

UiB Electronic Literature Research Group: 2011 Annual Report

Composition of the Research Group

The research group in electronic literature is mainly composed of researchers in Digital Culture working on the topic of electronic literature. Researchers associated with the ELMCIP Knowledge Base project, visiting Fulbright scholars, and other guest researchers also frequently join in our meetings.

In 2011, the following were frequent participants in our activities:

- Associate Professor Scott Rettberg (leader)
- Professor Jill Walker Rettberg
- Researcher Eric Rasmussen (ELMCIP)
- Stipendiat Patricia Tomaszek
- Elisabeth Nesheim (MA)
- Rob Wittig (MA)

External/visiting members:

- Visiting Fulbright Scholar Rita Raley (UCSB)
- Visiting Fulbright Scholar Mark Marino (USC)
- Fulbright Scholar Davin Heckman
- Thomas Brevik (Research Librarian, Bergen Naval Academy)
- Aud Gjersdal (UiB Library)
- Eduardo Navas (UCSD, postdoc researcher at Infomedia)
- Ugo Panzani (Visiting PhD researcher from the University of Bergamo)
- Talan Memmott (Blekinge Institute of Technology)

Research Group Activities in 2011

The Electronic Literature Research group was initiated in 2011, though members of the group have regularly organized research activities for the past five years under the umbrella of the Digital Culture research group, with which it is still closely affiliated. The research group met regularly. Weekly meetings were held focused on the development of the ELMCIP Knowledge Base and research following from it. Additional meetings were held focused on other research topics related to electronic literature, frequently including guest lecturers. The research group also organized several public events during this period, which are outlined below. Research group members published research in journals and disseminated research at a number of international academic conferences in this period.

Research Group Special Events

Guest lecture: Codework and Digital Poetics

16.02.2011: Lecture by Talan Memmott

Electronic Literature Reading

17.02.2011: Reading and demonstration of work by Talan Memmott.

Guest lecture: Critical Code Studies

13.3.2011: Lecture by visiting Fulbright Mark Marino.

Guest lecture: Exquisite Code

21.03.2011: Artist presentation by Brendan Howell.

Electronic Literature Reading

22.03.2011: Readings and demonstrations of work by Mark Marino and Rob Wittig.

Guest lecture: Remix and Cultural Analytics

12.04.2011: Lecture by Eduardo Navas (University of California at San Diego).

Electronic Literature Collection, Volume 2 Launch

02.05.2011: Event organized at the Bergen Public Library, funded by småforskmidler, the Bergen Public Library and the Fulbright Foundation. Presentations by Scott Rettberg, Audun Lindholm, Rita Raley, Stephanie Strickland, and Talan Memott.

Guest Lecture: Projected Art in Public Spaces and Tactical Media

10.05.2011: Lecture by visiting Fulbright Rita Raley.

Guest Lecture: Connectionist Fictions: Code, Complexity, and Connectionism

12.05.2011: Work-in-progress seminar by visiting PhD researcher Ugo Panzani.

International Workshop on Databases and Standards for Electronic Literature.

20-21.06.2011: This workshop presented international projects that document, curate, and present research on electronic literature: born-digital literary forms such as hypertext fiction, kinetic poetry, interactive drama, location-based narrative, multimedia literary installations, and other types of poetic experiences made for the networked computer. The workshop is to bring together and present international projects working on the documentation of electronic literature. Representatives of projects from the United States, Canada, Portugal, Spain, Australia, and Norway including humanities researchers, research librarians, and digital humanities developers participated in the workshop, which resulted in fruitful panel discussions of issues particular to electronic literature metadata and agreements to actively work together in an international network framed by the Consortium for Electronic Literature. A research article documenting the issues discussed during the workshop is being prepared by Eric Rasmussen for submission to *Digital Humanities Quarterly*. Co-funded by smådriftsmidler and the NFR VERDIKT program.

Electronic Literature Research Group Retreat

12-16.11-2011: Aberdeen, Scotland. Members of the Electronic Literature Research Group including Scott Rettberg, Jill Rettberg, Davin Heckman, Rob Wittig, and Patricia Tomaszek met for an intensive workshop at a country house near Aberdeen. The meeting included presentations and review of work-in-progress, planning, and grant application writing. Preliminary drafts were made for a SAMKUL application (submitted), a Meltzer project application (submitted), Meltzer travel applications (submitted), a HERA outline proposal, and an FP7 project. Conference panel abstracts were also developed for the 2012 ELO Conference. We also charted a plan for the groups activities in coming years,

including a continued focus on developing the ELMCIP Knowledge Base and research based on it, and made initial plans to host the 2015 ELO conference in Bergen.

Guest Lecture: Haptic Interfaces and Virtual Reality Art and Applications

27.11.2011: Lecture by Daria Tsoupikova, researcher at EVL: Electronic Visualization Laboratory at UiC, visiting Fulbright lectures.

Externally funded research applications

In 2011, the research group submitted major grant applications to VERDIKT, "Visualizing Electronic Literature: Analyzing Creative and Scholarly Networks in the Digital Humanities" and to SAMKUL "Literary Cultures and the Digital Vernacular." Regrettably neither was funded. We also began drafting applications that will be submitted in 2012 for the Humanities in the European Research Area framework and possibly also to the EU FP7 ICT framework. We submitted an application to the Meltzer fund for the project "The Electronic Literature Knowledge Base for the Exploration of Aesthetic Networks of Digital Poetic Practice." This application is pending.

We were awarded småforskmidler of 126.000 NOK, which supported three of our 2011 events. Additionally we were awarded 50.000 NOK from VERDIKT, which co-sponsored the International Database workshop. We participated in another VERDIKT event funding application with KHiB, which will support an upcoming seminar (March 2012) "Data is Political." 50.000 NOK has been awarded for that event as well.

Research Project Led by the Electronic Literature Research Group

ELMCIP

The ELMCIP (Electronic Literature as a Model of Creativity and Practice) project, led by Scott Rettberg, which is funded from June 2010-June 2013, continued to be a main focus of activity of the research group. Development of the ELMCIP Knowledge Base (<http://elmcip.net/knowledgebase>), which is UiB's main research output for the project, was the center of much activity. During the year the project moved from a prerelease stage to an active digital humanities database, which now includes more than 3.000 records documenting works of electronic literature, critical writing, authors, publishers, organizations, events and teaching resources in electronic literature. It is now widely recognized as an important research infrastructure for the international field of electronic literature.

Each Friday weekly meetings are held involving the team working on the Knowledge Base. Members of the Bergen ELMCIP team active in 2011 included:

- Scott Rettberg (project leader)
- Elisabeth Nesheim (MA student / research assistant)
- Jill Walker Rettberg
- Patricia Tomaszek (PhD student)
- Thomas Brevik (librarian at Sjøkrigsskolen)
- Eric Rasmussen (Post-doc Researcher)
- Stein Magne Bjørklund (Programmer)
- Aud Gjersdal (UiB Library)

Because the Knowledge Base is an active research database which UiB agreed to support and develop for five years beyond the period of the grant, we are actively pursuing further funding for staff and resources to support its continued development beyond 2012.

In 2011, members of the research group also participated and presented at several ELMCIP seminars at other ELMCIP partner institutions in Europe. These seminars included “Electronic Literature Publishing” at the University of Jyväskylä 28-29.03.2011, “Electronic Literature Pedagogy” at Blekinge Institute of Technology 15-17.06.2011, “Electronic Literature and New Media Art” at the University of Ljubljana 22-23.09.2011, and “Digital Poetics and the Present” at the University of Amsterdam 9-10.12.2011. Individual presentations are outlined below.

In addition, Scott Rettberg and Patricia Tomaszek are co-editing two issues of *Dichtung Digital* featuring ELMCIP-related papers on Electronic Literature Communities. 19 articles were selected and edited for these two special issues, and the issues are now in production for 2012 release.

PhD and Masters Students involved in the group

Patricia Tomaszek (PhD student), Elisabeth Nesheim (MA student), and Rob Wittig (MA student) were all actively involved in the research group in 2011. Nesheim and Wittig both successfully defended their MA theses in December 2011: “Framing Embodiment in General-Purpose Computing - a study identifying key components in a multimodal general-purpose computational environment” by Elisabeth Nesheim and “Networked Improv Narrative (Netprov) and the Story of *Grace, Wit & Charm*” by Rob Wittig.

Scholarly Publications

Members of the research group published the following electronic literature-related articles in 2011. Asterisk indicates that the publication is expected to count for research points:

Scott Rettberg

All Together Now: Hypertext, Collective Narratives, and Online Collective Knowledge Communities. I: *New Narratives: Stories and Storytelling in the Digital Age*. University of Nebraska Press 2011 ISBN 9780803217867. p. 187-204 *

Performative Reading: Attending the Last Performance [dot org]. *Dichtung-Digital* 2011 (40) *

Finding a third space for electronic literature: Creative community, authorship, publishing, and institutional environments. *Journal of Writing in Creative Practice* 2011 ;Volume 4.(1) p. 9-23 *

The ELMCIP Knowledge Base and the Formation of an International Field of Literary Scholarship and Practice. I: *OLE Officina di Letteratura Elettronica: Lavori del Convegno, Napoli, Gennaio 2011*. Naples, Italy: Altelier Multimediale Edizioni 2011 ISBN 978-88-905640-0-0. *

Bokstaver i bevegelse: Om elektronisk litteratur. *Vagant* 2011 (1)

Lesningens visjoner: Om elektronisk litteratur. *Vagant* 2011 (2)

Å lese med fingrene: Litteratur på iPad. *Vagant* 2011 (3)

E-Lit. Som Litt.-Vit. *Vagant* 2011 (4)

Jill Rettberg

Rettberg, Jill Walker; Atzenbeck, Claus. Interview with Jill Walker Rettberg. ACM SIGWEB Newsletter 2011 ;Volume 14.(1)

Patricia Tomaszek

German Net Literature: In the Exile of Invisibility. *Officina di Letteratura Elettronica/Workshop of Electronic Literature*. Giovanna di Rosario, and Lello Masucci, eds. Napoli: Altelier Multimediale Edizioni, 2011. *

Eric Rasmussen

Review of *The New Digital Storytelling* (Praeger, 2011), by Bryan Alexander. *Choice: Current Reviews for Academic Libraries* 49.6 (Feb. 2012).

Davin Heckman

"Technics and Violence in Electronic Literature." *The Digital Humanities: Beyond Computing*. Federica Fabretti, ed. *Culture Machine* 12 (2011).

"Electronic Literature as a Sword of Lightning." *Leonardo Electronic Almanac* 17.1 (2011).

Conferences / Presentations of Scholarly work

Members of the group made a number of conference presentations in 2011. Many were related to the ELMCIP Knowledge Base or the ELMCIP project. Since the Knowledge Base is a collectively built database open to contributions from authors and scholars active in the field, conference presentations and workshops are one of the best ways to disseminate the project and find new contributors.

Scott Rettberg

The ELMCIP Knowledge Base and the Formation of an International Field of Literary Scholarship and Practice. *OLE Officina di Letteratura Elettronica*; 2011-01-20 - 2011-01-21

Poetry, Visuality, and Materiality: Roundtable. *Poetry Beyond Text*; 2011-03-04 - 2011-03-05

Editing Electronic Literature: Roundtable. *Electronic Literature Collection, Volume 2* Lansering; 2011-05-02 - 2011-05-02

A tale of two programs: Developing curricula in digital culture. *ELMCIP Seminar on Electronic Literature Pedagogy*; 2011-06-15 - 2011-06-18

Rasmussen, Eric Dean; Rettberg, Scott. *The ELMCIP Knowledge Base. International Workshop on Databases and Bibliographic Standards for Electronic Literature*; 2011-06-19 - 2011-06-21
The ELMCIP Knowledge Base. International Workshop on Databases and Bibliographic Standards for Electronic Literature; 2011-06-19 - 2011-06-21

The ELMCIP Knowledge Base: a platform for documenting electronic literature. International Workshop on Databases and Bibliographic Standards for Electronic Literature; 2011-06-19 - 2011-06-21

Practical uses of the ELMCIP Knowledge Base for French Authors and Researchers of Electronic Literature. *Electronic Literature Knowledge Base Workshop*; 2011-07-04 - 2011-07-04

Electronic Authorship: Collaboration, Appropriation, Community, and Practice. *ISEA 2011: International Symposium on Electronic Art*; 2011-09-14 - 2011-09-21

Making Connections Visible: Building a Knowledge Base for Electronic Literature. *ISEA 2011: International Symposium on Electronic Art*; 2011-09-14 - 2011-09-21

Building on the ELMCIP Knowledge Base: Networks and Platforms for Persistent Cultural Memory. *Literature and the Digital Society*; 2011-10-06 - 2011-10-07

The State of Electronic Literature in Europe: Roundtable on European Electronic Literature Networks. Mapping E-Lit: International Congress on Electronic Literature; 2011-11-25 - 2011-11-26

Mapping Electronic Literature Networks: The ELMCIP Knowledge Base and the Apparatus of Electronic Literature. Mapping E-Lit: International Congress on Electronic Literature; 2011-11-25 - 2011-11-26
Reflexivity in American Metafiction and Literary Hypertext. ELMCIP Seminar on Digital Poetics; 2011-12-09 - 2011-12-10

Jill Rettberg

The Genealogy of a Creative Community: Why is Afternoon the "Granddaddy" of Hypertext Fiction?. ISEA 2011; 2011-09-14 - 2011-09-21
Rasmussen, Eric Dean; Rettberg, Jill Walker. Student Research Using the ELMCIP Knowledge Base. ELMCIP Seminar on Digital Poetics and the Present; 2011-12-08 - 2011-12-10

Patricia Tomaszek

German Net Literature: In the Exile of Invisibility. Officina di Letteratura Elettronica/Workshop of Electronic Literature; 2011-01-20 - 2011-01-21
Cross-Referenced E--Lit and Scholarship: The ELMCIP Knowledge Base. E-Poetry 2011. 18.05.2011-21.05.2011

Eric Rasmussen

Database Research and Publishing. ELMCIP Electronic Literature Publishing Seminar; 2011-03-28 - 2011-03-29
Contributing to the ELMCIP Knowledge Base. ELMCIP Electronic Literature and Pedagogy Workshop; 2011-06-14 - 2011-06-17
Rasmussen, Eric Dean; Rettberg, Scott. The ELMCIP Knowledge Base. International Workshop on Databases and Bibliographic Standards for Electronic Literature; 2011-06-19 - 2011-06-21
Rasmussen, Eric Dean; Rettberg, Jill Walker. Student Research Using the ELMCIP Knowledge Base. ELMCIP Seminar on Digital Poetics and the Present; 2011-12-08 - 2011-12-10
Significant Affects in Digital Literature. ELMCIP Seminar on Digital Poetics and the Present; 2011-12-08 - 2011-12-10

Rob Wittig

Is Life Like a Book or a Smartphone? Why the Form of Fiction Matters. TEDx Talk. 01.03.2011.
Netprov as a Model of Innovative Art. Keynote address to convocation of faculty and students of the School of Fine Arts, University of Minnesota, Duluth. 29.08.2011

Davin Heckman

Subversive Writing and the Digital Text. Congr s Internacional Mapping E-lit: Lectura i An lisi de la Literatura Digital; 2011-11-25 - 2011-11-26
The Politics of Plasticity: Neoliberalism and the Digital Text. Institute for Modern and Contemporary Culture. University of Westminster. Materialities of Text: Between the Codex and the Net. October 2011
Tagging Practices and the Disturbed Dialectic of Literary Criticism. Sabanci University, ISEA 2011: International Symposium on Electronic Art; 2011-09-14 - 2011-09-21

Thomas Brevik

Electronic Literature and the Digital Library. Internet Librarian International Conference. 27.10.2011-28-10.2011

Strategy for regional, national, and international cooperation

Consortium of Electronic Literature (CELL)

In 2011, we advanced the work of the Consortium for Electronic Literature, which includes partnerships with electronic literature institutions and databases in Europe, North America, and Australia. The international workshop on electronic literature databases hosted at UiB led to agreements to share data and work towards shared standards, which will be further implemented in 2012.

The Electronic Literature Organization

We have reached a tentative agreement with the Electronic Literature Organization to host the Electronic Literature Organization conference and exhibition in Bergen in 2015. The major international conference has been hosted biannually in the USA, but in 2013 is moving to an annual schedule, with a European host in alternating years, starting with Paris in 2013. Scott Rettberg continues to serve on the board of directors of the ELO, and is finishing his 3-year term as Vice President in 2012.

HERA and FP7

We are continuing to work with our ELMCIP partners in 6 European countries as the project progresses towards its outcomes and completion in 2013. We are in the process of establishing new partnerships for consortia for a new HERA application in the next round (2012 application) and for an EU FP7 application.

Local and National partnerships

We have been in talks with the Bergen Public Library about joint project applications and the Bergen Kommune about electronic literature exhibition activities. We plan to apply to the Kommune and to småforsksmidler to organize a workshop on "Curating and Exhibiting Electronic Literature" involving institutions in the Bergen art and literary communities. We are helping to plan a seminar organized by KHiB, titled "Data is Political" and Scott Rettberg and Jill Walker Rettberg have given guest lectures at KHiB. We have submitted a plan for a lecture / reading series on electronic literature at the new Writer's House, which will open in 2012.

Plans for 2012

Our work on the ELMCIP project will continue. We will also submit a number of grant applications, as mentioned above, in hopes of finding continuing funding to develop the Knowledge Base and to derive new research outcomes from it. We also plan to seek funding to develop new partnerships with Digital Humanities partners in the USA, including leading institutions in Chicago and California. A number of publications are in progress or in press, and research group members will be presenting at conferences including the Electronic Literature Organization conference, the ELMCIP Conference, and others in 2012. We will continue to have weekly meetings centered on work involving the ELMCIP Knowledge Base, and occasional guest lectures and work-in-progress presentations.