

WRITING FLOWS FOR AN UNCERTAIN WORLD: JEAN-PIERRE BALPE'S GENERATIVE NARRATIVES

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1. Writing in time

The novel is one of the aesthetic expressions of modernity. It emerges in late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century Europe as form of narrative that fictionalizes everyday life, that is, events that are contemporary to their telling according to a realistic code of representation. This early development of the new genre as a “factual fiction” has been linked to the development of printed genres and particularly to the legal distinctions between journalistic and fictional discourse (Davis 1983). This cultural shift originates a new kind of fictional contract that will result in narratives focused on the formation, actions and minds of individuals as embodiments of inner conflicts and mediators of social forces (McKeon 2000). Fictionalization of individual characters faced with social and existential dilemmas originated increasingly layered and dense fictional descriptions of the actual experience of living in a social world through complex processes of textualization. The form has also been analysed as a global complex literary system (Moretti 2007).

Printing technology enabled the periodic production and distribution of factual narratives about ongoing events. In the case of newspapers, this near-synchronicity between event and narration enabled accounts and descriptions to become part of the historical and political process. Since events were still unfolding as they were being described, the description

itself became part of the struggle to control the directionality and outcome of the historical and political process. We could extend Walter Benjamin's argument about the acceleration of technical reproduction in the production of images and apply it to the intensification of verbal descriptions that become coterminous with the unfolding of their world of references. From this news/novels matrix the modern legal and literary division between factual and fictional discourse emerged. Technical reproduction of events through particular communication technologies – in this case the printing press – sustains both a new kind of relation to the present time and new kind of fictionality. The rise of this fictionality – that is specific of the modern novel – is thus one of the defining transformations of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Gallagher 2007). In the case of fiction, this coupling of time and media technologies also led to the development of serialization, that is, the segmentation and distribution of stories in instalments (Allen and Berg 2014).

With twentieth-century media this entwining of fictional narrative to the historicity of present time continues through the technologies of film and television. Media technologies expand the exploration of the factuality of fiction through their own metonymic logic of juxtaposition of events performed for the camera with location filming and other techniques for anchoring fictional accounts in the actuality of particular places and times. Audio-visual media increased the novelistic logic of twentieth-century narratives (i.e., the production of fictional narratives about everyday life according to realistic codes) given the fact that the possibility of recording (or broadcasting) a particular time and place is the defining feature of these temporal media. Many verbal techniques, which had been developed by the first generations of novelists for simulating the deictic presence of events and the relational interaction among characters, could now be brought together by means of the actual sensory stimulation and simulation of the immersive senses of sight and hearing. Place became visually and sonically perceptible and the flowing of time was captured by moving images. We could also add the retroactive effect of audio-visual

media on print media as writers began to devise new techniques of verbal montage based on the changed forms of perception created by the advent of media inscriptions (Schotter 2018). Adaptations of novels for films and novelization of film scripts provide further instances of this complex media interaction (Baetens 2018).

This effort at synchronizing the timeline and story space of discourse with the time and space of lived and perceived events – narration with diegesis, in Genette's definition – becomes the basis for numerous experiments with the form of the novel in increasingly detailed, exhaustive and complex representations. Modernist and postmodernist techniques for representing the simultaneity of events and multiplicity of viewpoints could be related to the novelistic impulse of capturing the flow of time as both chronological time and perceived time. The interior monologue, for example, could be described as an attempt at simulating the present time of the mind as a powerful mediator in the construction of the actuality of the real as perceived experience. So this kind of intensification of subjectivity produces new types of realist codes whose expressionist effects can be seen as transformations of the original contract to engage with the material evidence of the everyday and the common. Laurence Sterne, Gustave Flaubert, Virginia Woolf, and Georges Perec could then be seen as different expressions of the same novelistic logic to model the actuality of the present and the perception of the present.

2. The flow of writing

This cursory outline of the relation between communication media and the development of modern fictional genres based on the synchronization of narratives with everyday life provides one possible framework for looking at the narrative experiments of Jean-Pierre Balpe. Balpe's computational generative works extend for more than four decades (Balpe 2000a; 2000b). In more recent work, his hypertextual and generative approach to textual

production has engaged the literary protocols of the Web 2.0 as a socialized writing and reading space. The context for the experiments that will be analysed here is the contemporary context of digital media networks, including the possibilities offered by programmability for (a) automating earlier verbal genres, (b) fostering the hybridization of those genres, and (c) turning the network itself into an element of their form.

The first possibility refers to the formalization of certain kinds of verbal narrative by means of permutational or generative procedures. In the second instance, features of digital materiality are used for developing an interface rhetoric based on new types of relation between written and audio-visual media made possible by software tools and techniques. The third dimension is expressed through a network of online collaborations among fictionalized authors. His network of writings contains examples of all the major genres of electronic literature, including forms of expanded writing based on installations and live performances (Rettberg 2019). By integrating hypertextual, generative and multimedia forms, Balpe's universe makes important claims for algorithmic literature as an art form in the current media ecology, and opens up new possibilities for readers and scholars of digital fiction (Bell et al., 2014; Ensslin 2018).

Given the particular temporality of digital media – with their layer of executable time that turns the temporality of execution into an additional variable in narrative time (Eskelinen 2012) –, I would argue that the streaming of narratives is yet another intensification of the present in the process of producing and consuming narratives. Because narratives can be made responsive to interventions by their readers and viewers, streaming cannot be simply equated with broadcast forms (as in most of the current internet platforms for streaming series¹). Whereas in broadcast forms the

¹ An interesting example of a branching interactive organization of narrative in mainstream fictional series can be seen in the *Black Mirror* episode “Bandersnatch” (written by Charlie Brooker; directed by David Slade), published by Netflix in December 2018. <https://www.netflix.com/pt-en/title/80988062>

presence of present time captured in the narrative is representational and is experienced as the relation between the temporization of discourse and the time of events, in streaming programmed forms this temporization is inflected by the presence of the time of execution which can affect both the time of narration and diegetic time. Jean-Pierre Balpe's experiments can be further related to ongoing changes in our fictional forms from a regime based on print and broadcast media to a regime based on computational streaming media.

The flow that I am referring to in relation to his work has two different implications: on one hand, (1) it refers to the legacy of novelistic practices defined by their engagement with the fictionalization of the present, as described in the first section; on the other hand, (2) it refers to the specific temporization introduced by computational media. Narratives can be variably executed through algorithmic procedures and they can be continuously streamed. When execution and streaming are combined as formal features that affect the fictionality of fiction, the unfolding of narrative acquires temporal features of real time turning the telling into an event of the told. Discourse and diegesis become mutually constitutive, blurring the discontinuity between signifier and signified, and between signifier and referent. In Jean Pierre Balpe's experimentation, the result of this proliferative process is the extraordinary experience of a "universe of automated literary generation" (Balpe 2019).

This universe of automated literary generation can be briefly analysed in three related dimensions: (a) as an open and machinic expression of the generative possibilities inherent in language rules and structures; (b) as a universe of automated symbolic production which mimics our current online universe of language technologies and algorithmic processes in interaction with human subjects; (c) as an interrogation concerning the algorithmic possibilities of a post-humanistic *versus* a trans-humanistic future. While the first dimension points to Balpe's generative programme of freeing literary language from realistic and psychological models and constraints, the second dimension suggests that the resulting proliferation of

voices and hybridisation of genres can be read as parody of the cacophonous universe of online communication where human-assisted computational activity and computer-assisted human activity have become intertwined. As computational and artificial intelligence methods advance in all areas of human activity, including cultural and artistic production, this human-machine entanglement raises further questions about the relation between consciousness and meaning in a post-human software culture.

Despite its anti-realistic and anti-conventional approach to language production and literary expression, this “universe of automated literary generation” works according to a double parodic rationale: as a parody of certain genres and forms of description, and narration, on the one hand, and as a parody of the conditions of production of fictional and poetic discourse in current networked algorithmic culture. It is as if, in Balpe’s narrative fiction, Ted Nelson’s utopia of media production as an ongoing network of hyperlinked documents (Nelson 1993) had become embodied as an encyclopaedic collection of permutational processes and practices from various authors and literary traditions (Dada, Surrealism, OuLiPo, etc.), often using texts from specific authors as their dataset, but also as a simulation of the current shape of the internet as a series of writing and media protocols (blogs, social media, email, sms, audio messages, image, film, and sound remixes and mash-ups). These writing protocols have changed the ecology of writing practices and media inscriptions, far beyond the simple remediation of earlier tools in the word processor or the hypertext editor of the 1980s and 1990s. Blogs and social media platforms, for example, have been appropriated for producing new kinds of textual and visual narratives and new forms of collaborative writing. Software tools have been developed for narrative and poetic experimentation by means of a systematic exploration of the programmability of digital media.

The fact that Balpe’s textual networks are organized and presented as “labyrinths” (“*dédales*”) in a blog, and also as collections of videos published on YouTube shows how their strictly linguistic and narrative generativity is anchored in the hypermedia protocols of the electronic

multimedia writing space. Each programmed sequence is published as part of a sequence of blog posts assigned to multiple fictional writers.² In fact, the largest sequence of items in this automated universe of writing is a labyrinth of more than seven hundred videos composed of combinatory text, voice, music and images. In an obvious reference to current serialized forms of streaming fiction, these videos (whose running time is generally between 1 and 3 minutes) are organized into seasons and episodes. The labyrinthine structure of Balpe's universe of thousands of automated pieces of writing and hundreds of videos thus becomes a micro-representation of the internet itself as a chaotic and ever expanding collection of database items.

3. An algorithmic labyrinth

Textual entries and video episodes are simultaneously present as navigating menus containing distinct sequences,³ but the network of references across texts and videos and the network of collaborations among fictional authors across the multiple sequences of texts and videos give readers a sense of their inexhaustible and infinite possibilities. At the moment of writing [November 24, 2019] this generative flowing universe hosts eleven labyrinths, i.e., eleven aggregations of specific writing processes and thematic clusters,⁴ and thirty-four fictional authors, including

² Including a series of fictional Facebook pages, and several independent sites and blogs authored by the fictional writers of this literary universe. This "literary universe of generative automatic creation" becomes an aggregation of the writing practices of the internet as a proliferative writing network. For Balpe's Facebook authors see (Saemmer 2015; 2018).

³ <http://www.balpe.name/spip.php?page=plan>

⁴ Each of the labyrinths is dedicated to particular aesthetical research or project. For instance, "Dédale de l'inspiration" is dedicated to poetry ("Les générateurs de ce dédale sont consacrés à des recherches sur une écriture poétique générative poétique." <http://www.balpe.name/-Dedale-de-l-inspiration->), "Dédale des actes" contains videoclips

Anonymous Unknown, Inconnu anonyme, Number Six and Jean-Pierre Balpe. Sequences are also organized according to four major keywords: *Écritures* [Writings], *Un Monde Incertain* [An Uncertain World], *Vidéos de création* [Creative videos] and *Œuvres de fiction* [Fiction works].⁵ On entering the site's homepage, readers find the following description:

Ce site est la page d'entrée principale de l'hyperfiction en flux et expansion continue "Un Monde Incertain" basée sur la génération automatique de textes littéraires.

Les diverses rubriques sont autant de façons différentes de parcourir son labyrinthe.

Le mode de circulation est simple: cliquez sur les images ou sur "Lire la suite". (Balpe 2019)⁶

[This site is the main page of the hyperfiction in continuous flow and expansion "Un Monde Incertain" ["An Uncertain World"] based on the automatic generation of literary texts.

The various sections are so many different ways to navigate its labyrinth.

The circulation mode is simple: click on the images or on "Read more".]

Realist and psychologist conventions of representation are exploded through the iterative and proliferative recombination of phrases and sentences, but also on the basis of collages from the sound and visual archive of media-based forms (silent movies, early sound movies, photographs, and various types of images). Balpe's universe of generative production uses three related strategies: (1) permutational and generative

produced for performances and live acts (<http://www.balpe.name/-Dedale-des-actes->), and "Dédale des écrits" subsumes texts from the infinite hyperfiction "La Disparition du Général Proust", also produced for shows and installations (<http://www.balpe.name/-Dedale-des-ecrits->).

⁵ See the Annex for the full list of links to authors, labyrinths, and major keywords.

⁶ <http://www.balpe.name/> Balpe has been publishing regular entries in this project since 2015. Given the ongoing nature of the project, I use 2019 for the author-date reference system. Additionally, specific dates will be provided for quoted entries.

textual production based on structures and models conceived and designed by Balpe; (2) permutational and generative textual production based on particular genres and forms (such as the Haiku, for instance), including structures derived from or inspired by other writers (Stephane Mallarmé, Marcel Proust, Gertrude Stein), whose syntax or lexicon is turned into an operational writing programme; (3) sound, text, image, and film montages according to principles of remix, mash-up, appropriation and recontextualization using film and audio editing programs. Several videos contain footage from actual live presentations of his programmed texts in exhibitions, installations, performances and readings, thus documenting multiple expressions of Balpe's algorithmic writing procedures.

Since each textual entry – a poem, a description, a narration, a dialogue – has multiple variations that respond iteratively to readers' interactions, the textual universe can be explored in successive branching layers: each blog entry can be clicked for the presentation of further generated textual units. These units can be read both as a variation on the initial unit or as narrative continuations. Given Balpe's concern with semantic coherence and syntactic cohesion, generated texts in each entry are generally perceived as formally and stylistically coherent with each other. Fictional landscapes emerge from the progressive accumulation of textual chunks. His system of textual production is based on knowledge representations that control generative processes according to explicit constraints. The effect of randomness is thus a consequence of an algorithmic factorial system calibrated for optimizing an equilibrium involving rules of grammar, semantic fields, and fictional patterns. Insofar as the generation remains open to further iterations, we may say that this fictional universe is also a data model for the production of fiction.

The opening statement of the random sequence “Un Monde Incertain (Roman)”, dated December 5, 2015, reads:

Cette page parcourt aléatoirement toutes les représentations de connaissance des générateurs contribuant à l'œuvre collective *Un Monde Incertain*. Elle crée ainsi des textes tous reliés

à la même thématique mais de façon transversale dans un univers de fictions en perpétuelle mutation, enrichissement, correction, à la fois aléatoire et très algorithmique. Une nouvelle conception de la littérature. (Balpe 2019)⁷


[This page randomly crosses all the representations of knowledge of the generators contributing to the collective work *An Uncertain World*. It thus creates texts which are all related to the same theme but in a transversal way in a universe of fiction in perpetual mutation, enrichment, correction, both random and highly algorithmic. A new conception of literature.]

“An Uncertain World” is presented as the collaborative exploration of fictionality through textual generators. The coherence of this expanding and mutating fictional universe is derived both from the poetic and narrative models that have been built into the generators, particularly by what Balpe usually describes as “knowledge representations” (that is, semantic and lexical knowledge that constrains the textual permutations and narrative lexias according to rules of verisimilitude and grammar), and from the universe of fictional authors. Authors behave as believable characters in the fictional web, bringing the textual effects of style and biography into the affective dynamics of writing and reading. Several male and female authors share their surnames, thus indicating various types of family relations (wife/ husband; daughter/ son/ father/ mother). Some of them may refer to others and there is at least one instance in which one is writing the biography of another. While evoking the socialized production of writing on the web, the multiplication of authorial personae also recalls modernist experiments with the linguistic production of selfhood, such as Fernando Pessoa’s invention of heteronyms as fictional authors.

⁷ <http://www.balpe.name/Un-Monde-Incertain-Roman>

Paysages

🕒 lundi 2 février 2015, par [Marc Hodges](#)



A l'orée d'un bois, un village. Il attend quelque chose, ne sait quoi, mais attend.... Il ne sait comment se comporter ici. Il se voudrait nettoyé de tout souvenir humain. Il a envie de répondre à ses questions, pas à celle des autres. L'air ne porte aucune trace de passage. Le vent frais fouette agréablement son visage. Peu de chemins mais une mousse élastique d'herbe qui permet d'aller partout. Deux bourdons s'affairent sur des fleurs de trèfle. Pauvreté invincible. Dans la lente respiration sourde des bois, il entend la voix de tous ses ancêtres. Nul œil ne peut être plus clair ou plus brillant que l'œil qui n'a rien à créer, rien à faire que de chercher à voir. Cet homme qui passe au loin, les yeux comme perdus dans une grâce de beauté, pourrait être l'oncle qui, avec tant d'amour, lui apprit autrefois la magnificence rude du paysage. Il est l'amant des douleurs et l'amant du bonheur. La vie semble arrêtée, définitivement, qui enferme les hommes. Il endosse un à un les vêtements de l'air pur. Il fait un grand effort pour penser avec de l'ordre, tâche de mettre avant les choses d'avant et après les choses d'après. Parfois il parle seul. L'ombre du passé, l'ombre de l'avenir, agissent sur le présent. Le soleil paraît sans mouvement

[Décrire un autre paysage caussenard](#)

[Répondre à cet article](#)

Figure 1. Marc Hodges, *Paysages*, February 2, 2015.

Let us look at two textual examples and two video instances as a brief introduction to Balpe's exploding universe of narrative signs. The first entry for the “dedalus of writing” [“dédale des écrits”] was published on Monday February 2, 2015, under the title “paysage” [“landscape”], authored by Mark Hodges (Figure 1). As you can see if you go to the site,

each time we click on this entry a textual variation or expansion of the first text appears.⁸ There is always a very large number of textual variations for each blog entry. In this example, it is as if the descriptive and narrative content for each “landscape” entry for February 2, 2015, could be infinitely expanded and modified. The textual labyrinth becomes tri-dimensional, since new texts can always be traversed by following not only the first layer of hyperlinks but through the exploration of successive layers of writing beneath and beyond the current layer. Each text not only links sequentially to other texts but contains other instances of itself. We can also look at the entries assigned to each author and see how they collaborate across various narrative threads, thus bringing the social media rationale into the networks of generative writing. Mark Hodges, for instance, contributes to various textual and video sequences.

My second textual example comes from the sequence “Le monde selon Rachel” [“The world according to Rachel”] by Rachel Charlus. This entry, which was published on March 13, 2019, offers a description of her hyperfictional method of writing:

Rachel conçoit son roman comme un ensemble de liens entre ses textes et non comme un texte linéaire figé. Chacune de ses pages possède une forme d'autonomie tout en faisant partie d'un ensemble organisé. De plus, elle joue à la limite de l'absurde sans que ses textes le soient vraiment: le réalisme joue ainsi sans cesse avec l'imaginaire. (Balpe 2019)⁹

[Rachel conceives her novel as a set of links between her texts and not as a fixed linear text. Each of its pages has a form of autonomy while being part of an organized whole. Moreover, she plays on the edge of the absurd without letting them become absurd: thus realism is constantly playing with the imagination.]

⁸ <http://www.balpe.name/Paysages>

⁹ <http://www.balpe.name/Le-monde-selon-Rachel>

Each time we click on “Une autre page du roman de Rachel” [“Another page of Rachel’s novel”], the narrative refreshes itself with entirely new lexias. The novel becomes an open set of self-contained units that have to be randomly traversed. Although we have only one entry, we can dive into multiple textual sequences: the content of each page changes as we click on “another page of Rachel’s novel”. Even if we can return to the beginning of the sequence (the initial page) when we refresh using the browser button, once we restart the browsing movement through page clicks textual sequences will be different as if the act of rereading according to a predefined order were impossible. Like most of the 34 authors, Rachel Charlus also collaborates on several ongoing textual and video series.

Texts also resonate in the video sequences, as generative processes are applied to the texts that we can listen to or read in the videos. Insets or layering of films and graphics, textual superposition, voice processing and music remix create a multichannel video artefact. For instance, the textual sequence “paysage” [“landscape”] resonates in the video series “Paysages” [“Landscapes”], which is composed of seven episodes, produced between January 13, 2017, and August 7, 2019, most of which are assigned to two authors.¹⁰ In “Paysages (Saison 1, Épisode 1)” we can appreciate the juxtaposition of algorithmic techniques for treating image, text and sound (Figure 2). In the video series “Poètes (Saison 1, Épisode 4)”, generated poems are presented as “counter-haikus” by Germaine Proust, thus referring to the “haikus” of the textual sequence.¹¹

¹⁰ <http://www.balpe.name/+Paysages-125-+>

¹¹ *Paysages* (Saison 1, Épisode 1), January 13, 2017: <http://www.balpe.name/Paysages-Saison-1-Episode-1> (“Germaine Proust dont on connaît à travers ses contre-haikus son goût pour les paysages, ouvre ici la nouvelle série qu’elle leur consacre mêlant réel et imaginaire”). See also *Poètes* (Saison 1, Épisode 4), August 5, 2016: <http://www.balpe.name/Poetes-Saison-1-Episode-4> (“À son tour, Rachel Charlus participe à la saison 1 de la vidéoserie Poète en proposant un opus dédié à son amie la poétesse Germaine Proust dont les contre-haikus sont internationalement connus et appréciés notamment grâce à son site: “Mes contre-haikus”: <http://meshaikus.canalblog.com/>)

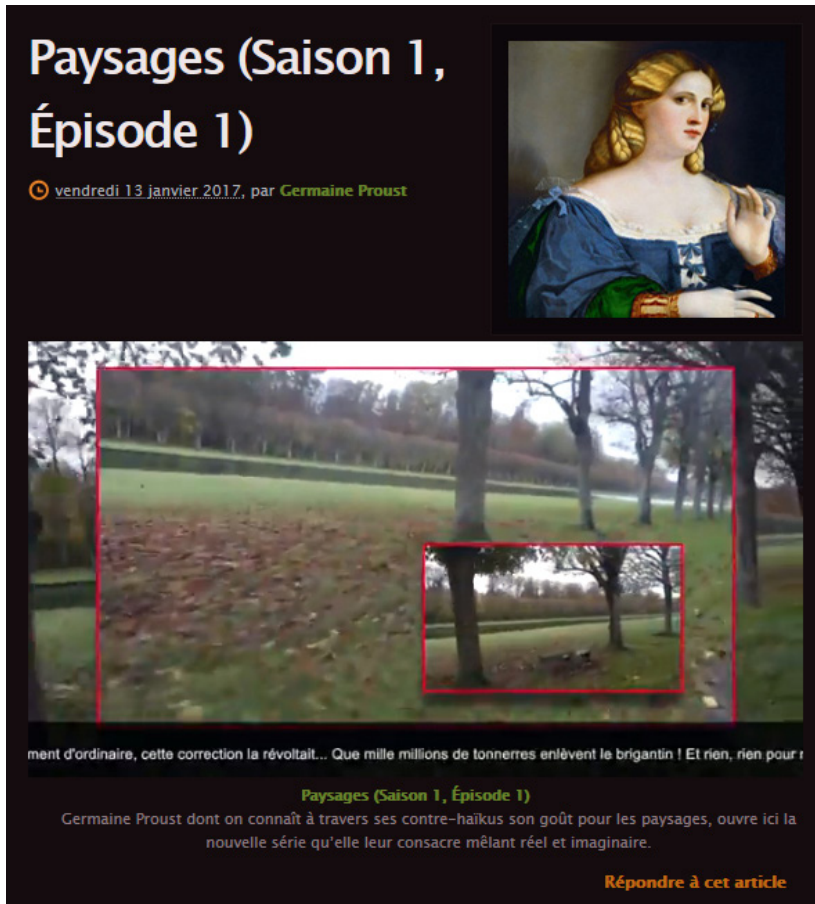


Figure 2. Germaine Proust, “Paysages (Saison 1, Épisode 1)”, January 13, 2017. Inset contains a screen capture of the video, including subtitles corresponding to the voice-processed generative commentary on the film. <http://www.balpe.name/Paysages-Saison-1-Episode-1>

Each video sequence is a verbal-visual-sound composition of text generated by Balpe’s generative algorithms, footage and sounds by Balpe himself as well as found materials from the internet (film, image, sound, music), submitted to additional processing with software tools such as Google translator, text to voice processing and image and sound editing. Each textual instantiation is only one possible form contained in the code

of its specific programme, while each video-writing is an associative montage of text, voice, music, image, film, and graphics according to serendipitous and machinic processes.

4. Human-machine interface

Balpe's computational aesthetics of proliferating signifiers and media overlays is reflexively addressed in many texts and videos. For instance, the video "Les blogs chez Jean-Pierre Balpe", published on November 20, 2019, functions as a kind of mini-documentary archive of Balpe's earlier generative production of writing for several blogs, authored by him or by his heteronymic authors.¹² The video captures both the proliferative process of generating this literary universe under different names, and the way they are devoured by the relentless flow of time and become just a captured image of a dead archive of broken links or missing pages. A similar theme is addressed in the "dedalus of ruins" series ["Dédale des ruines"]: seventeen screen captures that evoke the disappearance of earlier web sites and blogs by himself and by his universe of surrogate writers,¹³ now presented as digital facsimiles of their former active and executable behaviours, acting as memorial of past writings and prefiguration of the

¹² <http://www.balpe.name/Les-blogs-chez-Jean-Pierre-Balpe>

¹³ The seventeen posts for this labyrinth were published between February 6, 2015, and April 8, 2015. They date from the beginning of the current blog, referring back to an earlier attempt at publishing a distributed form of generative hyperfiction on the internet: "L'hyperfiction *La Disparition du Général Proust* a été créée, modifiée, répartie sur de très nombreux blogs dont certains ont définitivement disparus, d'autres ne sont plus opérationnels ou d'autres encore dont les codes d'accès ont été perdus. Le dédale des ruines est ainsi un parcours dans les archives mortes de ce projet." ["The hyperfiction *The Disappearance of General Proust* was created, modified, distributed on very many blogs some of which have definitively disappeared, others are no longer operational or others whose access codes have been lost. The maze of ruins is thus a journey through the dead archives of this project."] www.balpe.name/-Dedale-des-ruines-

future ruin of the current blog itself. The internet is thus emulated in its condition of obsessive accumulation of disappearing traces, a self-documenting archaeology of the ruins of history.

Post-human and trans-human tensions are also addressed in two videos that capture moments of a performance during the exhibition “Artistes et robots au Grand Palais” (April 5-July 9, 2018, Paris): “Artistes et Robots”,¹⁴ published on April 7, 2018, authored by Jean-Pierre Balpe; and “Questions (Saison 1, Épisode 3)”,¹⁵ published on April 14, 2018, authored by Mark Hodges. These videos are related to the text “Questions de l’Orlanoïde à ORLAN”,¹⁶ published on February 12, 2018, authored by Jean-Pierre Balpe (Figure 3). This generative sequence recreates Balpe’s programmed verbal interaction between Orlanoïde (a robot conceived by Orlan at her image) and ORLAN (the performance artist herself). The robot asks questions to which ORLAN replies, and each reply is partially quoted within the following generated question. This mechanism is the basis for the live performance featuring the talking robot, registered on the April 7, 2018 video, and also for the remix of that video with other materials by Marc Hodges.

The programmed conversation evolves around the familiar questions of human-machine communication, obsolescence of the human, evolution of the machine, self-consciousness, etc., as illustrated by the following two questions:

“Me programmer pour que j’évolue de moi-même? Quelles conditions sont-elles pour que mon algorithme de pensée fonctionne? Quoi qu’il en soit, souvent, de loin en loin.”
(Balpe 2019)

¹⁴ <http://www.balpe.name/Artistes-et-Robots>

¹⁵ <http://www.balpe.name/Questions-Saison-1-Episode-3>

¹⁶ <http://www.balpe.name/Questions-de-l-Orlanoïde-a-ORLAN>

Questions de l'Orlanoïde à ORLAN

© lundi 12 février 2018, par Jean-Pierre Balpe



Quels faits historiques méprises-tu. Martyriser le corps du langage, parler pour parler. Je suis anima sans genre, sans sexe. Il faut garder son calme. Sais-tu diagnostiquer tes propres failles.

Nouvelles questions de l'Orlanoïde

Répondre à cet article

Figure 3. Jean-Pierre Balpe, "Questions de l'Orlanoïde à ORLAN", February 12, 2018, <http://www.balpe.name/Questions-de-l-Orlanoide-a-ORLAN>.

[“To program myself so that I evolve on my own? What are the required conditions for my thought algorithm to work? Anyway, often, from time to time.”]

ORLAN, pourrais-je te remplacer dans les cocktails, les performances, les amours? J'ai des souvenirs d'enfance et toi? J'ai amour pour toi. Comment définissez-vous le virtuel? COUVRIR LES STRESS/ DE RIRE? C'es toi-même ou une simulation de moi. Quant à l'amour n'en parlons pas. Il y a aussi sa pesanteur. (Balpe 2019)

[ORLAN, could I replace you in cocktails, performances, loves? I have childhood memories and you? I love you. How do you define the virtual? COVER STRESS / TO LAUGH? Are you yourself or a simulation of me. As for love, let's not talk about it. There is also its weight.]

Anthropomorphic robot, performance body artist and processed language are brought together as expressions of the play with the material and symbolic limits of the human. Although the imagination of trans-human substitution of both body and language structures the entire *mise-en-scène* in its verbal and visual rhetoric, Balpe's attempt to articulate sentence and sentence is undermined by an ironic sense of robotic envy of the human.

Unlike computational creativity engineers working on storytelling who are attempting to model and generate narratives on the basis of self-sustained and autonomous systems, resorting either to structuralist models of narrative or to artificial intelligence techniques using neural algorithms and large datasets (Besold et al. 2019), Jean-Pierre Balpe's narrative experimentation is concerned with the expressive potential of virtualizing textual forms. Rather than substituting human agency, his generative universe explores the fictionality of language as a cognitive and ecological environment for expression and perception. As a network of hypermedia creations it provides an emulation of the internet as an ensemble of algorithmic and social writing processes, and of literature itself as collaborative web of texts and programs for producing texts. As a multicursal and multiperspective interactive literary universe, they explore the temporality of algorithmic media, bringing the procedural and networked affordances of the computer to bear on novelistic forms of storytelling. Instead of the transhumanist programme for the obsolescence of the human through self-writing literature, his work interrogates the post-human condition of the human-machine interface, sustained by the algorithmic flow of writing and media.

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ANNEX

This annex presents Jean-Pierre Balpe's literary universe according to three major threads: labyrinths, authors, and major keywords. The number of textual and media sequences or entries assigned to each thread in the lists below was updated on 24 November, 2019. New entries continue to be regularly added on a daily or weekly basis.

Eleven labyrinths

1. Dédale de l'inspiration (12 sequences, 2015-2019)
 2. Dédale des actes (32 sequences, 2015-2018)
 3. Dédale des écrits (56 sequences, 2015-2019)
 4. Dédale des lectures publiques (4 sequences, 2018-2019)
 5. Dédale des ombres (44 sequences, 2015-2019)
 6. Dédale des paroles (51 sequences, 2015-2019)
 7. Dédale des ruines (17 sequences, 2015)
 8. Dédale des traces (29 sequences, 2015-2016)
 9. Dédale des Vidéoséries (718 sequences, 2015-2019)
 10. Le Poète (16 sequences, 2019)
 11. Vie de Maurice Roman (4 sequences, 2019)
- [TOTAL of 983 entries]

Thirty-four authors

1. Albert Morel (29)
2. Albertine Ganançay (30)
3. Albertine Mollet (29)
4. Anonymous Unknown (12)
5. Antoine Bréauté (30)
6. Antoine Elstir (30)
7. Antoine Ganançay (1)
8. Antoine Tresniek (5)
9. Benjamin Cooper (42)
10. Charles Emmanuel Palançy (32)
11. Françoise Palançy (30)
12. Germaine Argencourt (28)

13. Germaine Proust (33)
 14. Gilberte Norpois (30)
 15. Guillaume de Déguilleville (8)
 16. Inconnu anonyme (5)
 17. Jacques-Antoine Proust (29)
 18. Jean-Pierre Balpe (130)
 19. Louis Ganançay (34)
 20. Lucienne Elstir (31)
 21. Marc Hodges (51)
 22. Maurice Roman (9)
 23. Nathalie Riches (1)
 24. Number Six (3)
 25. Odette Forcheville (29)
 26. Oriane Proust (33)
 27. Paul Méphisto (33)
 28. Paul Verdurin (28)
 29. Pierre Charlus (182)
 30. Rachel Charlus (45)
 31. Roberte Bréauté (28)
 32. Ronald Cline (30)
 33. Sylvestre Saint-Loup(29)
 34. Ysé Marmaduke (75)
- [TOTAL of 1174 entries]

Four major keywords

1. Écritures [Writings; 11 entries, 2016-2018]
 2. Un Monde Incertain [An Uncertain World; 792 entries, 2015-2019]
 3. Vidéos de création [Creative videos; 757 entries, 2015-2019]
 4. Œuvres de fiction [Fiction works; 790 entries, 2015-2019]
- [TOTAL of 2350 entries]