Vinícius Carvalho Pereira

Title: Watching the minotaur: a poetics of labyrinths in Andrei Thomaz's visual digital poems

Abstract: In Western societies, the most famous myth involving a labyrinth is probably that of Theseus, who slayed the minotaur and left the maze with the aid of Ariadne's thread. That image is recurrent in visual and literary arts throughout the centuries and was addressed in Latin American literature in Borges's (1998) short stories, such as "La casa de Asterión", "La biblioteca de Babel", "Los dos reyes y los dos labirintos", among others. If Borges is often referred to as a predecessor of electronic literature (RETTBERG, 2019), other antecedents of e-lit, such as Oulipian writers, also defined themselves and their work in terms of labyrinths: "Oulipians: rats who must build the labyrinth from which they propose to escape" (LESCURE, 1973). With the development of digital poetics, the metaphor of the labyrinth has kept its relevance, ranging from the description of hypertext structures (KOLB, 1994) to its use as an analytical tool in the scope of Aarseth's (1997) concept of cybertext. Besides their usefulness for describing complex topological structures, labyrinths cannot be dissevered from a consequence of their internal organization: they undermine discourses of supposed self-evident boundaries or absolute divisions. The convoluted shapes of mazes evince the lability of straight lines (of thought) and connote the instability inherent to language, especially in (e-)literature. In this context, we herein analyze the poetics of labyrinths in digital poems by the Brazilian artist Andrei Thomaz ("Cubos de cor", "Eclipses", "A caça e o caçador", "Dédalo e Ariadne", "Pacman e o minotauro" and "Quantas linhas são necessárias para apagar um retângulo preto?"), focusing on how they challenge our conceptions of reading and experiencing art. Somewhere between poetry and fine arts in cyberspace, Thomaz's works not only represent mazes by graphic means, but also establish semiotic labyrinths where the limits between verbal and non-verbal signs become blurred. Finally, the many references his works make to elements from "popular" and "high" culture create an intertextual labyrinth that question these concepts and face the user with the minotaur of doubt, uncertainty and all similar semiotic effects that make one wander through mazes of signs on a computer interface.

Name: Vinícius Carvalho Pereira – Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso (UFMT)

Bio: Vinícius Carvalho Pereira holds a PhD in Literature Studies, from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, is a Professor at the Federal University of Mato Grosso, teaches at the Post-Graduation Program in Language Studies and coordinates the research group Contemporary Semiotics. His research interests involve Modern and Contemporary Literature, Media and Technology, Semiology and Digital Technologies in Arts and Literature. He also carries out research in the field of Human-Computer Interaction, especially regarding semiotic approaches to interfaces.

Tina Escaja

Title: "De-centering Anglo-American e-lit. Feminist approaches, *en español.* A retro/activist (self) study."

Abstract: This presentation implies un-continuity as a way of dissonance from the canonical Anglo-centric e-lit theoretical frame, primarily from a cyberfeminist point of view "en español." By reframing a paper written two decades ago, Tina Escaja (aka Alm@ Pérez) revisits cyberfeminism and Anglo-American theoretical imperialism within the ongoing misogyny and gender gap as reflected in the electronic media.

Name: Tina Escaja – The University of Vermont (UVM)

Bio: Tina Escaja (also known as Alm@ Pérez) is a destructivist/a cyber-poet@, digital artist and scholar based in Burlington, Vermont (Distinguished Professor of Spanish and Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies). Her creative work transcends the traditional book format, leaping into digital art, robotics, augmented reality and multimedia projects exhibited in museums and galleries internationally. Escaja has received numerous recognitions and awards, and her work has been translated into six languages. A selection of Escaja's literary and digital projects can be experienced at www.tinaescaja.com