

trAces

A Commemoration of Ten Years of Artistic Innovation at trAce

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Brief history of trAce - Page 1
Brief biography of the team - Page 4

ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY - Page 5

WRITERS IN RESIDENCE - Page 15

Christy Sheffield Sanford - Page 16
Bernard Cohen - Page 17
Alan Sondheim - Page 18
Alan McDonald - Page 21
Kate Pullinger - Page 22
Tim Wright - Page 23

ONLINE PUBLICATION

frAme: Journal of online publishing - Page 26
Online studios - Page 26
Helen Whitehead - Page 31
trAce Articles- Page 33

CONFERENCES

Writers and the Internet - Page 33
INCUBATION - 2000 - Page 33
INCUBATION - 2002 - Page 35
INCUBATION - 2004 - Page 37

END NOTE

Acknowledgements

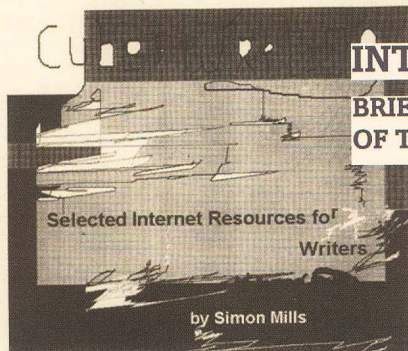
The project team would like to thank Sue Thomas, Simon Mills, Catherine Byron and Lynne Hapgood without whom this publication would not have been possible.

trAce

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF HISTORY OF TRACE

*(adapted and expanded
from a personal account by
Sue Thomas)*



For many writers working online today, the trAce community was the point of entry into using computers as tools for resources and communication. Sue Thomas began trAce in 1995 as the Cyberwriting Project, when she was Course Leader of a new Master's Degree in Writing at Nottingham Trent University. She realised that cyberspace was teeming with people who wanted to explore the web as a *space* for the production, consumption, and exchange of writing.

She obtained funding from the Department of English & Media Studies Department to hire Simon Mills (an MA student at the time) to research online writers' resources. He produced a photocopied booklet for internal distribution to writing students and faculty. During that period, Thomas was deeply involved with text-based virtuality, what she has called "fiction in action",

at LambdaMOO. Her engagement with MOO and online community led her to wonder how the web could be used more broadly to foster creative writing.

After producing the print booklet, Mills taught himself HTML and created the first trAce website. It was launched at the Virtual Futures Conference at Warwick University in May 1996. "We had spent a lot of time discussing what the new site should be called," explains Thomas. "After much scouring of dictionaries and emailing back and forth, the word 'trAce' appeared and immediately it seemed the perfect choice." It was a typographical error!

In August 1997 the Literature Department of the Arts Council of England awarded trAce £256,000 from its lottery-funded Arts for Everyone Scheme, and the trAce Online Writing Community began to expand and grow. Sue Thomas

1995

May 1995
trAce first ever publication

was seconded from her teaching post to become Artistic Director and Carolyn Bamborough was appointed Web Administrator. The same year, Mills graduated from the MA in Writing and began an MSc in Multimedia Engineering, after which he began a career in the commercial IT sector, but continued to work for trAce in his spare time. His original resource, renamed trAcEd, was put in the care of Andy Oldfield. The sheer volume of journals and zines becoming available online made the trAcEd pages useful to writers and readers looking for resources on the internet.

In late 1997 trAce hosted its first virtual collaboration, *Deep Immersion*, which teamed Australian author Terri-Ann White with poets Liz Yorke in the UK and Gillie Griffin in Canada, in partnership with the Australian Network for Art and Technology, and in 1998 Helen Whitehead joined the team to develop Kids on the Net, originally founded by Peter Owens.

As well as its international projects, trAce continued to work with writers from the UK, especially from the East Midlands region, by offering training, advice and internet access. As well as free training workshops, trAce initiated the Wired in a Week programme, where five local writers were taught how to build a website. trAce's international membership list grew steadily, and it launched the trAce/Alt-X International Hypertext Competition. Simon Mills launched frAme, the trAce Journal of Culture and Technology, and in September, *The Noon Quilt* site opened for contributions. In October, trAce held its first International Conference on Writing and the Internet, which included guest speakers Dale Spender, Mark Amerika, Cynthia Haynes, Jan Rune Holmevik, Liz Bailey, Keith Brooke, Molly Brown, Peter Howard and Heather Rosenblatt.

trAce then embarked on a programme of inviting international writers to join the team, virtually and in the flesh. Christy Sheffield Sanford became the first Virtual Writer-in-Residence in February 1999, followed by Alan Sondheim in September. From June to December 1999, Bernard Cohen was the *flesh* Writer-in-Residence. Winners of the first trAce/Alt-X International Hypertext Competition were announced, and trAce appeared at venues in Holland, the UK, and America.

Sue Thomas explained: "By then, the organisation had become so well-known that it often needed no

introduction. We appeared on TV and radio and continued to be well reviewed in the UK, USA, and Australia. Kids on the Net, originally intended to be a small site, grew hungrily and received extra sponsorship funding from Experian. In August *The Eclipse Quilt* attracted our highest number of hits ever - 27,000 in 24 hours - as writers recorded their eclipse impressions and others came to view them. By invitation, we worked with various organisations including The Poetry Society, The ICA, DA2 Digital Arts Agency, the NOW Festival and the Cheltenham Literature Festival ... But we ended the year, and the century, with a return to old media. *The Noon Quilt*, so successful as a website, became a pocket-sized book too. So the circle turns."

Virtual Writer-in-Residence Alan Sondheim shepherded trAce through the uncertain change of millennium in 2000, and Alan McDonald took over in March. Carolyn Bamborough left and Jill Pollicott joined the team. In July, trAce marked its five-year anniversary with the first Incubation conference. For three days, trAce provided a platform for the most essential voices on the web. Writers, critics, theorists and web-artists came from around the world to speak and share their work. The keynote speakers were Teri Hoskin, Geoff Ryman, Stelarc, and Gregory Ulmer.

By 2001 trAce was a busy 24-hour community for writers and readers across the world, and the website got hundreds of thousands of hits a month.



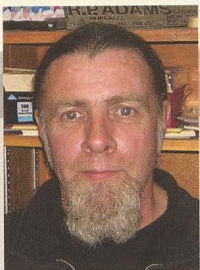
The Migrating Memories project was launched, and the Online Writing School came to fruition. The Nottingham Trent University and its Hive Business Incubator Unit were keen to support the school venture and in June the first courses began. Catherine Gillam joined trAce as School Administrator. Sue Thomas won an Arts and Humanities Research Board award for Mapping the Transition from Page to Screen, a project that examined the changes experienced by print writers moving to the web. Author Kate Pullinger, already a tutor at the Online Writing School, was appointed as a Research Fellow for the project.

In January 2002, after several years in the commercial sector, Simon Mills joined the team as a full-time Manager of Design and Development. He also acted as a web and software mentor for Pullinger during the Mapping the Transition from Page to Screen project, in which she kept a fascinating journal. Going directly to the root of hypertext, she polled new media writers, asking: What is the Hyperlink? Other useful surveys were also conducted during this period, and the results were used to produce *The Opening the Space Toolkit and Guide*. Pullinger's project, *Branded*, led to fruitful and ongoing collaborations.

In early 2002 the Literature Department of the British Council contracted trAce to provide a range of training services. In April, NESTA invested in

research and development, arranging links with their Education Department to develop and promote new media writing for all age groups. In March trAce co-organised a Colloquium on Literature and the Internet in Paris at the invitation of the University of the Sorbonne (Paris IV), and in April Kate Pullinger, Helen Whitehead and Sue Thomas were invited guests at the Electronic Literature Organisation's State of the Art Symposium at UCLA, California.

As part of the new trAce Web Studio, Simon Mills worked on three projects – *The Great Cardiff Poem*; Leicester City's Everybody's Reading (including workshops led by Helen Whitehead), and *Clean*, for the Women's Library in Hackney, (East) London. In June the Online Writing School celebrated its first full year of teaching, with up to 200 students and 15 tutors. July brought Incubation2, with keynote speakers Lizzie Jackson (Editor, Communities, BBCi), Talan Memmott (winner of the 2nd trAce/Alt-X International Hypertext Competition), and Robin Rimbaud (Scanner - sound artist). In the fall of 2002 Randy Adams joined the team as Associate Editor, commissioning a wide-ranging series of articles and interviews about new media writing and writers. In 2003 Jill Pollicott left the team and was replaced by Kate Wilkinson.



trAce was awarded NESTA funding to manage the Writers for the Future project (April 2003 to March 2005). Tim Wright was appointed as Digital Writer-in-Residence and Catherine Gillam became Research Administrator for the project. Writers for the Future included: Textlab, a residential week at Nottingham Trent University in November 2003, where participants took advantage of the Art & Design Department's state-of-the-art technology resources; a Roadshow (March and July 2004), when Tim Wright travelled throughout the UK, working with the people he met to piece together the mystery of what happened to *Oldton*, his childhood town, accompanied by Catherine Byron, Chris Joseph aka babel and Gavin Stewart. Work began on the trAce Archive, collecting and preserving all the content created on the site since its inception in 1996.

The highlight of 2004 was Incubation3: The 3rd trAce International Symposium on Writing and the Internet. Keynote Speakers were Ted Nelson, Paul Brown, Alan Sondheim and Tim Wright. Also featured were Kate Pullinger, Steve Gibson, and Simon Widdowson. There were opportunities to experience recent works and lively discussions about the ways new media texts are made, discussed and reviewed. Also discussed were methods of teaching and digital archiving in a creative context. Steve Gibson, with his interactive music event, Virtual DJ, hosted the wind-up party.

The Print View of Writers for the Future was published in 2005, and work continued on the trAce Archive. But the year also brought many changes to trAce. Sue Thomas left to take up the post of Professor of New Media in the Faculty of Humanities at Leicester's De Montfort University, where she hosts the list/blog Writing and the Digital Life. Simon Mills became Senior Lecturer in New Media, also at De Montfort, where he developed a Postgraduate Diploma in New Media Publishing. Helen Whitehead took up the challenge of being an e-learning facilitator at the National College for School Leadership. Catherine Gillam and Kate Wilkinson also moved on.



In June 2005 Dr Lynne Hapgood, Head of the English Division at Nottingham Trent University, oversaw the transition period as Gavin Stewart was appointed part-time trAce Project Manager to facilitate the *Decade* project and launch the trAce Archive. During that year Randy Adams continued his work as Associate Editor until May 2006 whilst collaborating with designer Paul Gataaaura on: *trAcas: a commemoration of ten years of artistic innovation*.

You can access trAce content by searching the Archive at:
<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk>

The trAce Archive was produced as part of Writers for the Future, generously commissioned by NESTA, The National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts. It was developed as a collaboration between Nottingham Trent University and De Montfort University.



The trAce Identity
evolved over the years

SUE THOMAS

Sue Thomas founded the trAce Online Writing Centre in 1995 and was Artistic Director until joining De Montfort University as Professor of New Media in January 2005. She has been teaching writing since 1988 and devised and managed the MA in Writing at Nottingham Trent University. She developed the trAce Online Writing School and also devised and taught online courses for the British Council.

Her books include the novels *Correspondence* (1992) and *Water* (1994), and an edited anthology *Wild Women: Contemporary Short Stories By Women Celebrating Women* (1994). Her nonfiction includes *Creative Writing: A Handbook For Workshop Leaders* (1995) and most recently *Hello World: travels in virtuality* (2004).

Her online work includes a web-interpretation of *Correspondence* at Riding the Meridian; *Imagining a Stone* at Ensemble Logic; and *Choragraphy and Lines at Lux*: notes for an electronic writing. With Teri Hoskin, she co-edited the Noon Quilt website and book, now an iconic image of the early days of the web. In 2002-3 she managed Mapping the Transition from Page to Screen, a research project looking at ways in which writers use the internet. From April 2003 - March 2005 she managed the NESTA-funded project Writers for the Future which explored innovative ways of writing using the internet, and provided criteria for best practice in the emerging genre of new media writing.

Currently she manages Writing and the Digital Life, a blog and listserv about the impact of technology upon writing and lived experience. Her research interests include transliteracy and narratives of digital experience. She is writing a study of nature and cyberspace. She devised the MA in Creative Writing and New Media in the Faculty of Humanities at De Montfort University, designed for writers interested in exploring the potential of new technologies in their writing via a combination of online study with a week-long workshop in the UK.

<http://www.hum.dmu.ac.uk/blogs/wdl>

SIMON MILLS

Simon Mills helped kick-start trAce in the summer of 1995 by undertaking the initial research into online writing resources. Later he put this research resource online in what was to become the first trAce website. For the next 7 years Simon worked in the commercial web development sector. During this time he also freelanced for trAce, designing and building the various incarnations of the trAce website, as well as other subsidiary websites and print materials. In 1997 he started the frAme: Online Journal of Culture & Technology, which was dedicated to publishing the work of leading practitioners in the field of online creativity. He edited frAme until its last edition in 2004.

Simon joined trAce full-time in 2002 as manager of the Web Studio where he designed, developed and oversaw the production of several arts websites as well as the trAce website. He worked on many trAce projects including Textlab, Incubation, Mapping the Transition, Writers for the Future and the trAce Archive. His role also included helping to guide trAce's overall direction.

Simon is currently Senior Lecturer in New Media and course leader for the PGDip in New Media Publishing at De Montfort University, Leicester, UK. He also works as a digital practitioner and has showed work at several conferences. His research interests include digital aesthetics and phenomenology. He has a BA (Hons) in Philosophy from the University of Nottingham and an MA in Writing and MSc in Multimedia from Nottingham Trent University.

<http://www.ultimateconcern.net>
<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/frame>

HELEN WHITEHEAD

Helen Whitehead is a digital writer and editor who has been working with online media for over 20 years. Her expertise is in the innovative and appropriate use of digital media for narrative, creative writing, education and elearning. She has led collaborative web writing projects and taught multimedia writing skills to a variety of groups both online and offline, from schoolchildren to lifelong learners. She is particularly interested in the multi-dimensional structures of digital texts and narratives, in making digital writing accessible to new readers, especially in the education sector, and in facilitating online communities. She was Education and Training Manager for the trAce Online Writing Centre for several years, and managed the trAce Online Writing School. She is now an E-Learning Specialist at the National College for School Leadership at its headquarters in Nottingham. She is Editor of Kids on the Net and its eTeachers' Portal.

<http://helenwhitehead.com>
<http://www.kidsonthenet.com>

BRIEF BIOGRAPHIES OF THE TEAM

ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY

"In some respects, the whole notion of creating a community of writers seems to be rather misplaced," Sue Thomas explained. "After all, most writers are solitary souls. We work alone, imbibing impressions of the world and then reprocessing them into pages of spidery code which a reader knows as letters and words."

"It would be nice to say that we calmly conducted a needs analysis of what we wanted and then went shopping for it," she pointed out. "But it hasn't quite been like that."

At the outset, trAce used Mailbase (a JISC-managed list for UK academics and their collaborators), and live chat meetings in LinguaMOO, hosted by the University of Texas at Dallas. trAce also experimented with Durand's Communityware. Sue Thomas explained: "Mailbase ... with its single strand, too often felt like a lot of individuals crushed together in

an elevator with no room to breathe. (As for LinguaMOO) it's one thing to teach a class of university students how to use a MOO, and it's quite another to expect individual writers in scattered locations to apply themselves to the study of programming in order to be able to get onto a MOO, let alone to move around, speak, build and interact." Communityware was simply not robust enough for the burgeoning community.

trAce finally decided to use an O'Reilly WebBoard for community interaction. From late 1999 to 2003, the WebBoard was used by over 3,000 people around the world. The WebBoard offered live chat, instant messaging, and



East Midlands Hypertext

Creating a Website for Ruddington

Visit The East Midlands Hypertext and read a piece of Ruddington's history, past and present, created on Saturday 19th September. You can still add your piece to the jigsaw and create a picture of Ruddington for the world to see.

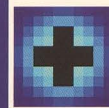
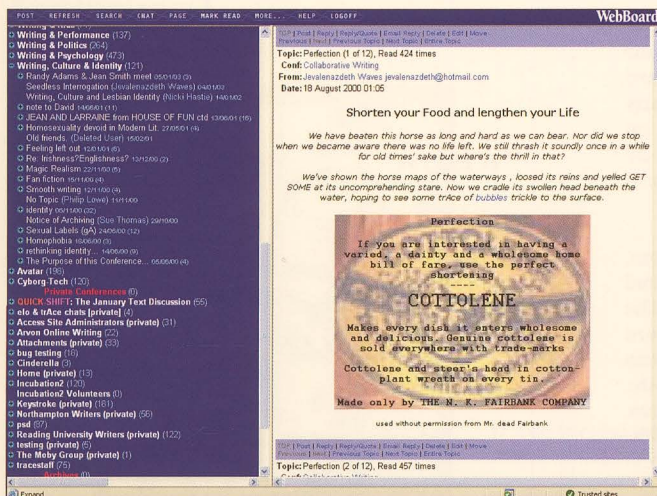


Pictures taken around and near the Frankham Kettle's Museum in Ruddington

trAce, Nottinghamshire County Library and Rushcliffe Borough Council have collaborated to provide this unique opportunity. Join us to take part in the first of a series of events which will take place in the East Midlands Region. [Read more...](#)

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/mentors/penfold/garden/september/index.htm>

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/hyper/index.html>



the last mountain has risen

shout over roofs and highways



offline emailing by subscription. One striking aspect of the early web was the generosity of writers and artists who worked with digital tools, and trAce came to thrive in this liberal atmosphere. The WebBoard supported an energetic international community of experienced writers and writing students.

trAce volunteer mentors worked online and were at hand to answer queries about technical matters. One of trAce's first mentors was Margaret Penfold, of Leicestershire, a retired primary school teacher with a degree in Latin. The story of her immersion into cyberspace became a three-minute documentary film called *Cyber Granny*. Other mentors logged on from India, Australia and Europe.

The WebBoard was also a place where people shared links to their online projects and so it became a window to

creative work on the web. It was often hosted by a trAce Writer-in-Residence; but many generous volunteers also donated their time to host certain topics, like Lewis LaCook who spent hours haunting the Poetry Workshop, and Everdeen Tree who helped develop the trAce Community Principles:

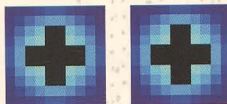
"trAce exists to connect writers and readers around the world in real and virtual space ... We are committed to a) supporting artistic practice across its entire range; b) recognising such practice as a basic means of expression ... We share not only a common sector of cyberspace but also resources, which are provided through real-life support, effort and funding and which are finite ..."

Because the WebBoard allowed people to use HTML and images in their posts, it soon became a creative environment in itself. One collective of

the longest day doesn't last long

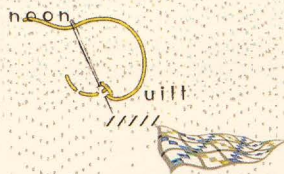
from the WebBoard

writers, called Jevalenazdeth, used the environment to experiment with hypertext. They regularly edited their texts, repurposing the software by using the WebBoard as a performance space for creative writing. Many collaborations were sparked through discussion on the WebBoard, including the Quick-Shift project (26-27 January 2002) where writers from around the world explored interactive writing online in real-time.

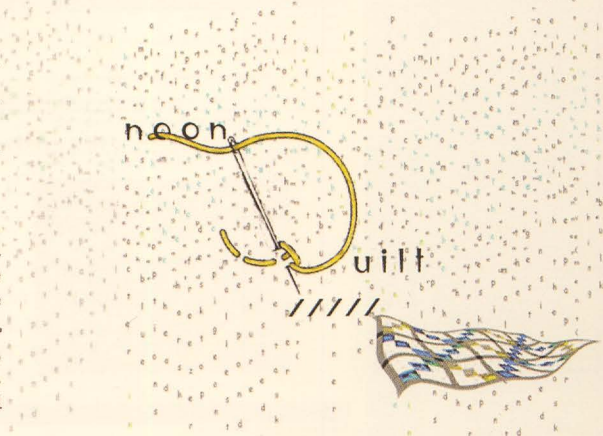


trAce members often met in the WebBoard chatroom, especially on Sundays, for informal and topical discussions. For a time, trAce partnered with the Electronic Literature Organisation and the chats were held every second week in LinguaMOO. Helen Whitehead and ELO's Deena Larsen worked long hours in the background to edit and post logs of the chats, which can now be found by searching the trAce Archive (<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk>). The chatlogs are fascinating material for researchers of digital writing and the people who make it.

The Noon Quilt (1998-1999) was one of trAce's most successful collaborative online projects. *The Noon Quilt* is an assemblage of texts submitted by writers from around the world, reflecting on impressions of what they witnessed outside their window at noontime. The project was stitched together over a period of approximately five months. It was designed and maintained by Teri Hoskin from an idea by Sue Thomas. Ali Graham wrote the Perl scripts needed to frequently update the quilt. *The Noon Quilt* was so successful that



<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/quilt/index.html>



Noon Quilt is an assemblage of patches submitted by writers from around the world. Together they form a fabric of noon-time impressions. The quilts were stitched over a period of approximately five months during 1998-1999. The Noon Quilt Book is available to buy from trAce.



quilt one >>
go

quilt two >>
ko

The Noon Quilt is now closed to submissions. It will remain on display here at trAce, as an archive attesting to a certain time, and a thinking within that time. Scroll to the bottom of this page for a link to the map that indicates the locations of the writers. The map is not complete.

What you need to view Noon Quilt.

Noon Quilt has been designed for Netscape Communications Navigator 4 and Internet Explorer 4 with javascript enabled. The quilt is best viewed on a 600x800 screen with 32 bit color without the browser toolbar.

When you move the mouse over a patch the writer's name will appear in the status bar. Select the patch and a smaller window will open with that writer's noon-time writing. From this window you can navigate the site via the libraries. Once again, pass the mouse over a patch and the patch name will appear in the status bar. It is important to refresh/load the noon quilt page to see the most current patches. Please enjoy!

last updated June 28 2000

Noon Quilt was designed, 'stitched' and maintained by Teri Hoskin from an idea by Sue Thomas. Ali Graham wrote the perl scripts needed to frequently update the quilt.

Teri Hoskin is a visual artist/writer. She edits and designs the [Electronic Writing Research Ensemble](#). Teri lives and works in Adelaide, South Australia.

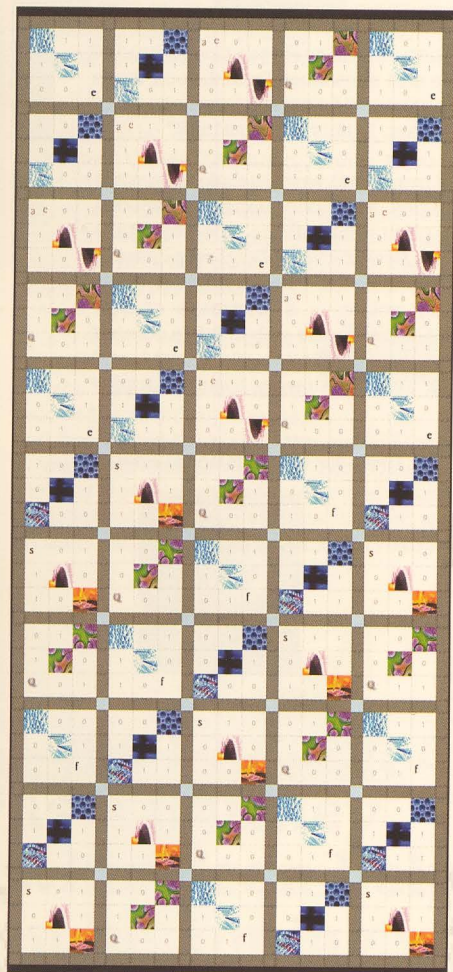
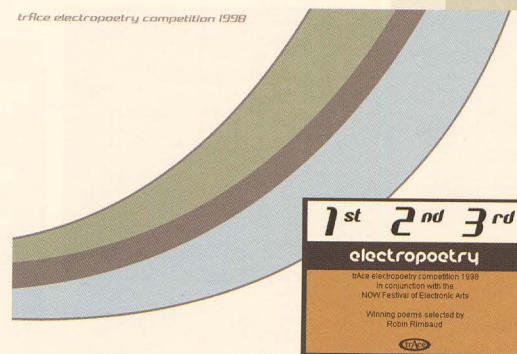
Sue Thomas is a novelist and Director of the [tlca](#) International Online Writing Community. She lives in Nottingham, England.

You can now download the [source code](#) used to build the Noon Quilt.



<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/electropes/index2.htm>

trAce electropoetry competition 1998



it was turned into a 112 page, full colour, wire-bound book (ISBN: 1 903229 00 6). The source code was also made available for download, for anyone wanting to create a new version of the quilt.

Simon Mills explained. "This simple idea worked because of the sheer variety of people who took part in it globally. And in some way all the people who took part in the project became part of a community: emails were exchanged remarking on what a unique experience it was to be part of this literal patchwork of human life."

The Eclipse Quilt (1999), a reprise of *The Noon Quilt* idea, reflected on the last total solar eclipse of the 20th century. Writers were asked to contribute 100 words about the eclipse with a short note about who and where they were. Contributors even included Vint Cerf, one of the founding fathers of the internet. trAce went on to manage two creative writing projects for the British Council: *The Dawn Quilt* (2004), where writers in Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka wrote about the moment when their countries turned to face the sun; *The Road Quilt* (2005), where people in Hungary, Romania, Russia, Georgia and Azerbaijan described certain roads, resulting in a wonderful range of stories and descriptions and photographs.

Another successful strategy employed by trAce to support the writing community was to develop competitions and award prizes. In 1998, to support the emergent genre of creative hypertext, trAce partnered with Mark Amerika's alt-X Publishing Network, and offered a prize of £1000 GBP for the best hypertext site on the web. The prize was shared by Americans William Gillespie, Scott Rettberg, Dirk Stratton, and Frank Marquardt for the hyperfiction, *The Unknown*, and Australian Jenny Weight, for her hyperpoem, *Rice*.

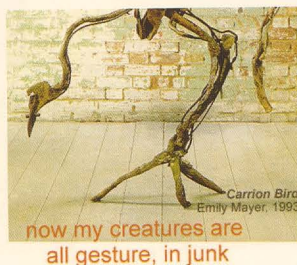
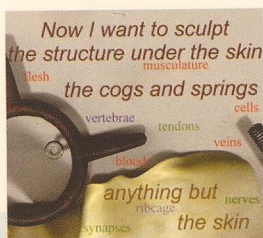
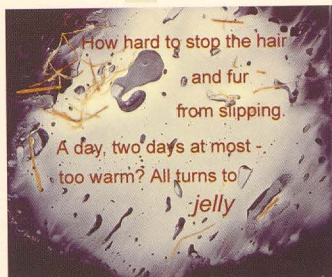
The 2nd trAce/Alt-X New Media Writing Competition was held in 2000, and looked specifically for work that stretched preconceived notions of writing. The award of £1000 GBP was won by San Francisco artist/writer Talan Memmott, for his challenging and multi-layered work, *Lexia to Perplexia*. Competition judge hypertext

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/quilt/index.html>

The Lapsed Taxidermist at Gilt Cross

My work was once
all pets and roadkill

anatomure
rawhide



poets were teamed up with a mentor who worked with them online for three months and helped them to extend and develop their internet skills. All of the poets - Martin Glynn, Bill Herbert, and Elizabeth James - kept online journals where their learning progress could be followed.

Catherine Byron was commissioned by the Poetry Society to write a long poem about a place (*Renderers: in the Vale of the River Tas, South Norfolk*). Her commission was linked with trAce to enable her to explore the creative potential of writing for the web. She explained: "The three poets who won places on that scheme were not, like me, expected to produce a standalone poetic text, but to play with onlineness. So their journals were the product, as it were - though each journal contains what could be considered standalone pages/works. All three journals are, in themselves, handsome and important texts in the history of online writing."

Byron was inspired by Francesca da Rimini's visit to Nottingham, early in trAce's existence, to experiment

writer Shelley Jackson remarked that: "*Lexia to Perplexia* is a kind of theatre in which luminous symbols and sentences (which look more like formulae) come and go. At times the lucid graphic icons are more readable than the layered scrims of text. Is this still writing?"

By 2000 the web linked hundreds of hypertext writers and web artists together on email lists, in anthologies, and increasingly in special web editions of well-known literary print publications. One important anthology, *Assemblage: The Women's New Media Gallery*, was created for trAce by writer/theorist Carolyn Guertin. She explained: "This international gathering of women's voices is a showcase of new media art being created on and off the world wide web ... It is a coming together of languages, skills and visions, a collection of art texts, and an exhibit showing the act of fitting disparate pieces together under the umbrella of gender."

The Poetry Society selected trAce in 1999 for their National Poetry Places scheme as the first Poetry Place in cyberspace, and so began the Wired Poets project, where



with the flat-bed scanner in the trAce studio. In addition to scanning in details of works by three artists she had worked with, Byron made many of the images of Renderers herself by placing - and in the case of yoghurt, pouring - real stuff onto acetates placed on the glass bed.

trAce also pioneered a scheme of Writers' Attachments whereby local writers Dan Gudgel, Nicki Hastie, David Leicester, Carrie McMillan, Jenni Meredith, Margaret Penfold, and Sue Rea had use of a hotdesk in the trAce offices and received training and support to develop their work. In return, they kept public journals so that others could follow what went on behind the building of web pages and hypertexts.

This section of *trAces*, started roughly at the beginnings of the trAce community, followed a winding course, and has ended back near the start. Like the web itself, trAce reached out in many directions at once. Sue Thomas mused: "I remember reading a Dickens' novel in which he described a family where there was little parental engagement and as a result the children were not brought up, but tumbled up on their own. That's what trAce did really - we tumbled up on our own."

I see reading and writing as a journey which can help us in becoming what we want to be

Nicki Hastie

drop down gorgeous
by nicki hastie, 29 April 2002

one	way	to	about	it
and	be	drop	down	
gorgeous				
sweet	become			
a	fast	and		
coming	in	to	down	
side	light	s		
have	y	yellow		
two	cold	was	s	
free	half	ing		
slow	slight	no		
run	no	was		
a	poem	has		
no	wind	back		
you	are			

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/attach/hastie/nh3.htm>

Back on the Road

Week Fourteen

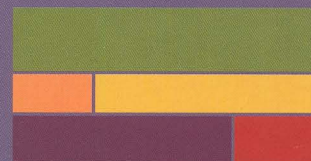
Monday 5 February 2001

I've just taught myself how to put the current date in a web page so it updates itself every day. It's another handy bit of Javascript from my teach-yourself-Javascript book. You can see the results in the [Magnetic Library](#) when you browse the Catalogue. Hopefully you will find today's date there. If you didn't see a date at all then that's because your browser can't cope with Javascript (although it doesn't seem to work in Netscape 4.0 - sigh...)

To test how things look without Javascript and in earlier browsers, I keep an old version of Netscape 2.1 on my computer. It's amazing how to think what works and doesn't work. I've tried to let users know throughout this journal when they're missing out on something. For instance, users without Javascript can't play with the magnetic poetry or the sliding puzzle. But they do get their very own message instead. In place of the date in the Catalogue, they just get a blank line - they wouldn't know they're missing out on anything. Anyway, if they want to know the date they can find it out some other way, can't they? I never promised to offer this service! I just wanted to show how up to date the Catalogue is without having to change the code by hand all the time.

All of this checking of pages in Netscape 2.1 has had a bit of an effect, however. Because early versions of Netscape didn't display background colours in table cells, a lot of my magnetic poetry examples became unreadable. I haven't had any complaints, but I don't want to make any either. I had hoped that most people would be using more recent browsers - but you never know. So I've gone back and played around with some of the colours in earlier journal entries. The problem came when I had black text on a silver table cell background on top of a black body background. In Netscape 2.1 this became invisible text. So much for my trying to represent the word tiles in the colours they appear on my [Road Words Magnetic](#) board. But maybe it's good not to be in "tegral".

I hope it was worth me doing all this. I can't actually remember which version of Netscape started being able to display table backgrounds and background colours. The one page which remains a bit of a disappointment if viewed without its background colours is the [rainbow page](#). It loses all its impact and stops it looking like a Mondrian painting, as Andrea had kindly described it.



If you can't see table cell colours, you've just been treated to a lovely big blank space!

And of course there's a lot more that early browsers can't deal with. Rollover images, for one. Well, I'm keeping them. I'm only prepared to go so far in the browser (ie) compatibility stakes.

And What's Next?

I don't know what comes next in the browser game, but I'm starting to ask myself that very question. We're into Week Fourteen now time flies and at this end of the other day Helen mentioned needing to think about an "exit strategy" for me. Hopefully it's not a one-way ticket out of here and may involve me stocking around for a bit, or trying something a little different in the web writing line. Perhaps there's another road opening up for me. Mmmm... I can almost imagine myself out on that road already.

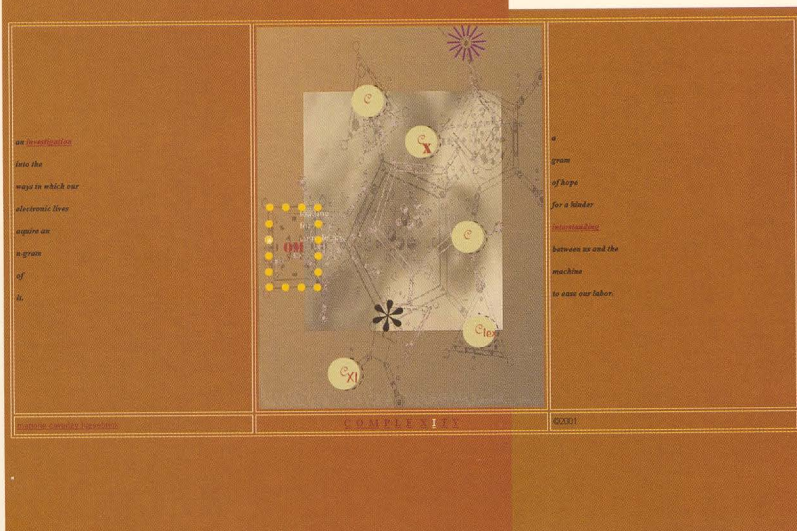


Eisenstein

You know the Dutch painter Piet Mondrian (1872-1944), co-founder of the De Stijl movement and the originator of neo-platonism.

Back on the Road

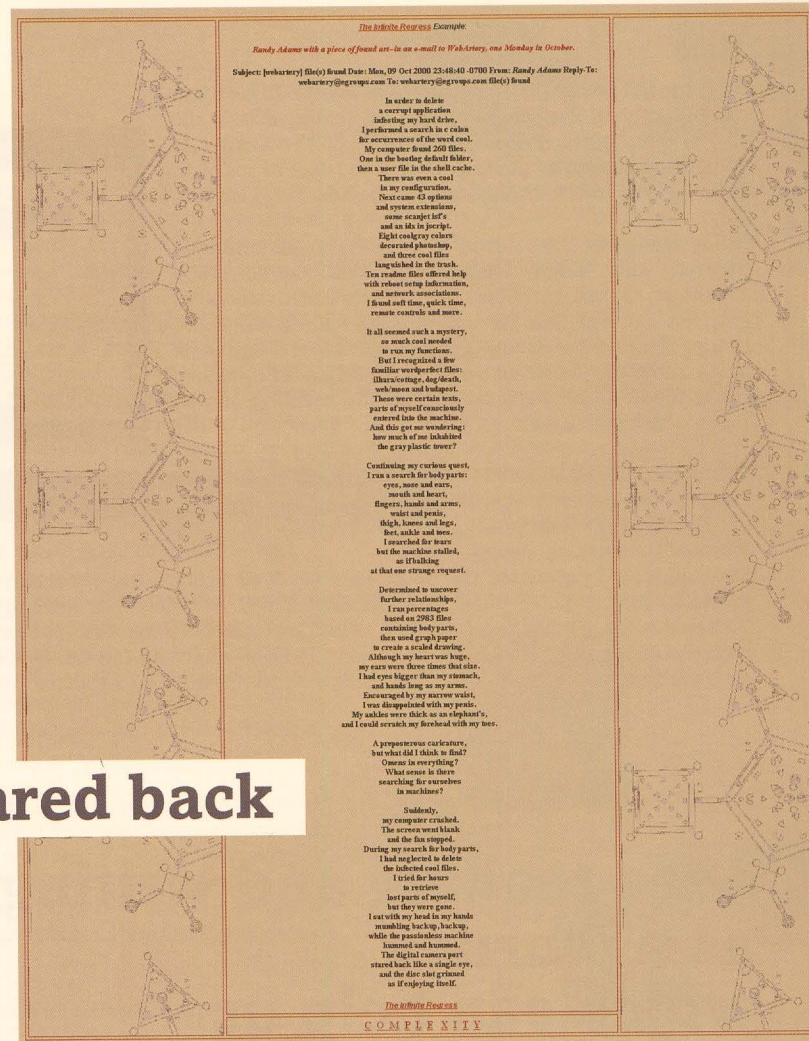
<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/attach/hastie/5feb.htm>



<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/frame5/coverley/gateome.htm>

the digital camera port stared back
like a single eye,
and the disc slot grinned
as if enjoying itself.

Randy Adams



<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/frame5/coverley/otwo.htm>

Machine Dreams and Webbed Arts



Urban Process in Subtextual Circulation
(A schematic how-to guide, with illustrations.)

carolin.guertin
© 2001

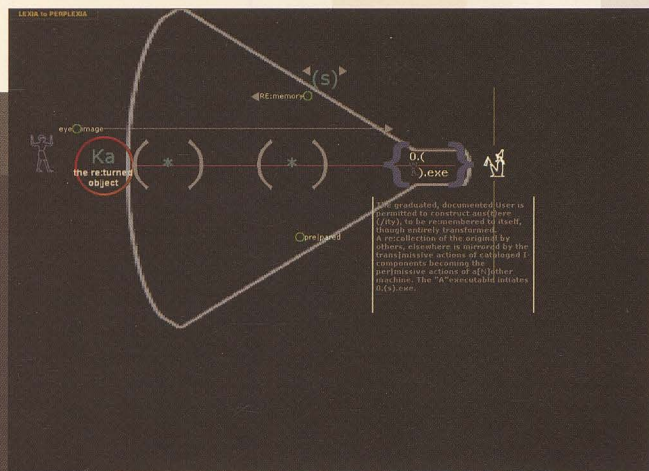
**this dream is the smoky
circulatory system of
machine language...**



**HTML. Dreamweavers.
Hot java. Cold fusion.**

Behaviours and timelines

Carolyn Guertin



**to be re:membered to itself,
though entirely transformed.
a re:collection of the original by others**

Talan Memmott

revolver >

recently I had problems with my technology

The back-boiler which ran my central heating system was old and needed replacing and there was a fault in the motherboard of my desktop computer.

As it turned out,

both ended up being fixed on the same day.

by me thomas

Back to Base

FROM PRINT TO NEW MEDIA

There was certain energy in the early years of the web, a potent synthesis of aesthetic practices fostered by ease of communication and relatively inexpensive technology. The short history of digital writing on the web can be tracked alongside the development of technology that made the interface increasingly more dynamic. The viral nature of the internet allowed for delivery across an international network of viewers and peers.

It took less than five years - from Tim Berners-Lee's first web browser, named WorldWideWeb - for programmers from Mosaic Communications to develop and release Netscape, a full-blown commercial browser that supported graphics (and sound). Many writers began using images to illustrate their texts on the web, while others argued that images were too seductive and undermined the meaning of words.

The trAce community embraced both camps, and some early chatlogs contain lively discussions about the use of mixed media in writing. In this charged atmosphere, writers working with the trAce community experimented with writing - like mez (Mary-Anne Breeze) who developed her own form of writing (mezangelle) that plays on code. Others judiciously added media to their texts. Cyberfeminists like Francesca da Rimini had a wide influence. Some writer/artists learned how to program and developed recombinant texts and interactive narratives.

The creative hypertexts and hypermedia in the trAce Archive can easily be compared to the multifarious pages of an artist's book. Linguistic and verbal elements are often treated as visual. There are complex and sometimes ambiguous juxtapositions. And from that seedbed of creativity this book is linked together by ideas, connections, and impressions, inscribed on a server at Nottingham Trent University.

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk>

Option: Compare and Assess Internal Databamage

Option: Explicit

[DE]Form[Action Is Loaded By Internal Damage Form
As Narrative String As Absorbed by Read her

! Returns True if the spec[Internal Damage Form
accepted as Read her Damage Coll[atefusion view

ConstFD[ional damageStateClosed = 0

ConstFD[ional damageDesignOpen = 1

If DisabledSleepingCnd[acSepCndGet damageState.
acForm, strNarrative) <> condamageStateClosed

Then

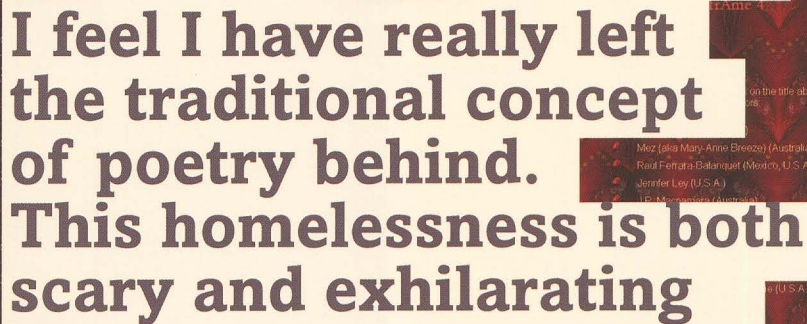
If Form(strFormNarrative) Current View <>
condamageFD[ionalDesign Then

!Loaded = True

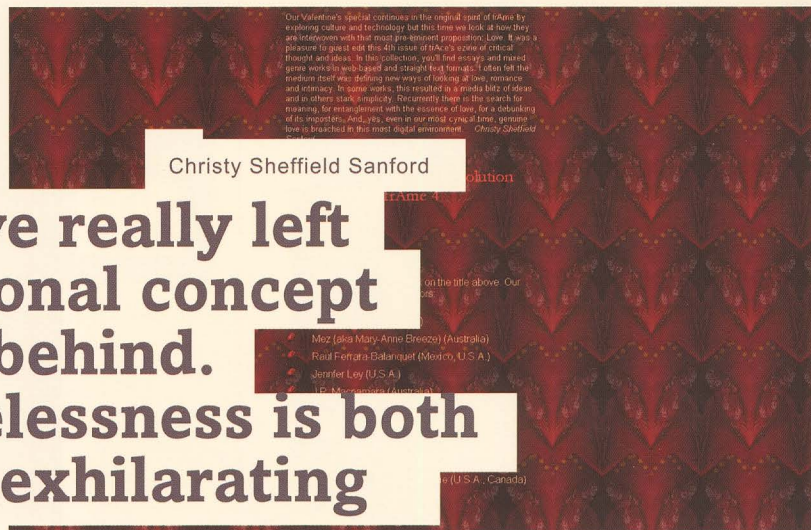
End If Internal Damagecond[CEPT] traumatic

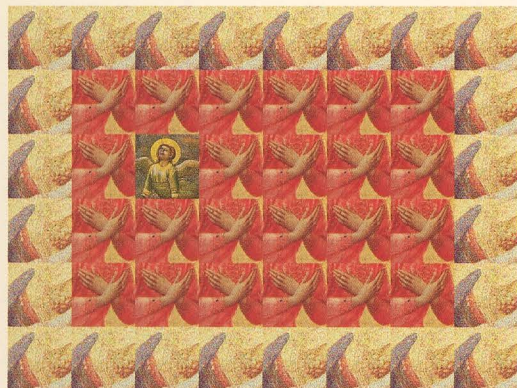
End If Internal Dam[Damagecond[cept] denied on
subconscious form[FDAL]e

End If[Internal Damage Report] deForm LGN



Four Writers-in-Residence worked with trAce over an 18-month period from February 1999 to September 2000. Each writer brought their experience and creative energy to the community by initiating online projects, attending conferences, and joining in WebBoard discussions. It was a heady period for writers on the web; broadband became more widespread and browser plugins allowed for the delivery of increasingly complex media. Shifts in technology were the norm. The fight for the web browser market between Microsoft and Netscape became known as the 'Browser Wars', and digital writers scrambled to make work that operated across the various platforms. It was a time when collaborations between writers, artists, and programmers became not only more prevalent, but often necessary.





http://netartefact.de/repoem/angeliperchristy/angeli_w.html

CHRISTY SHEFFIELD SANFORD (FEBRUARY - JULY 1999)

As the first Virtual Writer-in-Residence, Christy Sheffield Sanford (author of seven books including *The H's: The Spasm of a Requiem*, *The Italian Smoking Piece*, and *Only the Nude Can Redeem the Landscape*) brought a certain flair to the trAce community. Her work *NoPink* had already won The Well's 1998 prize for the Best Hyperlinked Work on the Web.

Her thoughtful engagement with the digital realm was tracked in her trAce Writing Journal: "In web-based work, I feel there has been an over-dependence on linking, which is disjunctive and counter to dramatic or in-depth literature. Linking is only one aspect of hypertext mark-up language. The quick cut can become an aggressive pattern. The predominantly male population on the web tends to colour how work is presented. I want to create a space that draws people in, that invites participation - that balances the vectors of receptivity and extension."

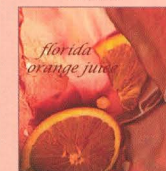
As well as offering a trAce Virtual AdvZer Column, where she answered questions about creative writing, software, and DHTML scripting, Sanford edited two issues of frAme. She held a 10-week online workshop (The Web for Writers), and participated in various collaborations, including *~~Water~~Water~~Water~~* with Reiner Strasser. Her work *Toward a Theory of Web-Specific Art-Writing* was published in Talan Memmott's BeeHive; and the web piece *Jill Swimming*, based on a collaboration with Jill Burton and Donna Mitchell, was featured as part of the Aix-en-Provence Art Contemporaine exhibit in June, 1999. For Riding the Meridian's October 1999 issue, she curated a hypertext collection and participated in an online roundtable discussion.

Her index of trAce works includes "My" Millennium and the *Gallery Showing of Tracework Members*, with an international cast of digital writers whose work is considered by many practitioners and critics to be the most influential on the web. The legacy of Christy Sheffield Sanford's time at trAce resounded in the community for a long time after her residency.

http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/writers/sanford/virtual_advZer.html



Christy Sheffield Sanford
holding to become
"Virtual AdvZer"



24-4 April 1999, Writer's Journal 4-24

trAce media World



Melinda Strasser, The Spasm, Christy Sanford, Maria Kall



Melinda Strasser, Christy Sanford, Maria Kall



Christy Sanford, The Resonance



Christy Sanford, Maria Kall, Melissa Strasser
Photo by Margaret Mitchell



David Roberts, Christy Sanford, Alan Lockhart, Maria Kall

Bernard's Journal
 15 November 1999

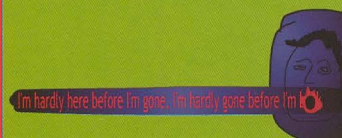
The end of the residency is now less than a month away. A burst of Macmedia Flash learning to finish with, I think.

I hope to stay in Britain for a while longer, and am waiting for certainty, not that I've had much of it, as a freelance writer and so forth.

I'm not complaining. I'm just able to say (a two sentence!) that I'm well adjusted.

trAcE / Bernard Cohen

Other projects proceed: *Island Voices*
Speedfactory on 24th November (making room to participate)



I'm hardly here before I'm gone, I'm hardly gone before I'm here

journal
email

discussions and exchanges
trAcE

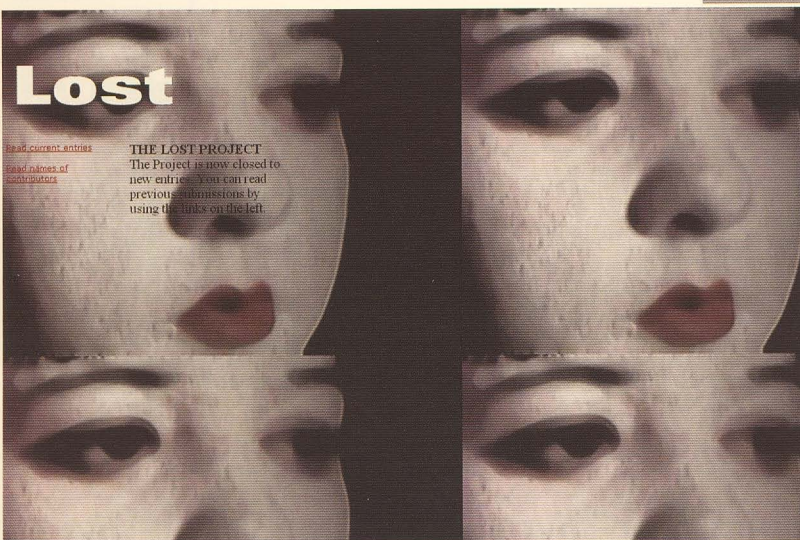
projects
bernard's books

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/writers/cohen/jo991115.htm>

BERNARD COHEN
 (JUNE - DECEMBER 1999)

The first flesh Writer-in-Residence at trAcE, Cohen was transplanted from Australia to a virtual geography. The author of three novels and the recipient of awards and fellowships, he brought a particular writerly sensibility to the trAcE community. He had an interest in issues regarding copyright, and hosted discussions in response to Mark Amerika's advocacy of copyleft, and an interview with copyright expert Thomas Dreier about copyright in the age of digital reproduction.

His projects at trAcE included: *Coalmining in South Derbyshire*, with collected stories and reminiscences by miners and spouses (two miners taught Cohen how to speak Swadlingo); *Island Voices*, where four writers from Iceland, Ireland, Jamaica and England were brought to the English East Midlands (a partnership run by Loughborough and De Montfort Universities to continue and expand on the East Midlands' programme of international writers' exchanges); and *Speedfactory*, where participants engaged in an online speed-writing project.



<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/lost>

A poet, critic, and theorist from Brooklyn, New York, Alan Sondheim's residency was marked by a notable generosity of time and thoughtful critique (his 2,903 WebBoard posts were mostly responses to questions or comments on writing work). His energy was infectious and sparked lively discussions about the nature of writing, and the body in cyberspace. Logging on from wherever he happened to be, using different computers, posting to the WebBoard, emailing members, sometimes chatting at the same time, Sondheim exemplified the term *being online*.

ALAN SONDHEIM

(SEPTEMBER 1999 - MARCH 2000)

The index of works created and initiated during his residency include the collaborative writing projects: *Yours*, *LoveandWar*, and *Lost* (multi-threaded works based on several characters; what Sondheim called inscription-machines). "Threads tended to wind around each other, disappearing from one backbone, only to appear on another," explained Sondheim.

One of his most fascinating projects, *Traceroute*, looked at the health of the internet, on December 31, 1999 and January 1, 2000. He explained: "During this period, Y2k problems were expected to surface world-wide. Using the tracer tool, utilized by system

administrators and net users in general to examine connections between any two computers online at the same time, the project mapped the world-wide telecommunications system on the eve of the millennium."

People from several countries participated by running tracerts, commenting throughout the night and into the next millennium.

**Brooklyn,
New York,
USA,**

from panix.com

Tracing route to cleo.murdoch.edu.au [134.115.224.60] over a maximum of 30 hops:

1 138 ms 139 ms 140 ms isdn2.nyc.access.net [166.84.0.123]
 2 134 ms 140 ms 140 ms xenyn-eid-FE0-1.nyc.access.net [166.84.0.97]
 3 138 ms 140 ms 139 ms 166.84.64.30
 4 158 ms 140 ms 160 ms nyc-13.nyc-core.h3-0-45M.netaxs.net [207.106.127.18]
 5 138 ms 140 ms 140 ms phl-13.phl-core.h2-0-45M.netaxs.net [207.106.127.17]
 6 180 ms 179 ms 160 ms l3-psk-t3-r.netaxs.net [207.106.3.202]
 7 136 ms 160 ms 140 ms sprint-nap.att.net [192.157.69.15]
 8 158 ms 160 ms 138 ms gbr2-p02.n54ny.ip.att.net [192.205.32.37]
 9 178 ms 200 ms 180 ms gbr1-p70.cgil.ip.att.net [12.122.2.2]
 10 239 ms 220 ms 240 ms gbr1-p50.sffca.ip.att.net [12.122.2.6]
 11 238 ms 216 ms 220 ms 12.127.11.46
 12 240 ms 218 ms 240 ms 205.174.74.166
 13 560 ms 599 ms 660 ms Serial3-0-0.rr1.optus.net.au [192.65.89.225]
 14 578 ms 580 ms 600 ms GigaEth0-0-0.ia3.optus.net.au [202.139.1.194]
 15 659 ms 640 ms 640 ms aarnet-wa.ia3.optus.net.au [192.65.88.190]
 16 620 ms 679 ms 660 ms murdoch-parnet.parnet.edu.au [203.19.110.146]
 17 659 ms 619 ms 659 ms cleo.murdoch.edu.au [134.115.224.60]

I long
 I yearn
 I want
 I need
 I crave
 I demand
 I beseech
 on the beach
 the tender shoot
 of aromatic, amarantic vermillion
 the crimson of my blush my lipstick my nailpolish
 lacquering the flowers that grow from your watered grave

Trace complete.

Alan Sondheim

the stem and voice of the avatar,
 se to slitting/splitting apart -

ur body jangled with the absence of
 ark which is secondary to growth
 on of digital corporeality will

in tree, stem to limb, word roots,
 ito find a way out of englishe, it's
 the bark of a tree, distant memory of
 the bark of a tree, distant memory of



Hescaline Avatarbreath

Cybele's fixations transpire

Interactive silence



cybele desires little oulipo, cast further spellspell

the text/sound is created from combining nine letters.

[t, h, e, n, e, r, s, e, y, b, i]

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/writers/sondheim/fout.cfm>

net yet bent she sent best set

these chests then seen bench test

so:

each sentence spells out the possible sounds that can be
 played when they appear in the sequence.

Alan Sondheim & Simon Mills

PHOTO BY:

THE WAR ROOM THE WAR RUIN

Please:

Your experience of war from home or abroad/
Your experience of ruin from home or abroad/
Have you participated in a war? Have you
participated in the ruin of a country? Have
you ever killed? Have you been wounded?
Have you lived in a ruined country? Would
you be willing to sacrifice your life for
your country? Do you believe that someone
who does not support the head of your
country is a traitor? Is your country at
peace/is your country at war? Do you
believe nuclear weapons are necessary?

Contribute >>

Read Contributions >>

About >>

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/warroom>

Alan Sondheim teamed up with Simon Mills in 2003 to create *The War Room/The War Ruin*, a place to retain the memories and feelings of anyone affected by war.

"I write and rewrite into a winperl program, changing it, substituting texts for noun lists, etc. The program is the matrix/catalyst/chora for subsequent processing. Once the program is transformed, I run it, enter sentences, bypassing the natural language of the questions. Run over and over again, texts emerge. The texts are then modified, sutured, eliminating program artefacts. The program itself undergoes continuous rewrite in relation to the texts. The program and the texts merge, diverge. I work towards the unimaginable representations of the imaginary. I pull emanants out from me, as if the body were wounded, as if ectoplasm were ASCII." (Alan Sondheim)

Simon Mills mused: "Here we witness literature and programming coming together to produce something unique. A cyborg text perhaps?"

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/writers/sondheim/trace.htm>

The Traceroute Project

Welcome to The Traceroute Project

This project is now closed for submissions - please go to the results pages to see the outcome - thank you for participating!

There are three results pages; the original one is [here](#), I have also made an easier text copy [here](#); and there is also additional material [here](#), created by J. Lelands. For the original project, please read below:

The Traceroute Project will look at the health of the Internet, on December 31, 1999 and January 1, 2000. During this period, Y2K problems are expected to surface worldwide.

The Project will give us a MAPPING of the world-wide telecommunications system on the eve of the millennium (yes, there's another one coming up!). It will be a rough portrait of world-wide Internet accessibility. The result - a series of charts of connections between computers everywhere - will be a new kind of writing / reading - looking at the raw data seen in these viewers, interpreting it as an image of the ELECTROSPHERE itself.

(The results and contributions are found at the trace Archive Writing Community; the Project is by Alan Sondheim, current Virtual Writer-in-Residence at trace.)

Traceroute is a tool used by system administrators and Net users in general to examine connections between any two computers online at the same time. Traceroute sends packets - small bits of data - to all the machines between the target machine and your own location. Three packets are sent at a time to each of the machines (routers), and the results are presented in a table. I am asking contributors to use traceroute, between their home machine and others online, during this period - and to send the results to trace - along with their location, the date, and a description of the effects of Y2K on their local environment.

For example, I live in Brooklyn; I might do traceroute between my machine in Brooklyn, and a machine in Perth, Australia; I would add the date, my location, and a description of the effects of Y2K on New York City (as far as I could tell). I would then paste this into the project URL, which is at (closed submissions form) - the results are at <http://trace.ntu.ac.uk/writers/sondheim/trace.htm>.

The result of all of this will be a mapping of the Internet network, checking out its nerves and state of mind, during the Y2K millennium crossover. This is one of the peak dates for the evolution of technology, and The Traceroute Project will attempt a picture of at least some of it.

We'll keep the results up, closing the submissions on January 1, 2000.

If you have any questions, please ask at the traceroute conference on trAce at <http://trace.ntu.ac.uk> or write Alan Sondheim directly, sondheim@panix.com.

How to Participate

There are 3 different ways to participate in the Project.

The EASIEST way is to go to <http://www.tracearchive.ac.uk> and follow the instructions to traceroute your own location from any number of sites around the world. For example, I am sending questions, and I can use the site to traceroute a location, say, in France, back to my location at panix.com.

If you use traceroute.org, simply cut and paste the results in at trace, and don't forget to add the date, time, what's happening (in terms of Y2K problems) in your location, and your location itself.

The SECOND way to participate - if you have Windows 98 or 95 - is to go to the DOS prompt (generally through Start / programs) and use the built-in traceroute facility. Just enter:

traceroute address >> trace.txt

For example, where "trace.txt" is the file into which you will put the results of your work. You can also put date >> trace.txt and time >> trace.txt - and, then, when editing the text, you can add information about your location, and what's happening there. The text can be edited in any text editor of course - it can then be pasted in the trace site. Please note the use of double carets >> instead of > - the double caret means that new information will be APPENDED to the file, instead of overwriting the file with ONLY the new information. (There is an example below.)

And the THIRD way to participate - if you're on Linux or Unix - is just to use the traceroute program - you can do "man traceroute" at the prompt to get help.

Again, you PASTE your results at (closed submissions page) and you can READ the results at <http://trace.ntu.ac.uk/writers/sondheim/trace.htm>.

Sample Entry

Here is a sample traceroute entry. This was made from my home computer in a site in Australia, cleo.murdock.edu.au. I had to double click on date and time, since the prompt asks for new time and date, and I didn't want to change anything. And I added "Brooklyn, New York, USA, from panix.com" by hand.

The commands (entered at the DOS prompt) were:

date > xx (where xx is the date in file xx)

time >> xx (where xx is the time in file xx)

traceroute cleo.murdock.edu.au >> xx (traceroute in Windows98 to xx)

The result follows:

Current date is Mon 12-20-1999

Enter new date (mm-dd-yy):

Current time is 2:54:35.974

Enter new time:

Brooklyn, New York, USA, from panix.com

Tracing route to cleo.murdock.edu.au [134.115.224.65]

over a maximum of 30 hops:

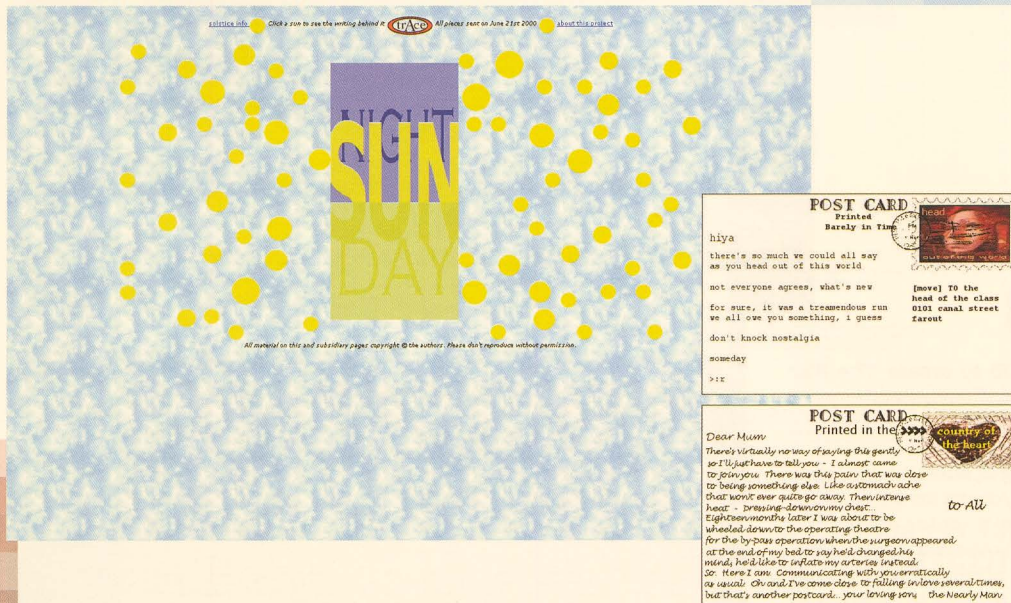
```

0 138 ms 139 ms 140 ms iadnet.nyw.access.net [66.843.123]
1 134 ms 140 ms 140 ms xerxes-edf35-1.nyw.access.net [66.840.97]
2 138 ms 140 ms 139 ms 166.846.62
3 428 ms 140 ms 160 ms nyw-01.nyw-core-b2-0-40M.net.au.net [207.106.127.18]
4 138 ms 140 ms 140 ms pld-b2-pbl-core-b2-0-40M.net.au.net [207.106.127.17]
5 189 ms 170 ms 160 ms 0-pbl-03-core.net [207.106.3.26]
6 136 ms 160 ms 140 ms spmnet-cap.att.net [192.127.69.15]
7 138 ms 160 ms 128 ms gblnet-02-04nyg-nyw.net.au [192.255.32.27]
8 178 ms 200 ms 180 ms gblnet-070-nyc.nyw.net [12.122.2.3]
9 129 ms 220 ms 240 ms gblnet-p-30-afrc.nyw.net [12.122.2.6]
10 238 ms 216 ms 220 ms 12.127.11.46
11 240 ms 218 ms 240 ms 203.174.74.166
12 300 ms 359 ms 600 ms GigaNet-0-0-01-optima.net.au [192.65.39.225]
13 471 ms 380 ms 600 ms GigaNet-0-0-01-optima.net.au [202.139.1.194]
14 639 ms 640 ms 640 ms amax-wa-01-optima.net.au [192.63.88.160]
15 632 ms 679 ms 660 ms murdock-packet-packet.edu.au [203.12.110.140]
16 679 ms 619 ms 650 ms cleo.murdock.edu.au [134.115.224.65]

```

Trace complete

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/writers/mcdonald/solstice/indexalt.htm>



A writer of radio plays and theatre scripts, Alan McDonald's residency was truncated by illness. His two trAce projects were

ALAN MCDONALD
(MARCH - AUGUST 2000)

very well received by the community: *The Longest Day / The Shortest Day* (a project where contributors wrote

about winter and summer solstices); *Imaginary Countries* (a project where contributors wrote about imaginary places, real or imagined). *The Imaginary Countries* project led to the creation of *The Imaginary Post Office*, which ran for five years from 2000 - 2005.

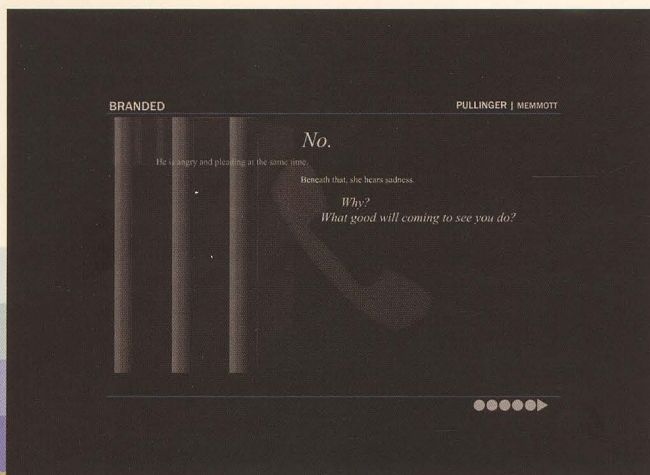
the web extends
through javascript into perl, java,
all sorts of languages, performances -
as far as classics of the early net -
perhaps there won't be anything,
and that might be a blessing -
the questioning of
"classics" and the canon

KATE PULLINGER

Mapping the Transition from Page to Screen
RESEARCH FELLOW MARCH 2002 - FEBRUARY 2003

Funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Board, this project examined the changes experienced by print writers moving to the web. Author Kate Pullinger, already a tutor at the Online Writing School, was appointed as Research Fellow. Her engagement with the project was a combination of training and support as she learned how to read and create works in the digital medium. Working with the trAce team, Pullinger learned how to use HTML and kept a fascinating journal of her progress. Going directly to the root of hypertext, she polled new media writers, asking: What is the Hyperlink? Other useful surveys were also conducted during this period, and the results were used to produce *The Opening the Space Toolkit and Guide*. Pullinger's project, *Branded*, led to other fruitful and ongoing collaborations.

<http://trace.ntu.ac.uk/transition>



<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/transition>

opening

Don't wait until you think you know what you're doing. You'll never take the plunge. The best way to learn is to do, to teach what you do to others, and to collaborate. Be prepared to learn new things and challenge your preconceived notions of your art. Don't consider it second-best. Use the technology. Think - what can I create that couldn't be done in print? Don't be put off by Luddite responses. Edit yourself: think rank radio not print. Get a high-speed connection. Back up your data. Get a web site, simple but professional looking, and keep it current. Give your writing away for free. Electronic work is shaping a brand new language of literature. Be connected to a writing community. The net conquers geographical or cultural isolation. Get a virus detector and keep it up to date. Learn basic HTML or Dreamweaver and use criteria when using a search engine. Investigate numerous sites in order to find those you initially feel comfortable with. Bookmark them. Use chat rooms and discussion groups to learn from the conventions. Lurk for a while before you post. Organise your bookmarks/favourites well so you can find those valuable web pages again. Search for it/save it/organise it. Planning the project or site is very important. Good planning is essential to maintain direction. Read as much online work as you can. Try to solve technical problems before asking others. You'll discover that you are much more capable and knowledgeable than you imagined. Every problem attacked means an increase in your skill level even if you need help to solve it in the end. Each new writer coming to the web could be the one to show others the way. It's an exciting place to be. Learn to program. Learn to read. Learn to write.

the space

SEND ME YOUR OLDTON ARTIFACTS:

Send me a letter of farewell or a final photograph before you take your leave of a place or a situation. You can contact me via the [trace forum](#).



A THEORY ABOUT DOGS & PARASITES

In the *blogs*, we are beginning to see that there is something special about the stray dog of Oldton.

Feel free to join in a discussion that has already ranged from alien abduction to Pi to Oriental calligraphy to Restoration painting via DNA sampling and Schrödinger's cat.



MY FATHER - A 50% TRUE STORY

The personal narrative of my piece will inevitably focus around my father's suicide. I think about it every day.

All the events I will mention about my childhood and my family are more or less true. Certainly the emotions I try to convey to you will be genuine. In the tradition of interactive narrative, I have been playful about when things happened and the order in which they happened.

Names and places have been changed and/or borrowed from elsewhere. But then that's all part of the story anyway.

Distraction Loop 3: GET STONED
An absurd pastiche in the form of a fictional blog with elements of performance video art.

Not much progress with this except I have digitised some potentially useful video clips (see stills) and transcribed some of the voice track. Interesting how it changes when you divorce it from the moving image and connect it to text.

Key elements still include:

Very rough blog setup: need to re-do template, add Amazon & Paypal, add episodes and work out how to integrate DV footage (please)

Psychogeography & location aware narrative discussion in trace forum: should have gone out and about in the real world, making it up as he goes along, rather than working to a pre-formed narrative?



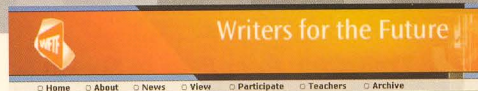
TIM WRIGHT

Writers for the Future

DIGITAL WRITER IN RESIDENCE APRIL 2003 - MARCH 2005

Funded by NESTA and co-managed by the trAce Online Writing Centre at Nottingham Trent University and the Faculty of Humanities at De Montfort University, this project explored innovative ways of writing using the internet and provided criteria for best practice in the emerging genre of new media writing. Tim Wright was appointed as Digital Writer-in-Residence and Catherine Gillam became Research Administrator for the project. Writers for the Future included: Textlab, a residential week at Nottingham Trent University in November 2003, where participants took advantage of the Art & Design Department's state-of-the-art technology resources; a Roadshow (March and July 2004), when Tim Wright travelled throughout the UK, working with the people he met to piece together the mystery of what happened to *Oldton*, his childhood town, accompanied by Catherine Byron, Chris Joseph and Gavin Stewart. *The Print View of Writers for the Future* is a publication that celebrates the whole project and offers advice and inspiration to anyone interested in creating, reading or teaching with new media writing.

<http://trace.ntu.ac.uk/writersforthefuture>



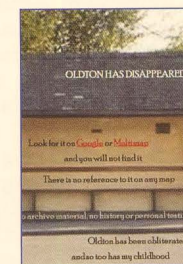
View

In Search of Oldton

Jan/Feb 04

Tim Wright's Weblog

In Search of Oldton



<http://www.oldton.com>

With 'In Search of Oldton', I plan to work together with people - online and offline - to build a digital evidence of a town that never really existed.

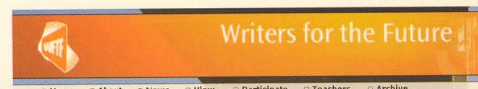
I am very keen for the project to encourage as many people as possible to try their hand at writing in a digital environment and to explore what it might mean to have a literary experience online.

Please send me texts, pictures, sounds, videos and memorabilia that I can use to build up a detailed portrait of my old home town. The only rule about submissions is that they must be about a place or a person who has been lost or left behind.

READERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Already a number of people have written to *Oldton*, giving me leads on where Oldton might be, and what might have caused its disappearance. By email, I have also received texts, images and sounds that have been submitted to the growing Oldton archive.

Please send me your own memories, memories, stories and favours from the disappeared town. You can email me, post to my blog or read through the posts on [Oldton Online Writing Centre](#), [The Nottingham Trent University](#), [Clifton Lane](#), [Clifton](#), [Nottingham NG2 8BB](#).



Participate

TEXTLAB

trACE Forums

Incubation 3

Online Course

trACE Roadshow 2004

TEXTLAB: THE CLASS OF 2003



Back row, left to right:

Catherine Byron, Gavin Stewart, Leanne White, Jane Alexander, Jeff Jackson, Chris Joseph, Tim Wright, Kate Phillips, Barbara Halls

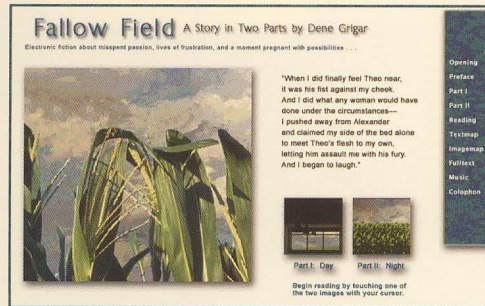
During our residential week at Nottingham Trent University in November 2003, participants took advantage of the Art & Design Department's state-of-the-art technology resources to work individually and in groups, making their projects in the next stages of development.

CATHERINE BYRON - LONDON, 1965-1980, 2003

Catherine Byron is a poet currently based at Nottingham Trent University where she teaches Medieval Literature and Writing. From 2001-2005 she holds an AHRC Creative Fellowship in Writing, and will be making new work for the web as well as writing poems for her seventh collection *Glass Pages*.

Catherine has used as her creative starting point Duffley Chancer's pre-vention of the bubble of water in cyberspace - has written about it, at the Lab, the experiment with recorded sound and created her first voice/image sequence for a new interactive audio work. <http://www.seebruce.co.uk/lab/voices/chron.htm>

this, to me, seems like a natural way to use the online environment -



to create something of emotional significance

out of the multiplicity of impersonal interactions

http://www.nospace.net/dene/elit/fallow_field/fallow_field_opening.html

and chaotic, shared media that the web offers.

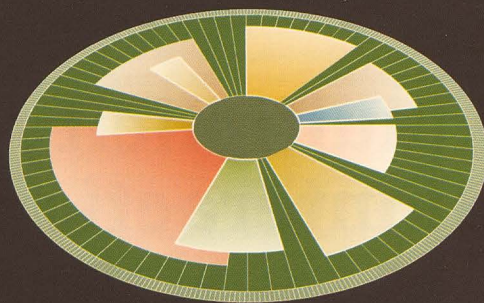
Tim Wright



» start



» about the project
» making the tool
» add comments



Simon Mills

What makes Online Writing Unique?
(editorial)



loading scene 3 of 28: 21%

In 1984,
Francis Schmitt described
a holistic information
network in which messenger
molecules and receptors link
brain, body and behaviour.

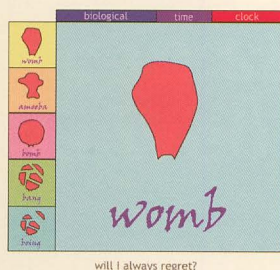
Christy Sheffield Sanford



<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/frame>

ONLINE PUBLICATION

frAme Journal of Culture and Technology
(ISSN: 1470-2134)



From 1999 to 2004 frAme published over 60 works by digital writers, critics, and theorists. The insightful essays covered everything from pop culture to ASCII art, brain-computer metaphors to desktop absurdities, identity to databases. Digital writers presented a range of works: a serial email novel, interactive hypermedia, code-based poetry, multi-layered narratives, and illustrated texts. Curated by Simon Mills (with assistance at times from Sue Thomas, Helen Whitehead and Christy Sheffield Sanford), the works in frAme represent a snapshot of the trAce community's engagement with digital aesthetics.

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/frame/index.cfm>



ONLINE STUDIOS

Canadian writer and visual artist Randy Adams opened the first trAce studio in 2000 and kept a net journal until 2005. He has called his studio "a six year adventure in online publishing." The contents include: an archive of poetry, non-fiction, photography, and spoken word; hypertexts, hypermedia, and interactive narrative; digital imagery and animations.

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/studio/radams>

Australian cyberfeminist Francesca da Rimini aka gashgirl (one of the early netizens who inspired Sue Thomas to set up trAce), used her studio to develop the project Soft Accidents. "The studio is a changing snapshot of the material I am working with," said da Rimini. "Life usefully ignores art's best and worst intentions, sometimes serendipitously drawing the maker into unforeseen drift zones, far from the original maps and plans, perhaps to eventually end up only slightly south-west of one's original destination."

<http://trace.ntu.ac.uk/accident/soft/index.html>

Carolyn Guertin, Canadian writer and academic (curator of Assemblage, the Women's New Media Gallery), opened a studio to workshop the second half of her electronic novel, *The Attributes of Heartbreak* (a historical work based on ancient myth and set in Ancient Sumeria - modern day Iraq).

<http://trace.ntu.ac.uk/traced/guertin/heartbreak>

Author Kate Pullinger used her studio to develop digital skills. Her journal recorded moments of frustration and serendipity. A successful print author, Pullinger continued to work across forms because "they offer similar-but-very-distinct possibilities." She went on to create: *Branded* (a collaboration with Talan Memmott); *The Breathing Wall* (with experimental software that allows the story to respond to the listener's rate of breathing, in collaboration with Stefan Schemat and Chris Joseph aka babel); and the multi-media story *Inanimate Alice* (also in collaboration with Chris Joseph aka babel).

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/studio/pullinger>

I didn't understand
that my mother was implying
that since we are black,
liberty and justice
was not intended for us.

Carmin Karasic

five teddy bears, three birds six hearts,
a few (that would be three) X's
which we all knew stood for kisses.

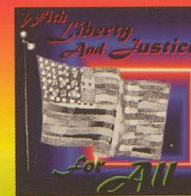
Jennifer Ley

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/frame4/ley/leyaheart/index.html>

Daddy Liked His With Heart

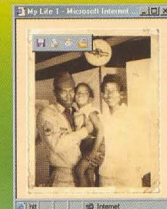
When I was 5,
my mother said to me,
"You don't have to say the
Pledge. It isn't meant for
you."

That was in 1959 on my first day of school.
She added if the teacher used to make me
say it, then have her talk to my mother.
I didn't know what the pledge was, or why
it wasn't meant for me, but I understood that
my mother, who usually insisted on good
behavior, was clearly giving me
permission to
disobey



Carmin Karasic
September 1998

(For best viewing arrange the text and image
popup windows so that all 7 are visible.)



<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/frame2/articles/carmin/pledge1.htm>

there are no rules...
I can start from an idea
as well as from an image

Nicolas Clauss

internal damage report

Mez

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/frame2/mez/idr1.htm>

6 august 1945 - obliteration



When, on August 6th, 1945, we released the bomb over Mission we made our turn and, as we leveled out the flash occurred. The tail gunner said, "I am not going," releasing the shock-wave -- and by the time he said that, the first one hit us. It was a real wallap -- a real bang. It made a lot of noise and shook the airplane.

Then, there was this mushroom cloud extending upward and we watched it blossom. Now below where there had been a city, the sight reminded me of a boiling pot of tar -- the best description I can give it. It was black and boiling underneath with a steam haze on top. Whereas we had seen the city as we came in, there was nothing visible now but this black boiling mass. Paul W. Tibbets
Pilot of the Enola Gay
written 9-25-82 in Kansas, MO

< back
< diary
< studio



<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/traced/guertin/incarnation/tail1.htm>

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/accident/soft/text/cachet00.htm>

i keep writing through
this space with its ache
that will not be filled
trapped in this bubble
circular window
out of time
follow the tale of the mouse
scurrying
i am pawing to transform
these webs
bone into gold
slow into light
alchemy of dimensions
geometry from sacred dust
maze of moments



fall back loop forward

JOURNAL TRACES

16 january 2003 - harvest
11 january 2003 - reiteration engine
19 december 2002 - against the fourth world war
26 november 02 - lepers and witches
25 august 2002 - border crises
22 june 2002 - belonging to country
19 november 2001 - dialogues
18 november 2001 - tracks and traces
4 april 2001 - birds fly out of the dreaming girls' fingertips
6 april 2001 - sleeping on the skin of the earth
6 april 2001 - pointless exercise
19 march 2001
29 february 2001 - ecstatic battle
26 february 2001 - fighting, drifting, dreaming
20 february 2001 - a crush of tears
13 february 2001 - distractions
11 february 2001 - seven sea birds down south, going north
6 august 1945 - obliteration

note to visitors...
liberation range...
body adornments
for the age of Perma War

Francesca da Rimini

< open studio

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/accident/soft/text/diary00.htm>

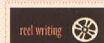
<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/studio/radams/awar3.html>

<http://www.runran.net>

remix runran



re on line / runran.net
audiovisual portal to navigating
media commentary — updated
26 February 2006



real writing —>
audiovisual takes / introduces a
series of digital works in
progress / remixes / multi-
mediatic clips



contact —> dynamic
audiovisual space for live
performance, in collaboration with
multimedia artist, composer, and
theorist Dave Gibbon



tunnel —> excerpts from one
of a series of animations created
in the past year, designed to be
played with live electronic
music — with web forum



post office —> imaginary post
office takes a left turn, into the
arena of social commentary — a
related internet

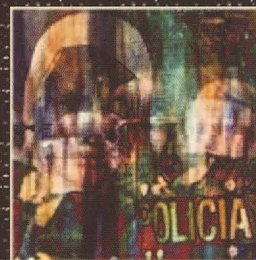
"Off on the program ready / ready Adams"
born random pixel Adams / I met a blog but
creative digital & other writings & imagery
spoken word / hypermedia / hypertext / end-
user hammering a computer

I am a writer/journalist, photographer and
visual artist — a citizen of the net. I often
hang out on the intersection of Academia and
Main. You can contact me at runran@runran.net

My online studio is a three-year adventure in
online publishing. It was developed from
1999 to 2003 as part of nku's Net Journal
Studio Program. Since 2002 I have acted as
Associate Editor for the Net Journal Studio
Program, based at the Nottingham Trent
University in England, responsible for
articles on the main page.

I wrote External Practice, an odd blend of social
history and travelogue. My photographs and
sound music work have been exhibited and
collected by public galleries, museums, and
archives.

For the past few years I have worked at
extending my practice into the digital into
creating hypermedia for the web, and
interactive animation for live performance
Grandio
collaborator



**I keep writing through this space
with its ache
that will not be filled**

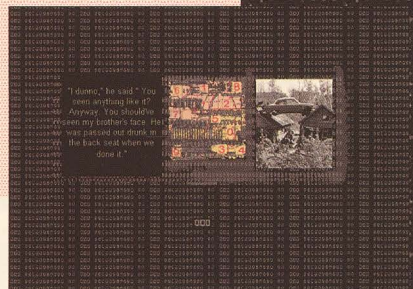
Carolyn Guertin

Randy Adams
trace online studio



Net Journal
Hypertext/Hypermedia
Affiliations/Collaborations
Selected Texts / Spoken Word
Imaginary Post Office
CONTACT
Photo Gallery

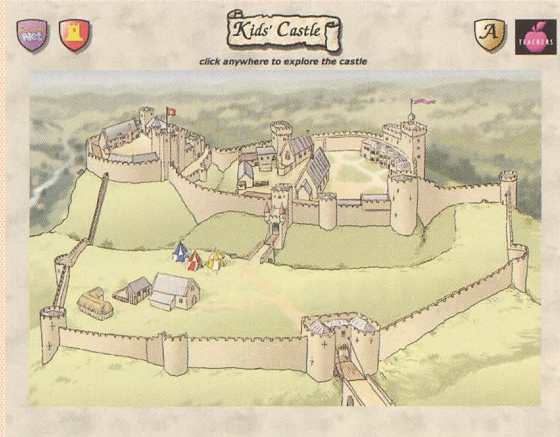
This website is a three-year adventure in online publishing. It was developed from 1999 to 2003 as
part of nku's Net Journal Studio Program. If you remain the media, please email a link to runran at
runran dot net. Current work and commentary can be found at www.runran.net. Thanks to the usual
suspects.



**who will claim
the territory
called
Hypermedia?**

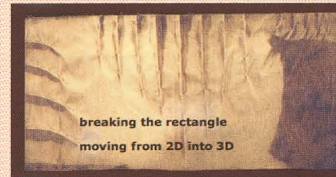
Randy Adams

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/studio/radams/index.htm>







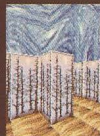

Helen Whitehead had already been working with online media for almost 10 years when she joined the team at trAce. Her job included being Website Editor, Administrator and Tutor for trAce Online Writing School, and Workshop Co-ordinator and presenter. Her dedication to the community, and to assuring that it was inclusive, was evident in everything she did. She hosted and logged chat sessions, helped members with technical problems, and maintained the website and WebBoard. She was also a creative writer fascinated by the possibilities of online publishing. Her work *Web Warp & Weft*, created with the support of a Year of the Artist Award (June 2000 - September 2001), explored the resonances between the making of textiles and the making of works for the web.

She also collaborated extensively with children and teachers. Established in 1998, she developed Kids on the Net into an interactive website for children's writing, with contributors and participants worldwide. As part of the NESTA-funded Writers for the Future project, she worked with digital teacher-in-residence Simon Widdowson to create *Dragonsville*, a stepping-stone project for teachers who wanted to begin using ICT within their literacy and English classes.



<http://kotn.ntu.ac.uk>

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/www/webwarpweft>

<p>The transition of 2D to 3D breaks the constraints of the rectangle.</p> <p>Create a digital universe!</p> <p>Click and fold for 3D...</p> 	<p>Visualise stunning designs beyond the screen and flat fabric print.</p> <p>Alter the range of tints, the intensity of light, and the scale.</p> 
<p>Patterns fill and drape, stretched, crumpled and twisted, interacting with the body, so that printed shapes function in 3D.</p> 	<p>With soft shadows, blurry reflections, and generous helpings of sky and texture, create organic shapes.</p> <p>Move them with the mouse.</p> 
<p>Manipulate photographic images, expand your perceptions. Display instantly, preview now. Animate and explore.</p> 	<p>Embrace holistic design. Be adventurous in making worlds. Create a digital universe! Click and fold for 3D.</p> 

trAcE
Online Writing Centre

Original new media writing, creative online courses, incisive articles, innovative webdesign, and a broad range of resources, news, discussions and research.

Index of Articles

Crossing the Divide
There is a real need for Aboriginal people to believe in their own metaphorical, says Grae Thomas. Alice White/Letter Alice/Markus-Jakob

Chance: a psychogeographical walk performance
Robert LaPlante Dan's ideas centered around deconstructive moments in the Reworked of these time, and capture the locality of audience between each moment

At Large in Cyberspace
Digital media: The state of 2005
A glimpse into what's been happening in trAcE's extended community during the past year of change
by Randy Adams

Writing Across Forms
"When asked why I continue to write across these forms," explains author Kate Pullinger, "I reply because I enjoy them all, and they offer similar-but-very-distinct possibilities."

Ebooks: Economics Value for Readers and Writers
Of all the models of publishing introduced over the past decade, says author Kate Pullinger, ebooks (possibly) offer the greatest potential for an (author's) reliable income

Ten Little Indians
An interview with Jackson Zbarsky
Melvick artist and hip-hop musician Zbarsky remixes derivative lyrics from a children's song
by Randy Adams

Sue Thomas: The Digital Life
Empowering others to take risks, to engage with their possible
by Randy Adams

Forums
Login:
Password:
Login

News
You are invited to make a contribution to decide
In the last ten years there has been an explosion of new technology, especially related to computers and the Internet, and for some of us it has changed forever the way we live and write. At trAcE reaches its tenth anniversary, we invite you to reflect on your own personal decade of living and writing with technology and make a contribution to decide.

22 November 05

News
Writing and the Digital Life
Professor Sue Thomas, former Artistic Director of trAcE, launched Writing and the Digital Life - a collaborative transdisciplinary blog about the impact of digital technologies upon writing and lived experience - on Blog Day, 31st August 2005.

22 November 05



http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/article_piccies/alice2.jpg

**empowering
others to take
risks**

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk>

http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/article_piccies/still1_avatara.gif

Hello...
My name is...
Kara

Hello...
my name is...
Dominic

**we look beneath
the surface
as that is where much of
what we do here exists**

**nothing actually starts until the user
interacts with the work**

Tim Wright

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/Review/index.cfm?article=60>

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/Review/index.cfm?article=134>

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/Review/index.cfm?article=86>

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/Review/index.cfm?article=42>

Interactive Futures: New Stories, New Visions
by Randy Adams
18/Mar/2003



The Interactive Futures forum was held at the University of Victoria on Canada's Vancouver Island. Presented in conjunction with Victoria's Independent Film & Video Festival, the speakers included artists, film makers and scholars from across Canada and the United States. Hosted and curated by Steve Gibson, Associate Professor of Fine Arts (Multimedia), the forum ran for two days and three evenings, February 7th - 9th, 2003.

Interactive video and sound installation artist Don Ritter opened the affair with a presentation of *Digestion*. Using custom designed hardware and software systems, he creates interactive video and sound controlled by live music, the body position and motion of viewers. His large scale interactive installations, performances and video tapes have been exhibited in 15 countries. The interactive sound installation *Intervention* has been experienced by over 800,000 visitors in seven countries.

In his keynote talk on the second evening Ritter discussed and presented examples of his various projects including the *Elephant Keyboard*, an interactive music instrument played by elephants at the Thai Elephant Conservation Centre in Lampang, Thailand in January, 2000. Christine Schöpf, co-director, Ars Electronica, Linz, Austria, 2002 says of Ritter:

"In *Save the Wh*, culture-revolving phrases as an artist did he employ technology without reason or intention for its own sake, but to help us reflect on our own culture, on other."

Ten Little Indians: an interview with Jackson Zbars
by Randy Adams
22/Jul/2005



The common portrayals of Indigenous peoples in film, the media, and children's music have shaped the public perception of Native people in North America for over a century. These typically inaccurate stereotypes have etched themselves deeply into the consciousness of every North American, and are an insidious and destructive force to the contemporary identity of Indigenous peoples (Jackson Zbars).

There is a growing list of First Nations and Métis artists, writers and musicians who have turned to using digital technologies as a resistance strategy to heal wounds and expose myths, or entertain readers and viewers by using unique and true voices. People like Cree Métis artist and writer Ashlee Haskagon-Inkwin (speaking the *Language of Spiders*); Mohawk/Italian multidisciplinary artist and curator Skawennati Tricia Pigeon (*Proteus*); Inuit/Chenodaga photographer, curator, writer and cultural analyst Jeff Thomas (*Boutique for Indians*); and Mohawk artist and hip-hop musician Jackson Zbars, whose deceptively simple Flash movie, *Ten Little Indians*, is the feature of this article.

Zbars is in intriguing company. On the literary front *Ten Little Indians* is the name of a 2003 book by Sherman Alexie, with stories about Native Americans; and Agatha Christie released a novel of the same name in 1939 (first released in England as *Ten Little Niggers*, renamed *And Then There Were None*, and finally released in the US as *Ten Little Indians*).

This children's song *Ten Little Indians* has been adapted by many.

At Large in Cyberspace
by Randy Adams
09/Mar/2003



My day began like most - make coffee and logon by 7AM. Check email, browse the news, and visit a couple of online communities. Then to work writing, editing, tinkering with digital images, in no particular order, which is probably why this column is long overdue. It's been almost a year since my last occasional column - that's certainly occasional, wouldn't you say?

I have excuses. For example, I spend far too much time fending off concerted attacks by people intent on mining my data, taking over my browser, or redirecting popup windows to sites offering consumer goods or sex. This morning I ran an Adaware scan on my computer and found 22 new objects - 1 Registry Key added, 1 Registry Value altered, 17 unknown cookies and other files - after only an hour on the net.

It was the usual culprits: Red Sheriff, Malware, adtom, betterinternet, searchtraffic, getor. Not just invading my privacy, but wanting to alter my preferences. Like junkies who wander neighborhoods at night looking for unlocked vehicles, rummage glove boxes for anything of value and leave a mess, data junkies who rummage through my computer are little better.

I don't like to lock my computer up tight, some of the new media work I enjoy requires certain permissions and plug-ins to operate. Sometimes I long for the time (oh so short) when the only people invading my computer were net artists like Jodi or Abud, when the cash hounds of big business viewed the net as a passing fad. It was like a borderland, net art needed no validation, pop-up windows were conceptual objects.

Save the Wh, culture-revolving phrases as an artist did he

Oh Google, how do I love thee?
by Pauline Masurel
11/Mar/2003



Obviously I love my Aurde Google - or almost any search engine - and the internet itself, for that matter. Who can resist their charms? Not least for providing possible answers to those obscure yet pressing questions such as "What is trepanning?", "How do you play a theremin?", "Where can I learn about barbed wire?" and "Is there a social group for people who enjoy performing original in

Indian restaurants?".

These sorts of deliciously quirky fields of enquiry can all feed back into my interests and preoccupations when I write. Well, sometimes they do. But to be honest, who really cares about sensible stuff like that in the abandoned passion of the moment when consumed by the sheer animal lust to find out something? To discover anything at all. Who cares whether it's true or not!

People sometimes get very preoccupied with worrying about the authenticity of sources. I concede that this is important for some purposes but, fortunately, I'm a fiction writer and not a journalist. Therefore if most references to a given activity espouse a particular belief - even if they've all been copied from the same erroneous source - it doesn't seem unreasonable for any character that I write to believe the same mistaken thing. My debt is to the internal plausibility of the story and not to anything so trivial as accuracy of fact.

The internet is full of lies and so is fiction. Indeed, I'm secretly convinced that it is all one giant hypertextual story if it had the time to read more than a few obscure corners and figure out the plot.

There is a place for me in the world of the internet.

trAce ARTICLES

From 2002 to 2006 the trAce front page featured over 75 articles by journalists, digital writers, scholars, and poets. The range of essays included: reviews of relevant books, conferences, and web/net art; opinion pieces about literature, aesthetics, spam, electronic books, and the skills needed to be a digital writer. There was a process category where digital writers explained the processes and concepts that drove their work, as well as several interviews. In 2004, as part of the Writers for the Future project, trAce held a New Media Article Writing Competition. The winning pieces were published on the front page.

"It's the summer of 2002," explained trAce Associate Editor Randy Adams. "Sue and I are sitting on the edge of an Iron Age hill fort, overlooking fields and fields of enclosures, talking about plans for trAce. It was there we first discussed changing the trAce front page to include articles about digital writing and the internet. There was no money in the budget for such a venture, but a month later Simon had built a new website and we published our first four articles. By December, Sue announced that we had the resources for an editorial budget, and the front page joined many other trAce projects that supported and paid writers and artists."

http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/article_list.cfm

Conference presenters:

Dale Spender; Mark Amerika; Cynthia Haynes; Jan Rune Holmevik; Liz Bailey; Keith Brooke; Molly Brown; Peter Howard; Heather Rosenblatt.

Friday 16th October 1998
The Broadway Media Centre
Nottingham
England

On the day of the conference, 150 writers, arts organisers and librarians travelled to Nottingham from all around Britain to register both their concern and their excitement about the future of writing in a digital world. It was the first conference to be held in the UK specifically on the topic of writing and the web. It came at a time when very

few British writers were working online, and the most common opinions about the internet were that it threatened artistic integrity, compromised the safety of authorial copyright, and encouraged the self-publication of mediocre work. The levels of technical and creative skill simply were not understood. This conference brought together an international group of professional authors and educators with extensive experience of the internet to address some of these anxieties and provide informed opinion about the potential of the net for the artistic community.

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/eastm/conf.htm>

INCUBATION
15 - 17th July 2000
Nottingham Trent University
Clifton Campus

By 2000 trAce connected more than a thousand writers and readers in over a hundred countries. Incubation offered the chance to meet in the flesh

Keynote Speakers: Stelarc; Teri Hoskin; Gregory Ulmer; Geoff Ryman.

to discuss the nature of writing and reading on the internet. For three

days trAce provided a platform for an international group of writers, critics, theorists, and web-artists. The themes were: narrative, invention, community, creativity, publishing, and ownership. Robin Rimbaud aka Scanner provided audio, The Electronic Lounge, in the conference bar.

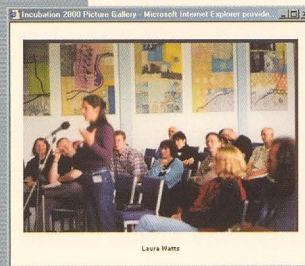
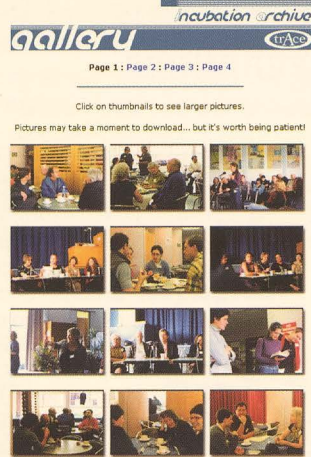
<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/incubation/archive/2000/index.htm>

Online Gallery: *Ink.ubation*, a digital salon curated by Mark Amerika.

http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/incubation/archive/2000/level2/intro_fr.htm

again I'm changing direction

Alan Sondheim



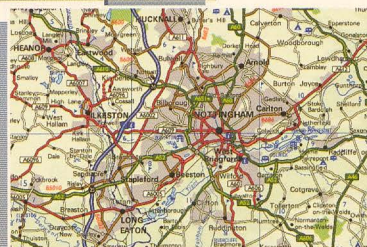
INCUBATION2 15-17th July 2002 Nottingham Trent University Clifton Campus

This conference provided a showcase for the writing of the future and offered a glimpse into the work of writers who used digital technology: poetry with sound and images, personal histories, news, journalism, stories with multiple endings. There was a live chat for trAce members who could not make the journey to Nottingham. Areas explored were: how can we use the online environment to further collaborations between artists and writers; how do the online environment and other new media tools modify the relationship between writing, language, imagery, culture, and ethnicity? Also presented was an interactive collaborative web

drama, *M is for Nottingham?*, created by Marjorie Coverley Luesebrink, that combined collaborative web writing with live mystery theatre.

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/incubation/index2002.cfm>

Online gallery: *_Net & Codeworkers Inc[ubation]_*, curated by Mary-anne Breeze aka mez.



I link therefore I am

Mark Amerika

10-12 July 2000
Nottingham Trent University

@define incubate

Etymology: Latin incubatus,
past participle of incubare,
from in- + cubare to lie
Date: circa 1721

Archive

arts
broadway
trAce

A trAce International Conference on Writing and the Internet

Keynote speakers: Lizzie Jackson (Editor, Communities, BBCi); Talan Memmott (hypermedia artist/writer: winner of the 2001 AltX/trAce award); Robin Rimbaud aka Scanner.

authors are worried about copyright and intellectual property

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/incubation/archive/2000/index.htm>

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/incubation/index2002.cfm>

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/incubation/gallery2004.cfm>

INCUBATION2

The 2nd trAce International Conference on Writing and the Internet
15-17 July 2002 at The Nottingham Trent University

Incubation2 was the second trace International Conference on Writing and the Internet, and the premier international event for writers working on the web. It provided a showcase for the writing of the future and offered a glimpse into the work of writers who use the internet to develop ground-breaking content: poetry with sound and images, personal histories, news, journalism, stories with multiple endings. This is writing on the web, for the web, and about the web.

Speakers included:

- Lizzie Jackson, Editor, Communities, BBCi
- Tizian Menemmi, Hypermmedia artist/writer
- Robin Rimbaud (Scanner) Sound artist

The conference was a significant opportunity for writers to extend their professional development, learn new skills, and interact with some of the leading writers and artists working online today. There were opportunities to meet with writers who have made a significant contribution to this new form, as well as the chance for writers to show their own work and look at other people's. There were visible-based workshops and feedback workshops, panel discussions, presentations, demonstrations and performances, and plenty of opportunity to network and meet those people you only ever knew online.

Our themes in 2002 were:

Process:

- How do we collaborate on the web?
- What is the difference between electronic writing and print-based writing?
- Is new media writing literature?

Learning:

- How do we learn and teach writing on the web?
- How is the online workshop different from the physical workshop?
- How has the web changed what we learn and how we learn it?

Culture:

- How is the web enabling writers to address diversity and difference?
- Is there a cultural divide between writers who use the web, and those who don't?
- How is the interdisciplinary culture of the web affecting traditional funding models for writing?

Incubation3 Gallery
The New Incunabula
Curated by Carolyn Guertin

Works	Remarks
	The incunabula were fledgling texts. The children of Johann Gutenberg's century, they were the first printed books before printing conventions became set in the years predating 1500. The name is derived from the Latin term for babies' swaddling and refers to those contents that are cradled by the bindings of a new form. For the first 50 years of its long life, the book was in a state of flux until it assumed its final shape that would remain unchanged for the next 500 years. That shape came to include spaces between words, page numbers, and illuminated manuscript.
	The 21st century incunabula are new texts for a digital age: they take a form that breaks the bindings of print and reshapes old ways of speaking. As a political and revolutionary form, it also counts many women among its master practitioners. The new incunabula use Web-native principles to find innovative ways of speaking within the conventions of the new media and simultaneously seek to define new conventions for this form for the future. New technologies—whether used for artistic or scientific ends—require new shapes to speak their attributes. Feminist writers too have long sought aesthetic shapes that can exist both inside and outside of patriarchal systems. This showcase walks the cutting edge, demonstrating not just where we have been, but starting off in new directions where the shape of this form is going.

Carolyn Guertin - A cyberfeminist and scholar of the new media arts, Carolyn Guertin is a Learning Environment Architect with Academic Technologies for Learning at the University of Alberta in 2003-4 and will be McLaughlin Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Toronto in 2004-5. As Curator of *Assemblage at Bixie*, the only gallery on the World Wide Web devoted exclusively to women's born-digital new media artworks, she will oversee the first all-woman gallery to be showcased at Incubation, a symposium devoted to the new electronic arts and literatures. A new media artist in her own right, her creative and critical works have been published and exhibited internationally online, in print and in real space.

what has become of writing ?

is new media writing literature ?



<http://califia.us/IncubationDrama/personstrip.gif>

we didn't invent language - language invented us

Paul Brown, Fine Art forum V14, issue 11, November 2000

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/studio/radams/claims/balloonpic1.html>

INCUBATION3 July 2004 Nottingham Trent University Clifton Campus

Keynote speakers: Ted Nelson, Paul Brown, Alan Sondheim, Tim Wright. Also featured: Kate Pullinger, Steve Gibson, Simon Widdowson.

There were opportunities to experience recent works and lively discussions about the ways new media texts are made, discussed, and reviewed. Also explored were methods of teaching and digital archiving in a creative context. One panel discussed practical ways to use the internet with young writers. Other presentations included mature digital writing projects, some the product of several years' collaboration. Incubation3 put to rest the notion that writing or artwork created for the internet would be largely mediocre. Tim Wright presented Oldton, a complex narrative work that included online collaboration, but was rooted in the tradition of storytelling. Steve Gibson, with his interactive music event, Virtual DJ, hosted the windup party at the Stealth club in Nottingham.

<http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/incubation/index.cfm>

Online Gallery: The New Incunabula: The Shape of A Woman's Form, curated by Carolyn Guertin.

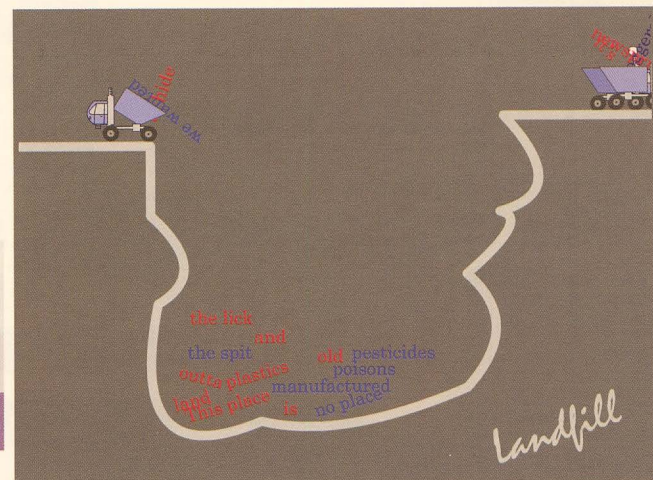
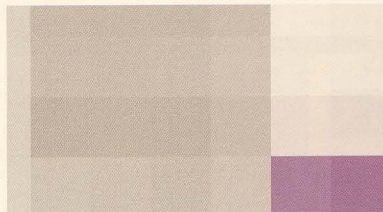


VIRTUAL DJ

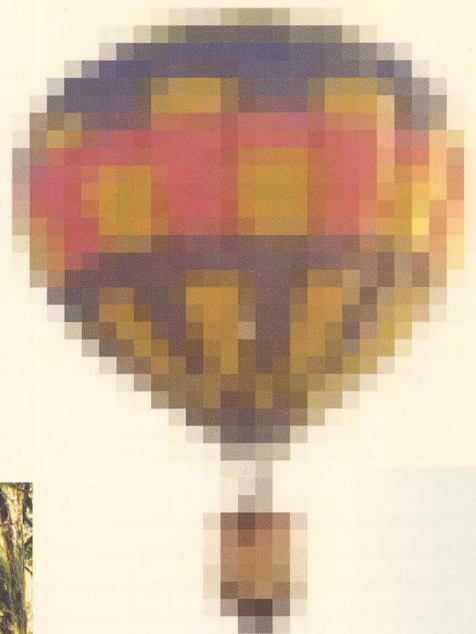
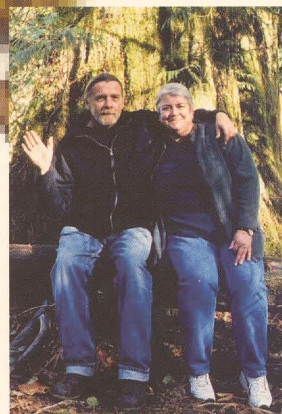
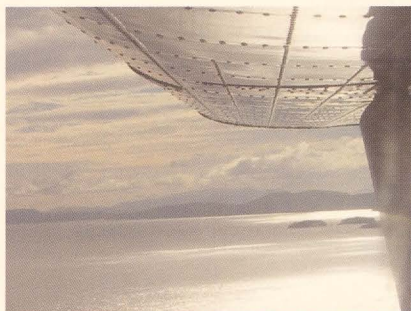
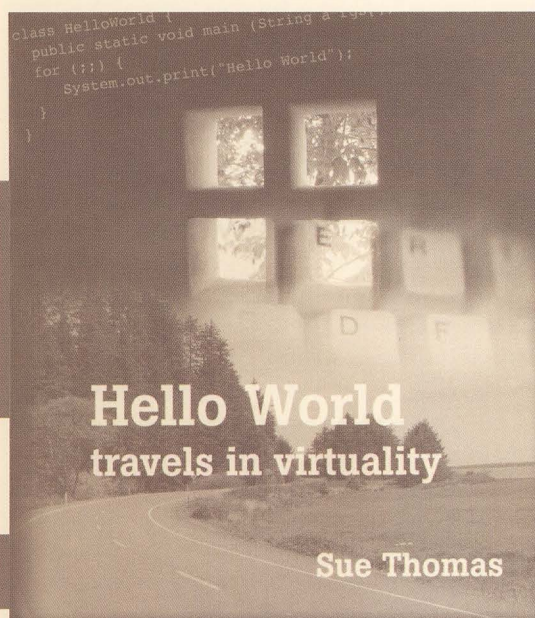
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Montreal images - Sébastien
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Vancouver images - Carmen Bennett
Net images - Alvin Berg, John Barber, Marta Gabriel Cruz



<http://www.telebody.ws/VirtualDJ/Image%20gallery.html>



http://tracearchive.ntu.ac.uk/article_piccies/helloworld1.jpg



the journey is everything

Montaigne, 1533-1592

This booklet was produced by the trAce Online Writing Centre at Nottingham Trent University with funding from Arts Council England.

The trAces Team

Writer, Editor and Visual Consultant: Randy Adams; <http://www.runran.net>

Art Direction and Design: Paul Gataaura; <http://www.sixsixtwo.co.uk>

Project Manager: Gavin Stewart; <http://www.gavinstewart.net>



LOTTERY FUNDED

If you require any further copies of trAces please email Frances Banks, English Administrator.
Nottingham Trent University at - frances.banks@ntu.ac.uk

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"I often wonder what it will be like when all of these clouds join up - if they ever do." *Sue Thomas*