

VISUAL NARRATIVE THROUGH HYPERMEDIA:
İKİ PROJECT AS A CASE STUDY

by
NAZ AKYAR

Submitted to the Graduate School of Social Sciences
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Sabanci University
Spring 2011

© Naz Akyar 2011

All Rights Reserved

ABSTRACT

VISUAL NARRATIVE THROUGH HYPERMEDIA: İKİ PROJECT AS A CASE STUDY

Naz Akyar,
M.A, Visual Arts and Communication Design
Thesis Supervisor: Elif Ayiter
Spring 2011

Visual narrative is an essential element in communication via images, which can appear in many different media and forms. To apprehend visual narrative one must know, how image and text work coordinately. Examples of this can be observed in many paintings, comics and photography, which includes text to enhance it's artistic expression. Self-portraiture also provides a rich expression domain for visual narrative, especially personal narrative.

In today's information era, hypertext and hypermedia are used for many purposes in computer, business, intellectual, educational and leisure applications. With their convenience in easy navigation and interaction, they are also being used in interactive electronic literature. Hypertext and hypermedia are perfect tools for non-linear or multi-linear narrative on Internet based platforms and websites.

Narrator is a very important narrative element for telling a well-developed story. In order to comprehend the uses of narrator in a narrative, whatever it's medium may be, one must study narrative modes and point of view narrators.

This thesis discusses the use of hypermedia with various creative content such as image, text, audio and video in visual narrative, while approaching İki project as a case study.

Keywords: hypertext, hypermedia, non-linear narrative, visual narrative, narrator, interactive narrative, self-portrait, personal narrative.

ÖZ

HİPERMEDYA ARACILIĞIYLA GÖRSEL ANLATIM: BİR ÖRNEK ÇALIŞMA OLARAK İKİ PROJESİ

Naz Akyar,
Görsel Sanatlar ve İletişim Tasarımı Yüksek Lisans Programı
Tez Yöneticisi: Elif Ayiter
Bahar 2011

Görsel anlatım, bir sürü farklı medya ve biçimlerde karşımıza çıkabilecek, imge ile iletişim alanının temel unsurlarındandır. Görsel anlatımı kavrayabilmek için, kişinin imaj ve metin unsurlarının birarada nasıl çalıştığını bilmesi gerekir. Bu durumun örnekleri, resim, çizgiroman ve metin içeren fotoğraf alanlarında gözlemlenebilir. Otoportre de başta kişisel hikaye anlatımı olmak üzere görsel anlatıma zengin bir alan sağlar.

Günümüz bilgi çağında, hipermetin ve hipermedya bilgisayar teknolojisi, mesleki, entelektüel, eğitsel ve serbest vakit değerlendirme uygulamalarında değerlendirilmektedirler. Kolay dolaşım ve etkileşim özelliklerinden dolayı, elektronik ortamda etkileşimli edebiyat alanında da kullanılmaktadırlar. Hipermetin ve hipermedya internet tabanlı ortamlarda ve siteleride, çoklu doğrusal veya doğrusal olmayan anlatılar yapmak için yetkin araçlardır.

Anlatıcı, gelişmiş bir hikaye anlatımı için çok önemli bir anlatı unsurudur. Hangi medyada olursa olsun, anlatıda anlatıcının kullanımlarını kavramak için öncelikle anlatı biçimleri ve bakış açısı anlatıcıları incelenmelidir.

Bu tez, İki projesini bir örnek çalışma olarak değerlendirip, hipermedyanın imge, metin, ses ve video gibi yaratıcı içerik ile görsel anlatı alanındaki kullanımını tetkik eder.

Anahtar sözcükler: hipermetin, hipermedya, doğrusal olmayan anlatı, görsel anlatı, anlatıcı, etkileşimli anlatı, otoportre, kişisel anlatı.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my family and Enrico Piciarelli for supporting me infinitely all along this consuming yet fruitful journey, their support has been my strength.

I would like to express my gratitude to my exceptional thesis advisor Elif Ayiter, her guidance and her belief in me have been my greatest motivations through this thesis and project. I have been very lucky to have such a wise and creative soul as my advisor.

I would also like to thank Servet Ulaş, without his support, guidance and help, İki project would have been a dream, an idea that doesn't exist; to Nazlı Eda Noyan and Bengü Karaduman who showed me what else can be done to express unique ideas and emotions in creative practices and visual narrative; to Emre Parlak, Deniz Cem Önduygu, Belkıs Işık, Ezgi Yıldırım and Ilgı Çandar, your support and inspiration have been appreciated immensely; to Emir Arkman, Bilge Batu, Ece Nalbantoğlu and Sinan İleri, who provided me with confidence in myself and my work; to Onur Yazıcıgil and Murat Germen, I wish everybody could have teachers like you; to Sabanci University Visual Arts and Communication Design department for letting me have this wonderful opportunity to work under their roof.

Finally I would like to thank Lewis Carroll, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, Dave McKean and Neil Gaiman for inspiring me in the field of storytelling and visual narrative, my life would have been so dull, so meaningless without stories; I wake up every morning thinking about this and only this; without their inspiration, this work couldn't have been done or even imagined.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	v
INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER 1. A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO VISUAL NARRATIVES.....	3
1.1 Narrating with Images.....	3
1.1.1 Painting and Text.....	5
1.1.2 Comics.....	8
1.1.3 Photography and Text.....	14
CHAPTER 2. HYPERTEXT AND HYPERMEDIA.....	17
2.1 A General Introduction.....	17
2.2 Hypertext and Hypermedia as Tools for Narration.....	19
2.3 Interaction vs. Immersion.....	20
CHAPTER 3. THE STORY OF YOU AND ME.....	21
3.1 First Person Narrative.....	21
3.2 Second Person Narrative.....	22
3.3 The Self-Portrait as a Tool for Personal Narrative.....	23
CHAPTER 4. THE “İKİ” PROJECT.....	28
4.1 Motivation.....	28
4.2 A Mirror or a Bridge.....	29
4.2.1 Two People as One.....	30
4.3 The Random Storyline.....	32
4.4 The Visual Language.....	34
CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION.....	38
REFERENCES.....	39

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Close-up from the fresco <i>The Mass of St. Clement</i> , 1100 AD from Basilica di San Clemente, Rome, Italy, creator is unknown.....	5
2. <i>Self Portrait with Loose Hair</i> , 1947 by Frida Kahlo (1907-1954), oil on masonite, Private Collection Des Moines, Iowa, USA.....	6
3. A close up of <i>Annunciazione</i> , 1436?, by Beato Angelico (1395-1455), painting on wooden panel, Museo Diocesano, Cortona, Italy, in which we see a dialogue between angel Gabriel and Virgin Mary. Mary's words written upside down while Gabriel's words are written normally.	7
4. <i>The Treachery of Images</i> , 1928-1929, by René Magritte (1898-1967), oil on canvas, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA, USA.....	7
5. An example of the z-axis storyline of the Infinite Canvas idea, from <i>The right number Part two</i> by Scott McCloud (1960-).....	9
6. A good example of different image and text style usage in comics, Page 99, from <i>What It Is</i> , 2008, by Lynda Barry (1956-), published by Drawn and Quarterly.....	11
7. A good example of different styles of visualization in one page. A page from <i>Signal to Noise</i> , 1989, 1992 and 2007 by Neil Gaiman (1960-) and Dave McKean (1963-), published by Bloomsbury.....	12
8. Another good example of different styles of visualization and typography in one page. A page from <i>Signal to Noise</i> , 1989, 1992 and 2007 by Neil Gaiman (1960-) and Dave McKean (1963-), published by Bloomsbury.	13
9. <i>The Nature of Desire</i> , 1986, by Duane Michals (1932-).....	15
10. <i>This Photograph is My Proof</i> , 1974, by Duane Michals (1932-).....	15
11. <i>Written Photo</i> , by François-Marie Barnier (1947-).....	16
12. <i>Self-Portrait</i> , 1450, by Jean Fouquet (1425-1480)	24
13. <i>Two Fridas</i> , 1939, by Frida Kahlo (1907-1954), Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City, Mexico.....	26
14. <i>Untitled Film Stills #14</i> , 1978, by Cindy Sherman (1954-), Collection of the Museum of Modern Arts, NY, USA.....	27
15. <i>00</i> from “How to Destroy Myself”, 2009 by Naz Akyar (1987-).....	29
16. A sample main page from the negative narrator's story.....	35

17. A sample main page from the positive narrator's story.....36

INTRODUCTION

This thesis will discuss the use of multiple narrators in visual narrative handling *İki*, my thesis project as a case study. For this matter, I will first support the readers with a brief introduction to visual narrative. This will be covered with a basic knowledge of the use of visual narration and storytelling in comics, paintings and photography with the support of text, in Chapter 1.

In Chapter 2, I will be covering *hypertext* and *hypermedia* as well as their use as a tool for narration. Since I am using these technologies in my project, I think it is important to give information about their field of uses and capabilities. The concepts *interaction* and *immersion*, as well as their relation to each other will also be discussed in this chapter.

Narration and narrative modes of first person and second person narrative will be handled in Chapter 3. Their features in narrative practices will be discussed and a basic information will be given. Self-portrait as a form of personal narration will also be covered while handling the subject with examples from painting and photography.

In Chapter 4, the framework of this thesis, the project *İki* will be studied. First, the motivation for creating this project and studying this notion will be expressed. Secondly, the project's use of double narrators, and the relationship between two narrators while creating one ultimate narrative will be discussed. The non-linearity, the randomness of the flow and the storyline, the navigation system within the project and the website will be explained. The visual system and the visual language that have been designed for the project and their components are the other subjects that will be handled in this chapter.

I will conclude this thesis with Chapter 5, which will discuss the importance of visual narrative. The reasons behind artists'/designers' need to become good visual narrators in order for a healthy and successful communication, will be the main subject of this chapter.

In this thesis, because of its subject and methodology (that I will be observing myself while observing the visual and narrative systems I am setting) I will be using the

guidance of second order cybernetics. (Glanville, 2002) In doing this, I will be using the first person singular and active verbs.

CHAPTER 1:

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO VISUAL NARRATIVE

1.1 Narrating with Still Images

Legendary cartoonist Will Eisner says that: *“There are different ways of telling a story. Technology provides many vehicles of transmission, but fundamentally there are only two major ways: words (oral or written) and images. Sometimes the two are combined.”* (Eisner, 2008) Thinking about all forms of storytelling, we can easily see that this is a valid statement, if we don’t count performance arts, such as music or dance. But we can also argue that music can be used as a surrogate of oral storytelling and in the case of dance, it can be used as a surrogate for imagery. In this chapter, I will focus on “imagery”, as a tool of storytelling, with words involved.

Images are powerful tools. Other than being the target of our eyes, which are one of our most important senses, images are more powerful and definitive than words. John Berger states:

“Seeing comes before words. The child looks and recognizes before it can speak. But there is also another sense, in which seeing comes before words. It is seeing which establishes our place in the surrounding world; we explain that world with words, but words can never undo the fact that we are surrounded by it. The relationship between what we see and what we know is never settled.” (Berger,1972)

There are other thoughts about narrating with images as well. Illustrative narrativity is considered “weak” and “subordinated” even though “not entirely parasitic” and is being used as a tool to “evoke preexisting narrative images” and “create a symbiotic relation with the verbal version” (Ryan, 2004).

What is an image? What is it’s role in narration? I can quote from Eisner and Berger again to answer these questions. Will Eisner writes: *“an image is the memory or the idea of an object or experience recorded by a narrator either mechanically*

(photography) or by hand (drawing).” (Eisner, 2008) Relying to this description, I can say that images have personal connections with our memories and experiences. They appear in our heads even before we put them out on the paper or on the screen. They are tools of building bridges, between what we already know and/or believe and what we see or want to express visually.

Our relations with images are dynamic, even though it may seem for an observer of the image, as static; but in reality we are always in an interactive state. Even though John Berger doesn't agree that photographs are mechanical records, as Eisner does, Berger talks about this as:

“We never look at just one thing; we are always looking at the relation between things and ourselves. Our vision is continually active, continually moving, continually holding things in a circle around itself, constituting what is present to us as we are.”(Berger, 1972)

This is why our relations with images are active, our minds try to create meaning while seeing the image, trying to connect it to a memory, a sight or an object it already experienced or saw before. That's how we see images. Again Berger says that every image is an appearance or set of appearances that has been detached from it's place and time and has been recreated and reproduced. Every image, including photographs, embodies a way of seeing. Photographs are not mechanical records; they are, even in family snapshots, carry the choices that the photographer wants to reflect. (Berger, 1972) According to his statement of photographs, not being mechanical records, I can say that, as a photographic narrator, I agree that the narrator has the control over her/his subject and frame, yet still the tool of narration is mechanical, since the camera is mechanical, but still it doesn't change the relationship between the image and the observer. We, as observers, are still building bridges between what we see and what we already know, no matter what the creator of the image chooses in her/his creative process.

1.1.1 Painting and Text

Humans have been using drawing and painting as tools for communication and storytelling, since 40,000 BC, the Upper Paleolithic Period. It all started with cave paintings, which reached its peak of excellence in between 18,000 and 10,000 BC, by Magdalenians, in Lascaux, France. Cave paintings were usually consisted of pictorial representations of animals, and hunting scenes. Since we don't have any evidence that written language existed in those times, we can say that cave paintings were the first recorded tools of storytelling and communication. Then, as time passed by, humanity created pictograms¹, ideograms², logograms³ and hieroglyphs⁴. Then came the alphabet and the tradition of written storytelling but visual storytelling has never been abandoned.

When new languages emerge, we can see in their first written examples, that they are using the support of visual narrative. For example, in one of the earliest example of the passage from Latin to vernacular Italian, in the fresco "the Mass of St. Clement" (Fig.1) which is dated around 1100 AD, we can see the pictorial narrative, almost as in a form of sequential art, aiding the text.



¹Pictography is the expression and communication with pictures and drawings for a communicative purpose.

²Ideograms are pictograms that represents an individual idea or meaning.

³Logograms are pictograms that represent an individual word.

⁴Hieroglyphic writing is a writing system that is consisted of characters in pictorial forms.

Fig.1: Close-up from the fresco *The Mass of St. Clement*, 1100 AD from Basilica di San Clemente, Rome, Italy, creator is unknown.

As we see images next to text, it becomes easier to give meaning to the text itself; pictures enhance the meaning and the story, as well as they make the text more attractive to the reader's eye. That is why our first books when we start to read, have more pictures than text in them. On the other hand, texts can enhance the meaning and the story of a picture as well. Text is widely used as a supportive tool in painting. Sometimes it serves as a component of the desired expression such as a written narration, or a subtitle (Fig. 2) as well as it can be used as a dialogue, taking the same role of speech balloons in comics. (Fig. 3)

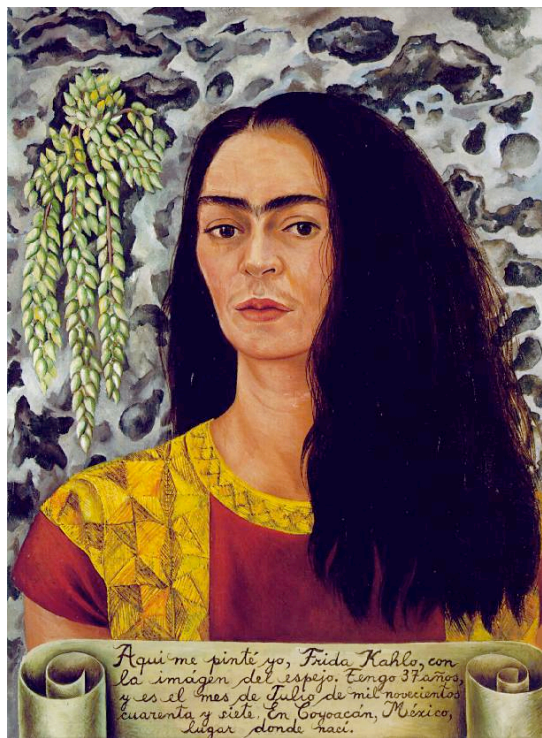


Fig. 2: *Self Portrait with Loose Hair*, 1947 by Frida Kahlo (1907-1954), oil on masonite, Private Collection Des Moines, Iowa, USA



Fig. 3: A close up of *Annunciazione*, 1436?, by Beato Angelico (1395-1455), painting on wooden panel, Museo Diocesano, Cortona, Italy, in which we see a dialogue between angel Gabriel and Virgin Mary. Mary's words written upside down while Gabriel's words are written normally.

The relationship between painting and text can also be used for other purposes such as stating an idea that the text or the painting itself can't express alone. For example, in René Magritte's famous painting, *The Treachery of Images* (*La Trahison des Images*), the image shows a pipe while under it, it is painted the text "Ceci n'est pas une pipe", French for "This is not a pipe". Magritte's point was that it was not a pipe, but a painting of a pipe. (Fig. 4)



Fig. 4: *The Treachery of Images*, 1928-1929, by René Magritte (1898-1967), oil on canvas, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, California, USA

1.1.2 Comics

Comics is a branch of sequential art⁵ in forms of strips, pages or books, consisted of images and text, in order to tell a story. They constitute great forms of narration and while being a tool for storytelling, they can also be the final product. They are often compared to motion picture in the sense of their similar use in narration but in reality they have very different voices and qualities. While in film, because the rhythm is faster and characters are life-like, the audience gets impatient of reading text and they want to consume the story faster, but in comics, because there is the static element of following the frames and reading the text, the story is made of more complex imagery and it is, in a longer term much detailed and deep. Comics stand in between print and film.

There is a certain thing we do while we read a story. We read it and it draws a picture in our heads. Comics, on the other hand speeds this process while providing the pictures as well. While we are skipping the text-to-image conversion process, text and image in comics becomes an inseparable whole.

There are many forms and mediums for comics. Whether they are in the form of printed comics, webcomics⁶ or hypercomics⁷, they work with same principles. As panels on a page, we tend to read them following a z-path, from left to right and down (in this statement I am considering cultures that have the reading orientation from left to right), this comes from the basic proximity principle of Gestalt⁸. When pieces are in proximity with each other, we tend to see them as a whole, that's the reason why we see comic panels as a whole page and read the page as if we are reading a regular book

⁵Sequential art is a form of expression in which images are arranged in a specific order in order to tell a mood or a story.

⁶Webcomics are comics that are published on the Internet, that can be either viewable as static images or dynamic with user interaction and control.

⁷Hypercomics is a variation of webcomics, coming from the merging of the terms "hypertext" and "comics". They work with "hypertexts" and "hyperlinks" in navigating through the narrative.

⁸Gestalt principles are a set of visual perception principles first introduced to psychology and philosophy by Christian von Ehrenfels which includes concepts such as: similarity, continuation, closure, proximity and figure-ground relations.

page. In hypercomics, things get a little more complicated. With their nature, hypercomics are designed to lead the reader from the path or paths the author chooses them to follow. We as readers follow a more nontraditional and non-linear path. The flow of the storyline is designed by the author, but we may have to make choices of which path to take, which lead us to follow a unique storyline.

There is an invention that I want to mention here which has been revolutionary in storytelling via hypercomics, which is “the Infinite Canvas”. It has been introduced to the world by comics theorist Scott McCloud. The Infinite Canvas, is an idea which consists of all the panels on a total *canvas* that we can navigate inside, rather than a panel next to a panel, (z-axis storyline rather than x/y-axis storylines) which gives a different possible comic narration and perception, both to the author and the reader. McCloud developed this idea while stating that: “*pages are an option—and they can work well when screen shapes are taken into account—but the advantages of putting all panels together on a single "canvas" are significant and worth exploiting.*” (McCloud, 2009)



Fig.5: An example of the z-axis storyline of the Infinite Canvas idea, from *The right number Part two* by Scott McCloud (1960-).

Other than being in many forms and media, comics tend to have many visual language and typographic choices as well. Text is as essential as the image in comics (if there are not “silent” comics). Image and text in comics may exist in many different ways. For example for images, they don’t have to be drawings as commonly assumed. They can include photography, collages, manipulated photos, paintings, scanography⁹ etc. (Fig.6, Fig.7 and Fig.8) Text works like this as well. They can be the voice of the narrator, a reminder of place and time, speech balloons etc., and as for the form they may be hand written (in comics terminology this is called: lettering, and it is a serious business by itself), digital lettering, cut-paste etc. (many different styles and ways are possible, it is basically a decision of the artist/s) (Fig.6, Fig.8).

⁹Scanography is a photography technic in which photos are acquired by flat-bed scanners.

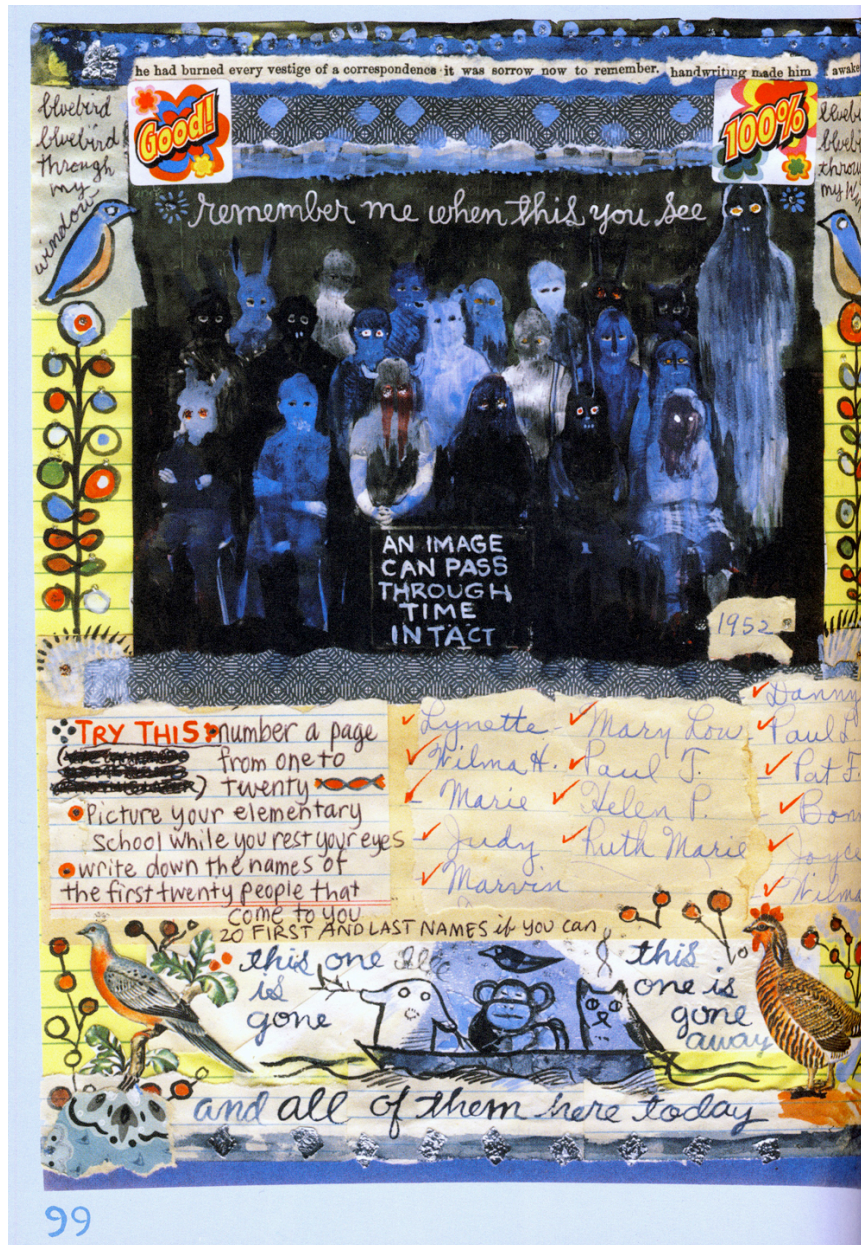


Fig.6: A good example of different image and text style usage in comics, Page 99, from *What It Is*, 2008, by Lynda Barry (1956-), published by Drawn and Quarterly.

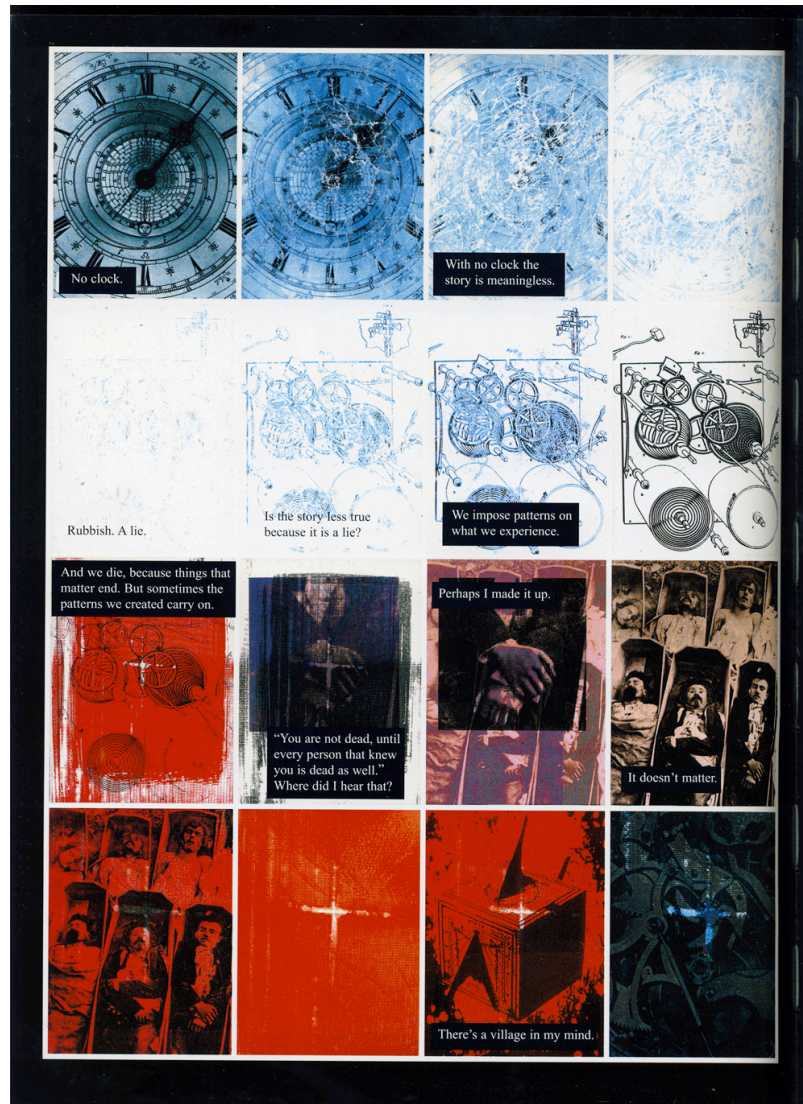


Fig.7: A good example of different styles of visualization in one page. A page from *Signal to Noise*, 1989, 1992 and 2007 by Neil Gaiman (1960-) and Dave McKean (1963-), published by Bloomsbury.

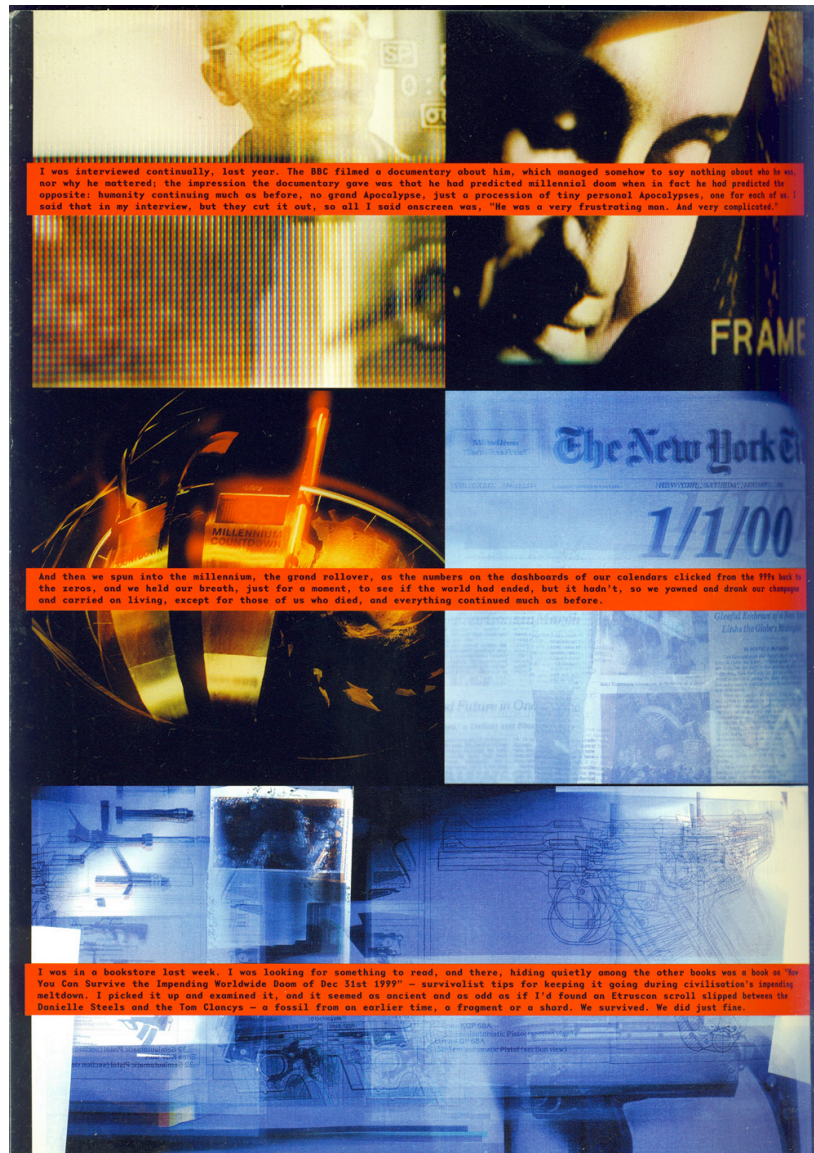


Fig.8: Another good example of different styles of visualization and typography in one page. A page from *Signal to Noise*, 1989, 1992 and 2007 by Neil Gaiman (1960-) and Dave McKean (1963-), published by Bloomsbury.

All these visual solutions for image and text are used in ways to support the narration, and the style of the story. They are done in ways to complete each other, with consistency. When telling the story they have to work together to succeed. Readers usually think that (because there are comics without text but there aren't any comics without images) images play a bigger role in narration of the story but it is not completely true. Will Eisner says that:

“a study of the graphic novel form will reveal that a major burden of narration

is assigned to the artwork. But with the proliferation of the comic book, the responsibility for the telling of the story is shared by text and image.” (Eisner, 2008)

1.1.3 Photography and Text

Photography is relatively a new element in the history of narrative compared to text. It has been a ground breaking development in factual and fictional storytelling. With photography, “image” has been democratized and open to replication. Photography supplied viewers with direct evidence to the stories and has been used to illustrate the text. As photography developed and grew stronger in the context of visual communication, the illustration process reversed itself *“the image no longer illustrates the words; it is now the words which, structurally, are parasitic on the image”* (Barthes, 1977).

Text can be used, in relation with the photo, in many different ways; as a title, caption, comment or as a graphic element within the photo. Most of the times, the text, while communicating with the image, amplifies the connotations that are already given in the photo; while other times *“the text produces (invents) an entirely new signified which is retroactively projected into the image, so much so as to appear denoted there”* (Barthes, 1977).

Many artists who use photography as their choice of expression use text as well, in order to add supplemental meaning to their artwork. As an example, Duane Michals uses text both as a title, embedded in the photograph (Fig.9) and as a comment under the photograph, stating what the photograph stands for (Fig.10).

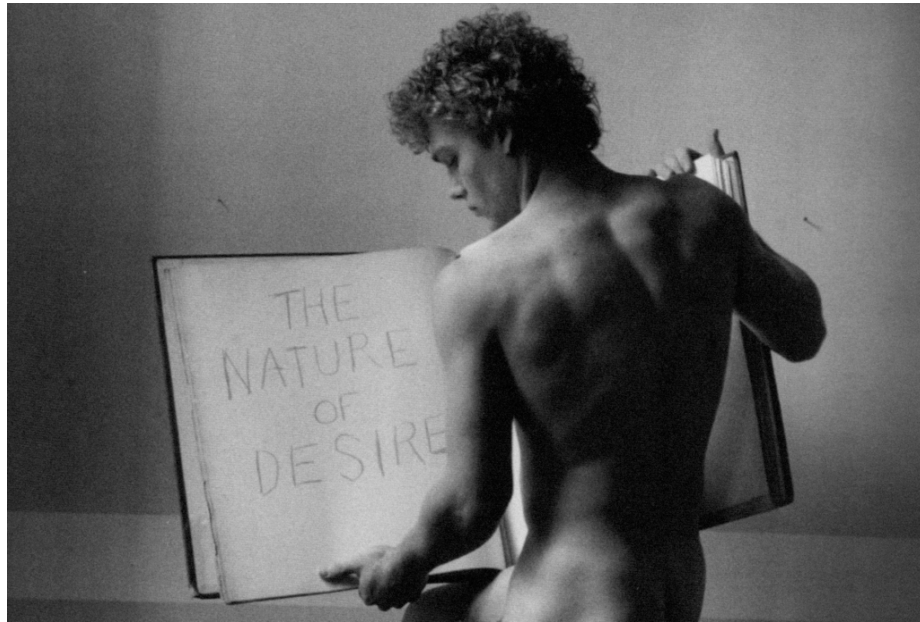


Fig.9: *The Nature of Desire*, 1986, by Duane Michals (1932-)



THIS PHOTOGRAPH IS MY PROOF
*This photograph is my proof. There was that afternoon,
when things were still good between us, and she embraced
me, and we were so happy. It did happen, she did
love me, look see for yourself!*

Fig.10: *This Photograph is My Proof*, 1974, by Duane Michals (1932-)

Text can also be used as graphic element on photographs. The text doesn't even have to be legible, it may be used as a component to support or add new meaning to the photograph's visuality. (Fig.11)

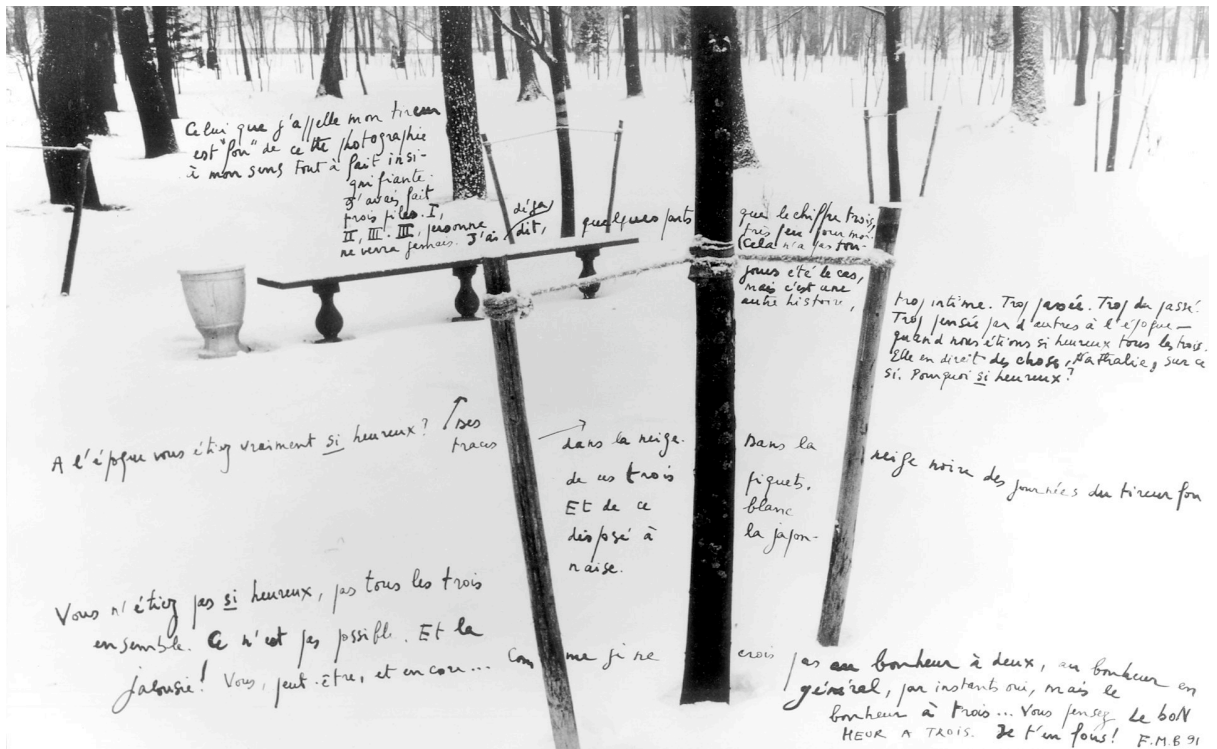


Fig.11: Written Photo, by François-Marie Barnier (1947-)

CHAPTER 2:

HYPertext AND HYPERMEDIA

2.1 A General Introduction

What does the term *hyper* mean, other than our daily use of the word, at which it stands for *excessive* and *above*? In mathematical physics and board games, it means *adding another dimension*. (Heim, 1993) Taking this as a reference, can we state that *hypermedia* is a form of media that adds another dimension in traditional forms of expressions? Yes, we can; but before all things related to hypermedia, I think it is necessary to define *hypertext* first. Hypertext, is a simple concept to understand but a hard one to define. One of the famous definitions of hypertext is: “*a text composed of lexias¹⁰, linked electronically by multiple paths, chains, or trails in an open-ended web.*” (Landow,1999)

Even though the whole phenomenon of *hypertext* started, when in 1965, before the existence of the World Wide Web, Ted Nelson introduced the term *hypertext* (and *hypermedia*) as “*a body of written or pictorial material, interconnected in such a complex way that it could not conveniently be presented or represented on paper*” (Nelson, 1965). The concept originated from the engineer Vannevar Bush’s 1945 article “*As We May Think*”, at which he envisioned a device for the purpose of better organization and location of information, which he called *the memex*. He thought that the memex would be a system that would contain a wide selection of material on microform, that would allow it’s users to navigate from a text to another, while remembering the user’s selections. (Bush, 1945)

¹⁰Lexia is the other name of a “node” in hypertextuality. A lexia is a self-contained unit of meaning within a hypertextual network that is navigated through clicking a link with a mouse.

Hypertext is nonsequential, while most of the traditional texts, whether printed or in computer files, are sequential, which means that, in hypertext environments, there is no single order of that the reader follows; there is no linear order for the text to be read; while in most of the traditional texts, there is. (Nielsen, 1995) In hypertext, the reader is presented with multiple different options to choose from, in order to continue reading the text. These options are interconnected with each other with links (mostly in forms of hot words that are embedded with links), which lead the readers to nodes/lexias. Nodes are small units of content (this content may be text, visuals, audio, video etc.) that all together create the total system of hypertextuality.

I think it is appropriate to define *hypermedia* as: hypertext meets multimedia. Some academics, who work in the field of web usability, such as Jacob Nielsen, prefer to use the term *hypertext* for the media that is included in my definition of *hypermedia* as well, because they think that it is useless to reserve a term just for the text-only systems (Nielsen, 1995), but I, as a visual communication designer, think that it is important to define terms with the media they are referring to, in order to understand what other circumstances and components we are talking about.

We use *hypertext*, in every single webpage that we visit everyday. Katherine Hayles states that: “*the World Wide Web with it’s links, millions of pages and multiple reading paths, is a vast hypertext of global proportions*” (Hayles, 2002). Hypertext is not only used in forms of electronic text. A printed encyclopedia qualifies as a hypertext as well, with it’s chunks of text (Hayles, 2002), as well as a lot of other texts with their notes and references, which readers may choose to read, or not, in a nonsequential behavior. (Landow, 2002)

Hypertext is used in a very wide field of applications; such as, computer applications, which include, online documentation, user assistance, software engineering, operation systems; business applications, which include, repair and other manuals, dictionaries and reference books, auditing, law and legal texts, trade shows, product catalogs and advertising; intellectual applications, such as, idea organization and brainstorm support, journalism, research; educational applications, such as, learning and teaching foreign languages, classic literature, museums and in entertainment and leisure applications, which include, tourist guides, libraries, newspapers and magazines, sexual, erotic and pornographic content purposes and interactive literature. (Nielsen, 1995)

2.2 Hypertext and Hypermedia as Tools for Narration

Hypertext narrative, is a form of narrativity rather than a genre. It may be fictional and nonfictional just as traditional form of texts may be. Since, the project this thesis handles as a case study is consisted of fictional narrative and fictional storytelling, this is what I am going to inspect according to the use of hypertext in narrative.

Hypertext theory and practice supplied electronic literature with the possibility of interaction. The freedom to tell a story, constructed of multiple chunks of text, graphics, audio and video, with the reader's interaction in choosing which path to follow, brought up a rich voice of expression. One of the most famous hypertext electronic literature piece is *Afternoon, a story* (Joyce, 1991), which started a new understanding in reading a story (Howell,1990).

Reading a hypertext story requires a different behavior than reading a traditional linear story, whether printed or not. A hypertext story or a hypermedia story, like *Patchwork Girl* (Jackson, 1995) has in it's nature of creation, the reader's pursue of following different paths, and navigational structure, discovering new ways, new beginnings and ends, within the story because of it's non-linearity or multi-linearity.

In 1997, Espen Aarseth came up with the term *cybertext* to define a new form of possible narrative. Even though the term *cybertext*, was first coined by mathematician Norbert Wiener in 1948, Aarseth brought it up in the theory of new media studies. Aarseth states that: "*The concept of cybertext focuses on the mechanical organization of the text, by positing the intricacies of the medium as an integral part of the literary exchange.*" (Aarseth, 1997) The difference between *hypertext* and *cybertext* is that, in hypertext, the reader can follow any path she/he wants through the narrative; while in cybertext there are certain rules, set in the text for a successful reading. Cybertextuality is also apparent as a concept in narrative of video games. For example, one can play a video game, anyway she/he wants; but in order to be successful in the game, one must follow a certain set of rules during the game.

2.3 Interaction vs. Immersion

Immersion, is a subject, that is open to debate, about hypertext and hypermedia narratives. It's nature of following different paths and chunks of narrative within the story, transforms the traditional understanding of fictional immersion into an entirely different concept. It is said that interaction and immersion are inversely correlated. As interaction increases in a narrative, the traditional immersion drops. (Ryan, 1999) I personally don't agree with this point of view. It depends on how you define *immersion*. Since, immersion requires complete attention and intense mental effort, I can argue that hypertextual interactive narrative are immersive as well.

While we are navigating through the narrative, we find new paths, new possibilities and with it's non-linearity or multi-linearity it provides us with multiple narrative within one. I accept, it may not let the reader to get immersed into one story, but the nature of hypertextuality doesn't lean on a single story or storyline anyways, so this would be inspecting it, as if we were inspecting a traditional, linear narrative. Hypertext narrative, consists of multiple sub-narratives within itself, so the understanding of the concept *immersion* should be according to multiplicity of narrative as well.

I think immersion is still valid in hypertext narrative for two reasons. One is the methodology of hypertext; a reader may lose perception of concepts such as time and space, during the pursue of multiple narrative possibilities of the interactive narrative just as she/he may lose those perceptions while reading a captivating novel. The other reason I find valid in this matter is that, I think it is possible for a reader to concentrate and get immersed by powerful changes within a story or multiple stories, such as various beginnings and ends. My second reasoning mostly depends on the threshold of the reader's concentration span and/or their willingness in suspension of disbelief.

CHAPTER 3:

THE STORY OF YOU AND ME

3.1 First Person Narrative

First person narrative is a very important part of narrative practice. First person point of view in narrative is very common. It can be defined as, a narrative mode, which is narrated by a character or personality, one at a time, narrating from her/his own point of view or about herself/himself. First person narrative may be in the singular form, in the plural form or in multiple forms. If it is a first person singular narrative, the narrator uses, *I*, as the pronoun; instead if it is a first person plural narrative, narrators use, *we*, as the pronoun, while narrating. First person narrative can also be authoritative, reliable or unreliable (as a deceptive voice or narrator), and all of these uses of the narrator as an element of the narrative, represents the point of view of the story.

First person narrative can be in many configurations, such as interior monologue (stream of consciousness), as dramatic monologue or as a simple first person storyteller, such as in Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. The use of these forms of the narrator, is in such a way that it adds meaning to the story. The first person narrator can also be used as a *device* in narration. For example, if the story is a detective story, the narrator usually doesn't know the entire flow of events, so the writer creates the narrator as our company, a person with whom we are discovering the mystery with. This narrator usually is an autodiegetic narrator. ¹¹ (Genette, 1988). The use of kind of narrator enhances the immersion of the story, as the reader builds emotional bonds with the narrator, the absorption of the story and the storyline increases.

The narrator may also shift from person to person in the story. A story that starts

¹¹ An autodiegetic narrator is a narrator who is also the protagonist of the story.

with the third person narrator may change into the first person narrator as the story continues. For example the writer may start with an omniscient third person narrator¹² and as the story goes on, the narrator transforms into a more *personal* first person narrator in order to change the story's narration and add depth.

There are several styles and forms of first person narrator. A narrator can narrate a story with a tendency of stream of consciousness. While using this, the writer shows us the structure and process of the narrator's ideas and feelings. In this narrative mode, narrator doesn't speak directly to the readers but rather it may seem like she/he is narrating the story to herself/himself. The narrator may also be an *unreliable narrator*. While using this narrative style, the writer, introduces the readers with doubt of the dependability of what the narrator narrates, since in those cases, the narrator, herself/himself may be mentally unfit, may lie or manipulate her/his memories or the readers, intentionally or unintentionally.

There are also levels of the first person narrator. A narrator may start the story, introducing another story, in which another narrator may start and introduce another story and this can continue like this. For example, we see this kind of leveling in *The Thousand and One Nights*, in which the first person narrator starts to tell about Scheherazade's story, in which Scheherazade starts to tell the story of Sinbad, who will start to tell the story of another character, and this continues like this, composing a multi-layered narrative. (Genette, 1988).

3.2 Second Person Narrative

Second person narrative is a narrative mode, in which the narrator is used, in order to address directly to the reader. Most commonly the second person personal pronoun, *you* is being used, from the narration of a protagonist or another main character.

The second person narrative is not very commonly used in literature comparing

¹²An omniscient third person narrator is a narrator who is all-knowing.

to the first person narrative and the third person narrative. The use of second person narrative is common among some examples of modern and post-modern literature, guidebooks, self-help books, do-it-yourself manuals, role-playing games, gamebooks, music lyrics, advertisement and interactive literature.

Sometimes, the use of second person narrative is inconsistent. The status of *you* as the expert, directing the subject *I*, may be constructed more explicit, as well as, the identity of *I* and *you*, may be emphasized on an emotional basis. According to the general use of narrator's person, which is thought to signify the split between the first person and the second person (in this context), and the functions of narrator and focalizer/expert witness may conflate. In certain cases, such as, while the writer uses the first person narrator, mentioning herself/himself as the second person, (as if the narrator is talking to herself/himself); since they have the same identity, the same person in psychosocial sense and same function in the narration, the roles of first person narrative and second person narrative may overlap. (Bal, 1993)

3.3 The Self-Portrait as a Tool for Personal Narrative

Since the first time mankind has ever seen his own reflection on a pool of water, he has been curious and fascinated. Not necessarily a result of narcissism, vanity or egotism; it is, from my point of view, about how we see ourselves and how that image relates to the reality. However we may see ourselves, there is always a need within that triggers us, to build a self-image representation. It may be reliable, or manipulated; it is a way to express and narrate our selves through artistic or non-artistic practices; considering our *profiles* on social networking sites, the way we handle our blogs and our avatars are also fruits of these practices.

A self-portrait, in the simplest description, is a representation of a person, which is drawn, painted, photographed, sculpted, performed, assembled, written, composed or portrayed by the person herself/himself. It can be in any expressive form. Since this thesis handles *visual narrative* as it's subject, I am going to address pictorial and photographic self-portraits as a narrative tool, in this chapter.

Even though it is known that the earliest self-portraits date back to ancient Egypt and Greek, the first identified self-portrait, which is an individual artwork, is by Jean Fouquet who created his miniature self-portrait in 1450. (Janson, 1986) (Fig.12)



Fig.12: *Self-Portrait*, 1450, by Jean Fouquet (1425-1480)

With the advent of cheaper and better mirrors, it became very common among artists to paint or sculpt their self-portraits. Even though it is an old practice, it didn't become that common until Renaissance, at which the *individual* as a subject became popular. Among all artists who painted their self-portraits, Albrecht Dürer was the first artist who was very productive in this field. He started making self-portraits with a silverpoint drawing, at the age of thirteen.

Many artists from both genders made self-portraits with different styles and forms. A self-portrait could be in many forms; such as a portrait of the artist which is inserted in a group scene, a portrayal of the artist as a heroic, historical or prestigious

figure, a natural and realistic (in manner and/or form) depiction of the artist, a symbolic and/or metaphorical representation of the artist or as a narrative self-portrait.

Modern painters such as Vincent Van Gogh, Edvard Munch, Egon Schiele, Pablo Picasso and Frida Kahlo painted many self-portraits, not only focusing on the reflection of their physical appearance but also dealing with themselves on psychological levels.

In Frida Kahlo's case, after her accident, which restrained her in bed for a long time, she started to paint self-portraits, which will later constitute one third of her artwork. Her self-portraits embody her suffering both physically and psychologically, transforming her pain into her art as an instrument of survival. Her self-portraits are highly narrative and metaphorical, which tell multiple stories within themselves. Some of her self-portraits contain multiple selves, representing different parts of her personality.

In her painting, *Two Fridas*, she represented her suffering in her marriage and divorce with Diego Rivera; while portraying herself in a wedding dress on the left figure, who is cutting her veins, and as the caring lover who is holding a childhood photo of Diego Rivera on her hand, on the right figure. Their unity is represented with the veins bonding and letting the blood flow between their hearts while holding hands. (Fig.13)



Fig.13: *Two Fridas*, 1939, by Frida Kahlo (1907-1954), Museo de Arte Moderno, Mexico City, Mexico

Photography is a very widely used tool for self-portraits as well. Many photographers took self-portrait photographs, either from the mirror reflection of themselves, with the help of a remote-controlled shutter release or the camera's timer, or with the assistance of another person. There are also examples of artists, who used others as models, which became symbolic representations of themselves in their self-portraits. Susan Kae Grant, in her image series, *Autobiographic Dramas*, used such models serving for the purpose of self-portraiture. She notes:

“My work consists of previsualized imagery created from a journal. They articulate my inner feelings and visions. Sometimes, I photograph myself; other times I use models. The models are symbols, the images are not about them, they are self portraits of me” (Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Photography, 1991).

Cindy Sherman, creates her artwork while obtaining the opposite disposition. Even though her work is considered, because of it's form, self-portraits, she doesn't agree. She said at an interview with The New York Times, that she doesn't consider her work as self-portraits and that she feels anonymous in her work (Collins, 1990).

Cindy Sherman, uses costumes and other props in her work, while posing to the camera in order to represent different characters, from different genders, races and age groups. Her characters are usually stereotyped people. She, as a “*response to the overkill of exclusive and fetishistic subject-identification in a medially conditioned mass culture*” amplifies her photographic characters and multiplicity of her ego (Schor, 2010). In her famous photographic series *Untitled Film Stills* (Fig.14), this tendency to pose herself as the central figure while she sets up the situation, can be observed as well. She responds to the general idea of her photographs, seen as self-portraits, while stating that, she doesn't see those characters as herself and those are “*characters from some movies which exist only in film or print*” (Adams, 2000).



Fig.14: *Untitled Film Stills #14*, 1978, by Cindy Sherman (1954-), Collection of the Museum of Modern Arts, NY, USA

CHAPTER 4:

THE “İKI” PROJECT

4.1 Motivation

In November 2009, I made a photography project called “How to Destroy Myself” (Fig.15). At the time I was trying to understand, as an artist how do I see “myself”, as a creator of art and as a human being. I was aware that, in time, as a photographer who focused with photographing herself, as a self-portrait addict I was growing a sense of seeing myself as *the other* rather than *me*, but I never paid a lot of attention to how it affected in my personality and eventually in my work. In the following days of my project “How to Destroy Myself”, as we were discussing it in a thesis group meeting, we came to an understanding that I was not only destroying my self image in the project, but also while doing that, I was cruelly criticizing myself, from the state of standing in front of the auto-timed camera, being the object, to the state of the author, the photographer, an unintentional subversive gaze was being sent.

That moment in the thesis group meeting, opened the doors of an unknown world of self-inspection and self-observation while creating art, which led me to my thesis project *İki*¹³, in which I create a visual story with two narrators, with two selves, telling the other’s story.

¹³ *İki* can be accessed at: <http://www.ikihikaye.com>

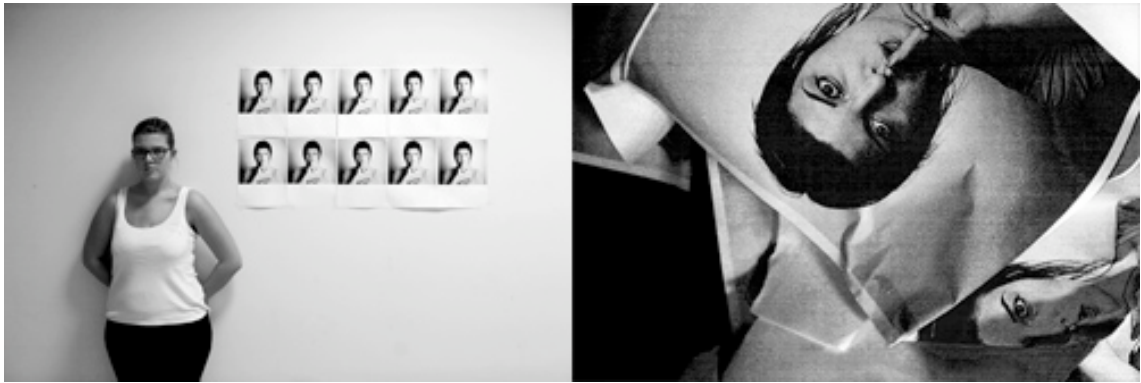


Fig.15: 00 from “How to Destroy Myself”, 2009 by Naz Akyar (1987-)

Another reason for working on this project is that, while observing myself from that particular (and external) point of view, I believe I might be able to unfold who I am, by telling the stories of my *selves*. In fact while doing personal narrative, the author/artist (as well as the listener/audience) “*is provided with a opportunity for fragmented self-understanding*” (Capps, Ochs, 1996).

4.2 A Mirror or a Bridge

The real issue I find in doing an artwork about myself, lays on the double-edged question: “Does my project work as mirror to me (the author/artist), or is it building a bridge between me and my selves (the characters I am defining as my alter personalities) in my work?” In *İki*’s case, I can say that, the artwork is building a bridge both, between the two of my “selves” and between them and I¹⁴.

The most common mistake to fall into while doing a self project about multiple alter personalities of the artist, would be confusing one of them with someone the artist could define as *self*. From my perspective, which is the one of an artist who is working in the ambit stated above (double *self* narration), none of the characters in the story are duplicates of the artist/author; they are instead pieces of her/him, far from representing

¹⁴ The object pronoun “them” here represents two selves in the project in a relation according to the artist/author.

the whole personality. Artist/author can enter the story if she/he wants as an external narrator, but that would mean adding another voice and layer to the story, which is not what I was looking for while preparing this project.

In *İki*'s case, there are two stories, may or may not intersect with each other, with their own narrators, each of whom embodies the role of the protagonist¹⁵, in an interaction with the other, the *invisible* protagonist (in this case, a “mute” protagonist). Since my “mute” protagonists are not verbally active in the stories, the text turns into a verbal monologue. In the particular circumstances of *İki*, my narrators are also *autodiegetic narrators*.

My mute protagonists take the role of the narratees¹⁶. The visual story I am intending to tell, moves from the interaction between the autodiegetic narrators and the narratees, which at the end creates the layout and the design of images, text and sound appearing together in one page. The final product, the *İki* website, is the overall narrative: a narrative of two narratives, symbolic mirror images of each other, communicating, with the interaction of the audience with the website, telling their stories to each other (and the audience) by using the second person narrative, while the real listeners/audience simply listen and lead the conversation between stories to an unknown and random storyline. It is both a very complex and a very simple structure, which includes two stories within a complex story and an active/passive audience.

4.2.1 Two People as One

In *İki* there are two stories, which are symmetrical in the sense of creation and practice. Each of them represents pieces of my personality. Since there is a random storyline, there is no order of stories so I'll have to refer them with nicknames. One of them is told by a self-judgmental, troubled and depressed piece of me, I will refer her as *the negative narrator*. The other story, on the other hand, is told by a happy, self-loving narrator of whom I will refer as *the positive narrator*.

¹⁵A protagonist is the main character in a narrative. There can also be multiple protagonists in a narrative.

¹⁶A narratee is the person who the narration is being narrated to –by the narrator- in the narrative text.

The negative narrator perceives the world from a dreary perspective, in which she believes every negative situation is caused by her. In her words “it is all your fault” and “because you caused it”. In the form of the artwork the narrators are talking in the context of an imaginary coffee fortune telling, so actually they are interpreting what they see in the other’s coffee cup. That turns “blaming the other” into “blaming herself”, because what people see in coffee cups in fortune telling works as a Rorschach inkblot test¹⁷. While telling the fortune of another, from a coffee cup, the narrator of the fortune is actually giving clues about her/his personality, which turns the fiction to pieces of facts about the narrator’s character because personal narrative “*is born out of experience and gives shape to experience.*” (Ochs, Capps, 1996)

The positive narrator on the other hand, while telling the fortune of the negative character (in the positive narrator’s story, the character of negative narrator is a narratee so I will refer her as “the negative character” while I am talking about her existence in this story) is hopeful, always saying things will turn out clear, problems will be solved and good news will come. From this we can understand that she sees the world as a place of opportunities and hope. Her perception of things around her is bright, colorful and calm.

Narration is a very wide playground in the context of multiplying selves. They “*may multiply along such dimensions as past and present; subject and object; male and female; id, ego and superego; good and evil; normal and aberrant and public and private.*” (Ochs, Capps, 1996) A very famous example of multiplication of a singular personality in partial personalities is the dogma of the holy trinity in the Christian Bible; the father (Gn 1:1), the son (Jh 1:1) and the holy spirit (Gn 1:2). In 1 John 5:7-8 the Latin Vulgate Bible says “*quia tres sunt qui testimonium dant Spiritus et aqua et sanguis et tres unum sunt*” (1 Jh 5:7-8) which translates into English as “because three are the ones who give testimony; the spirit, the water and the blood and the three of them are one.” Even though the word “trinity” has never been used in the Bible; the father, the son and the holy spirit are defined as united and belongs to the trinity of one great God.

¹⁷Rorschach inkblot test is a psychological test in which the subjects perception of the inkblots are interpreted to examine the subject’s personality characteristics and emotional functioning.

In my project while reflecting my partial selves as the positive narrator and the negative narrator, I am still keeping the visual connection between us¹⁸ while using my self-portraits as visual elements in their respective stories. The two partial selves I am using in my work may not be my total personality, as the author/artist, but they still belong to the core structure of my personality.

4.3 The Random Storyline

The first time I met interactive fiction, in a form of printed hypertext novel, I was in elementary school. It was one of the Turkish translations of children's bestseller gamebook series "Choose Your Own Adventure"¹⁹ in which the reader is supplied with the choice of which path should the hero pick during her/his adventure. Should she/he go to the forest or should she/he go to the house? Gamebooks are usually written in second singular person, so the reader is in the role of the hero, plus, considering gamebooks are consisted of adventurous material, it's immersion and popularity among children and young adults are high.

In hypertext gamebooks, the storyline is partially in the control of the reader, with the options she/he is provided. The choices we make in the continuation of the story leads us certain pages in which we continue to read until another decision has to be made. There are options, but those options are limited with what the author wrote so even though we can re-read the story with a different choice of storyline each time, there is a defined number of different stories we will read. Also the story may have been camouflaged as being non-linear (because it doesn't follow the exact order of pages but leads us back and forth with our choices) but is actually multi-linear.

¹⁸The object pronoun "us" here represents; the author/artist, the positive narrator and the negative narrator.

¹⁹ Choose Your Own Adventure is a series of children's gamebooks which are written in second singular person, in which the reader chooses from different options for the hero to pursue during his adventure. The options leads the reader to different pages and the story goes in this format. Choose Your Own Adventure was one of the most popular children's series during the 1980s and 1990s, selling over 250 million copies between 1979 and 1998. (Lodge, 2007)

What I am intending to build in *Īki* is more independent. There are two main options in the hands of the audience. One of them is continuing to view the story and letting the story take the audience to a narrative, which is not planned and is random. The second option is to close the website and make the story end. The first option also has some minor multiple choices; in some pages there are more than one hyperlink on the page. It is a decision that the audience has to make, which one to click on. Even if this may resemble multi-linear storybooks in means of format, it really does have nothing to do with those, because in the system I am setting for *Īki*, it doesn't matter which hyperlink you click on, they all lead to the same thing (and also to a different thing from each other) *the random storyline*.

The system might deceive the audience to feel free and in control of the story, because in action, they actually are in the control of the story while clicking to hyperlinks, but conceptually, nobody has the control over the story. The only thing that may be said about this case is that; there is a limit of auditory and visual components I designed for *Īki* and it is within this limit, what the audience will experience. The tricky part starts at this point: the components may vocalize and visualize the narrative but the grand narrative lays behind the continuation of the storyline; as the audience clicks, the story forms itself.

While creating *Īki*, I first recorded my voice, playing the role of one of the partial selves, while telling the coffee fortune of the other partial self. Then I dissected those recordings into words, groups of words and/or sentences and created meaningful groups of sentences with them. Those groups of sentences became the main pages. I found suitable concepts and visual themes for every main page, which were, in some of them a word while in some of them, one of the sentences in the group. After finding the visual theme I visualized every sentence and/or word group within every main page. That visualized pages became sub-pages of the main pages and they became design components of the main pages as well. I designed the typography of the pages according to the different visual language rules I am set for the negative and positive narrators. At the end, I rearranged the dissected sound clips in order for them to fit to the concepts and themes of their respective main pages possess and I embedded them on the pages. I practiced the same technique to both of the stories.

In total, there are twenty-three pages, the first page being the starting point of the story, the frame zero. There are twenty main pages with multiple dynamic sub-pages within them. There are also two video pages, each of them belonging to one of the narrators but the sound of the videos covers all the text that is included in the main pages of the respective story. The audience will navigate between pages, through hyperlinks, which will lead them to a random page. This way with the lack of a linear storyline, every viewer will have a unique experience of the story/artwork. This may bring to mind, the question: “What if the audience may not view all the pages but stop viewing the story?” My aim is not telling a didactic tale so I don’t find it problematic. I wished to create a visual story that has it’s own consciousness; a story of coincidences. I didn’t want to lead the dance of the reader and the story. I wanted the story to find it’s flow. This is why, the random storyline, is vital in *Íki*; it is what gives the story it’s uniqueness and meaning.

4.4 The Visual Language

As an artist/designer hybrid, I was in total control of the visual and audio-visual components I created for *Íki*. I followed certain creative paths that took me from photography and scanography to graphic design, from sound design to video art and finally to web design. Everything was carefully designed until it’s last little detail. For me, in a visual story that is being navigated through random lexias, visuality and audio-visuality have to be premeditated and interesting. The content and the visual language that my content is speaking are vital for my story to be followed, because in a narrative that is coincidental by it’s navigation, there has to be something strong that drives the viewer to continue on viewing the story.

Since my two narrators are representing different character traits of my personality, they should have different visual languages and voices (vocal and audio visual). This was my starting point in designing the project’s visuals and audio. I didn’t follow a sequence in visualizing my two narrators; I visualized them simultaneously.

The negative narrator is a brutally critical character, who is inspecting herself in the smallest detail to find faults to blame herself. She may be seen as “honest” from the

outside but in reality, she is oppressive and cruel to herself, as well as being extremely pessimistic. For all these reasons I used scanography in her still images. I scanned myself in 300 dpi²⁰ with a flatbed scanner. The self-portraits show me in different visual compositions, mostly distorted while scanning and are almost disturbingly close-ups (Fig.16). With the magnification of the scanner and high-resolution of 300 dpi, the macro effect and the lighting that the scanner brings to the photos are very dramatic. The facial expressions I have in the photos are also another major element in the images' overwhelming psychological intensity. My facial expressions can be interpreted as violent, painful, terrified and is under physical and psychological torture.



Fig.16: A sample main page from the negative narrator's story.

In the negative narrative, the typography I used in individual scanographies and overall main page designs are consisted of scanned hardcopy page tear-outs, that are written with a typewriter. The distorted effect which the pressed typewriter ribbon leaves on paper and it's scanning, brings the grungy effect I designed for the

²⁰Dpi, dot per inch, is a measurement term in printing that defines the number of individual dots that can be placed in a line within the span of 1 inch and is related to image resolution.

typographic concept. The torn paper and it's ragged edges bring my negative narrator's story, a visual contrast, when compared to my positive narrator's clean-cut boxes and other neatly organized visual elements on the pages.

For the positive narrator's story, I used white backgrounds and colorful yet soft photos. The photos are originally shot with various analogue toy cameras and then scanned to be digitized. I used plain film cameras for the photos because I thought, if my positive narrator is a happy, calm and natural person whom I can define as "sunny", the photos have to be as plain, colorful, sincere and modest as possible. They are not perfect photos but so isn't my positive narrator instead I can define her as *naïve*. Forms she sees in the coffee cup are interpreted to relate to hope, nature, animals, good news and problems being solved. That is the reason why her visuals possess the same mood, mostly consisted of photos belonging to summer days, family and friends. My typeface choice for the positive narrator's story is Gill Sans, for it's clarity (Fig.17).



Fig.17: A sample main page from the positive narrator's story.

Sound is another essential part of my narration. The audio tracks I recorded for the fortune tellings has been used over and over again in the project. While the audience is viewing a main page, she/he is also listening to the audio track on that page. There is

no volume adjustment button or on/off button of the track and it's on a loop. I wanted to take away the control of the audience over the audio track, because I think the audio tracks are crucial elements in the narration of individual main pages. They add another layer and dimension to the artwork. In the soundtracks of the positive narrator, the speech's pitch is higher, while negative narrator's pitch is lower. The reason I re-designed their pitches is to give them two separate auditory characteristics that define two separate personalities. I also re-used the soundtracks with different arrangements and melodies in my videos to support the narration.

For the videos, I used a lot of different footages and did two video collages. For both of the videos I used 8mm video footage from my family's old video archive, home videos from my childhood, footage I shot in various time periods and the footage I shot especially for this project. I tried to make visual connections to what the sound narrates while keeping it consisted with the visual narrative moods of the two narrators.

CHAPTER 5:

CONCLUSION

Stories can be told in many mediums with an infinite number of forms. It really doesn't matter how we tell them. I personally agree to what Neil Gaiman says in his poem *Locks*, "*we owe it to each other to tell stories*" (Gaiman, 1999). I also think that telling stories, whether they are personal or not, is the most honest form of communication. If we learn how to tell, then we may also learn how to listen.

Visual narrative is very essential. They are everywhere; in movies, on TV, in newspapers, in art, in advertisements and so the list goes on. Everything that communicates needs a story because we humans are always in the need of something to attach ourselves. An attachment can be made if that thing makes sense to us. This is the core reason why visual narrative are important; because images talk louder than words and they are easier to understand because we interpret them with familiar things we already know, so we get attached faster and easier to visual narratives(or narratives include images) than solely verbal narratives.

If an artist or a designer, doesn't know how to establish visual narrative, I shall say, her/his job is very hard. Every component we add to the visual system we set on our works, as artists and/or designers, has to add meaning to our art and/or design. If we want to communicate with images, everything in that image must talk, in ways we want them to, within our control. I think, if we learn how to control what we communicate through our designs and/or artworks, we are successful, because only that way our work will have meaning.

The reason I created this project was to communicate with others who view it, who navigate in it. I wanted to tell my story, with waiting nothing in return. I believe if I can narrate my story, I will understand myself better; and if I understand how to narrate a story so personal then I can narrate any story I choose to, with success, in the future. A good visual communication designer/visual artist should know how to narrate because narration is communication.

REFERENCES

- Aarseth, E. J., 1997, *Cybertext: Perspectives on Ergodic Literature*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD, USA: 1-75
- Adams, T. D., 2000, *Conclusion: We Are Not Our Own Light, Self-Portraiture and Autobiography*, *Light Writing & Life Writing: Photography in Autobiography*, The University of North Carolina Press, NC, USA: 227
- Bal, M., 1993, *First Person, Second Person, Same Person: Narrative as Epistemology*, *New Literary History*, Vol.24, No.2, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD, USA: 293-320
- Barthes, R., 1977, *Image Music Text*, Fontana Press, London, UK : 25-27
- Berger, J, 1972, *Ways of Seeing*, British Broadcasting Company and Penguin Books, London, UK: 7, 9, 10
- Bush, V., 1945, *As We May Think*, *The Atlantic Monthly* 176:1
<http://www.theatlantic.com/past/docs/unbound/flashbks/computer/bushf.htm>
(accessed on May, 21, 2011)
- Capps, L., Ochs, E., *Narrating the Self*, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol.25: 20-23
- Collins, G., 1990, *A Portraitist's Romp Through Art History*, *The New York Times*
<http://www.nytimes.com/1990/02/01/arts/a-portraitist-s-romp-through-art-history.html>
(accessed on May 26, 2011)
- Eisner, W., 2008, *Graphic Storytelling and Visual Narrative: Principles and Practices from the Legendary Cartoonist*, W. W. Norton & Company, NY, USA-London, UK: 7, 9
- Gaiman, N., Datlow, E. (ed), Windling, T. (ed), 1999, *Locks*, Silver Birch, Blood Moon, HarperCollins Publishers, NY, USA
- Genette, G., 1988, *Narrative Discourse Revisited*, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY, USA: 84-87,102
- Glanville, R., 2002, *Second Order Cybernetics*, *Encyclopaedia of Life Support Systems*, EoLSS Publishers, Oxford, UK
- Hayles, N. K., 2002, *Writing Machines*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, USA-London, UK: 26
- Heim, M., 1993, *The Metaphysics of Virtual Reality*, Oxford University Press, NY, USA: 30
- Howell, G., McAleese, R. (ed), Green, C. (ed), 1990, *Hypertext Meets Interactive Fiction: New Vistas in Creative Writing*, *Hypertext: State of Art*, Intellect Ltd., Oxford, UK: 140

- Jackson, S., 1995, *Patchwork Girl*, Eastgate Press, Cambridge, MA, USA
- Janson, H. W., 1986, *History of Art*, Harry N. Abrams Inc., NY, USA: 386
- Joyce, M., 1991, *Afternoon, a story*, Eastgate Press, Cambridge, MA, USA
- Landow, G. P., 2002, *Hypertext 2.0: The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD, USA: 21
- Landow, G. P., Lunenfeld, P. (ed), 1999, *Hypertext as Collage-Writing, The Digital Dialectic*, The MIT Press, MA, USA- London, UK: 154
- Lodge, S, 2007, *Chooseco Embarks on Its Own Adventure*, Publisher's Weekly
<http://replay.web.archive.org/20071009094529/http://www.publishersweekly.com/article/CA6408126.html> (accessed on May 14, 2011)
- McCloud, S., 2009, *The Infinite Canvas*
<http://scottmccloud.com/4-inventions/canvas/index.html>
 (accessed on November 21, 2009)
- McCloud, S., 2000, *Reinventing Comics*, HarperCollins Publishers, NY, USA
- Nelson, T. H., 1965, *A File Structure for the Complex, the Changing and the Intermediate*, Proceedings of the 20th National Conference, Ed. Lewis Winner, Association for the Computing Machinery, NY, USA: 84-100
- Nielsen, J., 1995, *Multimedia and Hypertext*, Academic Press, Morgan Kaufmann Publishers, CA, USA: 1-152
- Ryan, M. L., 1999, *Immersion vs. Interactivity: Virtual Reality and Literary Theory*, SubStance Vol.28, No.2, University of Wisconsin Press, WI, USA
- Ryan, M.L., 2004, *Narrative Across Media*, University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln NE, USA: 139-141
- Schor, G., 2010, *The Multiplied Ego: Cindy Sherman*, Donna: Avanguardia Femminista negli Anni '70, Electa, Rome, ITALY: 176
- The Latin Vulgate Bible, (Gn 1:1, Jh 1:1, Gn 1:2, 1 Jh 5:7-8)
- Tokyo Museum of Photography, 1991, *Self-Portraits of Contemporary Women: Exploring the Unknown Self*, Tokyo Museum of Photography, Tokyo, JAPAN
- Wiener, N., 1965, *Cybernetics, Second Edition: or the Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine*, The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, USA- London, UK