

Quelic Berga Carreras

Babel Quàntic

Generative installation (Processing projected on screen + high resolution digital prints)



Topic: Generative Art, Portraits

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Main References:

[1] Video:
<http://vimeo.com/7905471>

[2] More information:
<http://quelic.net/babel-quantic/>

Abstract:

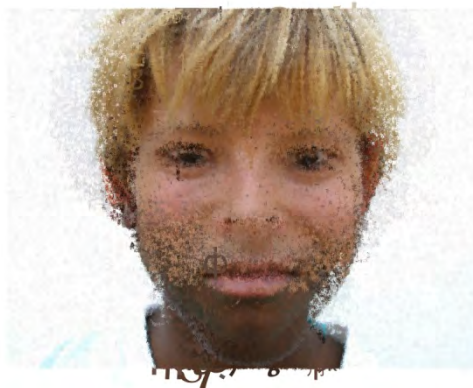
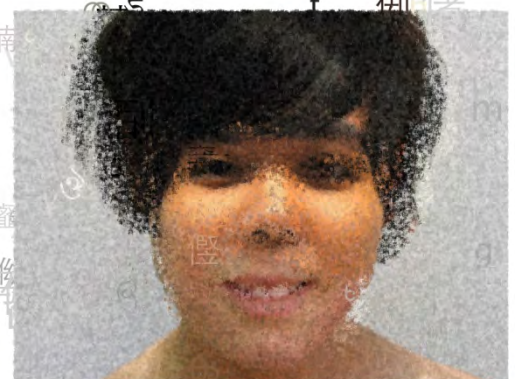
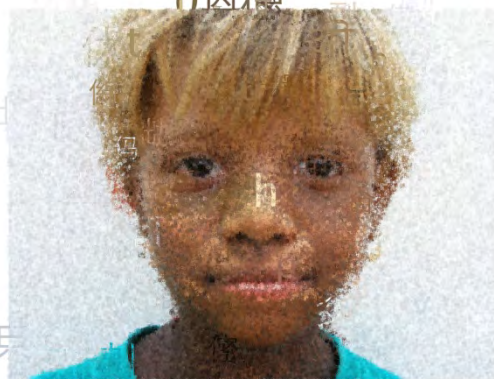
Babel quàntic (2009) uses most of the alphabets and several pictures from people from the world to create new human faces and new words. Impossible words give shape to impossible faces: some rather monstrous, some of incredible beauty. It is a generative artwork that creates endless faces and though, it is a celebration of diversity. Human creativity (through language) combines with the laws of genetics (face characteristics) to produce never ending, new, realities.

Programmed with processing.

2009 Prize Jaume Graells on Digital Art

Image detail of print quality:

Images of 3 generate portraits:



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Keywords: generative art, processing.org, hi-res prints, open-source

Presentation of Babel Quantic

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Figure 1. Portrait of one of the generated and then printed faces of Babel Quantic

Premise

Babel quàntic (generative installation 2009) uses thirteen different alphabets from the world to create new words and new human faces. Impossible words give shape to impossible faces: some rather monstrous, some of incredible beauty. It is a generative artwork that creates endless faces and though, it is a celebration of diversity.

Human creativity (through language) combines with the laws of genetics (face characteristics) to produce never ending, new, realities.

The piece is a continuation of the work *Salt Quàntic* (2006). It uses the scripting language of processing.org and it was programmed by the artist.

1. Context

Babel Quàntic is the continuation of the artwork *Salts Quàntics* [1] from the same artist. Both are strongly related to the hometown of the artist that has around 80% of immigration rate. The richness of the human and cultural landscape of the village was always inspiring the artist in his aim to envision the ideal future city with mixed cultures and ethnics. *Salts Quàntics* (2006) is an interactive sound-reactive artwork that mixes faces every time people sing, shout or make any noise. In this case, the artist invites people to use words and sounds, to communicate, express and dialogue, with the aim to reinforce the social network that daily grows in the city through human interaction.

Babel Quàntic was done during a long trip to Singapore where the artist was exposed again to a very mixed society. In this case the exposure of the artist to a very different culture helped him focus on to the linguistic part of the multicultural fact, hence he explored ways to integrate the concept of culture in this work.



Figure 2. Detail of the lips of one of the resulting faces.

2. Description of the process

This artwork uses Processing [2] open software to mix parts of faces from a database of 40 different pictures of faces of people from several parts of the world (Europe, South-America, Africa and Asia) pictured in Salt (Spain) and Singapore.

Once the image is composed in the memory of the computer it plots letters to random positions from different alphabets or ideograms choosing the colour that corresponds to the position of the image composed previously. The resulting effect is an image composed by letters and ideograms instead of squared pixels.

The software plots about 20.000 new ideograms and letters per frame and changes the parts of the composed face every 10 seconds approximately. See an online render of the working artwork at vimeo platform [3]. The resulting effect is a morphing face, sometimes very defined, sometimes fuzzy, but always changing.

It uses the technique of overlapping letters and ideograms constantly to create a complex texture as the skin of the portrait.

Because typography is vectorial the quality of the image can be scaled to a potentially infinite size which allows very high resolution prints. See an example of the quality of the texture in the Figure 2.

3. Concept

The artwork reflects on the idea that culture and genetics evolve and recombine constantly. It is a celebration of fuzzy frontiers between identities and languages where boundaries become links of unity to create a new mankind out of union, mix and randomness.

Conceived to be contemplated, the viewer becomes the observer of the mixing never-ending unique faces.

4. Exhibitions and prizes.

4.1 Collective exhibitions

- **WORK IN PROGRESS.** Centre de Cultura "Les Bernardes" de Salt (Girona), Spain, July 2012
- **OFFF BARCELONA,** Spain, June 2011.
- **SENYALS I INTERFERÈNCIES.** Fundació Atrium Artis, Girona, Spain, May 2011
- **TENS 5 MINUTS PEL CONSUM CULTURAL.** Espai Gironès, Salt, Spain, May 2010.
- **FESTIVAL SURPAS'09.** Portbou, Spain, Sept 2009
- **LABFABRICA, LABORATORI DE NOVES TECNOLOGIES DE CELRÀ,** Spain, July 2009
- **NANYANG POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL OF INTERACTIVE AND DIGITAL MEDIA,** Singapore 2009
- **FESTIVAL INTERNACIONAL DE VÍDEO I ARTS DIGITALS, VAD ,** Girona, Spain, 2007

4.2 Individual Exhibitions

- **ART DIGITAL: Quelic Berga Carreras.** *Sala Municipal d'Art de Igualada, Spain, Mars 2010.*

4.3 Prizes:

- **1st Prize “Ciudad de Igualada’09 Awards”** for *Digital Art for Babel Quàntic, Spain, 2009*



Figure 3. Portrait of one of the generated and then printed faces of Babel Quàntic

5 References

[1] <http://quelic.net/salt-quantic/>

[2] <http://www.processing.org>

[3] Video <http://vimeo.com/7905471>

Quelic Berga Carreras

An online short-film editing machine with a fixed structure and pseudo-infinite combinations.

TYPE of proposal: Poster



Abstract:

The online art project intends to reflect on the possibilities of generating automated, pseudo-aleatory cuts of a 25" short-film.

The poster explains the main 3 parts of iAm artwork: How the shooting have been done, how does the software works and how have the data visualization been conceived.

It shows the structure given to the script, the shootings and the later XML classification of the footage.

It explains the software architecture and describes the process that is followed to generate a unique short-film.

It analyses how the data visualization have been designed for this specific project.

Topic: Audiovisuals, Generative Editing, Art

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Main References:

- [1] Gifreu-Catells, A. (2011). "The Interactive Documentary. Definition Proposal and Basic Features of the New Emerging Genre".
- [2] Laskari, D. I. (2008). The Generative Audiovisual Narrative System.
- [3]Manovich, L. (1999). Database as Symbolic Form. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*
- [4] [See the working project at: http://iam.caotic.net](http://iam.caotic.net)

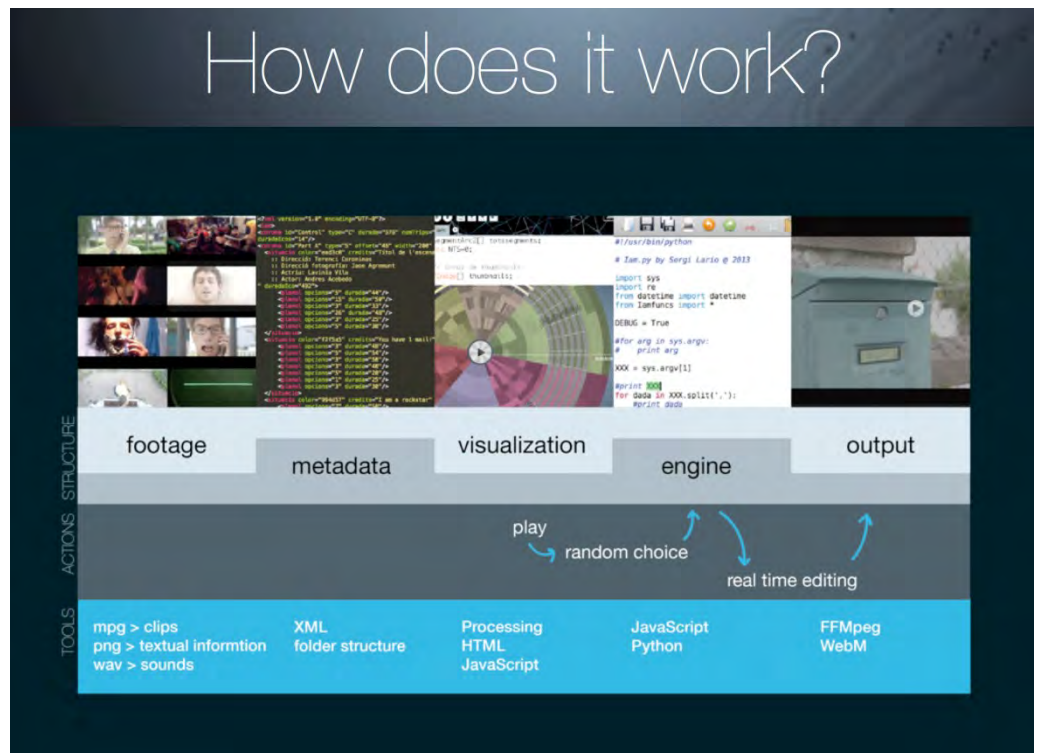


Image: Screen-shoot of a powerpoint presentation, part of the poster.

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Keywords: generative video editing, interface, data visualization, co-authorship, technology, patterns, processing.org, web-based, open-source