

Introduction to “Spreading the word: preserving and analysing electronic literature”

In the next pages, the reader will find several articles which were originally presented at the ELO Conference 2023 – Overcoming Divides: Electronic literature and social change. These articles are dedicated to the analysis of electronic literature committed to social and environmental causes. The current issue is related to the number of MATLIT titled “Interweaving voices: creating and sharing electronic literature” (Vol. 11 N.º 1), which was focused on the process of creating some of the works included in the *Arborescent // Resistance* exhibition. Both these issues aim to give the reader a glimpse of ELO Conference 2023. They also provide several examples of how electronic literature is being used to enhance social and environmental awareness.

We begin by presenting to the reader a keynote speech given by Jussi Parikka on the 14th of July 2023. This speech was later turned into an article co-authored by Paolo Patelli and May Ee Wong and edited in collaboration with the *Electronic Book Review*. “**Ecocritique between Landscape and Data: The Environmental Audiotour**” addresses environmental issues by discussing *Environmental Audiotour*, a digital work created by Parikka which was displayed at the Helsinki Biennial 2023. In this text, the impact of human activity on nature is scrutinized through digital technology.

In “**Teaching with the Electronic Literature Collection Volume 4**,” Rui Torres, Kathi Inman Berens, Mia Zamora, Lyle Skains, and John Murray, editors of the Electronic Literature Collection Volume 4, focus their attention on the user experience design of the four volumes of the Electronic Literature Collection (2006-2022), and the way this publication has been used to teach electronic literature. Besides suggesting thematic clusters of ELC4 works, this article also provides some insight into electronic literature’s pedagogy in higher education.

“**Re-enacting historical memories on social media through profile-based works: a perspectivist approach**” is an article written by Nolwenn Tréhondart, Alexandra Saemmer and Emmanuelle Lescouet, where they suggest the emergence of a new genre named “profile-based works”. Focused on the re-enactment of historical events and historical figures on Facebook and Instagram, and therefore, dependent on these platforms, these works are particularly challenging in terms of preservation and archiving. Some of the difficulties raised by these works are addressed in this text.

In **“Being the Other: Representation and normalization of queerness in video games,”** Amélie Vallières, Emmanuelle Lescouet and Pierre Gabriel Dumoulin invoke critical play, feminist theories, and queer video game theories to evaluate the potential of digital literary works for raising awareness about several social issues, especially those related to queerness.

As for **“Archive and/as Montage in *The City as Text*: Exposing the Chilean Social Uprising,”** a text authored by Tessa Allen de Oliveira, the reader is introduced to the 2019 Chilean uprising against neoliberal policies. Focused on *La Ciudad como Texto (The City as Text)*, created by Carola Ureta Marín, the author explains how the archive as montage anarchically multiplies the perspectives over an event rather than reducing it to a single narrative.

David Thomas Henry Wright’s article, **“The Text is Not Enough: Visibility in Asian diasporic Digital Narratives”**, is dedicated to the role of visual image in electronic literature. In this text, the author uses W.J.T. Mitchell’s (1994) “Picture Theory” to examine three diasporic Asian narratives and to demonstrate how the text/image relationship needs to be reassessed in digital space.

In **“Extraction, Cloud, Waste: electronic-literature as a catalyst for our internet eco-material awareness,”** Cyrus Khalatbari addresses the environmental impact of digital technology by focusing his attention on three life cycles of internet’s materiality (extraction, optimisation — or cloud, — and waste) represented by three art and design projects.

We will finish this issue with an account of the kids e-lit exhibition which took place at the Exploratório Ciência Viva in Coimbra, as part of the ELO Conference 2023. In **“‘Read, Imagine, Play’: memory of a kids e-lit exhibition,”** Ana Maria Silva Machado, Ana Sofia Albuquerque e Aguilar, and Jaqueline Conte describe their experience as curators of this exhibition.

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