

INTERSIGN POETRY

From printed to sound and digital poems



[Português](#)

Thirteen years ago the first exhibition of intersign poetry took place at the Centro Cultural São Paulo including about thirty visual poems by Brazilian poets, exposed on panels, under my organization. I was trying to set bounds to a trend of the Brazilian visual poetry which placed at the center of the poem the image in its most varied configurations: drawings, photographs, numbers, scribbles, graphics, colors. The intention was to distinguish it from the essentially verbal poetry made of graphic forms of text and to show poems where the image would take part as an element of signification to the semantic construction of the poem, demanding the observer's conceptual decipherment in order to interpret the whole poem.

The present exhibition carries out these ideas, foreseeing now the burst of the communication forms that led the poetry to experiment with the universe of sound, videographic images and the vast field of new technologies, without neglecting the printed record. If the intersign visual poetry performed the printed possibilities in the fusion of word and image, the poems exhibited here surmount the *material space* of the book to become object-poems, penetrate the *environmental space* of the sound to produce the sound poetry and reflect on the *virtual space* of technologies to create digital poems.

The intersign poetry of a few years ago did not want to *create* the visual poetry, but be distinguished as a particular "sector" of it. As well the poetry exposed at Paço das Artes does not want to create the "new experimental poetry" for the next millennium, or the poetry of the "new human being" of the technologies of communication. It only wants to show how it is possible to find poetics spread among the extra-book spaces, where the idea remains that art of poetry is made of a formal interaction and a conceptual composition between verbal signs and the other ones issued from each technique used by the poem.

Therefore, on the one hand, it is distinguished from an alleged experimental poetry that, however, only reproduces the classic definition of the poem as a specific process of verbal faculty, yet packaged by some features of other languages. On the other hand, it differs from the naive assumption that considers the simple use of the word in new technologies as the invention of the new poetic of the media world. The exhibition wants to encourage the observer to transfer its attention from the employed techniques to the way the signs are combined and articulate themselves within these techniques. Intersign poetic process enhances formal, structural and semantic functions of all signs gathered in the poem.

According to this, the exhibition intentionally gathers in the same room the text, the tridimensional object, the sound, the performance and the technology, disregarding all proposition of linear evolution. In this way, it asserts the cumulative and interacting nature of techniques of different cultural periods and contaminating the so claimed technological purity with the handicraft and hybrid features of the "obsolescent" techniques, with the materiality of the body and the gestures.

A privileged place for the discussion of these issues, central to the contemporary poetics and aesthetics, is the digital technology. It is characterized by opened use possibilities, either the newness that they can still offer to the configuration of the communicational language or the impact on the society that is arising. The *Intersign Poetry* exhibits several poems in CD-ROM, in the so-called "multimedia" language. First, they are not "experiments of poetic written texts". They are intersigned processes of word, image, sound, movement, varied ways of reading,

where the image, the sound and the movement are not simply features of the word. Regarding a new spatial configuration that is no longer the codex form of the book, the poetry inevitably trespasses the limits of the verbal sign itself. The hypertext becomes naturally hypermedia by the inclination to the integration of the languages within the digital technologies. So the digital poem also becomes a traffic between signs of different languages. When well done, it could be called "intermedia" (replacing the initial stage of digital "multimedia" language use where there is accumulation and superposition of many signs instead of functional integration between them). However, the poem, before entering the multimedia space (or intermedia, when developed), had already reached, according to the intersign poetics, the object poems and the sound poems. Respectively, elements such as interactivity and immateriality, two totems of the emerging (and yet so fragile) theories of poetics in new media, are achieved by those kind of poems. What matters, then, in the use of these new technologies is the easiness and the encouragement towards integrative realizations between languages where non-verbal signs are not reduced to the role of mere elements of reinforcing the verbal ones. The intersigned fusion conducts, after all, the creative exercise towards the fusion between the text genres. The poetry penetrates the field of theory, tale and encyclopedic information. Everything proceeds to the creation of big systems of communicating chambers where the narrative fiction, the game, the poetry, the scientific research, the daily information and the interpersonal contact can be moments of the same productive exercise.

Philadelpho Menezes

