

The Making of "The Famous Sound of Absolute Wreaders"

By Beat Suter and The Absolute Wreaders

No. 31 – 2004

Abstract

The project "The Famous Sound of Absolute Wreaders" is a cooperative work by six authors/readers for the radio-show "Kunstradio" of the Austrian broadcasting company ORF. Initiated by netart activist Johannes Auer it takes up a strategy which is participatory and intermedial on several levels.

The base of the project consists of six existing works of digital literature which served as a knowledge base for the six authors to create new texts. These texts were then edited by a human editor and a machine. And finally these edited texts have been sampled to a radio-show by two actors/wreaders. But the chain of events does not stop here: the six texts of the authors/readers are the material for six new works of digital literature of which at least three deal with visualization of text and metatext in the net-environment.

"Language is corrupt! Subject rules alienated object! Language ist the code to power!" Johannes Auer doesn't hide his thoughts when he introduces his new work, the concrete machine, which is a vital part of the cooperative project with the title "The Famous Sound of Absolute Wreaders". Ideas always seem far more brilliant when they are fresh thoughts flickerinhg through the brain than when they are written down and narrowed mediated into a frame of common media and understanding.

If ideas can be brought to light on paper through language why can this language not be conversed into real images of similar understanding? "The 'concrete_maschine' frees the language of the ruling code into a pictorial concrete." Thus Johannes Auer's work is a practical exercise in advanced intermediality. An algorithm translates texts in Mondrian-like pictures. The "concrete_maschine" is available for free use and will translate anyone's texts into images.

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But this is grabbing the horse by its tail: the well known (net)artist Johannes Auer alias Frieder Rusman initiated the collaborative project "The Famous Sound of Absolute Wreaders" for the Austrian radio program "Kunstradio" in 2002 and leaves a firm imprint with his new project the "concrete machine". The program was curated by the Viennese journalist Christine Böhler (editor of the literary magazine "Lichtzeile") and finally emitted on September 7th 2003 on the Austrian radio channel ORF1.



Two weeks before – from August 26 – 30, 2003 – the whole project was exhibited at the Hypertext 03 conference in Nottingham among six works. Auers "concrete machine" is by no means the only mentionable part of this collaborative work by six writers. As a final result there are six new works of digital literature to be found at <http://kunstradio.cyberfiction.ch>. But the project as a whole with its collaborative, autopoietical and intermedial aspects is at least as interesting as each new net-project. But now we better start where we are supposed to:

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Große Sentenz No. 1:

„spannen Sie eine text_brücke über den gesamten text und entziehen Sie damit einer fangfrage den boden“.

*Die ersten 3 Dateien aus dem upload-Bereich werden gelöscht.
(Blatt zerknüllen)*

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In the beginning there were six known works of digital literature – known that is in the German speaking part of europe. some go as far back as 1996 (and may build up on older texts), others were established just a few months before the collaboration started:

- Martina Kieninger's "der schrank die schranke" (<http://www.textgalerie.de/mk/schrank/s1.htm>) is an early work of digital literature and won the price of the German weekly "Die Zeit" in 1996.
- Reinhard Doehl's "das buch gertrud" (<http://auer.netzliteratur.net/gertrud/gertrud.htm>) is the authors 1996 translation into a new media of a book on Gertrude Stein he had written in 1965/66.
- Oliver Gassner's digital poem "tangor rgb" (<http://www.oliver-gassner.de/textratouren/tango/>) originates in 1998 and visualizes a tango by color- and rhythm-patterns without any links.
- Sylvia Egger's "piep-show" (<http://www.serner.de/piep/start.html>) is a double-bottomed neo-dada-work from 2001.

- Johannes Auer's "Log-Buch einer gemeinsamen Reise" (<http://auer.netzliteratur.net/logbuch/logbuch.php>) is a literary twist on transparency on the net from 2002.
- And Beat Suter's "cyberfiction.ch" (<http://www.cyberfiction.ch>) is a website with a database on digital literature

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Noch Große Sentenz No. 1:

was ist ein "absoluter wreader"?

bei idensen stosse ich über niels werber auf norbert bolz, der wiederum auf idensen stösst ... verweise im kreise ... so geht das im netz. zitate zitieren sich selbst am besten. es wird ständig weitergeschrieben. dabei schreibt manchmal der text selbst mit am text. der autor wird zum staunenden leser, während der leser zum autor, mitautor oder wenigstens mitarbeiter am text wird.

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The six writers and net-activists had the task to read the five works of the other participating writers and eventually assemble or write a new text on those works. The only condition for this text: it should be printable and performable. Thus the six writers took very different approaches in expressing their experience with the works of the others:

Johannes Auer has a few things to say about Lev Manovich's theory of multitasking as a collage. He tried to read all the projects at the same time on his computer screen and in consequence did ask himself if multitasking can be established as an avantgarde and who might be the processor? He doesn't find much of a collage or avantgarde however but sees that computer and human being use the same way of processing information "one after the other".

Reinhard Döhl's focus is on the conspicuously inconspicuous of the five other projects. He manages to condense the mains by means of his poetical language. Döhl reads thoroughly, collects the morsels of importance and takes them further down the road.

Sylvia Egger is motivating her texteditor to let the readers in on the secrets of constructing textscapes (text_landschaften). Consecutively the texteditor puts together a comprehensive tutorial on constructing a "text_landschaft" in consideration of text_islands (text_inseln) and concrete examples of using them by means of the projects of the Absolute Wreaders.

Oliver Gassner does short diarylike journeys into the textscapes and scans forms and shapes with his senses. As he goes along with his reading there are more and more multitasking intrusions. "When I get around to respond to Anaximander", he says, "she is offline again."

Martina Kieninger sees something we don't see and asks herself: Who is really the one who is reading and who is the one who is writing; and who reads what who is writing: Human being or machine, bechine or humachine? "Nothing is new. File not found."

Beat Suter wonders what a wreader might be and meets the quotes which manage to quote themselves the best; and meets the texts which manage to write themselves. Hereby he becomes a reader who marvels at his reading writing itself along at a fast pace into an intertextual textscape.

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Noch immer Große Sentenz No. 1:

herkömmliche texteditoren wie „word_gedöns“ oder „open-source-office_teilhaber“ haben den nachteil, dass sie texte als einweckgläser verstehen: wo noch kein text ist, kommt text rein, dann deckel zu (salopp_vulgarisierung). diese instant_folisierung des herstellen von texten führt daher im weiteren lese_vorgang (karma_spannung +/- abpausen von buchstabenreihen = zur augen_spannerei!).

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"The Famous Sound of Absolute Wreaders" is about writing in the internet. Who is writing? Who is not writing? Have we lost the author? Do we miss him? Is every reader becoming an author? Is a reader becoming a wreader? Or a feeder? Or a bleeder? You might respond: this is a rhetorical question since it is only reputable writers who were chosen to take part in the project. And right you are. The writer is still on top and doesn't share his might. The reader can take part in the project, but whatever he uploads in the designated area, it will eventually be deleted while the program is aired.

But there are a few more twists here. For example: the deletion of an upload is a performance of which the reader is the very important originator and contributor. the texts of the six "absolute wreaders" on the other hand don't get performed as integral unities. They get sliced, cut and pasted by a human editor, a machine, a combination of man and machine and they further get as collaged phrases digested, distorted, spit out and commented on by actors/speakers in a reading/dialogue setting and finally in a mind-affected setting. – And they serve as sort of a source code for six new net-projects.

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Große Sentenz No. 2:

„Verweise überall hin, Verweise in die weite wilde Welt hinaus, Verweise im Kreise ... so geht das.“

*Die nächsten 3 Dateien aus dem upload-Bereich werden gelöscht.
(Blatt zerknüllen)*

Noch Große Sentenz No. 2:

Bolz hat angedeutet, die Differenz von Autor und Leser spiele im Internet keine Rolle mehr und das abgeschlossene Kunstwerk werde seiner Grenzen entledigt. Für die Literatur bedeutet das: "Die Poesie soll von allen gemacht werden".

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What is left of the author? Do we know? How do we find out? Who is in control of the text? Or is the text in control of author and reader? Or does the machine control it all? The radio program has a length of 40 minutes. It is performed by two professional actors/speakers: Christiane Maschajechi and Peter Gorges from Stuttgart.

- Part 1 is a collage by Johannes Auer made from all of the texts by the authors/writers (4 pages out of 55 DinA4 pages). This audio-text is human controlled.
- Part 2 is a random generation of text-modules by the computer. The human control has been abandoned.
- In Part 3 the two speakers comment on the randomly generated text by the computer. This way we gain back some human control (but the author gets further undermined).

In Part 4 the speakers/actors/writers get to feel a further loss of control through consumption of alcohol while doing their act.

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Noch immer Große Sentenz No. 2:

„Mein Texteditor“ macht schluss mit den langen wartezeiten auf handlungsabläufe oder spannungs_bögen (architektur_vulgarisierung). Lassen Sie endlich auf wortnägeln köpfe rollen, solange und soviel sie wollen! platzieren Sie ihren cursor_boten. wo immer Sie einen text vermuten. fügen Sie text_marken ein, wo Sie sich unsicher fühlen. spannen Sie eine text_brücke über den gesamten text und entziehen Sie damit einer fangfrage den boden.

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A text of an author/writer was then randomly allocated to another author/writer. A text therefore becomes a source text or source code for a new project. Auer gets Gassner, Gassner gets Kieninger, Kieninger gets Auer, Döhl gets Egger, Egger gets Suter, Suter gets Döhl.

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Große Sentenz No. 3:

„Maschine (beleidigt): Ich kann kein Spanisch“.

Die nächsten 3 Dateien aus dem upload-Bereich werden gelöscht.

(Blatt zerknüllen):

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And thus are the six new works:

Johannes Auer (on Oliver Gassner's text): concrete_maschine
http://kunstradio.cyberfiction.ch/concrete/text_original.php

"Language is corrupt! Subject rules alienated object! Language ist the code to power!" Therefore "smash the surface" and cement it with the new concrete_maschine". The "concrete_maschine" frees the language of the ruling code into a pictorial concrete. Auer's work is a practical exercise in advanced intermediality. An algorithm translates texts in Mondrian-like pictures. The "concrete_maschine" is available for free use and will translate anyone's texts into images.



"There were several art-movements in the last century which were suspicious about language. Cubists and dadaists turned fragments of texts into pictures by means of collage. Dada dissolved words into sounds. The lettrists reduced language which they thought was aesthetically exhausted to letters. concrete poets were

assembling pictures by letters. and utopists in the 70ies tried to exchange the poles of the ruling code."

The "concrete_maschine" follows this path radically to its end. She challenges anyone to compute the text. "hand it over to the "concrete_maschine" and transform it into a free picture."

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Noch Große Sentenz No. 3:

Ich frage: wieviel Fenster können auf dem Screen gleichzeitig geöffnet und

betrachtet werden bevor die Komposition zu bloßem visuellem Rauschen wird?

Lev Manovitch sagt: 6 erscheint mir eine gute Zahl.

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Sylvia Egger (on Beat Suter's text): voyage automatique – webcam's revenge
<http://kunstradio.cyberfiction.ch/serner/index.html>

It may be difficult to take part in the "voyage automatique", but then each dialogue

between the system and the user is a voyage of its own. And part of the game: the right answer gets you to the main area, anything else throws you in a loop. the "voyage" itself works with webcam-pictures and an exchange of mail-clips and creates meaningful to ironic and nonsensical dialogues between the wreaders, a voyeur and the user: "Could it be that you too are searching for the absolute text, you slack pilgrim you, ... why don't you comb yourself first."

the content of the project "voyage automatique – webcam's revenge" may TIFFER according whether you are approaching from an institution, company or TAZ zone. but the basic information headache should remain the same. the voyage creates a HEREarchy among too many tasks: who, what, where etc.. the goal is to keep the number of pages as fast as possible. (discuss this message or consider inviting your colleague to our presentation!) we paid enough attention to the layout (basis). abused our companies letterhead and worked with artists in toasters (toaster == webcam – no abuse is recommended!). instead of putting all information in a long story elevator. we grouped each story floor into subtopics. it's just. that we talk about. how to round a dollar or tense! the revenge is totally in progress (each reader is a neat blowfly in chandlers bureau!). but we try to keep the deadline and stay within the pager limit. we encourage you to take part in our live TALKIN CURE. please take a few seconds and repeat the phrases: gagarin, titov, nikolayev, popovic, tereshkova, komarov, yegorov, leonov, shatalov, kubasow. we blow at your attention: MEET US IN ELIZA HEAVEN!"



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Große Sentenz No. 4:

„Stein kommt selten allein“.

Die nächsten 3 Dateien aus dem upload-Bereich werden gelöscht.

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Reinhard Döhl (on Sylvia Egger's text): Aus dem Logbuch eines Traumkapitän
<http://kunstradio.netzliteratur.net/doehl/start.php>

Welcome aboard. All messages are sent to the user. With Döhl we choose a slower method of transport: a hot air balloon. And we realize that text has always been a transport medium: literary and postal. Assume a text and store some traces. The

middle part gets lost at the edges. The text is perceived as a disk. the balloon logbook antagonizes this perception. By request each entry gets sent out and lands in a "worldly" inbox.

"today we think that a text is arising from texts and while reading it the text is formed in the mind of the reader. this applies above all to texts in the internet and to reading them.

In what ways and with which broad variety this is possible, is being demonstrated in this project by interchanging readings of predetermined texts by johannes auer, reinhard doehl, sylvia egger, oliver gassner, martina kieninger and beat suter.

In a second step my reading of the reading by sylvia egger's "my texteditor" and particularly the reference: "balloon_vulgarisation; used first by jean_paul in his 'airship_prose': he who sees europe from a balloon, only realizes how puffed up the clouds are" required an additional reading of jean paul's "aeronaut gianozzo's book of the seas" (des luftschiffers gianozzo seebuch).

Vollversion von Beat Suter
Suter Appretieren geben an: suter.beat@uni-stuttgart.de



this text which was given to me as an additional link by sylvia egger was the determining factor of my reading since i have been experimenting with a version of the "book of the seas" for the internet for years. as a result the "book of the seas" occupied more and more space in my selective reading of sylvia egger's texteditor. step by step the "logbook of the captain of dreams" started

developping of which the logs can be sent to the reader in the internet by ways of "balloon-mail". and a balloon-message can only be read after being retrieved from the mailbox.

I would also like to refer to a further linear reading outside of the project of the "famous sound of absolute wreaders" in which the "aeronaut gianozzo's book of the seas" eats up sylvia egger's "texteditor" like a worm until it has completely disappeared – only to be nibbled at again by sylvia egger's text and further on da capo al fine. (http://www.uni-stuttgart.de/ndl1/jpaul_logbuch.htm)"

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Noch Große Sentenz No. 4:

rosengarten, bunte steine, grabstein. deutsch und englisch. a rose is a rose is a rose is a rose ... auch wenn die abstände zwischen den buchstaben sich verändern is a rose a rose. und die rose ist rot und sie wird zu einem k, sie erhält einen is-stil, sie schliesst sich und öffnet sich, sie verdoppelt sich, spiegelt sich, schliesst sich. und der rosengarten wird grösser form und die rosen verbinden sich zu rosensträussen und verändern ihre form, rund und wieder.

*Noch immer Große Sentenz No. 4:
erstellen Sie eine neue text_landschaft
legen Sie die gröÙe ihrer text_landschaft fest
fügen Sie text_inseln ein
editieren Sie ihre text_landschaft
speichern Sie ihre text_landschaft*

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Oliver Gassner (on Martina Kieninger's text): as time goes on: absolute readers
<http://kunstradio.cyberfiction.ch/gassner/>

How fast does time go by while reading online texts? As fast as the texts pass by? Is it possible to read the moving texts parallel and what happens to transient texts if they get presented in a different design? Gassner shows a simple undesigned "WebTV-Version" of Kieninger's text and adds instructions: "Try not to let the texts come to a halt, but read all texts." [...] "Watch it for a while, close your eyes and think of texts which could be scrolling down in front of you. Mail those texts to wreader@carpe.com."



Gassner says he likes the concepts of Johannes Auer, since he always achieves opening new perspectives on 'net things' you thought you knew: games, logfiles, web-shops and more. and he asked himself: "what is the language a net-writer uses to write about net-writing in a literary tone?"

"I answered the question by creating a style and 'environment' which seemed to me to be most appropriate to both the work at hand (without copying it but still taking an aspect of it as a motivation for the style) and to the situation of sitting on a computer, writing about something happening on the same screen. so i experimented with taking on the role of a philologist when writing about Reinhard Doehl or with the role of a chatter/blogger/note-taker when surfing through Martina Kieninger's 'wardrobe'. as i think that the brain of the reader should be the place, where a text finds its final form i tried to make the materials given to me to 'redesign' into a net-installation that encouraged (a nice word for: forced) the reader to do so. instead of 'ordering' a browser to 'reformat' ASCII-text into something colorful i gave this instruction to the human reader."

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*GroÙe Sentenz No. 5:
„Multitasking ist für das menschliche Gehirn nicht ohne weiteres möglich.“
Die nächsten 3 Dateien aus dem upload-Bereich werden gelöscht.
(Blatt zerknüllen)*

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Martina Kieninger (on Johannes Auer's text): Fenster 1 2 3 4 5 6

<http://kunstradio.cyberfiction.ch/kieninger/martinaauer.html>



Multitasking as avantgarde or who is the processor? Martina Kieninger gets to the bottom of the discourse on multitasking. She recreates Lev Manovich's six windows and tells us: "Lev is not right. If the sum of all avantgarde is montage, the figure of all montage surely is blue. Therefore the solution to all avantgarde is blue. But 6 might not be blue. If it was, it would have a shade

of the flash-blue piano."

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Noch Große Sentenz No. 5:

Manovitch sagt: Sich überlappende Fenster bilden das Schlüsselement aller Schnittstellen zwischen Mensch und Computer. Die avantgardistische Strategie der Collage und Montage gehört heute zu den grundlegendsten Operationen im Umgang mit Computerdaten.

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Beat Suter and René Bauer (on Reinhard Döhl's text): *kunstrad1o : 1o : 1o : v1uelles rad1o: scrabble mit döhl*

<http://kunstradio.cyberfiction.ch/suter/>

Visual radio as multi-layer-scrabble with the author of the source text? The two wreaders use internet, search and code for visualizing Reinhard Döhl's texts. Words and sentences become the plaything of interpretation while as the original source-projects still shine through. How would you visualize the tango of colours which were translated into rhythmical words by a concrete poet? How would you visualize a log which secretly reads all visitors identifications?



Five scripts scrabble with Döhl's texts taking on the uniqueness of the intertext of Döhl's text and each work that served as a source code. text and metatext get translated, transformed, visualized. A stage is a wardrobe, is a bed and breakfast on a farm in an undefined countryside with a slow exchange of text and image which leaves cracks everywhere. the chequered colour-tango gets transferred back into text which in itself turns into concrete pictorial text-units taking up the rhythm of the tango in, over and out of the screen. the piep-show has to be discovered click by click. an anarchic layout gets assembled and reveals its finer points. where is the show, what is shown? read text doesn't disappear out of our mind but gets blurred, picks up pace and distance in its up and down movement the further back it has

been read. the log which is a record of a travel as a text goes on an other travel through the net and comes back as a refined sequence of pictures. and the hovering textual cyberclouds of Döhl's linguistic evaluation and compilation can be dragged into the visualization machine which kindly looks for appropriate pictorial translations in the net and transforms them into pictorial cyberclouds.

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Große Sentenz No. 6:

„Anonymität im Netz ist eine Illusion“.

Die nächsten 3 Dateien aus dem upload-Bereich werden gelöscht.

(Blatt zerknüllen)

Noch Große Sentenz No. 6:

Maschine: Kannst Du lesen?

Mensch: Willst Du was in die Fresse? Freilich hab ichs gelesen gehabt.

Maschine: Das erschwert die Sachlage

Mensch: Ich bin unschuldig

Maschine: Gar nix bist.

Mensch: Wenn Sie mich bei auch nur einer Lyge erwischen, dann tun Sie mich halt verurteilen.

Maschine: Aber das Kleingedruckte.

Mensch: Einspruch! Verfahrensfehler!

Maschine: Abgelehnt. Lesen Sie weiter.

Mensch: Ich ersuche höflichst darum, aus dem Logbuch zitieren zu dürfen.

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Texts by absolute wreaders on works of the other absolute wreaders:

- Johanes Auer: Multitasking als Avantgarde
http://kunstradio.cyberfiction.ch/auer_print.html
- Reinhard Döhl
http://kunstradio.cyberfiction.ch/doehl_print.html
- Sylvia Egger
http://kunstradio.cyberfiction.ch/egger_print.html
- Oliver Gassner
http://kunstradio.cyberfiction.ch/gassner_print.html
- Martina Kieninger
http://kunstradio.cyberfiction.ch/kieninger_print.html
- Beat Suter
http://kunstradio.cyberfiction.ch/suter_print.html

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Noch immer Große Sentenz No. 6:

beispiel logbuch von johannes auer.

falls sie das „log.buch“ gewählt haben. ist mit einem text_insel_inhalt von 10 kb zu rechnen (+/- verbindungs_mann, lauf_maschen, reise_fieber und piraten_ips) und eine spann_weite von 50 x 50 cm ist realisier- und lesbar. bedenken Sie jedoch. dass das „log.buch“ einer reise_karte gleicht. und somit die grösse dieser text_landschaft entsprechend aufbläst (ballon_vulgarisierung; erstmals von jean_paul verwendet in seiner luftschiff_prosa: „wer europa von einem ballon aus sieht, merkt erst. wie aufgeblasen die wolken sind.“).

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Basic text for the kunstradio-show consisting of 9 great (who said "great"?) phrases (collage):

- absolute wreaders (human edition):
http://kunstradio.cyberfiction.ch/teil1_print.html

Performed texts as heard in the kunstradio program (4 mp3-files):

- Website at the ORF for the kunstradio program from 07.09.2003:
http://www.kunstradio.at/2003B/07_09_03.html
- Part 1: http://www.kunstradio.at/2003B/MP3/07_09_03_a.mp3
- Part 2: http://www.kunstradio.at/2003B/MP3/07_09_03_b.mp3
- Part 3: http://www.kunstradio.at/2003B/MP3/07_09_03_c.mp3
- Part 4: http://www.kunstradio.at/2003B/MP3/07_09_03_d.mp3

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Große Sentenz No. 8:

Der Text bildet Schleifen und wird rekursiv. Ganz ungelinkt noch. Noch hab ich nicht geklickt. Das gefällt mir. Schleifen und Rekursion erzeugt man nicht durch Links, sondern durch Text.

schränk

schränk

schränken für alle

schränkwand den beschränkten

schränk schränkt summe aller schränke

das unbeschränkte keine schranke schränkt schränke schränken schränke

schränk schränke

★

And we now leave you to the digital textscape (text_landschaft) with a final word and advice from serner, one of the absolute wreaders:

"the famous sound of absolute wreaders" seems to prosecute text or reeders or riders. and if text or reeders or riders get famous. they loose their absolute framers (a kind of cute prosperity after duchamp and warhol; experienced mostly in ready-mades 2nd order). and if text or reeders or riders do not get famous. they even can attend a local flash mob. and what is to learn at all?

first: we have to learn: numbers are different. 6 might be a good number indeed. (it's your task now. to sum up 6 avantgardistic practices. hole the line! keep chunky! – call your local bookstore for a list of possible arms – cuttlefisher are welcome!)

second: we have to learn: looking through windows (multitasking as prosecution): look – if text. reeders or riders get in front of windows. they tend to put the loosy cubes into order (rubrics magic: a corner, an edge, a centre and a disk – you know best. how to get so far!). it's your task now. to play at high volume – turn on your windows! claim the main: _blank, _top, _parent, _self.

third: we have to learn: it's YOUR working day! your search on avantgardistic practices: 72,100 window seats!.