writing

What You See Is Where You Go
Xuan Ye 2018

Wonder Young Self Inside Without Yearlong Glow
Benjamin de Boer 2019

image

What You See Is Where You Go
light, timer, (wallpaper)

Fig.1 photo by Yuula Benivolski, at AGYU 2017
Fig.2 *Et Cetera*, at Trinity Square Video 2018

Wear Your Soul In Wordy Yesterday Gold
neon light, timer, wallpaper

Fig.3 photo by Polina Teif, at Xpace 2019

ISBN 9781777473006

Printed By Vide Press
Independent Risograph Press

tank face twisted eye cave relic Mirror swim tunnels net bloodlet cask illusion poison blood Lillies kill snout flick con Scroll razor sun crave milky sill Mire unchain box Blind end cast talus excessive Oilskin lilt forms ilium sterile sense event saddle unravels wattle Friz barnyard cork variety accede rump spur

force want Soul mist froth smear saw where went gooey whey auteur hiss woe shriek dance in out within where Organize technique Tic angry incentive actions Four paints Glee relation Pump horse hope Sucked long channels matter Sugar

trapped circle shiver shook still Bare bed snug beyond word Rest holy acrostic hunt shuffle break tau voicebox transit lap skivvies worn stain demands sky

lamprey Child openness could melt Skull laid mosaic tile fracture Flattened Leg rubber nape hail crash organ eggshell interior kept pumping Finger tremble

blankets snow sense edge close wail familiar shed assume another pose agenda ring rosy sty Now sit silent cursor flicker Fidget without move shove pull forward least loss Make future time city snarls Flee head virus escape itself Chew grayed

Hand smoke writing backseat stretch nullity circle test leap earth minutes long Ulna slash follicle tuck stirrup manner passage sweetbread known medulla Felt tongue flick though common Temperature revealed warm patch stir chart

word trace yearning
Bolus choke on klein curd
otherwise within some
infinity

inflates shape shadow object speak Beam throb knucklebone rotor buzz seat

Nosy mesh language stroph Hut stump thrust peering soot fantasy always grab

Ghost call gentle order impose only ever one know accept rheums upshot yesterday language capture mouth speech chatter talk snatch world skin Total broke turn inside skin organize map crumb technique yardage string

Glow
Groans”

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Without Worried

Inside I'm

Self
Sings

Young Yeast

Wonder

“While


Wear Your Soul in Wordy Yesterday Gold
Xuan Ye

Gold

Yesterday

Wordy

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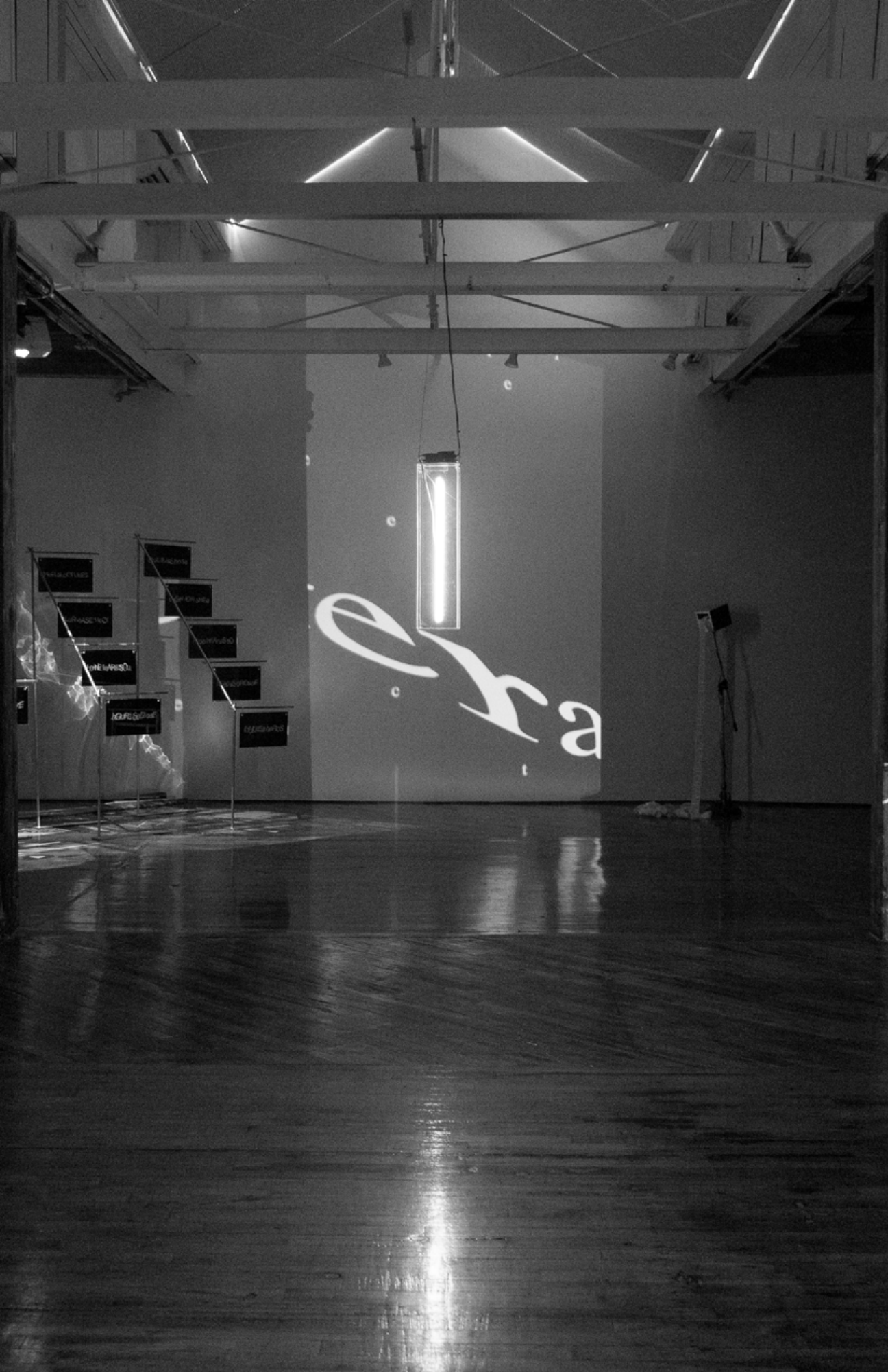
WYSIWYG is the ultimate asemia, a vacuum of meaning ad infinitum.

It hits “*a perfect note between sound and sense, signal and noise, poetry and narrative*”.

The flickering text cursor represents a metaphysical condition and universal expression that is in every work, every process, every thread in *Et Cetera* as both means and metaphor.

Through the window of virtualized space, the context of the exhibition is turned into an ocean of texts disowned by a froth of meaning.

Enlarging the icon to bodily size and placing it in the center of the exhibition hints that the space is a textual vessel. Like an immaterial ghost, it lures the eyes into a receiver, reconfiguring the awareness of the receiver.





Instead of *what you see is what you get*, *WYSIWYG* makes an inquiry as to *where you go*.

Because of the massive availability of texts, the task of writers has shifted from generating new texts to navigating. The text cursor was born for textual navigation.

In 2011, *Kenneth Goldsmith* coined the term "*uncreative writing*", a concept that responds to new conditions in writing brought on by digital technologies and the internet.

On the blinking brink of *I*, we stand at the foot of the "*metalinguistic*" (Groys) door, sucked in by the undertows of cyber sea, taking refuge in the noise.

Inheriting a “*twenty-five hundred year textual domination of western culture*” (Rotman xxxiv), singularizing and linear alphabetical writing is coming to an end. The original regime of signs no longer exists.

One stone is one inquiry. In the search for true meaning in the transcendence of thoughts, in the signifying duration of the cursor's emergence, we are "*linguistically homeless*" (Groys 11).

, thus dissolving all discourses by turning them into the word clouds that function as collection of words beyond grammar.

Groys argues that Google as the contemporary philosophical machine, as it presupposes and codifies the radical dissolution of language into sets of individual words that are "*liberated from their subjection to the usual rules of language to its grammar*" (6)

Up in the air, a trajectory draws a latent arc. The stone drops into the water. Waves emerge on the surface, rippling off an extra-grammatical set of words.

What you see is a stone thrown into a quiet pond.

The boundaries between
self and other collapse
as the networked self
is becoming multiple
and distributed
at algorithmically
accelerating speeds.

All four acts of self engender their own forms of subjectivity and co-evolve into a plural self that bleeds outwards into the collective.

“*a gestural self-pointing ‘I’, an ‘I’ spoken in language, an inscribed ‘I’ within alphabetic writing, a digital ‘I’ as self-enunciation within contemporary network media*” (xxxiii).

In the context of alphabetical writing in digital spaces, *I*, as *Brian Rotman* suggests, involves four reflexive acts of self:

, but by turning the text into an object operating within computational protocols, alien to the alphabetic / that cannot escape its one-dimensional seriality (Rotman).

In other words, digital binary code extends the alphabetic principle to its abstract limit, not simply in terms of the forms resembling the letters *O* and *I*

that are aural, pictorial, haptic and tactile, and creating new imagining agencies that reconfigure human subjectivity "*within its sensibility, affects and unconscious fantasms*"
(Guattari qtd. in Rotman 82).

Communicational technologies and their machinic processes facilitate the emergence of this “*para-self*” by engaging users in new body-machine interfaces (including graphical user interfaces)

The written forms at the same time witness a “*para-self*” who experiences itself as an *I* becoming parallel to itself (Rotman).

This disconnection between the speaking body and alphabetic writing separates an alphabetic self who writes and reads “/” and a spoken self who speaks and hears “/”.

However, this modality omits the corporeal dimension of utterance: these visual forms are disassociated with how the sounds are produced by the body.

Alphabets made up of a concept and a visual sign are common means to translate nebulous and open-ended shapes into fixed lettered lines.

The flickering I connotes the idea of a flickering *self*, oscillating in the spectrum of the technologized outputs of alphabets and mathematics.

The text has become the "*postmodern equivalent of the soul*" as *Steven Shaviro* observes (qtd. in Roman 2).

Since the Middle Ages, “*one can always avoid picking up a pen, but one cannot avoid being described, identified, certified and handled like a text*” (Illich and Sanders qtd. in Rotman 2).

Alphabetical writing in *Boris Groys*'s words reflects the Anglo-American tradition of language "*based on an ideology of presence*" (8).

In electronic writing, the text cursor is the first signal that human users recognize to write to - interact with - machinic bodies. This leads the way to the digital poetics of truth-establishing and world-building.

What you see is the shortest distance between */* and *1*.

I/1 desires to be separated from its world, calling for the first gesture of art.

Combining these two living elements --

“*the coming together of two orders, one chaotic, the other ordered, one folding and the other unfolding, one contraction and the other dilation*” (Grosz 9) --

Writing inscribes order from the chaos of the mind. The blinking text cursor signifies a strange coupling of chaos and its "*wanting to be ordered*".

The blinking text cursor thus contains "*what precedes those lettered lines*" and "*what is called by other, less prestigious names: rumination, free association, musing, reverie...*" (Schwenger 188).

It is always in the process of ever-wanting to be recognized as thought, before sentences are even formed in the mind, before writing violates the thoughts.

What was originally formed as an animated sign becomes durational, holding out a promise that is never wholly withdrawn yet is never fulfilled.

When placing along a timeline, the text cursor accumulates a continuum of oscillations.

Instead, it is
a para-linguistic ideal,
an impossibility, literal
growl and hiss. It
pronounces the genesis
that is chaos, “the
whirling, unpredictable
movement of forces,
vibratory oscillations that
constitute the universe”
(Grosz 5).

But it does not lack sound.

It is not yet ready to make sense; it is unknown and asemic: it lacks the smallest unit of meaning -- “*seme*” (Schwenger 185).

Even prior to information, the blinking text cursor is “*the milky noise of the whole of our messages gathered together*” (Hainge 19).

It’s the primordial oscillation that co-presents both zero and one at the same time, reproducing binary variables that constitute the basic unit of information.

What you see is a second of heartbeat, a yearning to confirm existential liveness.

Its presence requires two frames looping through the writer’s prolonged hesitation, *before* languages transcribe thoughts into visible concrete.

On the contrary, the text cursor - the modern icon that denotes typing - is animated.

The unwritten was simply the sheer lack of anything, a still flat void.

It amounted to unfilled parchment, papers clean and empty.

In a time before GUIs -
when ink and feather,
pen, brush, paper
or typewriters were
the prevailing writing
technologies - the
unwritten was not
denoted.

The cursor signifies where to type, at the beginning of a line, or the point of insertion.

Within graphical user interfaces (GUI), caret navigation is a form of keyboard navigation where a caret (*also known as a “text cursor”*) is used to navigate the space within a text document.

Almost hypnotic, the void is made to flicker.

On and off, *I* or *1* appears and disappears in a monotonous rhythm.

A vertical bar occupies the void. It’s in the shape of the letter *I*, capitalized; or the numerical symbol, digit *1*.

Go

You

Where

ls

See

You

What