pretends to be conceptually-pure, politically-correct and anti-consumer. In theory, that is. But in practice they keep selling objects to rich elites whose mega-companies destroy the environment. But let’s not think about that. That’s not what matters. What matters is that *it’s the hot new trend in contemporary art*. The mainstream media is buying into it, right? They’re swallowing our handles like it’s fresh-squeezed cum juice. CNN just called it Pure Art, but USA Today, hoping to increase their own

market share, said CNN was lost in the past and renamed the phenomenon E-Suprematism. An exhibition of this work is now available both at the Whitney Museum of American Art and online at MCIWorldcum. The exhibition's publicity program is being sponsored by Philip Morris. Union Carbide. Exxon/Mobil . . . ”

DJ Client, another rapid-exposure culture jammer focusing efforts on musical mutiny and executive decision-making power, was no longer paying attention, although Lady Detournement kept talking.

“The suit is still pending,” she said and DJ kept silent.

“If you think about it,” Detour was rambling, “we have a history in direct marketing that goes back to the days of the gold-rush, and so labeling our turf Silicon Mines was the smartest thing we ever did. How many articles did we get out of that?”

DJ got up and went to the fridge. He looked out the window at the big mountain crags. They called these rocks The Flatirons. It was a zillion dollar view. Literally. Good thing they bought in before the big land grab.

“Nuthin much in here,” Client yelled out as he peered into the fridge, “except cold spaghetti and bottled water.”

But did it come from the source?

“Detour, where this water come from?” asked DJ.

Detour didn't answer. She was too lost in her rap. Which she kept practicing, as if going over her lines before the big performance tomorrow.

"Sound bites, baby," she whispered, and then, back into character, "I think it's going to take a visionary, or make that Visionary, capital V, like Vagina, Verbatim, Velly Velly Vonderful, Vaccine and Viagra." She cut herself off.

"You got any dope?" she yelled at Client.

Her character was becoming undone. Post-corporate. It must be about nine at night. If it's pre-corporate, it must be about six in the morning.

But what about those work-anxiety dreams? You know, the ones that replaced the dirty wet dreams.

DJ came in with the bowl of cold spaghetti and sat down and started slurping it up with his chopsticks, extra slurp noise reenacting his glory days in Tokyo, when the clubs were destined for mating calls.

"You out," said DJ with an extra loud slurp, and so Detour shook her head, mussed her dirty blond hair up a bit, and tried again.

"It should be a core part of the agency's operations that we create fictional realities within the context of real media delivery systems."

FICTIONAL SITES, REAL MEDIA

“The emotional content is what comes across,” she said, trying to trigger some more sound bites out of him. “People want the emotional content. They want to build a relationship of trust with their daily computer interface.”

“Well, that’s why I do it,” he said, slurping up more noodles.

“Why? What?”

“Images and sounds are everywhere. And all we basically do is look into our computers, eyeing the beyond.”

“And feeling left *behind* . . . ”

“Exactly. Feeling left behind and searching for Meaning. Same old same old.”

“Listen: I need to vacillate.”

“Cool. You got Vaseline? Can’t vacillate without Vaseline — and that’s an order!”

“No, but I got my DJ’s wet spaghetti fingers and a dildo-appendage I call The Carrot King.”

“Really?”

“Yes, really. And he’s about to abdicate. That’s why I want to test-run our vacillation — before it’s too late.”

“OK, but without the slick Vaz, I can’t promise anything . . .
hmmm, so what do you say? First me, then who?”

“No, first me, *then* who!”

“Knock knock.”

“Who’s there?”

“Versioning.”

“Versioning who?”

[sound of match, deep inhalation, profuse exhalation]

“So what I am supposed to be? Your Johnny-Come-Lately Muse
of The Spheres?”

“You contuse, Mon Cheerio. Contuse and confuse. You are
NOT a come lately. Maybe come *often*, but never lately. Take it
from me. The Ink-ubator. The drip-dry Abstract Expressionist
disseminating ghost notes on the pixellated parchment. E-fuck-
ing-lastic. Like I be the robotic brethren sittin’ tight with my
homies on some old publishing house’s still in-demand back list. I
got me some prestige. I got me some clout.”

“You ain’t got no back list. And there ain’t no such thing as a
publishing house. Unless you call this wall of virtual space I keep
uncovering a kind of publishing house. But that’d be like calling
my life’s work a fancy home page.”

“But it IS a fancy home page. That’s what they said it was on CNN, and CNN rules.”

“OK.”

“OK!”

“But I want you to share my Weakness.”

“Your weaknesses, baby. Repeat after me: I want you to share my weaknesses. Say it.”

“I want you to share my Weakness. My Weakness is grand, it’s the total summation of all my petty little weaknesses, the same petty weaknesses that make me like every other no-fucking-body with their endless petty weaknesses. But it’s also *more* than that. My Weakness is Supreme Weakness. Untouchable Weakness. Prolific Weakness. Totally networked and branded Weakness . . . ”

“The Supreme Fiction is what I’m hearing here. You know, I thought that that embrace we had tonight, at the airport, when you first saw me come down the corridor — that was sincere.”

“I’m glad you liked it. How many of those politically-incorrect Chinese herb-pills did you eat on the plane?”

“Four.”

“Only four?”



“Yes, but they were a tasty four. Although the last one gave me trouble. My mind is so clear I can’t see the sky for the heavens . . . ”

[light of match, deep inhalation, profuse exhalation]

50 WAYS TO MARKET YOUR LOVER



1. Word of mouth
2. Stream of consciousness
3. Advertising
4. desecrating previous generations of experience
5. making monumental claims about your current world perspective
6. segue into the next number without really trying
7. acting as if you never cared about any of this
8. slave auction
9. TV. talk show hype
10. public radio / college circuit / underground network?
11. charting official and unofficial policy decision makers' daily agendas
12. offer sales incentives guaranteeing major feedback from "dupe"

13. create Master then reprogram entire personage through effects processing
14. deprive the glutinous mass of sexual fulfillment then rail them with totalitarian energy cleverly disguised in the rhetoric of a multi-national television broadcast coming into your home via superstate-implanted speakers that blast the words YOU MUST OBEY
15. retail experience at a discount rate via simulation or a downgraded version of the empirical method
16. siphon off the energy apparently there although sometimes not so sure what it is I'm trying to say but am saying it anyway
17. create a newsletter that instructs your workforce on how to buy/prosper/meet expectations & get the most out of life without giving them enough real cash dollars to retire at an early age
18. if you retire at a young age and are therefore unproductive (not producing goods and services all in the name of God or GNP, same thing), then obviously you're a flailing pervert who's only interested in wild crazy lustful enjoyable sexual activity and MUST BE ARRESTED so that you can no longer have any effect whatsoever on the cosmic consciousness' desire to experience the ultimate in high-tech body ejaculation
19. Marta was not alone. She had me. We were very much in love and knew what we wanted out of life. To be together. They separated us in 2011. I was in confinement at some closed down military base somewhere in the Midwest (nobody knew exactly where). I had been busted for smoking a joint in my own home. I used to think that I was just overly paranoid and that things were probably better than my

head would otherwise think. Now all I have time to do is think. I think as I cook the grub for all the other love-starved addicts of pleasure who were jury-rigged into a life of isolation.

20. marketing my lover is going into small business which the feds frown upon because that means there's more activity they have to control and eventually buy by-way-of their corporate cronies whose estates are really very beautiful and definitely worth slaving around in.
21. selling myself as my own lover is something I've often thought of doing although finding highly reputable would-be early investors of my product line isn't as easy as I thought it'd be it seems as though I'm too eccentric
22. But time has a way of catching up with history-in-the-making and maybe my innate knowledge of the business ledger will afford me the opportunity to create the greatest subsidiary the oligarchy has ever had time to consider its friend
23. building a list of possible sources of interest, people who will jump on your lover's bandwagon, will take a lot of time and effort
24. try cable t.v.
25. your local library
26. on the pedestrian mall, take off your clothes, rupture
27. "be" SOMEBODY SPECIAL (on t.v.)
28. videocassettes (self-help promo, simulated blowjob, ex-wife tells all)
29. National Public Radio special feature on your ability to
30. friends talking, lots of friends, talking, make friends
31. package: book, CD, audiocassette (talking-book), record, disk, movie, music video, party, world tour, simulcast (teleconference a "happening", YOU)

32. seem like you're not interested in any of this and that it's a waste of time and counterproductive and then when somebody else you know does it very successfully, cut them down for selling out (do this on t.v., preferably cable)
33. go religious, change your name, amplify all feedback
34. create Master then reprogram mission directives through digital effects-processor
35. accept the mortal morsels stuck in between your teeth and only when the time is right FLOSS (timing is EVERYTHING: are you too early? are you too late? are you just right? who decides?)
36. consider participating in benefit performances that will substantiate your desire and/or willingness to reach out and touch the people in a real genteel way (be human)
37. assume the body (individual) is naturally reckless and nervous when forcibly controlled in The Land of Political Bodies and let the muscles switch for a brand new day (Siouxsie & The Banshees)
38. the reasonable man adapts to the world; the unreasonable man persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man (that's George Bernard Shaw, thanks George, what about reasonable women, the ones who know that the shit has hit the fan, that the balance of terms isn't a balance but rather a lopsided landslide of rigged hegemony persisting in our collective memory?)
39. create extravagant experiments (for example, transgress your individual body's private pleasure-mode by assuming the disposition of the political body as if it were the personal prose you found yourself becoming, then, poeticize the moment of your "becoming" by launching your IPO)

40. the lover is bliss reincarnated as an industrial waste product coming to live via satellite, your heart is burning, gas?
41. chocolate cream-filled truffles fill your mouth as she enters more data into the terminally-ill base of operations
42. depress the mechanism and the social unrest begins
43. coverage of the revolution is spontaneously transmitted to our affiliates in Tokyo, Bonn, Berlin, Kyoto, Frankfurt, Kobe, Munich, Hiroshima
44. Marta makes me mad. Me masticate Marta. Marta mimics me, masticates, mimics me more. My Marta markets me. Masticates my me mightily. Makes me Marta. Marks me Marta. Mine.
45. Can I have your attention please?
46. Tonight's performance has been preempted. The cursory device has lost its syntagm and all personnel are needed to cover (up the sickness).
47. Thank you
48. Thank you
49. Thank you
50. Thank you

I AM CURIOUS MAGENTA



Blocks. Solid blocks. Solid blocks of water, books, mountains, pens, schedules, calendars, computer programs, letters, cases, plastics, wires, electricity, fingers, lights, eyeballs, pencils, clocks, papers, orgasms, chairs, horticulture, drawings, postcards, files, hips, reeboks, phones, key chains, poems, stamps, clips, novels, disks, thunderheads, beetles, windowpanes, earshot, pig powder, amphibious hearts, rock protrusions, estimable rights, sets in motion, radios, numbers, lips, chips, blips, tips on how to make your first million, envelopes, messages, coats, tapes, bumper stickers, receipts, pictures, tags, faces, quotations, weights, theories, maps, ads, shirts, baskets, bills, addresses, lines, keyboards, dope, time, erasers, markers, prefaces, utilities, organs, matches, spices, floss, money, screenplays, prescriptions, cities, pensions, calories, hair and innumerable amounts of other unnamable shit.

Followed by love, a dialogue of seemingly oppressive love, a love disconnected from seemingly oppressive reality, reality being

a life disconnected from love, a love so organized that every file is labeled with potential affection or agitation, banality or bravado, continuity or conduction, dereliction or derangement, entitlement or endomorphism, felicity or frankness, humor or humility, ignorance or impropriety, jadedness or jealousy, killing and kickbacks, lying and lingering beyond the designated time, morosely moving money to and fro with all accounts dwindling, nothingness, or or or or or, perfection and the inability not to promise the world, the quasi-religious affiliation with loosening the linguistic grip of sure hands as they quietly quarantine me from the people I grew up with, reconciliation and robotic reassurance that everything's okay, that I can demand change and join the popular change-movement, that all the supercilious sentimentality of those sequestered and scorned sapsuckers is a study in scuttlebutt scripture, scavengers selecting Schrodinger's cat as the absolute last of the last suppers, tinkering tomfoolery titillating me so that my testicles tingle with the timbre of a tiger who has to tinkle, unleashing an unofficial universality of unmerciful unstable unspoiled unselfish unwholesomeness, a vacation or vaccine, something to inoculate the viral thing growing inside me, anything, the who what why and where of my wandering wrath, a kind of xenophobic xerox machine that refuses to reproduce, yielding to no youthful indiscretions, just zealous zeroing in on the zesty opportunity of zygotes brewing.

I was sure that had she made it perfectly clear from the beginning of our relationship that she was just a spoiled brat and had never really released her emotional self into the ravaged and ravaging world of stereo electronics, that I would have been prepared for all of these necessary mental adapters, including the five-pronged one that sought connectivity in the kitchen, the bathroom, the bedroom, the porch and the garage, our spiritual-

ly deficient love-cabling lost in the ancient housing of some synthetic fix where she could have had access to my every tissue, muscle, cell, molecule, my eyeballs, could have driven all my cars, the Honda, the Mercury, the Zenith, the Apex, the Subliminal, the Proctological, the Hemorrhaging, the Hypothalamus for god sakes, she could have had it all and I would have been her trusty tongue, the penis in servitude, the butt-licker, nipple nibbler, armpit excavator, anything and everything if only she would have got in touch with her *buzzing neuron*ia, but her past would not let her, she couldn't, or at least she wouldn't, share the vibrational debris of energy endlessly ejaculating itself into the void of blackness my love for her was and in many ways still is, although, I must admit to myself here in the presence of a now-machine cranking out more eternal returns than one heart can possibly be expected to absorb, I must admit to myself that I can't help but wish she would have tried, put forth the crucial effort, because that would have opened us up to a future that only dreamers of the ultimate sexual silence happily find themselves in.

Now that the brutal media death has taken over and all the eyes are lining up in queues that run around the block, impatience seems to find itself stepping into huge puddles of slippery eggs that rueful children have broken in hopes of imitating their artless relationship with an incognito sun, savage eclipse of a Newfoundland where ears peer into the distance speaking a television language covered in layer upon layer of peacock feathers, a beautiful expanse of simultaneous transsexuality ramming genderless hallucinations into soft portholes of honest displeasure, a gentle ramming, the kinder, playful horniness of birds trading scatological queries with each other, the beating human breast of emotion calling home to make sure everything's okay, it isn't,

someone has mysteriously disappeared, the only clue to work off of is the message left on the answering machine, a muffled voice saying something that sounds like “extinct”, and I, putting the sleepy receiver back into its General Electric cradle muttering to myself that *this is me*, that I’ve become the surface appearance of things.

GRAMMATRON



Abe Golam sat behind his computer wondering how he could escape his marketing candor and enter a plea of Not Guilty. Gone were the days of pot-smoking music-listening meditation. His mental deposits of rare minerals were a thing of the past. Every speck of creative ore had been excavated from his burnt-out brain and it was obvious to him that the only way he could even pretend to survive in the electrosphere was to focus attention on himself, one of the innovators of an art movement that had a brief flash of success during the last few years of the 20th Century.

He felt someone else's past start to rub up against his own present in a way that seemed totally unnatural. His credit was maxed-out and his last live-in girlfriend left him for some young graphic artist in the Gallery Net Scene. He was wondering if he could cope.

Outside his office window, the big fluffy butterfly-flakes of snow spinning down from the July sky were a sign. Darting his eyes to the nearby hanging mirror and seeing the surgically-grafted cuntlips hanging off his puffy old-man cheeks was a sign. The software program that had just a few minutes ago whispered to him that it was time to wake up so he could go back to the Death Terminal and delineate his physical deterioration was also a sign. Everything he did, everything he saw, was a sign pointing itself in the direction of being social, of engaging with a world whose landscape was rapidly becoming an asexual flow of impertinent data. His standard response to all of these random signs was that he had to get himself out into the electrosphere so that anyone who cared could measure his measure for whatever it was worth. *Worth*, or value, was the rustling of data. He was the only kind of artist that could now survive into the 21st century: he was an info-shaman.

IT IS WORTHLESS, he entered his opening salvo of this particular day into the electrosphere, then he backspaced over the word WORTHLESS and typed in DATA. By the time he was finished with his first line it read IT IS DATA THAT WORRIES ME.

His glazed donut eyes were spacing out into the electrosphere looking for more words to transcribe his personal loss of meaning. Taking his fingers off the keyboard he started talking to himself in a mock-professional way: "Let's pretend to rub shoulders with the Giants of Narrative. Let's take this line by line pseudo-progression of thrusting development and zap it with so many special-effects that everyone who reads it will be totally wowed. Let's pretend that this is as new as it gets and then in our best trendoid way, let's prove that this is *the best* in mortal fiction. That's right, *mortal* fiction. Never say die!!"

Drug-free Cyburbia was killing its own. Golam was operating on bee pollen and royal jelly and his brain was throbbing. Meanwhile the chaotic electrosphere interrupted his mental writing space as some renegade programmer/marketer broke through his program's protective screen and blasted an alien signal into his aural arena:

"GOT BLUE BALLS, BUDDY? SAME OLD SAME OLD? FUCK THAT SHIT MAN. . . GO **MONSTER! MONSTER** IS THE MOST POTENT FORM OF DAMIANA EVER GROWN. AND WE GOT IT HERE IN CUM CITY! TAKE A TRIP TO CUM CITY AND WATCH YOUR LIFE TURN FROM SHITTY TO. . . WORSE!"

Golam had to laugh at that one. He was a sucker for the existentially dark misfit infomercial. Had been for over 30 years. He remembers that original post-punk car commercial where the acerbic, sophomoric creepoid in leather with a retro-James Dean haircut nervously Mr. Bojangled his tight white ass all around the Suburu saying things like "This rod is God! This junk is punk! You think I'm sick? At least I ain't slick! I make you wanna puke? At least I ain't from Dubuque! Stop kidding yourself! BUY THIS CAR! What? Grunge getting to your head? Now you act dead . . ." and then he would completely turn his attention away from you and jump into the vehicle taking off into what looked like the great American desert.

But the desert wasn't real. It was the desert of the real. It was a digitally-manipulated hyperdocument that prided itself on its ability to link information so as to create paths of annotated destruction. Slowly, imperceptibly, the granulation inside Golam's brain was motorizing itself into some foreign terrain that one of his ex-student-lovers might have designed as a last ditch effort to avoid being forced to live on the streets.

The alien signal on the monitor now pulsated like the interior of a human eye while the voice-over came through loud and clear:

“HI, I’M JOCK DERRIERE, AND I’M HERE TO HELP YOU NAVIGATE ALL THOSE SWOLLEN DREAMS INTO **ONE** FILM CANISTER THAT PROMISES **NOT** TO BLOW UP IN YOUR FACE! THIS IS ‘INTER-JIVE’ AND YOU’RE ON THE AIR! TELL US WHO YOU ARE!”

Golam was caught in a live loop and he immediately responded. It was hard to break old habits and his were the oldest.

“I’m Abe Golam, an old man. I drove a sign to the end of the road and then I got lost. Find me.”

“ABE BABY! YOU’RE THE POET LAUREATE OF WURD-STAR HYPERMEDIA! EVERYBODY WHO’S ANYBODY KNOWS THAT IT’S YOUR PIONEERING WORK AS ONE OF THE ORIGINAL WURDSTARS THAT MADE ALL THIS RAMPANT FREE EXPRESSION POSSIBLE! IF IT WASN’T FOR YOU WE MIGHT ALL BE LOCKED IN INOPERABLE FILES HIDDEN AWAY IN UNASCERTAINABLE FOLDERS IN CLOSELY GUARDED GOVERNMENT-PATROLLED SITES! OUR ABILITY TO CARRY YOU LIVE OVER THE ELECTROSPHERE IS DIRECTLY LINKED TO **YOUR** ACHIEVEMENTS SO LONG AGO! THANK **YOU** ABE GOLAM!”

Golam paused as his aura absorbed the electrifying hype that came his way.

“The Grand Narratives were disasters,” he plodded along, sending his signal to all who were lurking over the live interactive program he had somehow got caught in, “we had no choice but to do away with all that naming and desiring. There was too much emphasis on the body as an experimental project. We knew

that the mental jottings we periodically transmitted vis-à-vis pre-designed *modus operandi* rooted in modernist intelligibility were somehow coming apart in the mass mixed media of net-driven anxieties. The Credit Wars, Killing Contracts, Amoebic Contaminations, all of it had some small role in our eventual domestication. I am home now. . . ”

“WELL, YEAH ABE-BABES, WE’RE ALL HOME NOW! HOME ALONE! TOUCH ME YOU DIE!”

“I’ve never really cleaned out, you know,” Golam continued, “I used to go around performing my work back toward the end of the 20th Century, I’d go to bookstores, college campuses, libraries, art galleries, the usual, I’d strip my language down to the bone going for the best possible effects so that more momentum and energy would be stimulated leading to God knows what, and the only way I could get through it all was to dabble in the delectation of raw chemical substances. But at least I’m no longer a prisoner of my own skin. I’m beyond the beyond. . . ”

“BEYOND THE PALE ABES-BABES! BEYOND THE FUCKING PALE! WHICH REMINDS ME, CAN WE SNEAK IN A HYPO-MERZ SHOT OF GRUNGE! MY SPONSOR IS CHAMPING AT THE BIT!”

“Sure, go ahead.”

“HERE’S JACKIE JILL WITH A COME-ON!”

At this point a virtual babe with cosmic cleave and digital dew-drops dripping off her pseudo-collagen inflamed lips starts deep tonguing the screen coming at all the viewers as if she were ready to lick the radiation right off their dour faces. After about two dozen slo-mo sweeps of her tongue doing the nasty, she jerks her whole head back and speaks in a low erotic voice:

“STOP FUCKING AROUND. I DIDN’T COME HERE TO LISTEN TO YOUR DEPRESSIVE BULLSHIT. YOUR HANG-

UPS ARE EASY TO READ BABY. YOU NEED PUSSY. HOT WET UNINTERRUPTED NON-STOP FOREVER-IN-YOUR-FACE PUSSY. COME TO ME, JACKIE JILL, UP MY HILL, TO FETCH A PAIL OF STEAMY, HOT, CUM-WATER. COME ON BABY, YOU'VE BEEN PISSING ALL YOUR GODDAMN TIME AWAY. YOU WANNA GET LAID?"

At which point three more slo-mo sweeps of the tantalizing tongue come across the screen and then her access code burns brightly in dark red: JJ@900SEX.COM

"HI, I'M JOCK DERRIERE, AND WE'RE BACK LIVE ON 'INTER-JIVE'! WE'RE HERE WITH WURDSTAR PIONEER ABE GOLAM! ABE-BABES, GOT A GRAM OF PSYCHOLINGUISTIC BABBLE YOU WANNA SHARE?!"

"Nice Come-On. Wish I could buy some but it wouldn't do me any good. Besides, it would be too vacuous of me to drive *that* kind of sign out into the desert. You know something, there's a will-to-love and its still inside me. I can feel it inside my loins. At least I'm reading that pang between my legs as a sign of desire, desire for *love*, and you can't take that away from me. I'm just as responsible as the next mathematician screening formulaic devices. Digital Remote and The Mortal Scan. I read you, you *need* me. We're all *there*, Partner.

"Hey, listen to me: these exposed tracks of meaning and their supposed grams of nerve-scintillation can't fully make sense of the involuted wash now generating *this* generic sea. You too may want to wash me, but only as a temp. The permanent position is out in the cold blue yonder. It's the inevitability of my death that strokes me the best.

"No one can provoke the kind of nausea I'm speaking of. This is a code that refuses to submit. Take a hike. Go fuck yourself. The war is over The Subject. The war is over and *I* am The Subject. This is who I am."



Golam turned on his ReadyWipe™ and right before the intruder completely disappeared a trail of verbal ash floated by and he thought it said

***BREAKING NEWS!
MACRO WORLD MEDIA DECLARES WAR!
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CHECK NOW FOR PRICES. . .***

about the alt-x virtual imprint
ALT-X PRESS

Since our inception in 1993, Alt-X's primary mission has been to challenge the art and literary publishing establishments by supporting some of the most iconoclastic voices and visions in contemporary art and writing. Our Alt-X Virtual Imprint brings to web-readers a must-have library of uncategorizable writing being produced by some of the most provocative artists in contemporary new media culture. As eclectic writing makes its footprint into the electrosphere, we no longer ask "What is literature?" but, more importantly, "What is literature's exit strategy?"



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