

**Transversal Entanglements;**  
**Research-Creation and the design process for *Inflexions***

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This is to certify that the thesis prepared

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Entitled: Transversal Entanglements; Research-Creation and the design process for Inflections

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## ABSTRACT

Transversal Entanglements: Research Creation and the design process for *Inflexions*

Leslie Plumb

This thesis or more appropriately, this written component of my thesis, is a continuation of the agency<sup>1</sup> Research-Creation brought to the design process of *Inflexions*.

--*Inflexions*<sup>2</sup> is an open source interdisciplinary journal for Research-Creation, sponsored by *SenseLab*<sup>3</sup>. Research-Creation -as it is engaged by this journal- “should be understood as a method of intuition, a technique for expanding perception that puts it into immediate contact with sensation” (Thain 2008, 3). Here, I work to foreground what Alanna Thain is here calling a technique and what Andrew Murphie elsewhere calls a “technics” of distributed agency (Murphie 2009: 2). I suggest that such a technics provoked a transversal and relational design process. This is explored through the Deleuzian and Guittarian concepts of “the relation”, “inflection”, “rhythm”, “becoming”, and the virtual and actual. Further elaborations are made expanding on Erin Manning’s concept of the “elasticity of the almost” and “preacceleration”. The exploration is invested in bringing new methods of viewing and experiencing to works online that are activated by the relational movements and milieus of the Web.

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<sup>1</sup> This is because through the agency of this writing process, I was placed within an transversal sense of my becoming-design, within the discursive and sometimes poetic writing process.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.inflexions.org/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://senselab.ca/>

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And because everything requires a playlist, thank you to Bibio, Four Tet, Caribou, Bonobo, Kaki King, James Blackshaw, “The Chairman Dances” and Tune-Yards.

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

For the past three years I have had the privilege of being the web-designer and artistic director of *Inflexions*<sup>1</sup>, an open-access interdisciplinary journal for Research-Creation, sponsored by *SenseLab*<sup>2</sup>. This thesis or more appropriately, this written component of my thesis, is a continuation of the agency<sup>3</sup> research-creation brought to the design process of *Inflexions*.

Research-Creation -as it is engaged by this journal- “should be understood as a method of intuition, a technique for expanding perception that puts it into immediate contact with sensation” (Thain 2008: 3). What this means in less abstract terms was made palpable for me through the genesis of *Inflexions*. The serialized nature of the journal, its recursive tasks and compressed schedules, foreground tendencies in my design process that put me in direct contact with my intuitive process. This opened up my practice to the ‘senses’ I was intuitively feeling out for in my design process.

These senses are *felt* understandings of a piece, coagulated in the experiential, in the immediacy of sensation. These felt understandings can be thought of as affective tonalities that color an experience. Affective tonalities refer to the imperceptible force that courses through an experience, giving it its quality. This is a ‘sense’ that does not rely on the discursive or categorical. It moves through the affectivity of the plane of virtual-actual becoming (Manning 2009: 207).

The virtual and actual, as it is taken up here, is in line with Massumi, and Manning's understanding of the virtual-actual of experience (Manning 2009: 68).

Something that happens too quickly to have happened, actually, is *virtual*. The body is as immediately virtual as it is actual. The virtual, the pressing crowd of incipencies and tendencies, is a realm of potential. In potential is where futurity combines, unmediated, with pastness, where outsides are in folded and sadness is happy [...] The virtual is a lived paradox where what are normally opposites coexist, coalesce, and connect; where what cannot be experienced cannot but be felt – albeit reduced and contained.

(Massumi 2002: 30)

Rather than being dichotomous, Manning would say the virtual and actual are "aspects of the same event" (2009: 19). They are not oppositional forces that displace one another in the experience; they are participatory in the other's articulations, moving together in the becoming of an experience, flush with potentialities.

This “becoming” is felt as a virtual potentiality of experience, moves towards an articulation in the actual, an actualization<sup>4</sup> (Manning 2009: 19). Sensing this ‘becoming’ initiated an inquiry into my design process, one proliferated through the becoming-design of *Inflexions*, and activated through Research Creation. This is an inquiry into the ‘how’ of a design’s articulation, its becoming-sense.

## 1. 1 INTUITION AND THE RELATION

With each new editorial piece and issue, tendencies in my process began to foreground themselves and coagulate in purpose. However the 'purpose' of these tendencies did not express a goal-oriented system of deduction. They were not working towards a certain design produced through discursive process. Instead these tendencies seemed to be feeling out for something more, something in the experiential, that couldn't be quantified.

This design process was initiated by my tendency to postpone working on a project, until I had 'all the pieces' for that work, laid out in the Flash workspace. This included basic web navigation elements (such as buttons, menu items, and links), as well as all the components of that piece, as provided by the editors. I would then begin to nudge and prod the collective elements around in the workspace, playing with their composition, configuration, and orientation.

Beyond the subtler shifts of a text object 3 points to the right and 3 points left again, rapid-fire juxtapositions were also engaged. This involved toggling between compositional choices repeatedly, in an attempt to rapidly contrast the experiences of different configurations. Instances where a piece could be re-arranged and put back together again would also be engaged. This may involve interchanging a series of images with text, or breaking up texts and rearranging the order in which they may be viewed.

Any way that that piece's web experience could be sifted through, with subtle shifts in that recursive experience, was explored.

At first this would seem like a deductive approach, comparing and contrasting various compositions, in pursuit of the most effective layout or aesthetic experience. But this process was not simply trying to measure out the functionality satisfied by one composition versus another. Neither were differentiating degrees of aesthetic value being assigned to each composition. Each 'nudge' was more of a provocation, a way of prodding a piece in at the level of the experiential, not quantifying its behaviors.

From the very beginning of my design experience, my approach was focused on provocations rather than simply a deductive pursuit. The more I worked on *Inflexions*, I found I was engaged in just that: I was opening up my body to forces moving through experience, forces flush with the sense-making potentialities.

This is because with each nudge, I was provoking an “elastic movement”, where “movement [became] more-than, enveloping in its folds all the potential of its pastness and futurity” (Manning 2009: 36). With each prod of a title block 3 points left, 2 points right, and 1 left again, a rhythm was foregrounded that curved the experience of design, elasticizing time in the making.

Rhythm makes palpable the movements of the passing-present into a present futurity. For example, “[a] rhythm already involves the next beat, and to hear the rhythm



is to be in the middle of it, hearing its history at each moment, hearing at once the beats that came before and the beats that are still to come” (Evens 2005: 37). Translated into the context of a website, we feel the rhythm of the past experience of a particular design fold into present and future. We 'sense' this rhythm through the ability to recall, remember and relate to the future in past-present events (37).

This initially felt like a 'tug' on my sensing body<sup>5</sup>, as a piece suddenly pushed back in the experience, and folded me into the middle of a new articulation process. Such a 'catch' or tug on my sensing body was most palpably felt between each nudge of a piece's texts, images, and other compositional configurations. Again I say felt between each nudge - the experience felt *between* those acts of displacement- and not in the act of the nudge itself. This is because a rhythm does not emerge in the step-ness of the act of each nudge. We do not move to a rhythm, each nudge marking down a step mapped out; “we move rhythm...[and] rhythm moves use even before we know where we are going, even before we momentarily lose our connection” (Manning 2009: 34).

This experience has to do with memory, as does time and its experiential rhythm. Through the nudges, the futurity of experience is expressed in the present passing. You might call this a prehended future. Prehended future, the prehension of a futurity is a pulling out of the becoming event (Manning 2009: 7). “This initial prehension creates the parameters for the taking-form of space-time in the context of discrete experience.” (7).

The ‘discrete’ and immediate sense of a background color choice (say, blue) is affected by the previous experience of a yellow. The affect, although virtual and incorporeal, is felt through qualities of experience that bleed a tone or texture into the present experience of the blue, provoking a palpable sense of the past in the present. This is then ‘pulled out’ through what Whitehead calls prehension, which refers to a kind of pulling into act of an occasion of experience, leading us to perceive, say, a quality of a yellow slightly more orange, and perhaps more resonant with the desired design experience (Manning 2009: 7).

The incipient movement of the ‘sense’ of an orangey-yellow, towards an actualization, is a becoming. But that potentiality of experience is not yet quite actualized, and when it does, the quality of that experience may actualize toward a different resonance.

Were each of these color choices being experienced discretely, then when a color actualized in a different way than we expected, we would be thrown into disparity. We would lose all sense of what ‘yellow’ is, and can be. But it is specifically because past senses of yellow and blues participate in the present and prehended future, that that orangey-yellow can proliferate further ‘becomings’. As that yellow actualizes it is already moving with the potentialities of other incipient becomings. It is always already moving with the potentialities of future becomings, even while affecting in the past. As the present-pasness of the orangey-yellow is pulled out by further prehensions, what orange ‘can be’ moves towards an actualization through the incipient movements of becoming.

The textures of that experience may provoke a prehension of what a stronger tinge of orange may feel like in that composition, and whether that not-yet that quality of orange will become with the right quality of sense desired for that webpage's experience.

As these colors are nudged around, an expression of the inflection 'impinging' upon that experience may also be felt (Manning 2009: 35). This inflection "culls from the movement's potential its becoming form" (35). "Inflection gives expression to this worlding, and in the elasticity of its activity, it makes palpable the tangibility of sensation" (36).

These rhythms and inflections foreground the 'between' experienced as one composition shifts into the next, compressed and extended through my nudges. This 'between' is the relation or interval of experience, the site of the virtual-actual becoming (Manning 2009: 17). The palpability of this experience makes it possible to differentiate the incipient movements of sense-making potentialities, moving through particular design configurations. As the relation is further tested, shifted in microgranular steps of accumulation and dissolution, that interval of experience may be further spatialized and re-territorized.

This admittedly abstract exploration benefits from a specific contextual understanding from within Inflexion's design process. As it was through my design process that these concepts were made palpable, it is through exploring the relational movements that these concepts will emerge with full utility.

## **INFLEXIONS NO. 2**

### 2.1 “SIRENS”

The “becoming” is felt as a virtual potentiality of experience, moves towards an articulation in the actual, an actualization<sup>6</sup> (Manning 2009: 19). Sensing this ‘becoming’ initiated an inquiry into my design process, proliferated through the becoming-design of *Inflexions*, and activated through Research-Creation. This is an inquiry into the ‘how’ of a design’s articulation, its becoming-sense in relational movement with the Web, with spiraling potentialities.

Within *Inflexions* No. 2 “Rhythmic Nexus: the Felt Togetherness of Movement and Thought” there was one particular piece that hints at such spirals. This piece was Otto Oscar Hernández Ruiz’s “Sirens”. It particularly foreground potentialities and multiplicities of ‘sense’ a piece could be provoked to articulate with, through my intuitive nudging tendencies. The work is described thus:

When I [(Otto)] was living in a small town as a foreign student I started to make a diary of every time I heard the siren of an ambulance. I would stop whatever I was doing and take note of the time, where I was, with whom and what I was doing. The obsessive methodology became an account of the rhythm of this city, and how the layers of suffering and of leisure

interconnect through sound and attention (hearing and attributing meaning). Through sound the space of agony was connected with my own quotidian. After three months and over a hundred and fifty full entries it became impossible to continue with the project, as sometimes I would stop more than fifteen times per day to take notes. Sirens is a merging of intimate and collective spaces, an account of times when someone else's anguish became a suspension of my everyday rhythm. (Ruiz trans. by Scliar Mancini, *Inflexions No. 2*)

On each cue card was a series of notations, each marking the duration of time in which the artist heard a siren sound. The context in which each siren was heard, was described on left side of the card, with the time it was heard written on the right. However, these descriptions were all written in Portuguese, reflecting the artist's Brazilian origins.

This provided an interesting provocation in the design process as translations were not supplied by either editors or artist. While the notations of time could be read, regardless of language affiliation, the description on the left remained elusive (unless you happened to speak Portuguese). When I asked if it was important for participants to be able to read the cards (in the traditional literary sense) the answer was no.

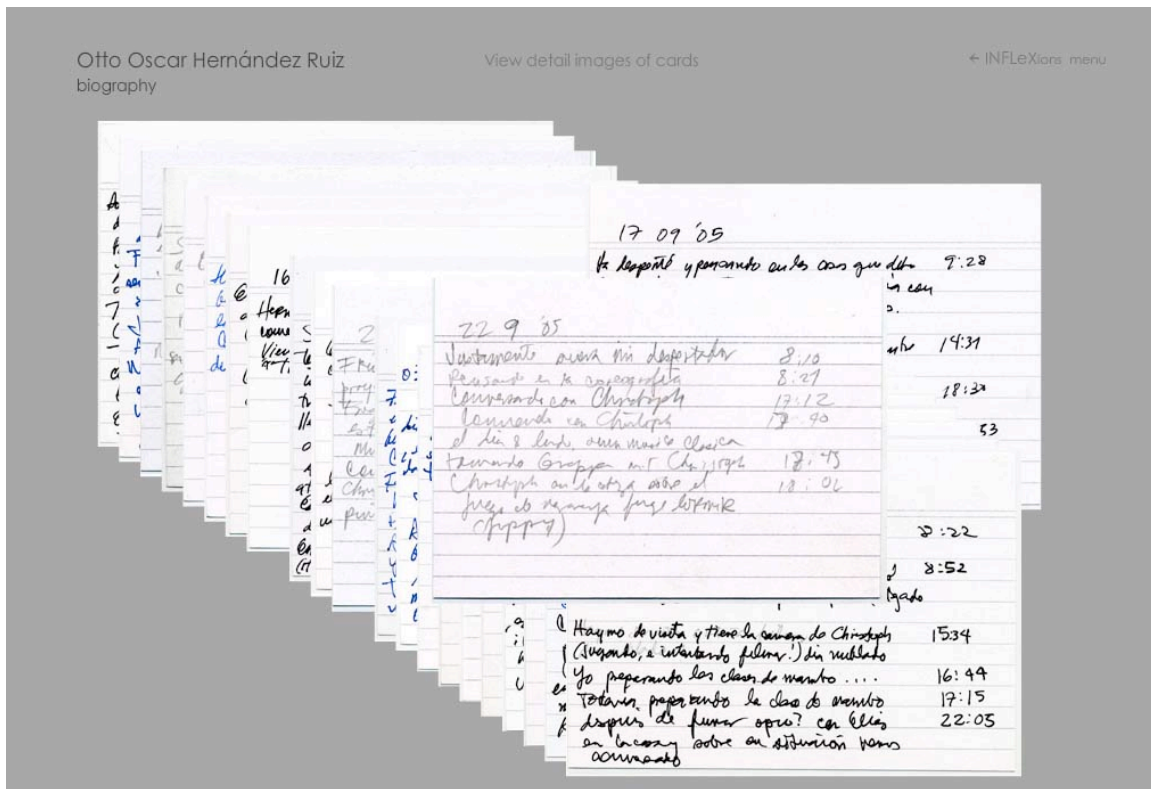
This produced a particular quality of experience as I shuffled and re-arranged the cards. Without the explicit literary description of each siren event, a sense of that notation

was foreground on an affectual level. This 'affect', was felt through qualities of experience that brought a tone and texture to the duration felt with each written notation's experience (Manning 2009: 24). As the time of each siren could not be discursively approached through its literary description, these qualities of experience fed a *felt* understanding of the notations. This was a sense of the interval in time each 'note' created, in the fullness of sensation, and immediacy of experience.

This was most palpably felt as the passing-present experience of a notation, folded into the future-present of another. Despite the descriptive details of that siren event remaining aloof, the weight of that event was still felt within the reading gesture. I use the word gesture because, despite the descriptive literary content of the notation remaining inaccessible (to this Anglophone), the text did not simply become devoid of language. Other 'senses' of that text were foreground, ones that coagulated a sense of that text as a felt duration, an interval of movement in that reading experience.

In response to this, the web-design for this piece attempts to foreground the affect of the text and notations, by provoking a sense of their overwhelming numbers, as the deck is un-shuffled by the participant's movements with the mouse.

To begin with the viewer is confronted first by the above description, as a series of 23 cue cards load behind it. This may be more accurately view online<sup>7</sup>.

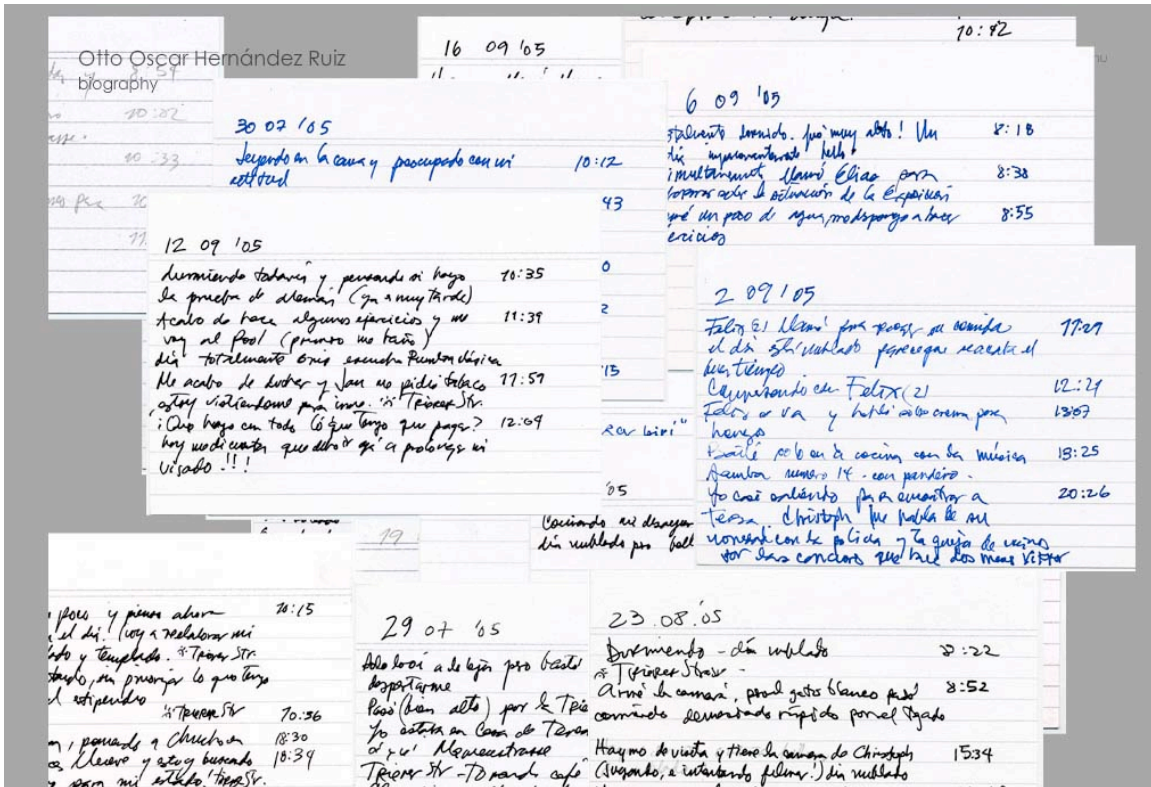


Cards 1 “Sirens” Inflexions No. 4 (2009)

These cards are spread on a diagonal across the screen, overlapping so that only the edges of their top left corners are revealed. As the cursor runs over the edges of the corners of the cards, each card will pop up a bit in response to the cursor, a bit of a nudge-response to a small prod by the mouse. Should the participant click or hold the mouse down on one of the cards, that card can then be dragged away and placed elsewhere on the screen. As the participant continues to do this, sometimes certain cards ‘stick’. By this I mean rather than only being dragged when the mouse is pressed down, and released on a mouse ‘up’, they ‘stick’ on the mouse-up as well. You have to be a bit more aggressive to click the cards ‘off’ (to deselect them) by moving it to other locations, and click over other cards that might pop up in front of that card and ‘shake it loose’. By this I mean some cards

when selected pop up in front of a card that was once partially covering it. Other times when one card is supposedly selected, a card that was under it jumps in front and becomes the item selected for dragging. There are also instances where a card that is clicked for selection does not become ‘draggable’ and remains stationary, with no alternative card popping forward.

There is an agitation to this process as sifting through and looking at more cards has to be very deliberately done. As the participant continues to move and play with the positions of the cards, the space can become claustrophobic.



Cards 1 “Sirens” Inflexions No. 4 (2009)



As the grey background relief space becomes completely covered with the cards, the white on the cards themselves becomes the new background and the text is foregrounded. They soon become overwhelming indicators of that notation in time the artist describes in the intro. As more and more cards have their full face revealed, the time notations begin to overtake the space.

This is particularly aided by the fact that all the handwriting is in Portuguese. As explained earlier when I asked if it was important for the participant to be able to ‘read’ the cards, the answer was no. Therefore I attempted to foreground the notation, that collapse of the “agony” with “quotidian” that comes from each siren sound ‘noted’ again by the reading gesture. The context of that notation, the quotidian of that index in time, may be felt even if given descriptive context in writing. Whether the participant could ‘read’ it in the literary sense, was not as important to the artist.

In response to this the design attempts to foreground the affect of the text and notations, by provoking a sense of their overwhelming numbers, as the deck is unshuffled by the participant’s movements with the mouse. Because the participant cannot smoothly control the placement and selection of the cards, an agitation is provoked in the movements from one card to another. The gestures experience a stuttering of experience, as some notations of “agony” ‘stick’ to the mouse, and cannot easily be swiped for another or clicked ‘off’ by the mouse. That notation must be ‘noted’ in an extended and stuttered experience of that duration when it ‘sticks’ and repeatedly must be told to ‘let go’ of the cursor.

Here each card is a movement in duration, with each notation written on its face marking another folds in that relation of experience. Each time a card is selected and moved by the participant, both bodies curve with the becoming of that interval of experience, until it elastically folds into another interval with another card. Alternatively this interval may scattered and dispersed into the associated milieus of all the cards in relational experience with the viewer in worlding.

Even if a card is not ‘selected’ by a mouse movement, each time a notation ‘in time’ is read, an interval is felt. A duration inflects that curves that node of experience in the shift of that relation. The Web’s rhythms simply amplify that experience of duration by provoking a multiple “sense” of that duration that ‘sticks’ to the sensing body, through the tactile agitations of the mouse’s movements. A multiple sense is also felt in the ‘overwhelming’ sense of those notations in chorus across the screen. Read one after another, each notation of time becomes heavier if the siren sound is ‘thought’ with each of those intervals. This feeling may become multiplied through the overcrowding of the web-page space. To view the full face of a card, the participant must pull that card out from the neat assembly first available. Slowly a more chaotic composition emerges, and the participant may potentially feel overwhelmed as each card starts to press against the others, some still unrevealed and stacked below. That those hidden below may be revealed if a certain combination of cards are overlapped, and a mouse click may invert their stacking order, only brings greater agitation.

These are of course are just one set of interpretations, and should in no way be taken as a categorical break down of experiences ‘available’ when engaging the work. This is just one potential experience that resonates with my sensing body. As I was unable to collaborate directly with the artist, and only with the work, I can only speculate on the intended experience he hoped to express.

## 2.2 BRINGING PALPABILITY TO RELATIONAL MOVEMENTS

The quality of design process and becoming-design engaged in this piece provides many insights for future technics of Research-Creation. These ‘technics’ are something Murphie defines as techniques and technologies that bring an agency to the intuitive tendencies of process (Murphie 2009: 2). Working with “Sirens” foregrounded the relational movements I was ‘feeling out’ for throughout my intuitive process.

As stated previously, one of the questions I asked when I first engaged “Sirens,” was if it was important that the participant be able to ‘read’ each of the cards. However my very first question was if the order in which they were viewed was important; it was not.

That the order ‘didn’t matter’ has been a common theme in those pieces that I’m able to foreground a multiple ‘sense’ of, and with the sense-making rhythms of the Web. In such cases a piece is somehow opened up. It is as though I have been given permission<sup>8</sup> to ‘play’ with the rhythms and inflections of a work, simply by having the

freedom to move elements of a piece around. The relation is constantly being shifted as I do this, each differentiating nudge of the relation, acutely spatializing the inflections of the piece's becoming. This is not simply playing with the order of the work, or how the work is experienced, but playing with what is 'working' in the work, how it articulates and 'makes sense' in the experience. When the order 'doesn't matter' it seems that the borders of a piece become softer within the design process. The affective margin of relational movement becomes more tactile, and the becoming-actual of the interval's incipient movements, more acutely felt.

Sensing the incipient movement of the virtual actualizing in a piece is the first step towards finding that shift in the relation that will provoke a new quality of becoming. This is because in sensing that becoming, you are already moving with and moved by its rhythm of experience. Once in the middle of that rhythm – pastness and prehended future folding into the node of present experience - you are in the immediacy of a piece's becoming and deformation (Manning 2009: 36). Once there you may then perceive in that perception, how the shifts in the relation you provoke 'become' in the immediacy of that perception. Through such a process a piece's becoming may be spatialized and re-territorialized within the perception, with each shift of the relation revealing more qualities of becoming and spiraling potentialities.

As such it's not the non-linearity of the piece that opens it up and makes it easier for my design to shift the relation. It's not that there are multiples in that work, multiple images, sounds, or text lines. It's the way the relational movement of the work makes the

virtual-actual of becoming more palpable, and thus more easily shifted, spatialized and then re-territorialized. This palpability is granted through what Manning calls an “elasticity of the almost” (Manning 2009: 41). Manning explains in *Relationscapes*

[...that the] relation is always already elastic. It expresses this elasticity in relation movement through inflexion. But that doesn't mean there are no other opportunities to feel its elasticity... The elasticity of the relation is perceptible in its affective margin, in the emergence of the unknowable where what is known stretches and contracts into a propulsion of experience. Every event is in some sense imbued with such virtual elasticity. What relational movement can do is to make this elasticity felt, to actualize it in an almost-form that takes shape in its deformation (Manning 2009: 41).

In the elastic movement, the movement becomes more-than, enveloping in its folds all the potential of its pastness and its futurity (Manning 2009: 54). When I play with the arrangements of a work, I am actually playing with its relations, felt in the rhythm and the incipient movements of its virtual-actual becoming. The more I can ‘play’ with these relational movements, the more their elasticity of becoming-almost, is felt (41). This is felt in contractions and extensions of becoming and deformation, the ingathering of the incipient movements, and their almost-becoming in the virtual (41). This experience in design process leads to a stronger rhythm of understanding of that piece, how it “becomes” as past and prehended becoming-body fold with present.

### **3.0 INFLEXIONS NO. 3**

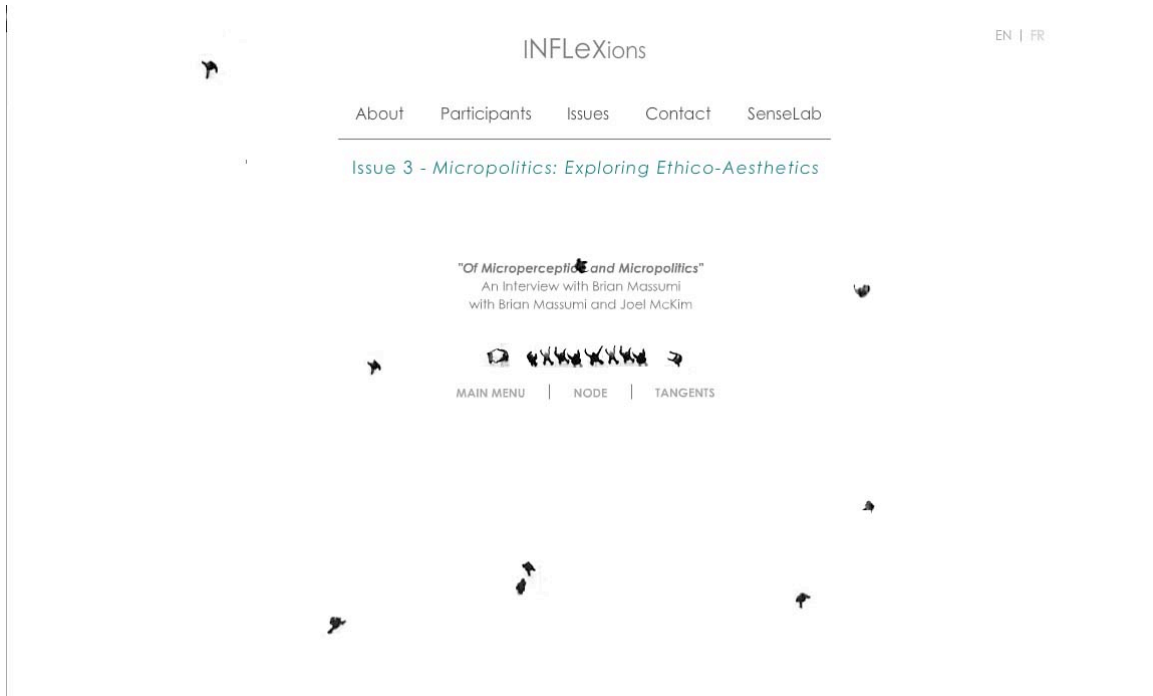
#### 3.1 ENABLING TANGENTS

For this issue the *Tangents*<sup>9</sup> consisted of “molecules” that were part of the event, “Society of Molecules”<sup>10</sup>. This SenseLab event was held between May 1-7 2009,

Each molecule was composed of 3-10 people in 16 locations across the world. One member of each molecule was designated as an “emissary” and visited another molecule during the period leading up to the event. Emissaries deposited a “seed” with the host molecule and brought back a “recipe” to their home molecule. Molecular events were conceived as local interventions with ethico-aesthetic reverberations on a micropolitical level. (Inflexions 2010 n.p.)

Taking inspiration from a molecular idea of people traversing the globe, I created a menu/index page (viewable here) in which each of the *Tangents* would be little people walking across the screen, shot from a birds-eye view. Each person has their own route that they cycle through (unfortunately only on a straight line because of technical limitations). The *Node*<sup>11</sup> section is signified by a line of people –one for each piece in the *Node* - all shoulder to shoulder, swaying their arms back and forth collectively. However each person in the Node line is a unique body, despite their synchronous movements. To

make sense of an extra paper, which was I added a single person, twirling on the spot, just to the right of the *Node* group. To the left of the *Node* people are two people facing each other swinging hands, which references the two *Node* editors, and links to their introduction to issue *No. 3* (see *people 1*).



(*people 1*, *Inflexions No.3* (2009))

Each of these people stop their movements on a mouse-over and reveal an image or text-base description of the project they are linked to<sup>12</sup>. One side-effect of this is that each time a *Tangent* person is stopped on a mouse-over, and restarts on a mouse-off, their 'walk' begins again but at a timing with the others different than before. Thus the rhythm shared with the other people moving on the screen shifts slightly, as the gait begins at a different interval.

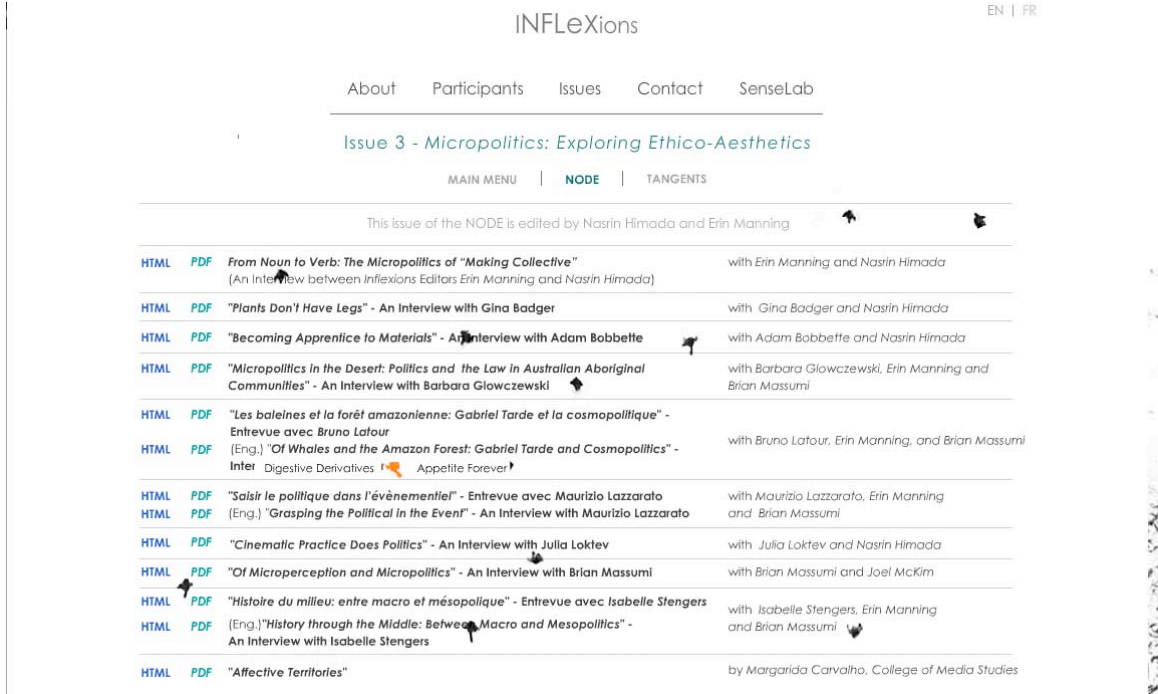
The background was left white in an effort to give the people an open plane within the ambiguous web page ‘space’, rather than providing some image of a floor or ground that supported some illusionary environment. This was an effort to make it feel as though the people were walking through the image plane and not *on* one.

As with most of the designs I make for *Inflexions*, I leave an ‘out’ for those participants who (perhaps) do not have the patience to deal with these more exploratory menu systems. The waving *Node* people are an example of this: they are links to view a list form of the *Node* and *Tangent*. If the participant should choose to select either of them, a list form with full descriptions of each of the works in that *Node* or *Tangent* appears. However the tangential walking people remain on the screen (see image *people 2*).

When you view the *Tangent* in the list section, the tangential people are momentarily suspended at whatever spot they happened to be at on their walking route when the participant clicked to view the list-view page. However they do keep ‘walking on the spot’ and should the participant bring their cursor over one of those people, that tangent will begin walking across the entire window again. As such there may be a combination of suspended and ‘full-route-walking’ people shifting how that illusion of ‘walking’ feels on that plane.

When the *Node* list section (view [here](#)<sup>13</sup>) is selected all the tangential people seamlessly continue walking with the same pattern they had on the first main menu page.





(people 2, *Inflexions* No. 3 (2009))

By seamlessly I mean that there is no reload or new page loaded, so the animation is not restarted, it just continues on from the first main page. Consequently, while the viewer is confronted by a list of the pieces in the *Node*, these little people continue to move across the list, subverting the planar orientation slightly.

These “free-agents” also undermine the ‘normalized’ engagement of that listed material by injecting some mischief into the page. As the participant goes to click on that text link, a little person may walk under the cursor, causing a *Tangent* to now be the selected hyperlink. The ‘tangent’ will stop walking for as long as the cursor is over it, so if the participant continues to click down, they may be brought to an editorial piece they hadn’t intended to visit. This serves the TANGENT well as they are meant to be

tangential interlopers that inflect the *Node*'s more curated themes.

This highly conditional scenario was not hard-coded into the piece, nor was it pre-designed to play out in such a way. The activation of a new potentiality and quality of becoming 'became' through the shift in the relation, provoked by the rhythm of experience of the Web, with participant, with *Inflexions*. An incipient movement moving through the tangential people and Node list was activated, through the shifting of the milieus of participant, website and Web in worlding.

Together participant, creator, and field of web-design co-constituted by *Inflexions* curve the rhythm of experience to a new quality of becoming, one that for a moment, is held in spirals of potential activity. The rhythm of that experience curves to a new relational experience as the prehended *Node* content selected by the participant, is actualized as one of many *Tangents* instead. Not only does the participant not end up viewing what she had assumed she was clicking on but the relation itself has been moved, and a new quality of becoming provoked, through curving of that experience. The experience of reading has been tweaked.

This creates an interval of experience. What is felt, in the viewing/reading, is as much rhythm as content. But instead this web experience engages a relational movement that is itself rhythmic, that pushes and pulls in a different way, in a "togetherness of a curving that fields metastable equilibriums" (Manning 2009: 33).

As the relational experience of *Inflexions* folds into a new becoming, the TANGENT piece and participant move the relation, diffusing and reterritorializing the web-space within an activity of the senses. The elasticity of this experience provides insights for future technics of Research Creation that may wish to pull from the ‘happy accident’ to open up its spiraling potentialities for future *Inflexions* issues.

Another interesting aspect of this piece is that like the cards in Otto’s “Sirens”, these tangential people listen and respond to participant interactions, but they do not take them as strict commands. They do not always obey. They do not always act in the way the participant expects them too. On the first main menu page they act and respond fairly methodically, revealing a description of the Tangent they link to (through a mouse-over) and loading that exact Tangent on a mouse selection (or click). But on the *Node* list page particularly, they become more subversive, or at least mischievous. They take away some of the control from the participant, by ‘accidentally’ interjecting themselves into the way the selection and link-to action plays out. For instance when the participant clicks down, the prehended the node-piece they believe they have selected and expect to experience, elastically snaps to an experience of a tangent piece instead. What Manning calls “the elasticity of the almost” is made palpable – the participants feels the interval between expectation and experience, between the virtual and the actual. A different quality is introduced, one that curves experience and activates new potentialities of experience (Manning 2009: 41).

[This] is perceptible in its affective margin, in the emergence of the unknowable where what is known stretches and contracts into a propulsion of experience. Every event is in some sense imbued with such virtual elasticity. What relational movement can do is to make this elasticity felt, to actualize it in an almost-form that takes shape in its deformation.

(Manning 2009: 41)

Both “Sirens” and the menu system of *No.3* express instances where the the rhythms and inflections of the Web ‘push back’ against the participant, but within and through the becoming of that piece in worlding. This ‘pushing back’ is the elasticity of the relation giving palpability to the incipient movement moving through the Web. But the articulation of this palpability is made with the becoming of the piece, its relational movement, in worlding with the participant.

This suggests that the rhythms and inflections of the Web are being used by the becoming-design, to activate incipient movements in a piece, provoking a quality of becoming particularly articulate on the Web. This may be how the ‘sense’ of a piece is multiplied and amplified by different becoming designs, responsive to the inciting environment.

The design’s use of the rhythms of the Web to activate a particular quality of becoming in a piece, might also explain why some pieces do not achieve the same level

of web-articulated sense-making. This is because incipient movements moving through a piece must have the propensity to be activated by the quality of relational movement the shifting milieus of the Web are capable of. If not, the quality of relational movement the becoming-design uses to activate incipient movements in a piece, will be pulled from other milieus passing through that relation.

This may explain why some pieces do not articulate a multiple 'senses' with the Web. This does not mean they fail to express a 'sense' on the Web, but that the multiplicity of 'sense' they express, inflects less strongly than other milieus passing through the piece's form. A becoming-design may pull from many milieus such as: the descriptive language in the piece, the rhythms of its colors, a particular mouse gesture needed to open and view the piece online, the tone of voice in the writing, the space the piece takes up on the webpage etc.

Every *Tangent*, *Node*, and menu space of *Inflexions*, has been moved by the becoming-design's provocation of a relational movement, to a particular quality of becoming. But this relational movement is not one necessarily provoked by the shifting milieus of the web. A piece online still moves with the rhythms of the Web, as well as other associated milieus, in worlding with the participant. But those rhythms were not necessarily what activated a new quality of becoming-piece in worlding with Web and participant. This could be said for the HTML versions of the *Node* papers, used in this issue. The Web certainly inflects with such pieces, and moves and is moved by its relational movements. But those rhythms do not necessarily activate an incipient

movement within the becoming-actual of that piece's articulation.

#### **4.0 INFLEXIONS NO. 4**

##### 4.1 “LOCO-MOTION”; QUALITIES OF TRANVERSALITY AND CO-GENERATIVE DESIGN

The designs for Issue 4, and Andrew Murphie's 'Loco-Motion" in particular, are the culminating response to the insights Research-Creation brought to my design process. For this issue I dramatically changed the way I worked, in order to maximize the potential of my intuitively-driven tendencies to 'feel out' for the relational movements and becoming of an issue. Again this relates to having 'all the pieces' available to me, so that they might be poked and prodded, provoking an articulation more palpable within the rhythm and inflection of the experience of the issue as a whole.

During Inflexions No. 2 “Micropolitics: Exploring Ethico-Aesthetics”, these 'tendencies' were exercised within the scope of a single piece, on a case-by-case basis<sup>14</sup>. The navigation system was treated in a similar way, with the inflections and rhythms amplified by the nudging process, only felt out for in the experiential of that immediate piece. By this I mean the 'nudges' were not employed across the experience of more than one piece. They were only exercised within the experience of one piece's design process in Flash. Despite my intuitive tendencies driving me to surround myself with all the pieces of an issue, and 'all the pieces' within the web presentation of a particular editorial

piece, this process was not extended to and magnified across the whole of the issue. Such an approach would demand that the rhythms and inflections of one piece be felt out and rigorously explored with respect to the relational experience of another piece (and vice versa). This would mean having more than one piece running in the same workspace, moving back and forth between them. Again, this would be done to differentiate the qualities of experience my pokes and prods provoke transversally, across the immediate relational experience of multiple pieces. This would result in an exploration of how a shift in the relation (as provoked by my design movements) moves all the pieces of an issue towards another quality of articulation particularly articulate across the whole of the issue, with the participant.

Working in such a way would be very time-consuming, and not necessarily the best strategy for meeting deadlines in a professional environment. It would demand constantly having to re-engage and differentiate the qualities of experience felt in one piece through the qualities of experience provoked by design movement in another. No single piece could be closed off and 'finalized' for the approval of an external editor. Until the whole of that issue had been congealed as a whole, through the differentiating nudges of my intuitive process, the design process would not be settled upon a specific actualization in Flash. Everything would have to be open and accessible to the poking and prodding process transversally, so that the inflections of my design could be felt not only within the supposed confines of a single piece's workspace, but across the transversal and relational experiences of multiple pieces.

However, with *Inflexions* No. 4 “Transversal Fields of Relation”, I attempted to find a middle road, a way of touching on the complexity such a process might afford without succumbing to its enormous time constraints. With this issue, I attempted to bring an additional agency to my intuitive tendencies, by opening up that relational design approach to the entire contents of the issue. However this was done without mirroring the process in an infinity that would likely see no end. Through this I saw myself operating in line with technics of Research-Creation, something Murphie defines as techniques and technologies that bring an agency to the intuitive tendencies of process (Murphie 2009: 2). This is “the partial, always incomplete attempt at what used to be thought as agency (now agency as participation and becoming) within worlding” (Murphie 2008, 2). This extends research towards how participation occurs, where “agency is not the autonomous action of a subject but a mode of participation that produces becomings” (Thain 2009: 5).

Agency is a strange term for the process I am defining, for usually agency is seen as an individual’s capacity to have an effect on a process, while here it was as much the process having an effect on my design intuition. This agency, within the context of *Inflexions* No. 4, was first exercised by maintaining an un-segmented approach to the design process for all the pieces of that issue. In other words the designs for editorial pieces, and the navigation system as a whole, were created in co-generative relational dialogue with one another (a dialogue that created a polyphony). But in basic terms "Loco-Motion" was an attempt to develop the design of an editorial piece *with* the developing design of the overall issue.



This gave my intuitive tendencies access to rhythms and inflections of 'all the pieces' of that issue, throughout the design process, but with the ability to return to and modify pieces within their actualization in Flash code. This is unlike issue 2 and 3 where once the design for an editorial piece was completed, it was rarely re-opened<sup>15</sup> and modified in response to the later design actualization in Flash, enacted in the navigation system.

Any change in the navigation system would be explored through the qualitative shift in experience felt in another piece (and vice versa). This is in contrast to deciding on just the 'right' shift of the relation, provoked by my design, based on the qualities of experience felt within the confines of that one piece's workspace. Instead design options within one piece would be differentiated and decided upon based on the rhythms and inflections felt in other pieces as well.

In other words, the relational field of experience in which my intuitive process engages and nudges the becoming of a piece would no longer pretend to be discrete process and agency would become distributed.

My relational experience, and the rhythms and inflections of my design experience, ensure that I am always designing with the becoming of the whole of an issue. Even when I design for pieces in a supposedly discrete and segmented way, the design experience of piece 'A', continues to inflect the design movements of past and future

pieces. As suggested earlier, this is possible through the rhythm of experience. This rhythm - through the affect of the past and prehended future - insures that my design body 'becomes' with the whole of that issue, in relational movement. As I move through that content of that issue, present-passing design experiences of Piece 'A' fold into future-present experiences of Piece 'F' and onward (Manning 2009: 102). This rhythm of experience ensures that an entire issue, and its individual pieces, are inflecting and rhythmically becoming together. This is regardless of whether the coding level of that design has been closed and finalized. Whether I still have access to it, and can change the Flash code of a piece, does not limit the relational experience informing my design process. The experience of designing with that piece, and the becoming-design of that piece, continues to 'become' in relational movement with the entire issue, the Web, the participant, and so on.

Thus I am always designing with the becoming of an issue. I cannot decide to work otherwise. The becoming of that issue is never a segmented process. Even if my Flash-coding process begins and ends, and treats the 'design' of that piece as a discrete object, the rhythm, inflections of relation movement fold that piece into a becoming with Web and participant (Manning 2009: 35). And as the participant moves through that content of that issue, both issue and participant 'become' in rhythm and inflection with the Web, in a process of "worlding" (Manning 2009: 66).

However, designing in a supposedly case-by-case basis can limit my ability to amplify the sense-making potentialities of that overall issue. This relates to activating, if

not pre-accelerating, a larger field of sense-making potentialities moving through the relational experience of that issue.

For example a sense-making potentiality of experience may have begun to move towards an actualization, through a shift in the relation experienced, as a participant moves from the navigation system to an individual editorial piece (Manning 2009: 25). However, this relational movement may not have been enough to activate that potentiality. Although palpable in the 'more-than' of experience, through the in-gathering or “pre-acceleration” of the potentiality, it is not yet fully articulate within the rhythm of that experience (Manning 2009: 19, 25). Were my nudges and prods used across the experience of both these pieces, a greater palpability of this potentiality may be foregrounded, providing an opportunity to activate that sense within my Flash coding. As my nudges continue to feel out for and prehend 'just the right' shift in the relation, that 'sense' may then be pushed towards an actualization in the relational experience, that may not have otherwise been felt.

Lending this nudging process to potentialities provoked by the relational movement across the experience of a whole issue, may allow layers or multiplicities of sense to be doubled up. Although I can by no means control which sense-making potentialities are actualized in the relational experience of the participant, I may be able to bring a greater palpability to these potentialities, increasing the chances for that sense to be felt in the “more than” of experience (if not fully actualized) (Manning 2009: 63). This can result in a doubling of 'sense', discursive and affective, that amplifies the articulation of that

issue's relational experience.

Issue 2, and 3 did not necessarily suffer from being designed in a more segmented way, for these issues were focused on sense-making potentialities inflecting within the individual editorial pieces. Works such as “Sirens”<sup>16</sup> demonstrate this. However, continuing to design in such a way holds onto the illusion that there is a border between the designs of these pieces, their experience, and their becoming. By failing to embrace the relationality and transversality of that design process, the ability of that issue to coagulate with an affective surplus of sense, may have been weakened. This was specifically the case, for instance, with the articles which were not incorporated into the wider design, kept as written pieces only, giving the participant or reader the impression that only art could be relationally activated.<sup>17</sup>

As emphasized earlier, as the participant moves through issues of *Inflexions*, navigating that website and picking and choosing their way through its contents, they are in a process of becoming that cannot be abstracted from either the issue or the web as a whole. Maintaining aesthetic and coded borders between editorial pieces, navigation systems, and the whole of that issue, only works against the affective 'sense' a given issue may be trying to promote. Therefore, why design based on the assumption that the design of each piece is a discrete process at all? If the design for individual pieces is already emerging and becoming with the whole of that issue, in relational experience with the web and participant, why not design with the full agency of that relational movement? To truly understand how you are affecting the articulating a piece, through the shifts in the

relation your design provokes, you must design responding to the rhythms and inflections those relational movements provoke in the whole of that issue. Only then might you be able to provoke an affect-full experience of that piece, amplified by the relational movement of the Web.

This is in the interests of gaining more control over the affective experience of an issue, because ultimately, you cannot control or prescribe a shift in the relation. You cannot control how rhythm is moved towards a new articulation, or how it inflects with the sensing body worlding. Neither can the design body ‘decide’ how it will be moved, and towards what quality of becoming. I cannot *decide* what a design process will move with and be moved by. However, I can expand the potential for my intuitive tendencies to sense the virtual-actual of an issue's becoming, in a way palpable within my immediate experience.

Sensing the incipient movement of the virtual actualizing in a piece is the first step to finding that shift in the relation that will provoke a new quality of becoming. This is because in sensing that becoming, you are already moving with and moved by its rhythm of experience. Once in the middle of that rhythm – “pastness” and prehended future folding into the node of present experience - you are in the immediacy of a piece’s becoming and deformation (Manning 2009: 7, 69). Once there you may then perceive how the shifts in the relation you provoke ‘become’ with each shift of the relation, revealing more qualities of becoming.

The distributed agency of the process as activated in *Inflexions* No. 4 magnified the potential for this to happen. Expanding the scope in which my nudges were employed provoked a more palpable sense of the whole of an issue's becoming. As introduced earlier, by opening up my nudging process transversally -across all the relational movements of the entire contents of that issue- I found I could increase the affective force of the work. In so doing I was potentially affecting "an expansion of perception [that] brings us into 'affective co-motion'" which, Thain suggests, "[opens] us to more possibilities for being affected, [increasing] our own power to affect in return" (Thain 2008: 3).

This relates to the ability to differentiate the affective tonalities foregrounded by the rhythms and inflections provoked by my nudging process. This differentiation is felt in the qualities of experience articulated in the experience of engaging with the site. Through the rhythm of that experience a difference is felt in these qualities as the present-passing experience, as a tone of experience folds into the future present of another.

By amplifying the palpability of the becoming of a piece, in relational movement with that whole issue, the ability to differentiate and provoke particular qualities of experience increases. The becoming of a piece may then potentially be shifted towards a particularly affective articulation with the Web, within the incipency of its becoming (Manning 2009: 6). The implications of this within a design context are that a design can then be more than an aesthetically pleasing framing and presentation case for web content. It can be more than the functionality of buttons and links. It can be a relational

movement, a way of activating potentialities of sense in a piece, within the incipency of its becoming. Instead of being a paste applied to the exterior of a form, the design process may be a method of excitation and provocation, a way of inciting new qualities of becoming within the affectual sense of a piece.

#### 4.2 THE EMERGENCE OF TRANSVERSALITY THROUGH TECHNICS OF RESEARCH-CREATION

Transversality is a dimension that strives to overcome two impasses... [and] tends to be realized when maximum communication is brought about between different levels and above all in terms of different directions. (Guattari qtd. by Brunner and Rhoades 1)

In issue 4, “Transversal Fields of Relation” transversality emerged with the greatest articulation within Andrew Murphie's "Loco-Motion; 14 theses and 21 ghosts for locative and mobile media", or rather through Loco-Motion's relational movements *with* the navigation system as a whole. Here I want to focus especially on this piece in order to bring out this quality of transversality. But as this exposition progresses, Loco-Motion's relational dialogue with the whole of the issue, will be folded back into the discussion. Such an approach is not intended to suggest that Loco-Motion can be treated discretely.

"Loco-Motion", which can be viewed [online](#)<sup>18</sup>, opens with the following introduction:

Mobile and locative media are now at the core of things. But this is an unstable core. It's this instability that I'm interested in today. I'm not trying to "pin down" mobile and locative media. Rather, I'm interested in how what I'm calling "loco-motion" propels an ongoing variation in living and technical systems. This has implications for thinking about media, but also for much else. I'm also interested in loco-mobile media as inter-temporal. By this I don't mean that we have lots of modes of living available to us, that we can switch between. Rather I'm suggesting that the switching itself is becoming our prime mode of living, not only with mobile phones, or locative media, but all media events, for example VJing. (Murphie 2011: n.p.)

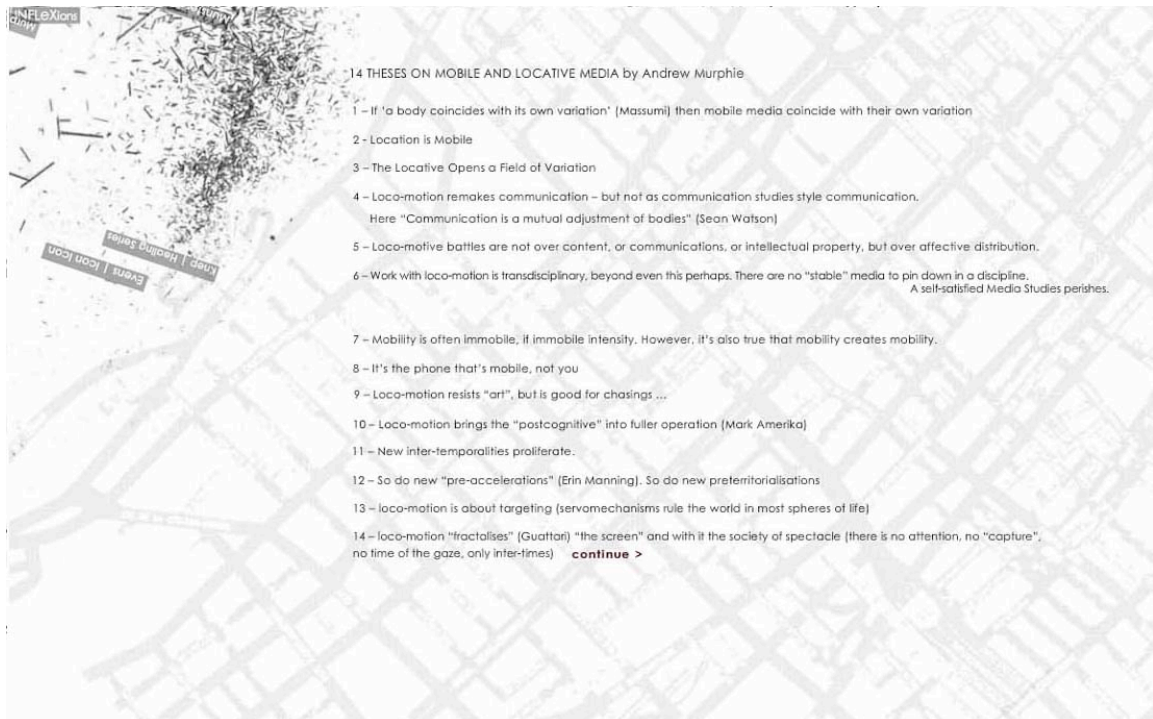
This introduction was followed by a list of "14 theses and 21 ghosts for locative and mobile media". These may be read in their plain text format [here](#)<sup>19</sup> in almost the same format in which I received them. However, upon seeing that each theses and ghost was primarily one sentence long, I asked the author if it was permissible to a) play with the order of those theses and b) whether they needed to be read in a fairly standard<sup>20</sup> way. Luckily I was given complete creative license, providing me with great freedom in regards to how I could engaged and provoked the text.

As with "Sirens", "Loco-Motion" offered an opportunity to play with the reading experience in gestural way. By this I mean activating the affective tonality within a



reading experience. I hoped to foreground sense-making potentialities, within the reading experience, which would activate what was being described in the text. By this I mean activate that relational experience in such a way that it would 'do' what was being discursively described, within the 14 theses and 21 ghosts. I hoped to find ways of foregrounding 'senses' of that text, to actualize in the design what was being poetically proposed in a literary form.

This interest was propagated by my experiences working with "Sirens", and foregrounded some of the transversality already at work in my design process.



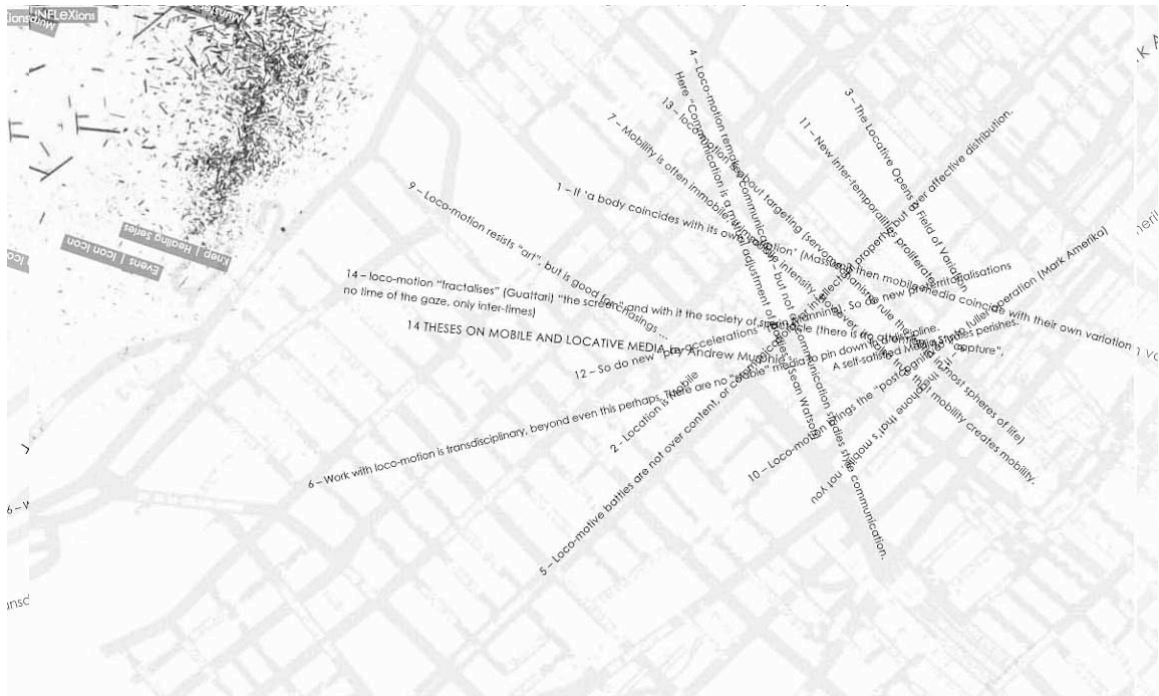
(Fig. 1 "Loco-Motions" Inflexions No. 4 (2010))

I opened the presentation for this piece with the introduction supplied by the artist, laid over a slightly faded, grey-scale image of a street map of Montreal (see Fig. 1). This image is slightly ambiguous, and may not necessarily register as a map of anything. It needed only to suggest grid-like proportions that may be later foreground as map-like qualities.

Because I wanted to maintain some legibility in the reading of this piece, rather than freely abstracting it for my own purposes, I decided to 'swing' between different textures with which to read discursively and feel experientially, foregrounding in different design valences what that text was proposing with its theses.

Therefore, I created a scenario whereby the participant, after reading the introduction, could click on a 'continue' button, that when selected, brought him or her to the 14 theses of "locative and mobile media". This activated not a straight-forward rendering of the text as text but a clot of intersecting sentences crisscrossed and rotated by different degrees, centripetally, around approximately three to four points of intersection (see Fig. 2).

The idea is that once this arrangement reaches full opacity, each line spins apart and rotates until all are distributed equally along a vertical alignment, with the same zero degree rotation (see Fig 2). A title at the top of that column then emerges, each sentence now revealed to be one of the "14 theses" of locative and mobile media.



(Fig. 2 “Loco-Motions” Inflexions No. 4. Web, 2010)

The content of this text explores the following:

1 – If ‘a body coincides with its own variation’ (Massumi) then mobile media coincide with their own variation

2 – Location is Mobile

3 – The Locative Opens a Field of Variation

4 – Loco-motion remakes communication – but not as communication studies style communication. Here “Communication is a mutual adjustment of bodies”

(Sean Watson)

5 – Loco-motive battles are not over content, or communications, or intellectual property, but over affective distribution.

6 – Work with loco-motion is transdisciplinary, beyond even this perhaps. There are no “stable” media to pin down in a discipline. A self-satisfied Media Studies perishes.

7 – Mobility is often immobile, if immobile intensity. However, it’s also true that mobility creates mobility.

8 – It’s the phone that’s mobile, not you.

9 – Loco-motion resists “art”, but is good for chasings ...

10 – Loco-motion brings the “postcognitive” into fuller operation (Mark Amerika)

11 – New inter-temporalities proliferate.

12 – So do new “pre-accelerations” (Erin Manning). So do new preterritorialisations

13 – loco-motion is about targeting (servomechanisms rule the world in most spheres of life)

14 – loco-motion “fractalises” (Guattari) “the screen” and with it the society of spectacle (there is no attention, no “capture”, no time of the gaze, only inter-times)

(Murphie 2010: n.p.)

The modest animated transition created to get to this text, was not casually done. While the participant is reading this text in its more so-called traditional (more aptly book-based) layout, there was a hope that the memory of that transition, and the affect of that experience, would inflect with their *present reading of the text*. Although a very small gesture, it carried the potentiality to activate further experiences of that piece, with the next 'continue' button clicked. It served as (perhaps) a small reminder that the Web-based articulation of that piece held its own forms of mobility and locomotion, asking for an adjusting of bodies-in-the-making and a reorientation of experience (Murphie 2010: n.p.).

Participants were then offered a second 'continue' button. Upon its selection, each of the 'theses' swings and rotates back into the intersecting arrangement briefly seen in the first transition.

Once the theses have taken a position in the center of the page, intersecting theses start to vibrate slightly, and the page sections off into 9 cropped views of square proportions. Within each square exists a cropped view of intersecting text arrangements, like that of the original graphic first experienced, each at different focal points and focal length perspectives. By this I mean each viewing square had a fragmented or dissecting view a grouping of intersecting sentences.

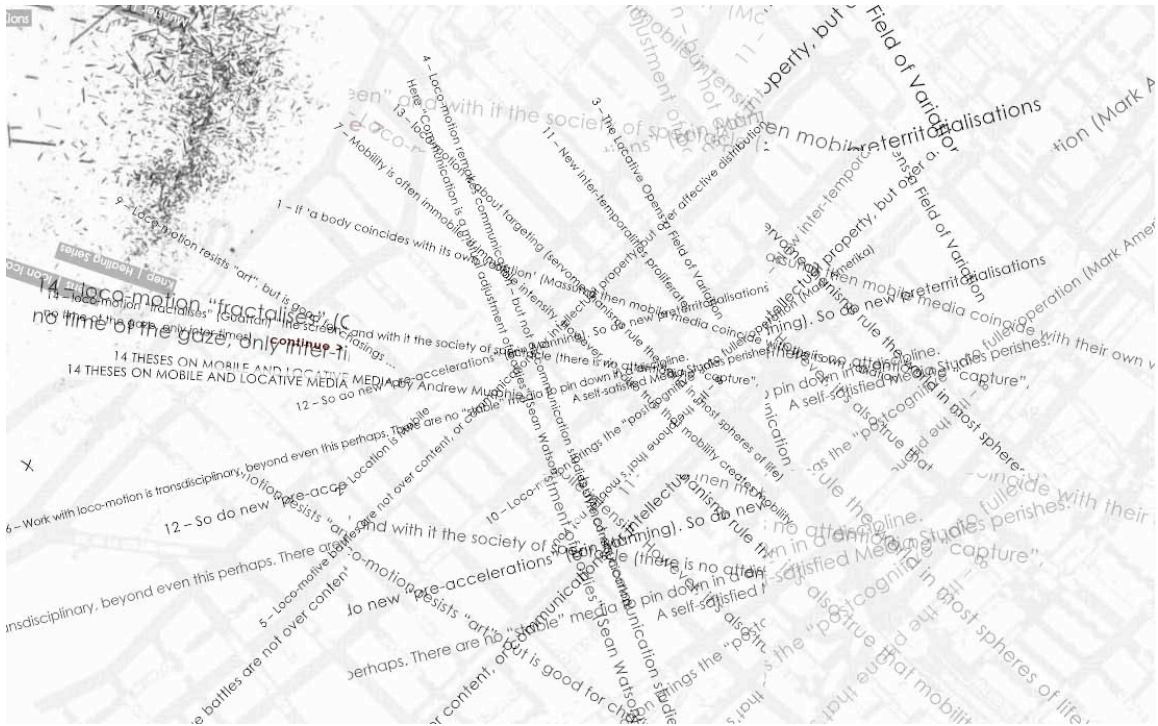


Fig. 3 “Loco-Motions” Inflexions No. 4. (2010)

The arrangement of intersecting sentences shifts the experience of the theses, the beginning to end, line-by-line reading of the text, interrupting it by crashing another sentence into that reading (Fig 3). Thus certain words and phrases overlap and interject in the narrative experience. The 'sense' of the text begins to shift, the literary-narrative of words collaging together in the rhythm of that experience. Certain words and phrases

begin to foreground themselves through an inflection, layering another 'sense' into the discursive understanding of certain theses sentences, remembered from the previous reading page.

This becomes all the more palpable as you move the mouse around. Should the participant move their cursor even slightly, a mouse-follow<sup>21</sup> action is enacted. By this I mean that within each cropped view of the sentences, the text 'follows' or moves in the opposite direction of the mouse movement. This animated response is limited to either a horizontal or vertical axis. As you run your mouse upwards, the view squares for certain parts of the graphic run downwards, while others run up. They even appear to fold into one another, and onto themselves. This is because (in general) as the cursor moves left, the extreme left view of the text will move its focus horizontally right, while the far right square's view will move left as well. Usually whichever direction the mouse pushes, the view of the intersecting theses will fold into the middle. This is done vertically as well as horizontally which means that the 'reading' of the sentences is broken up, and refuses to settle. Even when the mouse is stationary the sentences continue to vibrate by small degrees, back and forth.

While the sentences maintain their legibility, these shifts and vibrations demand that the participant continue to re-calibrate their body's relationship to that reading gesture and experience. In effect this 'does' what some of the theses suggested in their prose. Thus "Loco-motion remakes communication – but not as communication studies



style communication” (Murphie 2010: n.p.). Here “Communication is a mutual adjustment of bodies" (Sean Watson " (Watson qtd in Murphie 2010: n.p.).

Through this design process, the participant is (hopefully) given a sense in the immediacy of that reading sensation, of how they are making 'sense' of the literature, within the immediacy of that experience. Future and passing present words, grasped within the immediate moment a particular 'view finder' square makes them visible for discursive reading, are folded into past and future-present phrases made available in other squares. The relational movement of the reading gesture engages the "inter-temporalities" proliferated by mobile media. It ""fractalises" (Guattari) “the screen” and with it the society of spectacle (there is no attention, no “capture”, no time of the gaze, only inter-times)" (Murphie 2010: n.p.).

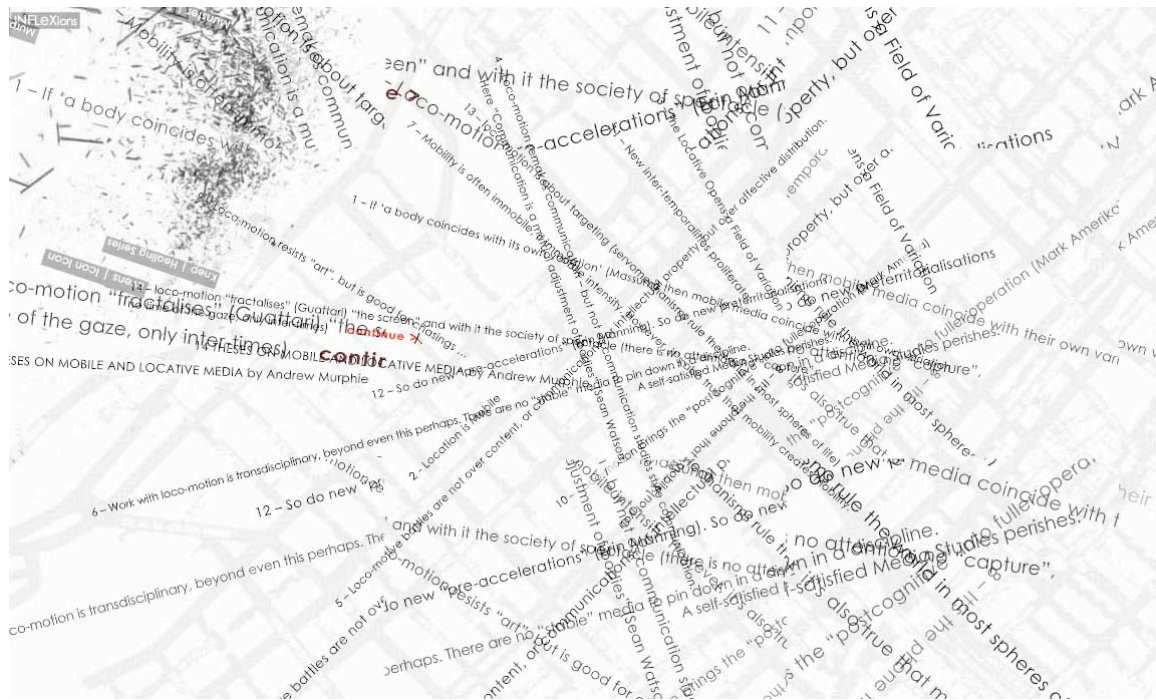


Fig. 4 “Loco-Motions” Inflexions No. 4 (2010)



This arrangement is "good for chasings" provoking a desire to "target" certain sentences (that might still elude you), making palpable your own desire to read in 'good working order' from left to right (Murphie 2010: n.p.). And yet, like any reading process (distracted as we are by daydreams and the like), we find we cannot adequately control the process.

As participants push and pull their way through the reading of the theses, the memory and affective experience of their past column-based reading may be called up once more. This may fold a layer of sense into the reading, one that resists a single temporality, "coinciding with its own variation" as Murphie suggests (Murphie 2010: n.p.). Certain words that were not previously prominent in the participant's reading of the list version of the theses, may now inflect and affect in different ways.

Adding another layer of transversality to this experience is the grey-scale image of a map of Montréal that sits under the text. Reading, pushing, and pulling the text across this map becomes reminiscent of the scrolling gesture used when navigating the view-windows of GPS and GoogleMaps<sup>22</sup>. The fore-grounding of this map graphic may also inflect sense of those theses as highways and byways, streets as well as sentences. Again this is a potential sense-making experience that may or may not be foregrounded in the experience of the participant. But the potential for that inflection has been built into the relational experience of that work. This is another transversal connection that can be

made with the "locative and mobile media" of interest within the poetics of the theses.

But this is not all. The piece continues. Another opportunity to make these qualitative comparisons of the text's discursive and affective experience is offered in the next section of that piece. Again this is triggered by a selection of the 'continue' button. However, this time the 'continue' button has been buried within the intersecting texts, visible within only 3 of the viewfinder windows.

In the initial stages the placement of the 'continue' button was experimented with. But when placed more accessibly at the bottom of the page we found that participants did not spend very much time with this orchestration of the theses. They were perhaps more accustomed to clicking next next next in a website to move forward. Therefore we decided to bury this link button inside the shifting and sliding text of the viewfinders,, in an attempt to slow the participant down and spend a bit more time in that texture of reading experience. As that text is continually moving and scrolling, the participant has to 'fight' with the animation a bit, becoming part of that push and pull process (and they themselves becoming nudges of the experience). While some would argue such a move is less 'user-friendly', I feel this admittedly imperfect actualization holds potentialities for future design explorations.

Once the continue button is successfully selected, the cropped views of the texts dissolve. In this process nine discrete versions of that one text arrangement fade into view. If the participant did not yet understand that each of the nine views were different

focal length perspectives of that one arrangement, the 'reveal' process might clarify this. This is to emphasize the fractalization of mobile media these inter-temporalities proliferated through the screen.

As soon as these discrete text arrangements reveal themselves, eight of these arrangements start to fade out until only the central arrangement -the one we started with – remains (see Fig. 5). This arrangement then spins out again, rotating into the column-based arrangement experienced earlier. Again an opportunity to re-read that text is provided, with a transversality introduced in that affective and rhythmic experience.

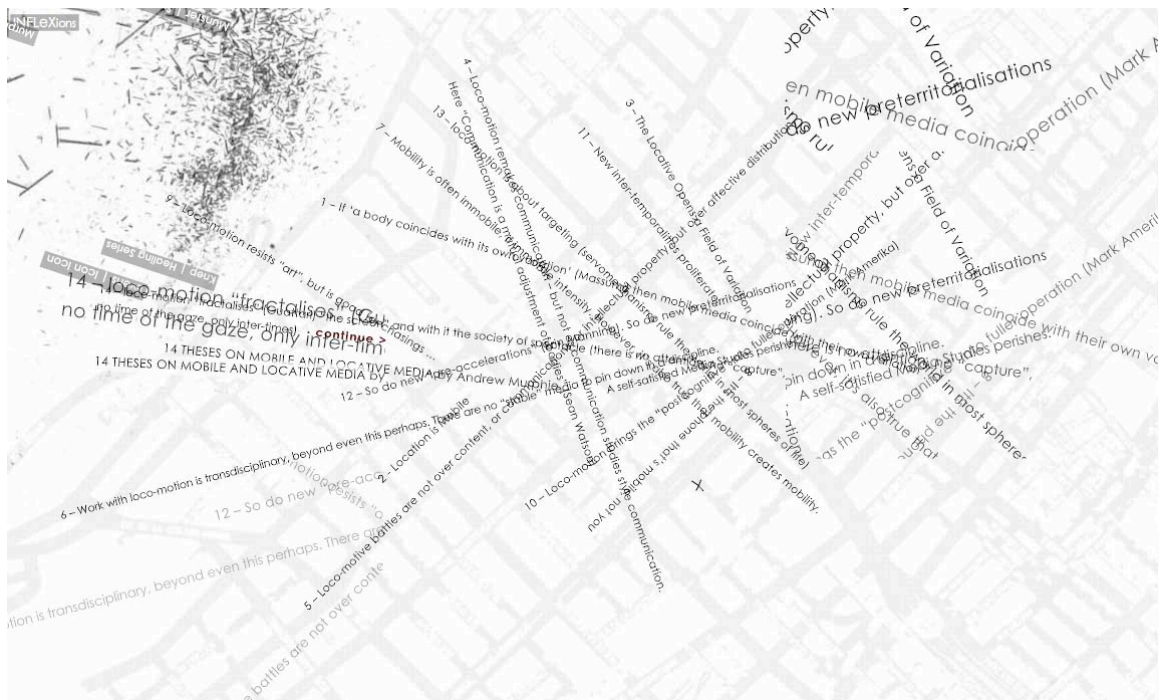


Fig. 5 “Loco-Motion” Inflexions No. 4 (2010)

As this list of the 14 theses settles once more, this time with a lessening in its opacity, a title emerges at the top. This title is in white typography, the inverse of the

theses, with black brushed behind the title so that it may be read via contrasting colours. It reads "21 ghosts and mysteries haunting locomotion" (*Inflexions* 2011: n.p.). However the 21 ghosts are not immediately visible. The page appears to be blank, save the 14 theses. Yet, the visual set up of the title does leave a clear suggestion as to how that text may be revealed. Originally this 'hint' was not included in the design, but leaving opportunities for prehension, has become an important way of expanding the usability within my less traditional navigation systems.

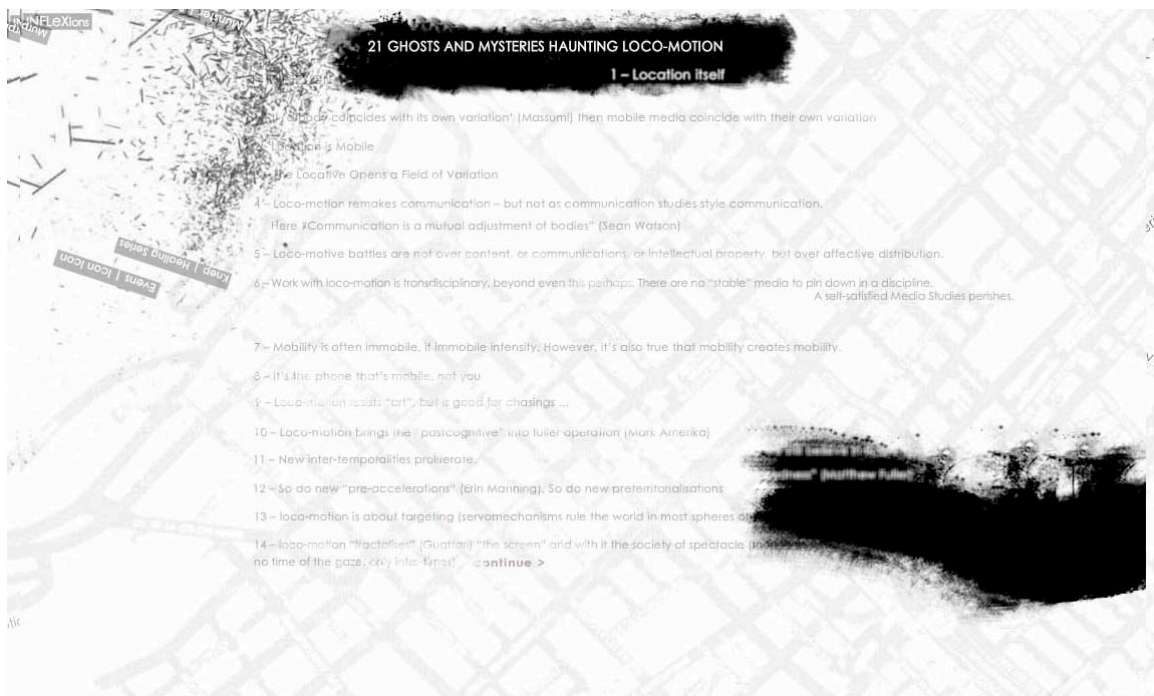
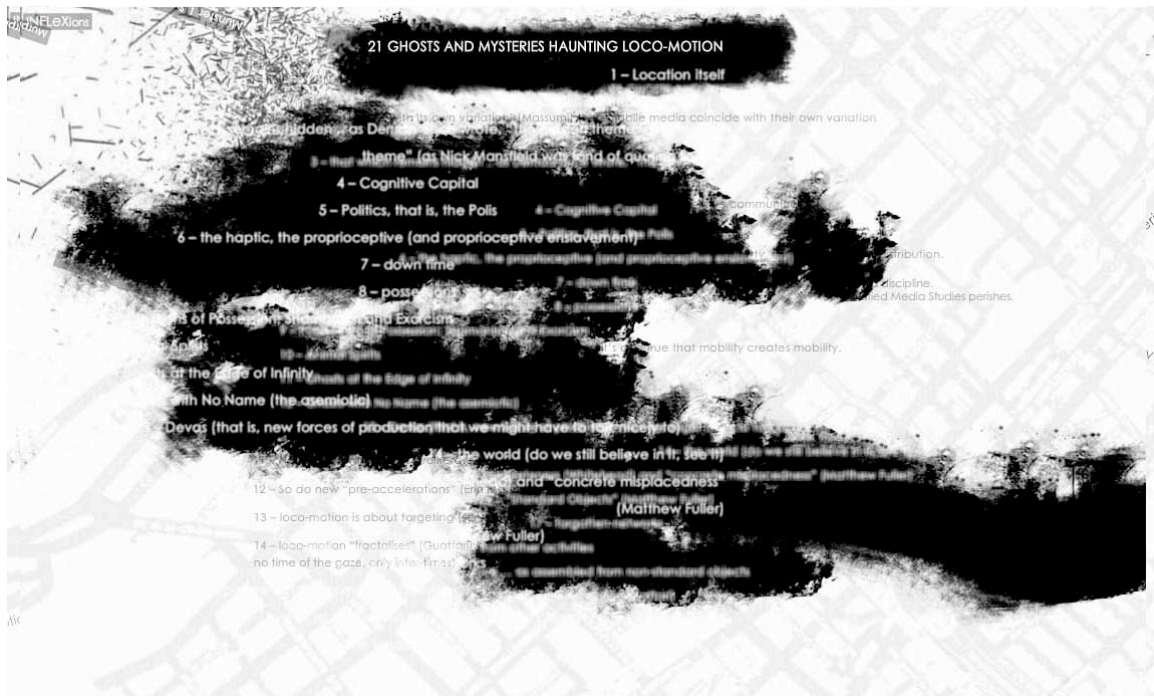


Fig. 6 "Loco-Motion" *Inflexions* No. 4 (2010)

As soon as the participant moves their mouse, they then discover that that a black paintbrush like motion has been attached to their mouse movements, allowing them to paint black across the page. As they do this there is a confluence of experiences (Fig. 6-7). There is the gratification of making an individualized 'mark' on the page, calling up

the relational experience of the hand, mouse, cursor and Web touched upon in the earlier section. As the participant paints that space, text begins to reveal itself. This is very much a ghosting effect, calling up the way letters written with a pen dipped in oil become visible when soaked in water. As the user paints the space, the contrast color of the black makes these words legible once more. How words and phrases are revealed depends on where the participant tracks their cursor. This 'ghosted' text is not perfectly aligned however. Instead they are scattered somewhat diagonally, working from the top right across the left and the back across the right again, provoking cursor movements across the entire window. Here, the typography has also been softened to give it a less exacting impression, to once again provide another 'sense' of that ghosting of the text. Underneath the more legible text is some smaller but blurred versions of the same text, to add another sense of rhythm to that viewing space.



(Fig. 7 "Loco-Motion" Inflexions No. 4 (2010))

The determined participant, who blackens the space methodically to reveal all the text in full, will reveal the following 'ghosts' of mobile and locative media:

1 – Location itself

2 – Mobility – it's all around us, and yet ..

3 – that which remains hidden ... as Derrida once wrote, “The hidden theme is the hidden theme” (as Nick Mansfield was fond of quoting to me)

4 – Cognitive Capital

5 – Politics, that is, the Polis

6 – the haptic, the proprioceptive (and proprioceptive enslavement)

7 – down time

8 – possessions

9 – Possessions of Possession; Shamanism and Exorcism

10 – Animal Spirits

11 – Ghosts at the Edge of Infinity

12 – Ghosts with No Name (the asemiotic)

13 – Devas (that is, new forces of production that we might have to talk nicely to)

14 – the world (do we still believe in it, see it)

15 – abstraction – misplaced concreteness (Whitehead) and “concrete misplacedness” (Matthew Fuller)

16 – “Standard Objects” (Matthew Fuller)

17 – forgotten networks

18 – Work ... as a separate activity from other activities

19 – Love ... as assembled from non-standard objects

20 – the synaptic (Guattari)

21 – Escape

(Murphie 2010: n.p.)

While the participant continues to black out the space to read the 'ghosts,' some words and phrases from the 14 theses may still 'peak out' in the areas not yet blackened. Again an opportunity to amass a reading of the collaged text, within the rhythm of that experience, is provided. It may also allow for inflections between the texts, pre-accelerating other potential senses of that text in both the literary-discursive and affective experience.



Fig. 8 “Loco-Motion” Inflexions No. 4 (2010)

As you work to reveal the text (Fig. 8), the sensation of pushing and pulling across the



screen is foregrounded once more. For the 'ghosts', you must literally run your cursor over the words, before they will reveal themselves: the participant must move their cursor around the whole of the page if they wish to read all of those texts. The body is not so easily dismissed as a passive agent in this Web experience. However, such an action may also simply foreground the primitive nature of the mouse, this plastic rock we push and drag across the table to navigate a webpage. Nonetheless as the participant runs their cursor across the web-space, tactility is brought to that reading process, one gesture-like in its consistency. Again, this may open up other sense-making potentialities in the rhythms and inflections of that piece and in the issue as a whole.

The 'ghosts' of this section are obviously, less 'thesis-like in their consistency. They are conceived as inflections to the 14 theses, with the goal of potentially inflecting the reading of that text with new layers of sense. They are not conclusions; they are openings into other transversalities of thought and experience. I have no intention of trying to map out possible associations and meanings these ghosts may bring to the theses, or to the participant experience. It would be impossible to map and chart all the possible permutations of thought and experience this piece could generate. But it is hoped that the way I engaged the participant in the reading experience foregrounded other senses and sensations of that text, otherwise background in a more traditional presentation of that piece. It is hoped that despite challenging the user to move through and access the work in a way less habitual, I can to slow down that reading process, so that new vectors of thought and relational experience may emerge.

### 4.3 AN EXPLORATION OF DISTRIBUTED AGENCY

As emphasized earlier, I am always designing with the becoming of the whole of an issue, in relational movement with the Web. However, with this issue I attempted to bring a singular agency to this process by engaging pieces through the rhythms and inflections felt with other pieces, across the whole issue. This was in the interests of focusing the affective experience of that issue, of bringing out through the design, a particular quality of experience.

Of course the most I could do was set the stage (so to speak) for those rhythms and inflections. I focused on two particular tactics. For this issue, I insisted that I would not begin work on any part of it until I had the final form of every part of that issue available to me. This was done to counter the truncation in design process experienced in No. 2, and No. 3 “Micropolitics: Exploring Ethico-Aesthetics”. But with *Inflexions* No. 4, not only did I insist that all pieces be submitted at the same time, I also did not begin to work on any of the designs until I had gone through all the material, including the entire contents of the written papers. This was done in an effort to prevent myself from 'cheating', or bending the rules of my new technic, by beginning work on one piece in isolation from the others, simply because I had an immediate affinity for the material.

Once I felt I had adequately familiarized myself with all the material of that issue, I then revisited past issues, their coding, their navigation system, and particularly those moments in certain pieces that seemed to have the most potential as regards creating

inflections and articulations both within the issue itself and across the Web as a whole. These were pieces such as "Sirens" and the 'tangential' people of Issue 3's navigation. There were of course many other pieces of interest, but for the sake of a concise discussion I will limit the discussion to these two particular pieces.

Particular attention was brought to these pieces in order to revisit particular articulations in that relational experience, and to revisit the tendencies in my own design process. By 'listening' to these pieces once more, the technics of research-creation I had already begun to exercise could be layered with another sensitivity and awareness in the 'how' of my current process.

Nudging 'all the pieces' of an issue, in open co-relational dialogue, is a technic for bringing an agency to my intuitive process. It allows me to bring an immediate sense of the becoming of an issue, to my design experience, and the way I differentiated design choices.

However, "Sirens" and *Inflexions* No. 3 foreground another potential tactic related to the actualizations of Flash animations. The cards of "Sirens" and the 'tangential people' of No. 3 'pushed back' in the experience, in a way that provoked new qualities of becoming and relational experience, with the participant and the Web. This relates to the reluctance to 'obey' or their tendency to resist the participant's expectations. In other words, where the participant may have expected a piece to yield a particular response to their cursor or mouse actions, based on previous experiences, they were now faced with pieces that

would not 'give up' their content as instantaneously or easily. The hope was that this might curve the reading/viewing experience toward with a new potentiality of becoming.

In some respects this may be considered a way of coding in a degree of autonomy within the actualization of Flash code. All code is of course 'autonomous,' responsive to its own internal logic and language. But the autonomy I mean here is the less accessible, or less transparent way in which the code actualizes in an experience based on or in response to a participant's mouse actions. An example would be the way a card might 'stick' to the mouse in "Sirens". This technic suggests that coding can also be used to subvert what seemed to be an appropriate directive (or mouse command) for a known and desired interface response.

It is those moments when a piece 'resists', or 'pushes back' in the experience, that there is an opportunity for expanding the experience of reading or viewing. In a design process hard-coded and 'controlled' within a programming language, this is a way allowing the code (once realized and actualized) to curve the rhythm of experience.

Working with Flash action-script and code in general, demands a structure and logic. It is a call and response, a yes or a no, speaking in zeros and ones. It is hard to get it to say "maybe?" "possibly?" or only "sometimes". You can randomize and condition statements, but it is still math-based. The code only ever 'works' or doesn't. It either executes a script request, or replies with an error message. Therefore it is not within the code itself that I can necessarily 'build' potentialities for experience. I can't 'code'

unpredicted (or non-prehended) shifts in the relation that provoke new qualities of becoming. At least within my level of technical skills, potentialities could only be provoked through the co-realization of two or more codes actualized within a webpage. By co-realization I mean two or more codes actualized (perhaps) by two animations running simultaneously.

Each of these animations, on their coding level, are discrete. I use the wording co-realization, rather than 'interaction', because it's not that the two coded animations 'interact' at the level of their zeros and ones. But once executed and realized on a webpage, their relational experience with the participant actualizes a becoming 'with' the between of the codes. They can 'interact' through the inflections and rhythms of the relational experience called forth by their coming together. This creates a potential a shift in the relation to the texts or artworks at hand: as co-realized codes inflect one another, what is produced is a new field of relation.

This was elaborated upon more thoroughly during the discussion of *Inflexions* No. 3's 'tangential' people. However, I bring it up again here to provide some insight into how the navigation system of *Inflexions* No. 4 tried to capitalize on this coding-enabled potentiality. This was an interest in having discretely executed codes 'become' in a continual actualization that called forth new potentialities for experience, through their co-realization in the web-space.

Thus in addition to the expansion of my intuitive 'nudging' process, an agency was also brought to the scripting level of my design process. By coding in such a way that, for example, an animated rotation of an image could run simultaneously with an animated congregation of a group of titles, there was a potential for that code to actualize in the experience with a new quality of becoming I had not expected, resulting in a whole new level of prehension, in the designing.

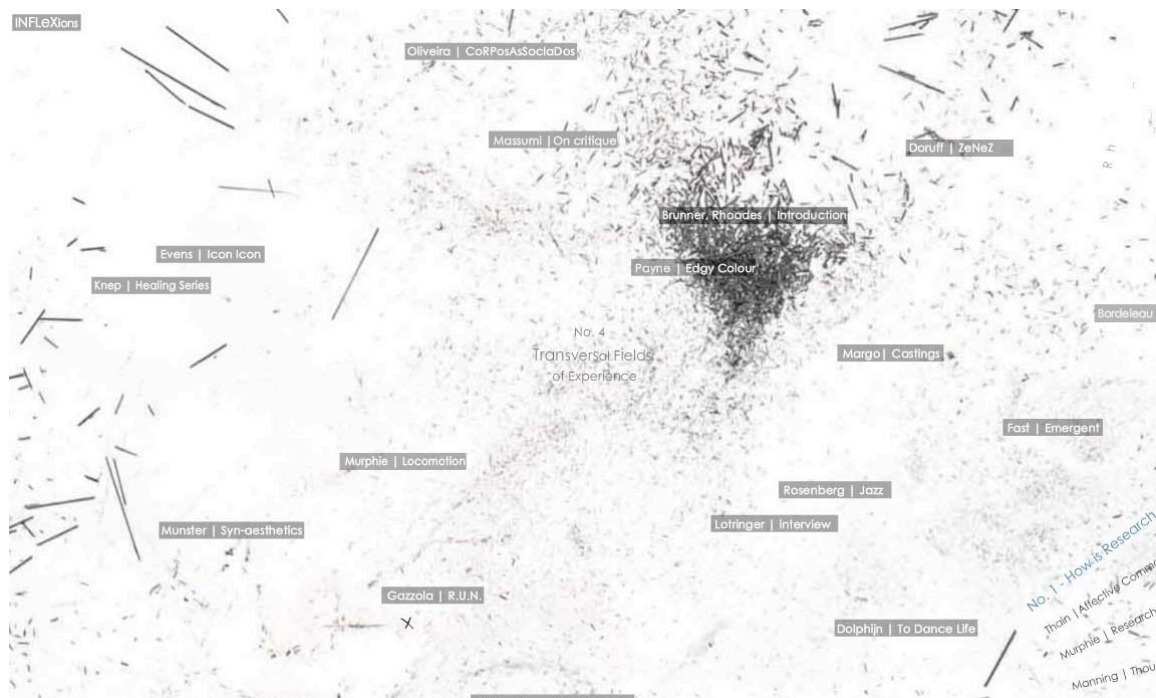
This is pretty much what happens all the time when coding, unless you happen to be particularly proficient. But from here, once these new qualities and becomings were felt (or simply stumbled upon), an opportunity to then expand that experiential 'find' into an actively pursued affectual experience began to occur.

When building the navigation system for *Inflexions* No. 4 this was actively pursued. There was a conscious effort to design at the coding level with an 'ear' for the potentialities co-realized code might provoke. This initiated a process of coding for what had not yet happened, a way of coding for the unknown relational experience. I could then bring agency to these non-prehended actualizations of the code that were particularly affective and articulate, within the relational experience of that issue. By then 'nudging' the codes, and feeling out for the differentiations of their rhythms and inflections upon their actualization, I could then capitalize on those newly found potentialities or 'happy accidents.'

This is what happened with the design for *Inflexions* No. 4's navigation system. While I cannot give a play-by-play description of the entire differentiating process of design used in the creation of this system, I can highlight how this system's design capitalized on the potentialities foreground by co-realized code.

However, for this particular discussion I will be primarily focusing on the relational experience of the navigation system *with* "Loco-Motion" as it is beyond the abilities of this paper to breakdown the inflections and rhythms of all the editorial pieces (62 to date) relationally experienced with the navigation system.

#### 4.4 MOBILITY AND RELATIONAL MOVEMENT



*Nav. 1, Main page of Inflexions No. 4 (2010)*

The navigation space for *Inflexions* No. 4 "Transversal Fields of Relation", opens with the title of the issue, anchored at the center of the page. After this, all the titles of the editorial works fade in behind that title, piled on top of one another, and then disperse across that web space (see Nav. 1).

If the participant is paying attention they may notice the some titles have slid out of view, above and below the top edges of the screen. Additionally, a single title illuminated in orange - the *Inflexions* menu bar - moves to the top right of the screen. Many would have maintained a distinct color for this menu bar. However, maintaining a grey-scale color scheme throughout the visual field of the web-space was necessary for the particular visual experience I hoped to provoke. The titles too, could have each been assigned their own color scheme. I opted not to do this as I thought this would be distracting and counter-productive within the affectual experience I hoped to provide.

With so many titles to manage, the visual space was easily cluttered. Because I did not wish to distribute the titles in a column, but preferred to have them scattered throughout the space, there was a lot more competition within that visual field for attention. Assigning colors to each title would provoke a noisy texture of experience, with each colored title restlessly pushing and pulling on the participant for attention. Maintaining gradation levels, rather than distinct colors, allowed that visual field to be calmed and smoothed out. It also prevented the titles from 'separating' from the image. By this I mean overtly foregrounding themselves 'above,' or on a different visual plane, discrete from the image. My hope was not to use the typical strategy of foregrounding or

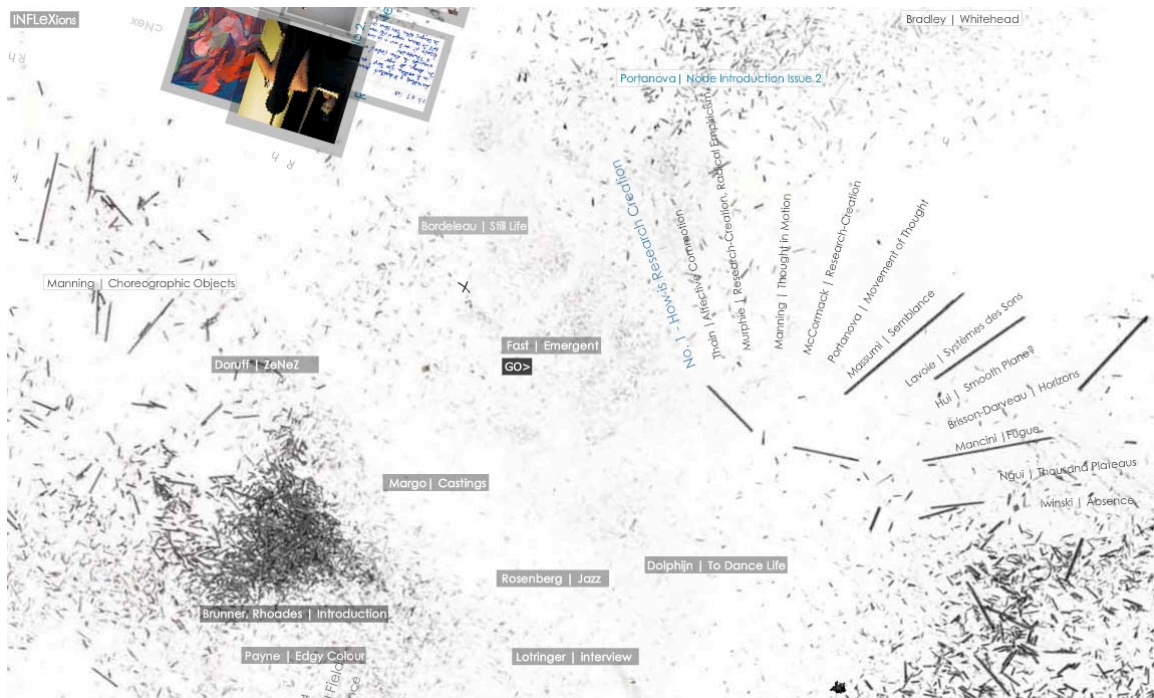


backgrounding that renders the viewer passive. I wished to activate that space with a different quality of experience. This was in the interests of 'smoothing out' that visual space, so that when new inflections and rhythms were provoked, they could be activated with greater affective focus. This particularly relates to the relational experiences provoked by the animation each title triggers.

This leads to the second reason a grey-scale colorization was used. In addition to its 'calming' effects, a single color gradation allowed the tiles to maintain a visually tactile relationship to the image behind these titles. This image is a grey-scale 'drawing' I made that consists of the lead from a mechanical pencil crushed to different degrees of severity. These shavings have been bounced and jiggled across paper to give an impression of coagulating movement. I found that when the titles maintained the same grey-scale color scheme as this drawing, they became more anchored in that visual space. This was a visual experience of the titles *with* the image, on similar (if not the same) visual planes. Of course I still had to provide the participant with some visual feedback. I chose to do this, once again, by using the cursor. When a given title was "mouse over"<sup>23</sup>, the title would fade into its own distinct color.

When 'moused-over', a flash animation was also triggered, which created a shifting and twisting of the entire composition. This is how it works: Each time a title is selected, that title shifts to the center of the page. However, the title does not shift on its own. It moves with all the other titles, and the image as a whole, while maintaining the same spatial configuration between them. The only thing that 'changes' is the re-composing

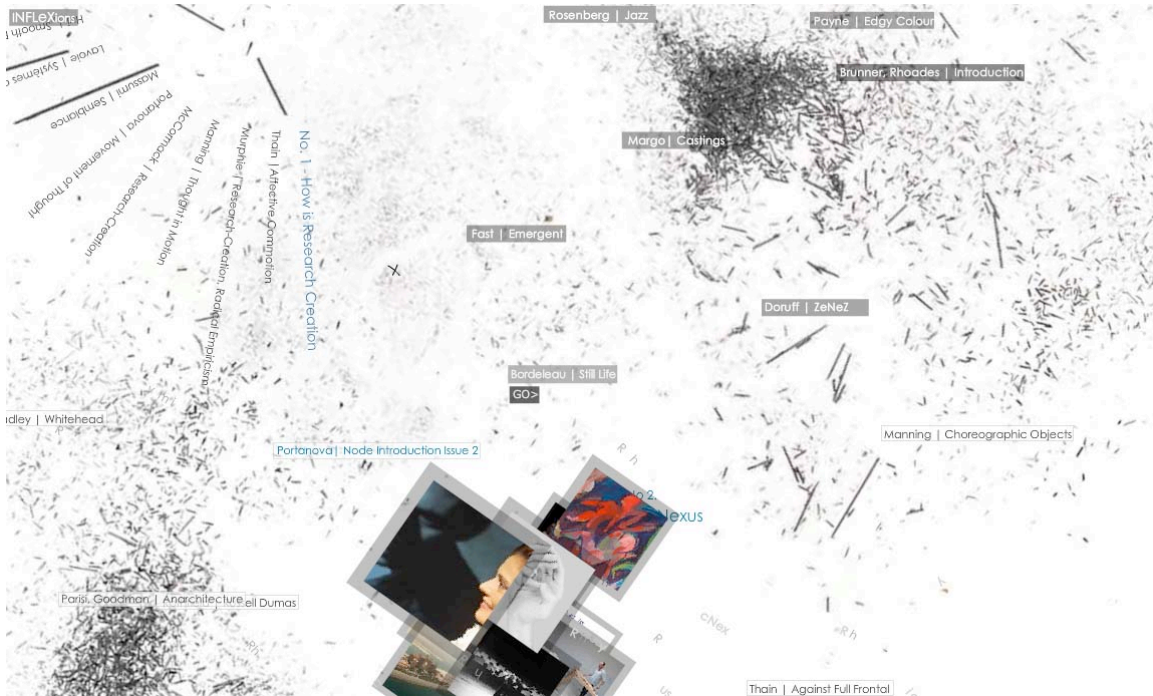
effects the browser provides as a cropped view of that much larger image/title field. The browser window thus becomes activated as a 'view finder' of sorts. What was once 'off screen' visually slides into the far right, left, top or bottom of the screen, depending on which title was selected.



As the whole of that image *with* title slides into a new centralized position, new sections of the overall images are revealed, while others slide out of view. On the experiential end, what is foregrounded is a vertiginous shift of the visual plane. This is of course more easily viewed [here](#)<sup>24</sup> than explained.

For example, a title may be located at the bottom right of that overall image, and maintains that spatial arrangement, pre and post shift. But the cropped view the browser window provides reconfigures the experience of that compositional arrangement (see Nav. 2, 3). Regardless of the spatial relationship the title holds with the image, once that

title (with all other titles and image) shifts to the 'center' of the browser window, a new sense of what 'center' is within that composition, is created.



*Nav. 2, 3, Main page of Inflexions No. 4 (2010)*

What is 'right, left, top and bottom' is also re-composed within the borders of that browser window, along side past/future experiences of what 'right, left, top, and bottom' has been, under different configurations of that title/image's orientation. And this happens every time a title is selected.

The participant is thus continually folded into a doubled sense of that compositional (or navigational) space: that which is off-screen and onscreen, that which is framed within the borders of the browser window, and that which has been experienced in the passing-present and future-present of the larger image-title composition. The participant

is continually provoked to re-compose their 'sense' of that navigation space, and their orientation with it, within that relational experience. The rhythm of experience folds a doubled if not multiplied sense of that composition into every past, present and prehended future experience, continuously reorienting toward what is newly re-composed as 'center'.

This experience is further compacted by the fact that the image/title do not always shift on a strictly vertical and horizontal axis (x and y)<sup>25</sup>. Depending on which title was picked a quick slide into position, or a more dramatic twist and turn of title with image will occur. By this I mean some titles would trigger not only an 'x' and 'y' shift of the background image (with the title), but also a 'z' rotation<sup>26</sup>. However, in this case, only the image itself would rotate, while the title would appear to remain horizontally aligned<sup>27</sup>.

Within the actualization of that relational experience, the rotating image with horizontally aligned title provokes a sense of vertigo, or a centripetal inertia. When the titles were coloured, the vertigo effect of this animation was not as palpable. The 'twisting' and visual inertia of that experience needed to occur on the same visual plane. The folding of that space into itself, was only possible if the title felt like it was within the image, and the image within the titles.

The relational experience of this coding provokes and dissipates a sense of inertia and vertigo. This is a rhythm that only begins to take off, before being dropped. It is up to the participant to keep it active, to keep clicking on new titles, to further feed the

elasticity of that experience.

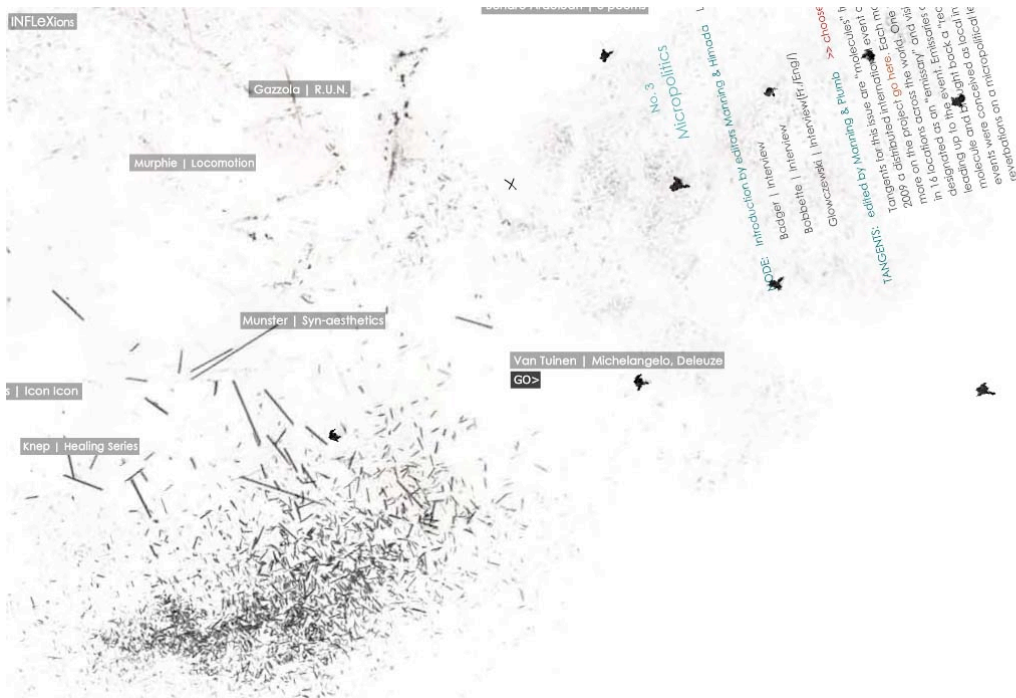
For example, there is a jolt felt as the image-with-title finally settles into its new location. The acceleration and inertia of experience must suddenly dissipate, but is still felt in the affect of the passing-present. For the active participant, it will be apparent that an additional mouse-over<sup>28</sup> shows 'details' about the work that title links to. Of course, not all participants will make it this far. But if they do, they will have reached this moment through a lived experience of the navigation space. This is why I chose to stagger the process; I hope to slow down the speed with which the participant might get access to the 'goal' content. My hope was that they might thus be enticed to revisit the inertia and vertigo felt with that first animated response to their title selection. Should they be inclined, they would spend more time in the navigation space, exploring its rhythms and inflections that web-experience foregrounds. This may then provoke another vibratory shift in the relation and texture of that experience.

One of the things such an approach can do is link this singular experience of navigation with other Web sites. My (sometimes) challenging interfaces and web-designs perhaps 'push back' against participant expectations. As their pre-hensions are thwarted by a design created to resist or slow down the content-delivery rate, a new 'sense' of the Web may emerge leading them to consider what a viewing or reading experience in Web space might be.<sup>29</sup>

For the purposes of this written portion of my thesis, I cannot discuss the

inflections and relational movements all past interfaces brought to the relational experience of No. 4's navigation system – there were simply too many links as this was always conceived as a relational process. I have chosen to focus on the particular inflections and transversal relations between "Loco-Motion" and No. 4's navigation system. However, I will say that the integration of these past systems, into the present one, held two main gestures. First, there was a desire to aesthetically and affectively fold past *Inflexions* issues into the present. This happened (for instance) when the participants found their way, often by accident, into a past issue while still playing with the navigation system of Issue 4. This is possible because all previous issues are embedded in that topographic space as well. This would encourage new readers to revisit older material, and fold past readers of our issues with the present. The memory of content and interfaces used in past conceptions of the journal, would not be lost entirely, but folded into a new configuration. The essence of issue 1, 2, and 3's interfaces are carried into issue 4 through the code, as well as the memories of the past readers. Their differing coding configurations will further shift that relational experience, potentially foregrounding a new articulation and experience of those past issues, as well as their content. A new inflection and rhythm of experience would emerge, through a shift in that relational experience. Aesthetically, this integration of past issues into the navigation system also served as a way to pay homage to past web designs. But integrating those past designs into the most recent navigation system, was also an attempt to develop a technic of Research-Creation. This was previously hypothesized upon, during the experience of co-realized coding structures in *Inflexions* No. 3 "Micropolitics: Exploring Ethico-Aesthetics". It was hoped that new qualities of experience might be provoked

through the similar 'accidentally activated' tactic of the tangential walking people of *Inflexions* No. 3.



Nav. 4 Main page of *Inflexions* No. 4 (2010)

One of the surprises of the walking people of Issue 3's navigation system was that a new quality of experience was activated when these people 'walked' underneath (or on top of) other text-based links. In *Inflexions* No. 4 I hoped to provoke a similar 'potentiality' for new becomings, by running codes side by side in a similar way. This was tentatively initiated by bringing certain elements of past interfaces into the collaged space of the latest topographic space of issue 4 (see Nav. 2,3,4). Through this process, I hoped to further develop technics for 'opening up' my coding to the potentialities, through the unknown relational movements of their actualization.

Although I can only briefly discuss this process here, this was part of a much larger attempt to build for the not-yet of future issues of *Inflexions*. The design for this issue's interface was specifically created and coded for what had not yet 'happened' or been created.

The beauty of the sliding titles and image is that it suggests that a navigation space can be topographic. It is not 'square', in a top-down alignment. It is centrally oriented. I also created this topographic space in such a way that I can always add 'more' - there is no limit to the edges of that space (at least within the digitally-enabled illusion of that space), due to the way it has been coded and the layout of that space. Creating a space that was centripetal and expanded outwards gives that navigation space room to grow expodentially if I wished. Its becoming curves with each additional issue and design movements. Any title selected can become the new central point. Instead of content maintaining a page-link 'anchored' and 'scrollable' presentation, this space activates the web-space as potentially infinite and mobile. Its borders are not visually perceptible, only the limits of the cropped view provided by the browser window.

#### 4.5 THE 'BATTLE' FOR AFFECTIVE DISTRIBUTION

In retrospect, I was negotiating many of the issues Andrew Murphie was poetically exploring with "Loco-Motion". However, this correlation was not understood from the outset of my design work. This is because I was not engaging this work in a discrete and derivative way; I was 'feeling out' for inflections and rhythms that could



provoke a transversal emergence of new becomings in the relational experience of that entire Inflexions issue.

“As a “dimension to overcome two impasses,”[Transversality] is not a mere connecting device but a practice for novelty to emerge. The novelty that transversal practices yield always feeds from existential territories and universes of value. We have to stress this transversal mode of productivity to avoid any alignment with mere connectivist or communicational models of different terms merely ‘linked’. But transversality never links. It crafts, shifts and relates. (Brunner and Rhoades 2011)

This transversality found particular expression in “Loco-Motion” because this piece, in relational movement with the navigation system, offered different entry points of resonance with the whole of that Inflexions issue. It was not the only piece to do this, but Loco-Motion provoked a particularly vibratory resonance with the becoming of that issue, and the agency I was attempting to bring to my design process.

This cannot simply be attributed to the mechanics of working with this piece in the same Flash work-space as the navigation system. Again, I cannot ‘decide’ which pieces will resonate, propagate and populate the relational experience of that issue with new sense-making potentialities. I cannot decide what my design process will move with and be moved by in the relational experience. However, "Loco-Motion" was particularly accessible to me. My nudging tendencies were able to foreground and bring palpability to the virtual-actual becoming of a piece, in relational movement with the overall issue and

Web. The rhythms and inflections of its becoming allowed me to better sense the resonating affective tonalities of its becoming with that navigation system and whole Inflexions issue.

This may be attributed to the freedom afforded me by getting to collage the sentences together, and play with their gestural and affectual reading experience. But as explained with “Sirens” it was not that there were multiple ‘things’ for me to move around and re-organize. It wasn’t that I was simply able to break all the sentences up, shuffle them around, and adapt them to an aesthetic of my preference. It was that the relational movement of that work that made the virtual-actual of becoming more palpable, and thus more easily shifted, spatialized and then re-territorialized.

Consequently, each time I nudged and prodded the work, the relational movements of the piece (with that Inflexions issue, the Web, the participant), were more acutely felt. This meant differentiating qualities of experience, and the potentialities of ‘sense’ and becoming moving through them, could be more palpably felt. I could then (potentially) bring a more focused agency to the affective tonalities of that relational experience, activating a “moreness” in the sense of that issue.

As developed by William James, “[t]his moreness of experience, in the mode of transversality, pulls us into divergent experiences even while it leaves traces behind that virtualize into a collective field of potentiality” (Brunner and Rhoades 6).

Because the relational movements of Loco-Motion were particularly accessible, I could feel out for potentialities of ‘sense’ and sense-making, resonant with the affective tonalities of that Inflexions issue. But a particularly articulate expression of transversality occurred when the technics of Research-Creation I was employing folded into an immediate sense of their agency, while exercising that agency. Massumi’s describes this as a “thinking-feeling of what happens.”

[This is a] direct and immediate self-referentiality of perception. I don’t mean self-reflexivity, which would be thinking about a perception, as from a distance or as mediated by language. This is a thinking of perception in perception, in the immediacy of its occurrence, as it is felt – a thinking-feeling, in visual form. (Massumi 2008: 6)

This is a situation in which we experience “a vitality of vision itself”, a kind of perception of the event of perception in the perception” (Massumi 2008: 6). This was provoked by the fact that Loco-Motion’s prose were discursively exploring the same “loco-motive battle...over affective distribution” that I was engaging within my design process. But it was not the ‘sameness’ of their interests that produces this vitality. It was the potentialities of sense, foreground by the enabling rhythms and inflections of the piece with design process.

When the ‘battle’ over affective distribution expressed by my design process was brought to Loco-Motion, an affectual and experiential sense of Locomotion’s prose was

foregrounded. But the affectual sense of Locomotion's prose also foregrounded a sense of my technics of Research-Creation, while those technics were being exercised in relational movement with the piece.

Such a process produced a sense-enabling loop, provoking multivalent entanglements. These entanglements were foregrounded as the design for the navigation system became palpable within the articulations of Loco-Motion (and vice versa). As my design process was moved by, and moved with these works, an attunement of 'senses' began to emerge. This relates to the sense-making potentialities my design process chose to foreground. I use the word 'chose' hesitantly, but the differentiating and spatializing capabilities of my nudging process does enable me to focus the affective tonalities of a given relational experience. I cannot choose 'what' is foregrounded for another participant or how it articulates in a wider, less orchestrated context, but I can choose which articulations are foregrounded, and amplify that experience. By bringing an agency to those rhythms and inflections my nudges provoke, and focusing that agency upon 'senses' particularly articulate with the Web and overall Inflexions issue, I can potentially curve that overall affective experience.

These 'senses' are of course differentiated within my decidedly subjective relational experience. But subjectivity, as it is used here " [...]is different from the notion of the subject" (Brunner and Rhoades 3).

Subjectivity for Guattari always denotes a process, something that shifts and oscillates between entanglements of existential territories and universes of value [...] For Guattari the production of subjectivity is based on transversal practices that allow the collective emergence and entanglement of existential territories and universes of value. (Brunner and Rhoades 3)

While moving back and forth between Locomotion and the navigation system - nudging and adjusting, shifting and juxtaposing - the ‘question’ each piece posed began to be emerge, but with an attunement of affective tonalities. This ‘question’ is the ‘how’ of a piece’s articulation, the ‘how’ of its becoming with that issue, the Web and the participant in worlding. I saw this “how” question as a kind of coagulating with an emergent entanglement. This is not an attunement of ‘senses’ running side by side, or in similar veins of thought. This is an attunement of vibratory and generative resonance, with transversal potentialities.

This affective attunement was felt most palpably within the ‘slips and stutters’ of “Loco-Motion” and the ‘shifts and twists’ of the navigation system. The original execution of these designs maintained separate web pages and discrete locations. They were of course created in close experiential proximity to one another, throughout my design process, in the Flash work space. But they were designed in acknowledgement that they would ultimately be housed in separate web pages. Flash movies cannot be sub-indexed within its animation time-lines and therefore to satisfy ‘usability and

‘accessibility’ issues, separate HTML pages have proliferated for content page of Inflexions. When no longer housed in a single Flash movie, the transition between content can not be specifically choreographic through transitions and responses to the participant. As such there has always been a clear ‘entrance’ and ‘exit’ between editorial pieces included in each Inflexions issue, through the blink reload of a new page, and its new content. This may not seem like an important issue, but it does ultimately emphasize the discreteness of Nodes and Tangents, when of course we wish to emphasize emergent transversalities of expression and experience. Since this couldn’t be avoided, I chose to explore how Loco-Motion and the navigation system could draw attention away from the more straightforward process of an entrance and exit between content. As these explorations began to congeal, the affective tonalities of these shifts, twists, slips and stutters, began to coagulate between the two pieces, in a clearly resonant way.

This emerged organically, through the mobility my distributed-agency brought to my design process. I truly did not plan or orchestrate these seemingly aesthetic similarities (but more accurately, transversalities). It was not until I wrote this thesis that I became aware of their transversal relations. They emerged through the multivalent entanglements of sense-enabling polyphony.

For example: a sense of the micro and macro proliferates as the participant moves from the fragmented screens of Loco-Motion, and the re-configuring and composing borders of the browser window. Senses are folded into new potentialities through the rhythm of this experience. This is further mobilized by the shifts and stutters of the

theses' inter-temporalities. The inertia and vertigo of the main navigation only provokes these "inter-times" further, pre-accelerating potentialities within Loco-Motion's poetic prose, as well as its gestural expressions (Murphie 2010: n.p.).

Within the ghosts, just as the participant must move the mouse across the screen - actively searching out for the 'ghosts' of Locomotion - so to does the navigation system provoke the participant to engage the whole of their browser window. This is an unusual task for the Web, which tends to draw our attention to a narrow field of menu buttons, and directed movements. While searching for other pieces and issues, on and off screen, a doubling of that sense of body-hand-mouse-cursor-interface may propagate. A sense of "a mutual adjustment of bodies" may proliferate through the re-configuring and re-composing experiences of the frames and screens, within the affective experience of mouse gestures (Watson qtd. in Murphie 2010: n.p.).

The list goes on; the field of variation entangled within this relational experience, must find satisfaction with an intensive expressions that activate content "in a field of transversal potential" (Brunner and Rhoades 2010). But the purposes of this exposition is not to chart permutations and behaviors. That would limit what the relational movements of piece with navigation system, with Web and participant, can provoke in the experience.

As I wished to foreground the 'entanglements' described by Rhoades and Brunner in their introduction to that respective issue, it was important to bring "Loco-Motion" into

the same navigation field of Inflexions No. 4's main page. This allowed a greater palpability of the multiplicities of sense provoked and propagated within the transversal experience as well as giving me a more complex playing field, thus activating transversalities that might otherwise have been backgrounded.

Finally, I want to suggest that these transversalities were also emphasized on an aesthetic level. It becomes clear, I think, that the navigation system inflects across the affective margin of "Loco-Motions". The presence of the graphite shavings and selection buttons for other editorial pieces within Locomotion's reading space, act as a reverberating reminder of that shared navigational process, and the shared design process. The fact the title-squares for other pieces are still available in this space, and can be selected by the participant, acts as yet another enabling opportunity revisit that movement between the main navigation field and Locomotions theses and ghosts.

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

Of continuing interest in this design process is contributing to a "moreness of experience", complexifying what it means to "read" and to "view" on the web (Brunner and Rhoades 3). This is a 'more' of inflections and transversal experiences across a piece, an issue, the journal as a whole and the Web. The movements between Locomotion and overall navigation system of Inflexions demonstrate the capacity for my interface to not provoke transversal emergences resonant with the becoming of the whole of the journal,



as well as that issue. Thus instead of just accommodating new pieces submitted for future issues, *Inflexions* 4 attempts to leave gaps and folds within its interface, open to new potentialities of experience subsequent issues may provoke. This interests reflects the generative form of research-creation provoked by *Inflexions* No. 2, 3, and 4. Unlike previous issues, and indeed many journals on the web, the design of this journal attempts to build for what has not yet been conceived for future issues. It leaves space for new qualities of emergence by proliferating a navigation system that is not restricted to a set layout, orientation, or assembly. By engaging a co-relational design process of transversal aspirations, the new potentialities of experience subsequent issues may provoke, can be sensed and foreground.

However the most satisfying provocation of Issue 4 and “Locomotion” was that the conception of this piece inspired its author to rethink how they ‘wrote’, or rather how they could write with the milieus of the Web. This is one of the core interests of *Inflexions*, and provides many potential opportunities for further exploration in future issues. It asks that the web inflect with the conception of a piece, even at the incipient stages of the author’s creative process. Through the web-designs explored here, we may potentially encourage contributors to rethink how their material will be engaged, and whether there are sense-making potentialities within the Web experience, that resonate with their future work. As always, this is in the interests of creating further openings and opportunities for transversal emergence and becoming that push this journal forward not as a passive passanger of on the Web, but a co-conspirator and sense-enabling provocateur.

## **6.0 END NOTES**

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.inflexions.org/>

[Inflexions] publishes articles, short texts of various genres including poetry and ficto-theory, images, sound, and other multimedia content. We invite writing and/or other forms of expression actively exploring such issues as: (inter/trans/non) disciplinarity; the emergence of new modes of collaboration; micropolitics and the life and death of institutions; creativity, subjectivity and collectivity in cultural production; the ethics of aesthetics; the aesthetic as ethics. The goal is to promote experimental practices combining research and creation in such a way as to foster symbiotic links between philosophical inquiry, technological innovation, artistic production, and social and political engagement. Of continuing concern will be how these efforts may renew and recast relations between the concrete and the abstract, perception and conception, the body and technology... (Inflexions 2011)

<sup>2</sup> <http://senselab.ca/>

<sup>3</sup> This is because through the agency of this writing process, I was placed within an transversal sense of my becoming-design, within the discursive and sometimes poetic writing process.

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<sup>4</sup> For further insights see Manning's *Relationescapes*: "What takes form as we move is the actualization of virtual potential rich in each displacement. The eventness of movement is a virtually concretized differentiation of matter-form that creates a dynamics that is of the order of speed itself." (Manning 2009: 19)

<sup>5</sup> Of course this was not a corporeal tug on my body; this was a tug on my senses, in the fullness and 'more-than' of sensation.

<sup>6</sup> For further insights see Manning's *Relationescapes*: "What takes form as we move is the actualization of virtual potential rich in each displacement. The eventness of movement is a virtually concretized differentiation of matter-form that creates a dynamics that is of the order of speed itself." (Manning 2009: 19)

<sup>7</sup> See [http://www.inflexions.org/volume\\_4/n2\\_t\\_ruiz.html](http://www.inflexions.org/volume_4/n2_t_ruiz.html) to view original work.

<sup>8</sup> Particularly when dealing with the artwork of another, there is an expectation you will design 'around' that piece so that you may respect the "integrity" of that piece's original message and affect. Thus, I often seek permission from that authoring artist to intrude on the assumed borders between their work and my design, if I see an opportunity to pull the piece apart a bit to re-territorialize with my design's inflections.

<sup>9</sup> *The Tangents*:

“present individual contributions to the theory and practice of research-creation. Tangents pieces strike off in directions all their own, and resonate across their divergences. Taken together, they suggest potential connections with each other and the issue Node. (*Inflexions* 2010 n.p.)

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<sup>10</sup> <http://www.theaterofmemory.com/societyofmolecules/>

<sup>11</sup> The *Node* “features a group of conceptually interlinked pieces that engage with a particular problematic in a variety of different modes, including but not limited to academic essays” (*Inflexions* 2010 n.p.).

<sup>12</sup> Again, this is in the interests of actively rethinking what the web does to the practice of viewing and reading in that relational experience.

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.inflexions.org/volume\\_3/node\\_menu.html](http://www.inflexions.org/volume_3/node_menu.html)

<sup>14</sup> This is because, as a web designer, I rarely receives editorial material all at the same time. To meet deadlines, you frequently have to begin designing a layout and navigation system before you’ve experienced all the content first hand. The navigation system is then created last, in an effort small effort to familiarize myself with the material of that issue, before settling on the overall design. But the time given to the navigation system was always highly restricted, and little opportunity for that design process to emerge in relational movement with the editorial pieces, was afforded. The final form of this editorial material is then handled discretely, ‘inserted’ into the coding-framework and web-design for the navigation system, generally without any further modifications being made to previously executed designs.

This is not to say such a process resulted in a poor design or failed to access the incipient forms of its editorial material. Rather my the agency of my intuitive process was only being applied within the rhythms and inflections of discrete pieces, rather than actively across the whole of that issue’s becoming. This did however result in pieces feeling

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highly discrete from one another, the NODE, and overall design. The affective experience was perhaps less palpable moving throughout the whole of the issue

<sup>15</sup> As emphasized elsewhere, this was primarily because of time-restraints, and the need to finalize designs with editors and the original contributing artists.

<sup>16</sup> [http://www.inflexions.org/volume\\_4/n2\\_t\\_ruiz.html](http://www.inflexions.org/volume_4/n2_t_ruiz.html)

<sup>17</sup> This was done to satisfy the need for a strictly HTML version of text. HTML can be fully searched and indexed by search engines (particularly academic databases), while Flash must rely on meta tags due to the closed nature of Adobe Actionscript.

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.inflexions.org/volume\\_4/n4\\_t\\_murphie.html](http://www.inflexions.org/volume_4/n4_t_murphie.html)

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.inflexions.org/volume\\_4/n4\\_t\\_murphiehtml.html](http://www.inflexions.org/volume_4/n4_t_murphiehtml.html)

<sup>20</sup> By fairly standard way, in a clearly legible, top down, left to right, paragraph aligned way, propagated within print media.

<sup>21</sup> Mouse-based triggers fall into four categories. mouseUp, mouseOver, mouseDown, mouseOff and mouseRelease. In this instance, a mouse-follow is an action that causes an object to follow and react based on the movements of the mouse. It is perhaps more accurately described as tracking the mouse, rather than strictly following. For this piece, based on the speed of the mouse, and its displacement from the center of the page, the text shifts to horizontally or vertically in relation to that displacement.

<sup>22</sup> See <http://www.google.com/maps>

<sup>23</sup> Mouse-based triggers fall into four categories. mouseUp, mouseOver, mouseDown, mouseOff and mouseRelease. In this instance, a mouse-over is when the cursor hovers

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over an object, but does not click down. Content can still recognize when the cursor has ‘hit’ their borders, making this mouse-over function possible.

<sup>24</sup> [http://www.inflexions.org/volume\\_4/main.html](http://www.inflexions.org/volume_4/main.html)

<sup>25</sup> The modern Cartesian coordinate system in two dimensions (also called a rectangular coordinate system) is defined by an **ordered pair** of **perpendicular** lines (axes), a single unit of length for both axes, and an orientation for each axis... The lines are commonly referred to as the *x* and *y*-axes where the *x*-axis is taken to be horizontal and the *y*-axis is taken to be vertical (“Cartesian coordinate system.” Wikipedia. Aug. 16 2011)

<sup>26</sup> This simply constitutes rotations within the Cartesian coordinate system, and within actionscript code.

<sup>27</sup> To create this illusion, the title actually had to rotate equal-amounts-opposite-to the degrees of rotation taken by the image. By this I mean if the image rotated thirty degrees, then the title had to be rotated negative thirty degrees. The visual realization of this coding makes it seem like the title remains horizontally aligned. But the coding used to create this visual illusion actually shifts both objects.

<sup>28</sup> Mouse-based triggers fall into four categories. `mouseUp`, `mouseOver`, `mouseDown`, `mouseOff` and `mouseRelease`. In this instance, a mouse-over is when the cursor hovers over an object, but does not click down. Content can still recognize when the cursor has ‘hit’ their borders, making this mouse-over function possible.

<sup>29</sup> One of the goals of *Inflexions* is to produce a journal that embraces the rhythms and inflections of the web. Rather than adhering the expectations of print-media based

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layouts, and clearly indexed paginations we hope to actively rethink what the web does to the practice of viewing and reading.

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