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Visualization and interactive applications for texts and reading

"That way text is coming to your eyes like when you look to nature"

W. Bradford Paley
digital artist
(US)

Interview

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Question: As we know, your investigations are directed at new ways of displaying text. Could you tell us more about where the idea came from of reviewing the traditional ways of reading in order to give more dynamism to text?

Question: We can see here the new compositions you made out of the text of Alice in Wonderland, with key words and different structures one into the other. Is there any specific rule for the reading; is there a specific direction or structure the user should know before taking the adventure of this new revolutionary way of reading?

Question: Is the printed version a representation of your work from the computer, like an output of your text art to show out the whole composition at once or it is a different independent way of displaying text?

Question: As you said before, the text lines are moving like rubber bands, could you tell us more about the connection between the lines and words. Would it be possible for you to show us a bit of the text process of this project on the computer?

Question: Is this new way of displaying text or literature a simplified way of reducing also complexity in order to make it more clear and simple?

Question: Could you tell us more about the process you normally use for this kind of project, do you work on a database or visualisation module or something like that?

Question: If we look at the print version of your project we can see the composition and details seem different; is it the different media giving you different application ways?

Question: We were speaking about the possible applications of your projects in investigations or in many practical issues to make communication faster, clearer and more direct. Are you working in connection with any company or institution interested in the same purpose at the moment?

Tools

Full video

Abstract

With a lot of his text printings as scenario, W.Bradford Paley reveals the theories and creative ideas bringing him to the creation of these artistic compositions, where the text acquires different capabilities. Paley is investigating and working in two different but connected ways, one is interactive text, in order to give users the opportunity to get inside the composition and discover the discourse of the text by surfing throw the key words, rubber bands and so on. And the other way is a printing of the text composition, displayed in a way that makes your eyes move around looking for the sense of the paragraphs. In a way, this text is coming to your eyes, as Paley says, the same way as when you look at nature. W. Bradford Paley is founder of Digital Image Design Incorporated, creator of TextArc.org and associate professor at Columbia University.

Interviewed by Pau Alsina, Professor of Humanities Studies (UOC) and recorded by Pau Waelder (co-director of Artactiva), at Ars Electronica 2004.

text art, interaction, rubber bands, display

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