

Introduction

Davin Heckman

In the year 2000, I encountered *Rhizomes* as a place where anything could happen. Working for Ellen Berry and Carol Siegel, I found something that was far beyond what I'd learn to expect from scholarship. Yes, it was demanding and the ideas were difficult to keep up with, but the application and the attitude was playful, chaotic, experimental, risky. And that's how Ellen and Carol coached me: Work with an author, figure out an interesting way to present the work. Within a few months (and some creative pushing from Jason Nelson), I was reading all kinds of strange stuff and trying to convert into images, sounds, and interactive texts.

A decade and a half later, working with Talan Memmott on a course for UnderAcademy College (<https://underacademycollege.wordpress.com/>), I found myself once again in that same cognitive zone: Flooded with stimulating input, playing with interesting people, and making it up as I am carried by the current. It seemed natural to propose a team-up between *Rhizomes* and UnderAcademy College.

As you will undoubtedly notice, this journal issue is weird. Rather than issue a CFP and solicit articles, this issue began with a call for participation in an UnderAcademy course.

Following UnderAcademy's curricular model, the seminar employed a series of prompts drafted by participants, each generating a flow of responses.

As you will also notice, the contributions do not follow the conventional format, nor is authorship conventionally attributed. Instead, we submit our list of contributors with the knowledge that we wrote through, with, across, and against each other. We invite you to read with the understanding that the organizing principles might be conceptual (as conceived in your minds or ours) and performative (as a dialogical entanglement), cohering in specific nodes, flowing more loosely as clusters of responses, with hyperlinks cutting across these trajectories.

With respect to the individual contributions, we have tried wherever possible, to preserve distinct voices and render subjective shifts legible, not in the interest of providing identifying marks, but in the interest of preserving the twists and turns of *parole* and the space for thought that such voices open up.

And, thus we have Rhizomes 32: “*Meme Culture, Alienation Capital, and Gestic Play,” edited by Talan Memmott and Davin Heckman.

VIEW ISSUE: *Meme Culture, Alienation Capital, and Gestic Play.

Contributors

Claire Donato is the author of *Burial* (Tarpaulin Sky Press, 2013) and *The Second Body* (Poor Claudia, Spring 2016). Recent writing has appeared or is forthcoming in BOMB, The Elephants, Fanzine, DIAGRAM, and Sixth Finch. Her vegan Material Studies have been shown at MoMA PS1, Knockdown Center, SPACE Gallery, and other galleries. She currently works as a Visiting Assistant Professor in the Architecture Writing and BFA Writing Programs at Pratt Institute, and is a 2016-2017 Digital Studies Center Fellow at Rutgers University. More at somanytumbleweeds.com.

Sergio C. Figueiredo is an Assistant Professor of Social and Digital Media in the Department of English at Kennesaw State University. He is the editor and translator of *Inventing Comics: A New Translation of Rodolphe Töpffer's Reflections on Graphic Storytelling, Media Rhetorics, and Aesthetic Practice* (2017). Sergio is currently working on a multi-volume translation of Töpffer's monograph, *Essais Sur Le Beau Dans Les Arts*. His work has appeared in *ImageText*, *Textshop Experiments*, *In Media Res*, *Journal of Cultural and Religious Theory*, and *Journal of Visual Literacy*.

Davin Heckman has been involved with *Rhizomes* since 2000, when he began as technical editor, editing html and developing experimental interfaces with adventurous contributors. Since then, his *Rhizomatic* self has mutated into many different forms: aspiring Pokemon trainer, retro-futurist, advising editor, and, most recently, a memetic assemblage. When not in mutant form, Heckman is Professor of Mass Communication at Winona State and serves on the board of the Electronic Literature Organization (eliterature.org). He is the author of *A Small World: Smart Houses and the Dream of the Perfect Day* (Duke UP) and many articles on electronic literature and digital culture.

Jeremy Hight has an MFA in Creative Writing from CalArts. His fiction has appeared in *Chiron* and other journals. He has published 40 essays in design, e-lit and interface theory as well as philosophy and art history. He is the author of two books with a third soon. His book "What Remains" (published by Free Dogma Press) is a short story collection composed by taking all tech and sci-fi out of sci-fi films and taking what remains into prose. His collaborative narrative work once edited live by earthquake data, "Carrizo Parkfield Diaries" is in the Whitney Museum Artport. He is currently working with Damon Loren Baker on prose that changes based on how it is read. He created the early locative narrative work "34 north 118 west." He teaches Creative Writing and English Comp and lives with his soul mate Lisa and his amazing cat Samson.

Jeff T. Johnson's writing has recently appeared in *PEN America*, *Fanzine*, and *Jacket2*. A Netprov feature player, he is co-creator of All-Time High. His open-field concrete digital poem THE ARCHIVERSE is documented at archive.net, and is anthologized in *Electronic Literature Collection Volume 3*. He wrote *Trouble Songs: A Musicological Poetics* (punctum books, 2017). A chapbook, *trunc & frag*, is at *Our Teeth*. He is a Visiting Instructor at Pratt Institute, and is a 2017-2018 Digital Studies Fellow at Rutgers-Camden.

Kelly Lydick is the author of the chapbook *We Once Were*, and the experimental, *Mastering the Dream*. She holds memberships with the International Association for the Study of Dreams, where she has presented her work on dream studies, the Academy of American Poets, and the Arizona Authors Association. Her writing has appeared in *Guernica*, *The Rumpus*, *Drunken Boat*, *Switched-on Gutenberg*, *Mission at Tenth*, *Thema*, *Tarpaulin Sky*, and on NPR's *The Writers' Block*, among many others. She is also a member of the co-founding editorial board of *Immanence Journal*. You can learn more about her work in writing and metaphysics at kellylydick.com.

Mark C. Marino (markcmarino.com) is a writer and scholar of electronic literature living in Los Angeles. He most recently taught How to Write and Read Fake News for UnderAcademy College. He also teaches writing at the University of Southern California where he directs the Humanities and Critical Code Studies Lab. His recent work includes *Mrs. Wobbles and the Tangerine House*, a collection of interactive stories he is writing with his children. Mark is the Director of Communication of the Electronic Literature Organization.

Talan Memmott is a hypermedia writer/artist, his hypermedia work is generally Web-based and freely accessible on the Internet. Memmott has taught digital art, electronic writing, and new media studies in the Digital Culture and Communication Program at the Blekinge Institute of Technology in Karlskrona, Sweden, the Teledramatic Arts and Technology Department at California State University Monterey Bay; the Georgia Institute of Technology, University of Colorado Boulder, and the Rhode Island School of Design, University of Bergen. He is currently a professor at Winona State University. Memmott holds an MFA in Literary Arts/Electronic Writing from Brown University and a PhD in Interaction Design from Malmö University. Memmott was a co-editor for the *Electronic Literature Collection*, Volume 2 (ELO), and the ELMCIP Anthology of European Electronic Literature.

Craig Saper, author of *The Amazing Adventures of Bob Brown* among many books has very recent chapters in *Beyond Critique* and *Information Art*. He also recently co-edited *Electracy: Gregory L. Ulmer's Textshop Experiments*, and he has edited and introduced and published six new editions of Bob Brown's Roving Eye Press experimental poetry books. Under the pseudonym, dj readies, he also published *Intimate Bureaucracies* with Punctum Books. Visit Saper's readies.org reading machine. If you have books you'd like reviewed for Hyperrhiz or Rhizomes, then send ideas to Saper; if you have ideas for book-equivalent inextricably digital projects, then please look at Electric.press.

Orchid Tierney is a PhD candidate in English at the University of Pennsylvania. Her research is in discard studies, media archaeology, digital humanities, and contemporary poetry and poetics. She co-edits *Supplement*, an annual anthology on Philadelphia writing, and her reviews and creative work have appeared in *Western Humanities Review*, *Journal of Modern Literature*, *Jacket2*, and elsewhere.

Erik Zepka is a conceptual artist, researcher and writer working in the intersections of art, literature, science and philosophy. His work looks at taxonomies in relation to the things we live with and are driven to create, especially current technologies - how we order them and what roles they play socially. Materializing forms, abstracting concretions - the space between potential and matter, category and object. This malleable framework manifests as presentation, publication, curation, distribution and exhibition depending on the project. He has been exhibited and collected internationally at institutions including the Tate Modern, Videographe, the Whitney Museum, the Inter-Society for the Electronic Arts, Pikselfest, Chelsea College of Art, Nabi Museum, and the SFU Institute for the Humanities, collaborating on work with artists such as Stelarc and Pauline Oliveros.

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