



**Electronic Literature Exhibit
MLA 2012, January 5-8, 2012
Curated by Dene Grigar, Lori Emerson, and Kathi Inman Berens**

Preliminary Impact Report

Overview

This report is intended to provide stakeholders involved in the Electronic Literature Exhibit, held in Seattle, WA from January 5th to 8th at the 2012 Modern Languages Association Convention with information concerning the Exhibit's impact. Impact, from our perspective, is tied to the overarching mission of the Exhibit, which we articulated as "to expand scholarship and creative output in the area of Electronic Literature by introducing Humanities scholars to the art form." In order to achieve this mission, we identified, at the outset of the development of the Exhibit, four goals. These were to:

- Introduce scholars to a broad cross-section of born digital literary writing, both historic and current
- Provide scholarship and resources to scholars for the purpose of further study of Electronic Literature
- Encourage those interested in the creative arts to produce Electronic Literature
- Promote Electronic Literature in a manner that may encourage younger generations to engage with reading literary works

All activities relating to the Exhibit—from the inclusion of five student docents who assisted visitors at the Exhibit, to the "Readings and Performances" event on Friday night at the Hugo House, to the four-platform social media marketing plan and archival work undertaken by undergraduates in the Creative Media & Digital Culture Program, to inclusion of undergraduate works of Electronic Literature in the Exhibit, to the ongoing web archive of the site—have been developed to help us meet these goals.

Assessment of success in attaining these goals is built on information in four areas:

1. References to the exhibit by humanities scholars
2. Inclusion of the web archive in scholarly databases
3. New scholarship and creative output generating from it
4. Physical and virtual engagement of visitors with the Exhibit and its online archive

We view this report as "preliminary" because print-based data is not yet available for inclusion. Thus, this phase of our report includes data stemming from electronic publications and media; they serve as the first step in the process of analysis and evaluation of the success of the Exhibit. For the most part, the data covers a short

period of time surrounding the Exhibit, from mid-November 2011 when the web archive was launched to mid-January 2012 after the closing of the Exhibit.

1. References to the Exhibit by Humanities Scholars

Ball, Cheryl. "Review of *Profession 2011* section on 'Evaluating Digital

Scholarship.'" *Kairos*¹ 16.2. Spring 2012.

<http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/16.2/loggingon/lo-profession.html>. Retrieved: 28 Jan. 2012.

"Editor's Choice: Round Up of AHA and MLA Conferences." *Digital Humanities*

*Now*². 9 Jan. 2012. <http://digitalhumanitiesnow.org/2012/01/ec-round-up-of-aha-and-mla-conferences/>. Retrieved: 28 Jan. 2012.

Jackson, Korey. "Once More with Feeling: How MLA Found Its Heart."

*HASTAC*³ 16 Jan. 2012. <http://hastac.org/blogs/kbjack/2012/01/16/back-mla-report-not-badgood-fact>. Retrieved: 28 Jan. 2012. Reprinted in Mpublishing: U of Michigan Library. 16 Jan. 2012. <http://publishing.umich.edu/2012/01/16/mpub-mla/>. Retrieved: 28 Jan. 2012.

Malloy, Judy. "MLA 2012 to Feature Exhibition of Electronic Literature." *Authoring*

Software. 28 Dec. 2011.

http://www.narrabase.net/elit_software_news.html#dec28_2011. Retrieved: 28 Jan. 2012.

Taylor, Laurie, N., "E-Lit Exhibit at MLA; Exhibits, Peer Review, and What

¹ *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy* began in 1996 and since that time has grown to 45,000 readers per month; additionally, it is referenced electronically (i.e. "backlinked") by 2500 sites.

² *DH Now* has 2794 Followers on Twitter. Its site had 14,500 visits with 5000 unique visitors, and 48,000 total page views in Nov. 2011. See <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/infostudies/melissa-terras/DigitalHumanitiesInfographic.pdf>.

³ HASTAC (Humanities Arts Science & Technology Advanced Collaboratory) says in its September 6, 2011 report that it has 7150 members and that its site has seen 350,000 unique visitors to its forums since 2009. See <http://hastac.org/about>.

Counts." 2 Jan. 2012. <http://laurientaylor.org/2012/01/02/elit-exhibit-mla-exhibits-peer-review-what-counts/>. Retrieved: 28 Jan. 2012.

2. Inclusion of the Web Archive in Scholarly Databases

Electronic Literature as a Model of Creativity and Innovation in Practice (ELMCIP) Knowledge Base.⁴ <http://elmcip.net/event/electronic-literature-exhibit-0>.

Electronic Literature Organization Directory⁵. <http://directory.eliterature.org/>.

3. New Scholarship and Creative Output Generating from the Exhibit

Berens, Kathi Inman. "Haptic Play as Narrative in Mobile Electronic Literature."

Forthcoming in *ebr: electronic book review*. Spring 2012.

Grigar, Dene. *Born Digital Literature: Understanding Literary Works for the Electronic Medium*. Book Proposal. Submitted to The MIT Press.

Grigar, Dene, Lori Emerson, and Kathi Inman Berens. "Curating Electronic Literature."

Forthcoming in *Rhizomes*. Spring 2012. <http://www.rhizomes.net/>.

4. Physical and Virtual Engagement of Visitors with the Exhibit and Its Online Archive

⁴ ELMCIP is a "collaborative research project funded by Humanities in the European Research Area (HERA) JRP for Creativity and Innovation and involves seven European academic research partners and one non-academic partner." Its mission is to "investigate how creative communities of practitioners form within a transnational and transcultural context in a globalized and distributed communication environment. Focusing on the electronic literature community in Europe as a model of networked creativity and innovation in practice, ELMCIP is intended both to study the formation and interactions of that community and also to further electronic literature research and practice in Europe. The partners include: The University of Bergen, Norway (PL Scott Rettberg, Co-I Jill Walker Rettberg), the Edinburgh College of Art, Scotland (PI Simon Biggs, Co-I Penny Travlou), Blekinge Institute of Technology, Sweden (PI Maria Engberg, Co-I Talan Memmott), The University of Amsterdam, Netherlands (PI Yra Van Dijk), The University of Ljubljana, Slovenia (PI Janez Strehovec), The University of Jyväskylä, Finland (PI Raine Koskimaa), and University College Falmouth at Dartington, England (PI Jerome Fletcher), and New Media Scotland."

⁵ "The Electronic Literature Organization was founded in 1999 to foster and promote the reading, writing, teaching, and understanding of literature as it develops and persists in a changing digital environment. A 501c(3) non-profit organization, the ELO includes writers, artists, teachers, scholars, and developers."

Electronic Literature Exhibit at the MLA 2012.
Visits: 503; attendance at Readings and Performances event held at The Hugo House on Friday, January 6, 2012: 107.⁶

Electronic Literature (Main Archival Site). <http://dte-wsuv.org/mla2012>.
1673 total visits from 10 Nov. 2011- 18 Jan. 2012; 1733 total visits as of 27 Jan. 2012.
Visitors to the site came from: the US, Sweden, Canada, Spain, Norway, the UK, Italy, Albania, Australia, Denmark, Greece, Puerto Rico, France, Germany, India, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Austria, Philippines, Colombia, and Algeria.

Kathi Inman Berens' Curatorial Statement. <http://kathiiberens.com/2011/12/06/curatorial-statement/>.
539 total visits from 6 Dec. – 8 Dec. 2011 - 18 Jan. 2012

Lori Emerson's Curatorial Statement. <http://loriemerson.net/2011/12/05/performing-e-literature-e-literature-performing/>.
388 total visits from 5 Dec. 2011-18 Jan. 2012.

"Electronic Literature Readings and Performances" Poster. <http://twitpic.com/81ek4y>.
440 total visits.

Storify archive of the event. <http://storify.com/kathiiberens/e-literature-exhibit-at-mla12/>.
128 from 10 Jan. 2012-28 Jan. 2012.

Facebook and Mini-Site. <http://www.facebook.com/wsuv.mla.elit2012>.
145 Total Likes; 43,444 "Friends of Fans." Friends came from US, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, Mexico, Singapore, Ethiopia, the UK, and The Bahamas. 12/28/11-1/16/12

Twitter. <https://twitter.com/#!/mlaelit2012>
72 Followers as of 27 Jan. 2012.

"Invisible Seattle Visible Again." Press release created by Washington State University Vancouver's Marketing Department. 3 Jan. 2012.
<http://news.wsu.edu/pages/publications.asp?Action=Detail&PublicationID=29434>.
Retrieved: 28 Jan. 2012. Reprinted in WSU News as "Ahead of Their Time." 3 Jan. 2012.
<http://news.wsu.edu/pages/publications.asp?Action=Release&PublicationID=29434>.
Retrieved: 28 Jan. 2012. Reprinted also in WSU's College of Liberal Arts website.

⁶ It should be noted that Canada's Poet Laureate Fred Wah, who lives in British Columbia, drove to Seattle specifically to visit the exhibit and attend the Readings and Performances associated with the exhibit.