

# Digital Anthropophagy: Refashioning Words as Image, Sound and Action

Roberto Simanowski

In his lecture “Creative Cannibalism and Digital Poetry,” Chris Funkhouser notes that digital poetry “devours other texts” by appropriating, transforming and reconfiguring them [1]. Funkhouser distinguishes between “pure cannibalism” and “ritual anthropophagy” and detects the latter—in which the other is killed and eaten in order to inherit its strength and qualities—in examples of digital poetry. He notes: “An anthropophagic text, in which the author or authors engage with multiple languages or idioms, devours other texts, icons, and is free to remix discrepant methods and philosophical approaches” [2]. It may sound bizarre to talk about the remix of the discrepant in terms of cannibalism when there is a well-established academic term to describe such inter-media relationships. Almost a decade ago, Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin used the concept of *remediation* to describe “the representation of one medium in another,” a process in which the formal logic of prior media is refashioned in new media and which Bolter and Grusin mark as “competition or rivalry between the new media and the old” [3]. Remediation does seem to be a suitable concept to discuss the interdependent and competitive relationship between media. However, the notion of cannibalism and anthropophagy allows us to link inter-media relationships to an instructive example of appreciating and appropriating the Other in post-colonial history, which I want to revisit here in order to explore the hidden correlations between old and new media in the society of the spectacle [4].

In his 1928 “Anthropophagic Manifesto,” Oswald de Andrade claimed that the Brazilian must “devour”—critically assimilate rather than imitate—European codes using irreverence, inversion, joke, parody, sacrilege and insult as subversive anti-colonialist strategies [5]. Andrade’s manifesto appeared in the first edition of the *Revista de Antropofagia* and sparked the very influential anthropophagic movement of the Brazilian avant-garde. An example of such subversive anti-colonialist strategies was to adopt the colonizer’s biased view of the colonized as a cannibal and to base the quest for an originally Brazilian identity on the trope of cannibalism [6]. In contrast to the xenophobic nationalist movements of the time, the concept of *Antropófago* aimed to produce national identity not through isolation or ignorance of foreign stereotypes and imported culture but through its intentional ingestion and digestion. Thus, *Antropófago* (and its 1960s offspring Tropicalism) led to manifold metamorphoses that, in allowing for recogni-

tion of other cultures, opened the way for non-homogenizing cultural encounters.

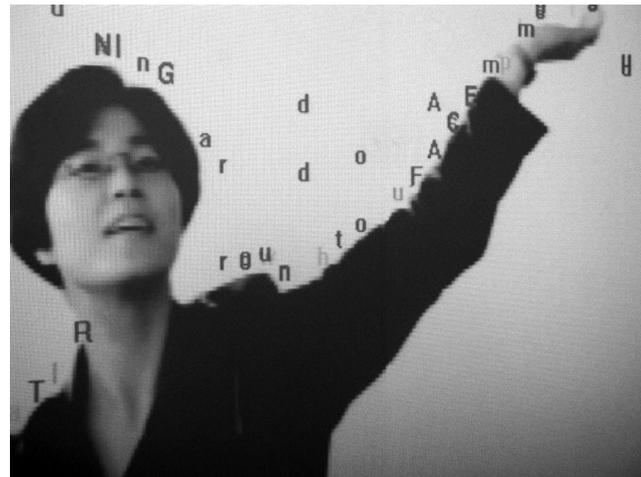
It is this tradition of creative consumption that Funkhouser evokes in discussing trans-medial manipulation in the light of anthropophagy rather than remediation. The term allows us to rethink the trans-medial relationship as a contest between new, popular media and old, elitist media, as a kind of *reconquista* of the center stage of culture, which had been “colonized” by the Gutenberg Galaxy in the wave of the so-called *Leserevolution* (reading revolution) and “structural transformation of the public sphere” (Habermas) in the 18th century [7]. This “rollback” began in the 20th century, signaled by the increasing importance of visual culture in the form of cinema and television, which Adorno remarks upon as a “language of images” and “hieroglyphic writing” [8]. The rollback entered a new stage with the predominance of digital technology at the end of the 20th century.

The fusion of text and image goes back as far as the illuminated manuscripts of the Middle Ages and figurative poems of antiquity. It has been exploited in the 20th century not only in concrete poetry, graphic design and advertising but also

## ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the incorporation of text within interactive installations as an expression of cultural anthropophagy. This “consumption” is carried out not by displacing the text (i.e. replacing it with images) but by transforming text into image, sound or action, or into a post-alphabetic object (i.e. depriving the text of its linguistic value). As shown in detailed examples, the de-semanticization of text turns words into ornament, while in other cases (where the linguistic value of the text is stressed within the interactive installation or can be “rescued” from it) the literary is still an important subject of attention.

Fig. 1. Camille Utterback and Romy Achituv, *Text Rain*, 1999.  
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Fig. 2. Zachary Booth Simpson, *Sand*, 2000. (© Zachary Booth Simpson)

in the Art & Language movement and the works and text installations of Barbara Kruger, Jenny Holzer and Lawrence Weiner [9]. It should also be recognized that letters are images; not only in the form, for example, of the anthropomorphic alphabets of the 16th-century German Peter Flötner or the 20th-century Russian painter Erté, but also in the sense that writing as such—apart from its logographic forms in Egyptian hieroglyphs, Sumerian cuneiform or Chinese characters—combines, intrinsically, the visual and the verbal. Even with respect to oral text, it has been argued that it is as difficult to keep visibility out of literature as it is to keep verbal discourse out of painting [10]. However, this essay is not concerned with images read as text or with reading text for its imagery but with the transformation of text (in the form of letters) into image (or sound and action). As we observe below, digital technology makes it easy to “consume” text by obscuring it or rendering it less legible—illegible, even—in the face of other modalities, strategies of reading or instrumental engagement with the work.

This argument is something of a corrective to the hopes and expectations surrounding the role digital media would play for text. In its early days, digital media seemed to be “the word’s revenge on TV,” as Michael Joyce put it in reference to hypertext in 1995 [11]. Of course, Joyce was aware of the pictorial turn in modern Western culture. In a different article of the same year, he pointed out a general impression that the MOO—a text-based on-line virtual reality system—

was a mistake of the history of technology, an interregnum in the immanent hegemony of the “post-alphabetic image.” Joyce’s assumption was that “soon the image will either rob us of the power—or relieve us of the burden—of language” [12]. Shortly thereafter, Jay David Bolter spoke of the “breakout of the visual” in the digital world, observing that in multimedia the relationship between word and image is becoming as unstable as in the popular press (and TV, we may add); images are no longer subordinate to the word, and “we are no longer certain that words deserve the cultural authority they have been given” [13]. In 2000, Robert Coover, not only a well-known postmodern author but also a leading advocate of hyperfiction and electronic writing at Brown University since the early 1990s, identified the constant threat of hypermedia “to suck the substance out of a work of lettered art, reduce it to surface spectacle” [14].

Coover’s notion is in line with Andrew Darley’s observation that new media genres further the general “shift away from prior modes of spectator experience based on symbolic concerns (and ‘interpretative models’) towards recipients who are seeking intensities of direct sensual stimulation” [15]. The reader, Darley holds, becomes a sensualist “in pursuit of the ornamental and the decorative, modes of embellishment, the amazing and the breathtaking” [16]. Coover’s words invoke an image of blood-sucking and thus raise again the specter of cannibalism. However, what Coover has in mind may be better thought of as *kill*ing rather than *devour*ing if the text is simply replaced with images. The concept of anthropophagy discussed above requires a certain “digestion” or incorporation of the text instead of its complete deletion.

One way to devour (or to “kill” without deletion) is to turn text into a *post-alphabetic* object. The term *post-alphabetic text* has been used to describe David Carson’s design style, which “refashions information as an aesthetic event” [17]. It implies that letters no longer serve the purpose for which the alphabet had been invented: forming words that serve as signifiers. The classic example for such use of text is sound poetry—poetry that rejects generating a meaningful text and rather draws attention to its acoustic value. While in the case of sound poetry text turns into music, there are other genres or media that may be considered to undermine the linguistic importance of the text. Thus, text undergoes sonification in opera (though not to the same ex-

tent as in sound poetry) and visualization in film, where what is imagined is no longer a function of reading but the result of direct presentation to the eye. In his 1953 essay *Prolog zum Fernsehen* (Prologue to Television), Adorno, for example, claims (and complains) that in television speech becomes a “mere appendage to the image” [18]. From a different perspective, this sonification and visualization can also be understood as an enrichment of the text, similar to that which occurs in concrete poetry, adding meaning to the linguistic dimension of the text by means of the way it is presented [19]. However, Adorno’s point of view is clearly driven by his rejection of the new, popular medium as a threat to older, more “dignified” cultural affordances, aligning the difference between the pictorial and the linguistic with the distinction between mass and elite culture with their respective cultural values [20]. Turning letters into visual and acoustic objects, digital media seem to side with the popular rather than the elite.

## TRANSFORMING TEXT INTO POST-ALPHABETIC OBJECT

In the interactive installation *Text Rain* (Fig. 1) by Camille Utterback and Romy Achituv, viewers stand or move in front of a large monitor, in which they see themselves as black-and-white projections on which letters “fall” from the top edge. Like rain or snow, the letters appear to land on participants’ heads and arms and respond to their motions, and seem able to be lifted and let fall again. The falling letters land on anything darker than a certain threshold value and “fall” whenever that obstacle is removed. Participants who have accumulated enough letters can sometimes decipher an entire word or even a phrase. The installation does not completely strip letters of their linguistic value but allows *reading* the text in addition to *playing* with it, as it employs passages from the poem “Talk, You,” from Evan Zimroth’s 1993 book *Dead, Dinner, or Naked* [21].

In my own experiences of and in documentary evidence about *Text Rain*, however, the lines can hardly be deciphered, even after the viewer has painstakingly collected all the letters. Generally speaking, viewers do not engage in the reading process but rather test the interface. The fact that there are words formed by the letters encourages viewers’ dialog with the letters, but it does not allow them to read the entire poem, nor does it elicit the intention to do so. The work functions primarily on the physical level; the

fascinating elements of the installation are the movements that it creates in front of the monitor as viewers interact with the falling letters. The letters are liberated from their representational function. They have left language behind and turned into visual objects as part of an interactive installation. The viewer (or “interactor”), on the other side, is liberated from reading the text and looking for meaning. She can simply enjoy the moment of playing.

However, in Utterback and Achituv’s installation, text does still play a certain role as text. On the one hand, it appears as letters that the interactor can collect, unlike in Zachary Booth Simpson’s similar installation *Sand* (2000), in which a stream of liquid sand flowing from above reacts to the interactor’s shadow on the screen (Fig. 2). On the other hand, if one reads the poem one realizes a deeper relationship between the text and the installation. The poem is about the conversation between bodies. Two of its lines read: “At your turning, each part/of my body turns to verb.” This relationship between verb and body, between You and I, is mirrored in the installation, in which the movement of the interactor’s body creates words. However, the poem ends with the lines: “and yet turn to nothing/*It’s just talk.*” This can be understood as a celebration of the aimless conversation, which does not turn into a linguistic message as a practical result. Such aimless talk reflects exactly what the user does in her interaction with the letters in the installation, which likewise does not lead to any specific result in terms of a message: It is just play.

The installation turns out to be a performance of the poem from which it gains its meaning. In the special terms introduced above: The text is devoured in the sense of ritual anthropophagy. However, it is important that the dismembered text remains readable (in a book or on the website for *Text Rain*), since only its perception as intact poem reveals how the installation has digested its meal.

It may not come as a surprise that most visitors experiencing *Text Rain* never look up the provenance of the text, which is not provided at the installation venue. The majority engage with the installation only on the level of a joyful play with falling letters and hence miss the deeper meaning of the installation possible through interpretation of the text. The majority of interactors are not really interested in putting the text together again and, to be sure, to assemble the text would require not collecting some of its letters on one’s arm but retrieving

and reading it in its original form. While the artists may hope that the original text is consulted in order to understand the installation, the audience may opt out of this opportunity and simply consume the letters as visual, interactive objects.

Whereas *Text Rain* still allows reading of its text, Paul DeMarinis’s *The Messenger* turns text completely into unintelligible signs. *The Messenger* (Fig. 3) distributes e-mails DeMarinis received to three bizarre output devices on which they are displayed letter by letter. There are 26 talking washbasins, each intoning a letter of the alphabet in Spanish; there is a chorus line of 26 little skeletons, each wearing a poncho bearing a letter, which dance when the corresponding letter is uttered; and there is a series of 26 electrolytic jars with metal electrodes in the form of the letters A through Z, which oscillate and bubble when electricity is passed through them. As the description of the work on the Ars Electronica website states, the installation is an “allegory for messages whose final destination is a total void—a phenomenon that has become a standard component of everyday life in the modern world” [22]. Although the installation does give those messages an audience by presenting them within an art installation, it also enforces this void by depriving them of their linguistic meaning. The installation becomes an allegory of the annihilation of linguistic meaning, which has become a typical factor of visual culture in modern society.

If we discuss *The Messenger* in terms of cannibalism, it may be hard to detect any ritual anthropophagy. Instead of playing with the quality of language, *The Messenger* seems only to mock it by its absolute distortion. When Funkhouser observes of digital poetry that it “devours other texts” by appropriating, transforming and reconfiguring them, with respect to DeMarinis’s installation, we have to conclude that it eliminates the text by turning it into sound, light and performance. Nevertheless, *The Messenger* still represents each letter as a letter, allowing for the deciphering of the text if one were to record the sound of the washbasins or the dance of the skeletons and play it back again and again. Such recovery of the text becomes much more difficult in our next example.

*The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* (2008) by Caleb Larsen, a student at the Rhode Island School of Design, represents letters with random visual signs. Larsen employs a copy of the complete works of William Shakespeare from Project Gutenberg, which provides a corpus of literary texts online. He has parsed the

entire work of Shakespeare, replacing each letter with a small colored square: Each alphabetic character plus space and apostrophe (28 symbols in total) is assigned a color whose name starts with that letter (e.g. B = Blue, G = Green, C = Cyan, A = Azure, etc.), with white (blank) being a space and black being an apostrophe. The result is a huge image in a “pointillistic” style (Color Plate A), with the difference that it is much less figurative and at the same time far more “representative” than an image by Georges-Pierre Seurat or Paul Signac, for example. What looks like a decorative painting seems to hold a tremendous depth, because it represents the texts of Shakespeare line by line, play after play: The entire work in *one* view. Although the text itself has no appearance at all, it is present in its disguised form.

This presence is the *sine qua non* of Larsen’s piece. *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* would not be interesting if William Shakespeare were an unknown pointillist painter. One would perceive (and dismiss) Larsen’s work as a mere decorative painting with little visual allure. Would it be interesting if William Shakespeare were an unknown writer? Yes, because the relation between the colored points and the text would still be intriguing. However, one certainly cares more about such trans-medial manipulation if one cares about the writer whose text is behind the canvas. The “eaten” text nurtures the work. Larsen is well aware of this and allows the piece to pay tribute to the text (or rather: to text) in the semiotic conceit of assigning to each letter a color whose name (i.e. textual existence) starts with that letter.

Although *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* annihilates the text in an even more radical way than *The Messenger* or *Text Rain*, with the right technology for recoding the pixel as letters one could still gain access to a meaningful text. This is not the case with *Untitled* (2000) by Squid Soup, an audio-visual environment completely constructed of letters, between which the interactor is able to navigate and, in addition to the psychedelic sound presented, trigger small audio-files with mouse clicks. Together with the sound, moving letters appear and slowly vanish into the room. Neither these letters nor the letters of the text-walls combine to indicate linguistic meanings. The same applies to the words mumbled by a group of male voices as part of the audioscape. These words are created in a cut-up-like technique from random passages on a random page in a book taken randomly from the shelf.

*Untitled* is, as Squid Soup explains at the online gallery The Remedi Projekt, an exploration of synergy between audio and visuals. The result is not a text augmented by the meaning of the mode of presentation, as is usually the case with concrete poetry or the interactive installation *Text Rain*. The result is a post-alphabetic text-landscape, a fascinating, somehow hypnotic experience, which makes absolutely no claim to semantic meaning. As Squid Soup explained in a private e-mail, they consider their work successful if the audience is fascinated by the piece and gets “a feeling of being somewhere.” *Untitled* is an example of art beyond hermeneutics, where letters appear as visual objects with no claim to linguistic meaning at all.

### REMEDYING OLD MEDIA

Bolter and Grusin note that 2 years before publication of their book *Remediation*, Paul Levinson, in his book *The Soft Edge: A Natural History and Future of the Information Revolution*, “uses the term *remediation* to describe how one medium reforms another” [23]. In Levinson’s teleological media theory new media technologies are thought to remedy deficiencies of prior technologies. One thinks of photography, which remedies the insufficiency of representing reality in painting, while film remedies the incapacity of photography to represent reality in time. What is it about text, however, that requires remedy? It would seem to be precisely the disregard for its materiality that is fundamental to its usual mode of signification. Text requires concentrating on what it signifies; its appearance

itself has, typically, little foregrounded appeal. The situation is different with illuminated manuscripts, figurative poems and concrete poetry, where the linguistic dimension finds its realization and apotheosis in the visual dimension. The examples I discuss in this essay demonstrate how—in different, increasingly radical ways—digital media further emphasizes a focus on the text’s materiality while undermining the effects of its linguistic signification.

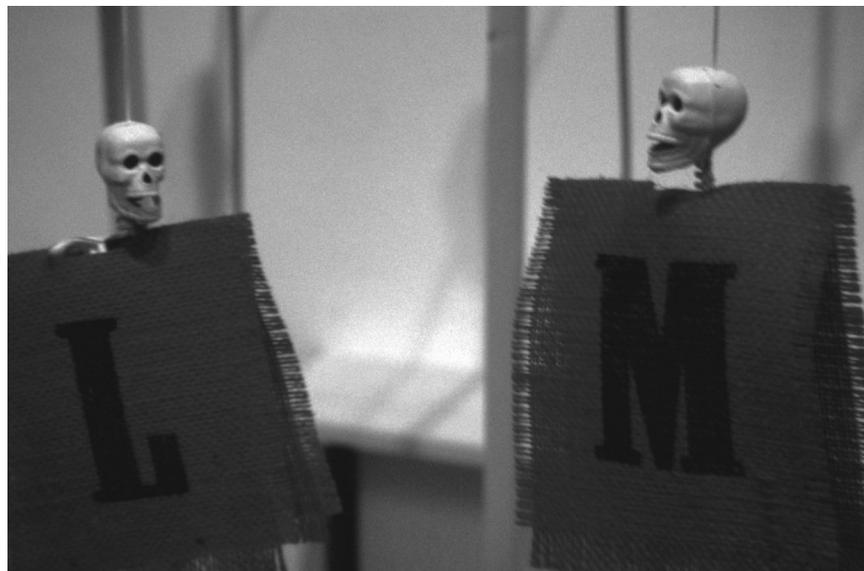
This process of undermining is clearly different from the “identificatory spell of the mass cultural hieroglyph” [24] that Adorno, as Miriam Bratu Hansen put it, remarks upon in relation to the mimetic operation of film. It can, however, be associated with Adorno’s discussion of mass culture, reification and the absence of intellectual contemplation. However, it also may be interesting to situate this development in relation to current aesthetic theory, which implicitly proposes precisely this kind of refashioning. Scholars as various as Susan Sontag, Jean-François Lyotard, Michel Serres, Erika Fischer-Lichte and Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht have all focused on the materiality of signs rather than their meaning, while protesting against the linguistic dominion over perception and the reduction of the experience of art to rationality [25]. This turn against interpretation does not restrict itself to literature but includes visual arts; Sontag’s reference, for example, is Ingmar Bergman’s film *The Silence*; Lyotard’s are Barnett Newman’s paintings; and if Fischer-Lichte announces the switch from the “linguistic turn” to the “performative turn,” she aims at overcoming the

prevalence of interpretation in respect to theater and performance art. However, as regards text, the logical consequence of such theories is to present and perceive text as a visual or sonic artifact rather than as an object to be read and interpreted. In fact, insofar as “semiotics privileges textual/linguistic descriptive frameworks” [26], the turn against interpretation—hermeneutics and semiotics—is a turn against text.

Considering the rivalry Bolter and Grusin see between new and old media [27], one could say that post-alphabetic, non-linguistic words and letters incorporate the victory of the visual, acoustic, performative artifact over the meaning-producing aspect of text (meaning understood as a linguistic message). This victory is another step in overcoming the separation of high and low culture by the refashioning of the medium of the cultural elite through the MTV and club culture aesthetics of remixing and reconfiguration. Such decline in the cultural significance of literature is characteristic of modern (and postmodern) mass media society and can be seen in the light of the “decolonization” of culture, given the fact that literature (and with it the paradigm of hermeneutics) became the most important medium only in the course of the 18th century. However, as the examples of digital art discussed here show, rather than being completely rejected or expelled, text is ingested, digested and regurgitated as a benign, innocent artifact [28].

Returning to the metaphor introduced above, we can conclude that the new, popular media appropriate the old elitist media in the spirit of the anthropophagic movement rather than that of its adversary, the nationalist xenophobic movement. With the use of “anthropophagic weapons” (irreverence, humor, parody, sacrilege), representatives of the allegedly superior culture/medium become trophies for the allegedly inferior culture/media of events and effects. Since cultural anthropophagy is “devouring the foreign material and regurgitating a new object . . . using of the other only what is of interest” [29], in the examples discussed—as well as in many other artifacts in the digital realm—text, as the *other* to the world of the visual, sound and performance, appears *as* visual object, sound and performance. However, it is important that text remains present in one way or another. All the examples discussed develop their appeal precisely because they distort text rather than other, less meaningful material. In all of these examples, text is somehow

Fig. 3. Paul DeMarinis, *The Messenger*, 1998/2005. (© Paul DeMarinis)



present, although in a “devoured” form, stripped of its original feature as linguistic message.

This notion can be linked to the aesthetic theory above in the sense that the audience’s relationship to text shifts from distance and reflection to immersion and intensity. With respect to the concepts that Gumbrecht employs, one can say that text moves from the “culture of meaning” to the “culture of presence,” which Adorno probably would have considered a move toward mass culture. As the example of *Text Rain* shows, the “creative consumption” (rather than destruction) of text in the paradigm of anthropophagy (rendering text as non-linguistic objects) offers a bridge to the “old culture,” with the literary as an important subject of attention. However, it does not insist on a traditional way of reading the text but allows us simply to engage with it in its subverted form. As we have seen, such a retrieval of the literary becomes more and more difficult, if not impossible, in other examples. To be sure, to most people, letters falling down the screen and being uttered by dancing skeletons may not evoke any notion of a subversion of textual hegemony. But then, neither does the line “Tupi or not Tupi, that is the question” convey any true sense of parody for those who have never seen, let alone read, *Hamlet*.

## References and Notes

Unedited references as provided by author.

1. Chris Funkhouser, “Creative Cannibalism and Digital Poetry,” unpublished lecture at the Electronic Poetry Festival, Paris (21 May 2007).
2. Funkhouser [1].
3. Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin, *Remediation: Understanding New Media* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press 1999), p. 45.
4. This phrase of course evokes Guy Debord’s 1967 essay *The Society of the Spectacle* (Oakland, CA: AK Press 2006), which protests the transformation of the world into a society of images and the replacement of reflection by distraction. While this is not the place to discuss Debord, and his relationship to Adorno’s similar criticism of the culture industry, the present article is concerned with the social implications of old and new media and the relationship between high and low culture.
5. Leslie Bary, “*Oswald de Andrade’s Cannibalist Mani-*

*festos*.” Annotated translation with introduction in: Latin American Literary Review Vol 19, No. 38 (July–December 1991): 35–47.

6. Another example is Andrade’s positing of the problem of the colonizer/colonized relationship in a Shakespearian pastiche: “Tupi or not Tupi, that is the question” (*Tupi* represents Brazil’s largest Indigenous tribe).
7. For the role of the book as “public sphere” in the formation of modernity see Marshall McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1962); Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450–1800* (Verso: 1997); Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (MIT Press 1991).
8. Theodor W. Adorno, “Prologue to Television,” in Theodor W. Adorno, *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords* (Columbia University Press 2005), pp. 49–57: 54.
9. For a detailed discussion of the fusion of the literary and the visual with respect to the history of books as well as kinetic concrete poetry in digital media, see Chapter 3 in Roberto Simanowski, *Against the Embrace. The Recovery of Meaning Through the Reading of Digital Arts* (forthcoming 2010 with University of Minnesota Press).
10. W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory. Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), p. 99.
11. Michael Joyce, *Of Two Minds. Hypertext Pedagogy and Poetics* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), p. 47.
12. Michael Joyce, *Othermindedness. The Emergence of Network Culture* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000), p. 42.
13. Jay David Bolter, “Ekphrasis, Virtual Reality, and the Future of Writing,” in: Geoffrey Nunberg, ed., *The Future of the Book* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 253–272: 258 and 262.
14. Robert Coover, “Literary Hypertext: The Passing of the Golden Age,” in: Feedmag 2000. (The original version is no longer on-line.) For a German translation, see my translation in Roberto Simanowski (ed.), *Digitale Literatur*, special issue of *Text & Kritik*, Vol. 152 (2001), pp. 22–30.
15. Andrew Darley, *Visual Digital Culture. Surface Play and Spectacle in New Media Genres* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), p. 3.
16. Darley [15], p. 169.
17. Matthew G. Kirschenbaum, “The Other End of Print: David Carson, Graphic Design, and the Aesthetics of Media” (1999), <<http://web.mit.edu/m-i-t/articles/kirschenbaum.htm>>.
18. Adorno [8], p. 53.
19. In this light, it is difficult to see how concrete poetry represents anthropophagy of this kind, as Funkhouser suggests, since the strengths and qualities of the text are actually complemented in the modus of cooperation rather than ingested and acquired in the modus of cannibalism.
20. Adorno in fact defines mass culture as “hieroglyphic writing” [8], maintaining that the concreteness of the image fosters mimetic desire. To Adorno, film is hieroglyphic not so much because of its bringing together of icon/image and written text (as is the case with silent film) but for its duplication of reality (which requires the film-maker to naturalize the image with the addition of sound).
21. Evan Zimroth, *Dead, Dinner, or Naked* (Evanston: Triquarterly Books, 1993).
22. <[www.aec.at/en/archives/prix\\_archive/prix\\_projekt.asp?iProjectID=13755](http://www.aec.at/en/archives/prix_archive/prix_projekt.asp?iProjectID=13755)>.
23. Bolter and Grusin [3], p. 10. See Paul Levinson, *The Soft Edge: A Natural History and Future of the Information Revolution* (New York: Routledge, 1997), pp. 104–114.
24. Miriam Bratu Hansen, “Mass Culture as Hieroglyphic Writing: Adorno, Derrida, Kracauer,” in: Max Pensky, ed., *The Actuality of Adorno. Critical Essay on Adorno and the Postmodern* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997), pp. 83–111: 89.
25. There is no space here to contextualize the proposed allusion through a detailed discussion of the complex theories and diverse positions of the scholars mentioned. For such discussion with respect to digital arts, see Chapter 1.3 in Simanowski [9] and Roberto Simanowski, *Digitale Medien in der Erlebnisgesellschaft. Kunst—Kultur—Utopie* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 2008), pp. 246–275. To give only some relevant titles for the referred position: Susan Sontag, *Against Interpretation* (1964); Jean-François Lyotard, *The Sublime and the Avant-Garde* (1984); Michel Serres, *Les cinq sens* (1985); Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *Production of Presence. What Meaning Cannot Convey* (2004); Erika Fischer-Lichte, *Ästhetik des Performativen* (2004).
26. Mitchell [10].
27. Bolter and Grusin [3]. See also the book edited by Erika Fischer-Lichte et al. (forthcoming with Transcript in 2009) entitled *Kampf der Künste! Kultur im Zeichen von Medienkonkurrenz und Eventstrategien* (Clash of Arts! Culture in the Context of Media Competition and Event Strategies).
28. Roland Barthes, “Érté, or À la letter,” in: Barthes, *Responsibility of Forms: Critical Essays on Music, Art, and Representation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), pp. 103–128, p. 119: “For the letter, if it is alone, is innocent: the Fall begins when we align letters to make them into words.”
29. Alamir Aquino Corrêa, “Immigration and Cultural Anthropophagy in Brazilian Literature,” in: *Passages de Paris 2* (2005), pp. 273–280: 274f.

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