

# Cyvers city: poetry and practice<sup>1</sup>

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## Abstract:

This article reflects on the work called Cyvers City whose intention to combine poesis with technique, locates it in the area of deep questions that have been asked in the western aesthetics from the separation artists made of handcrafted production. The connection with science that art has been pursuing since the Renaissance finds in projects such as Cyvers one of the ways that, proposed from the author, tend for the transformation of our perception and idea of the world.

Key Words: Cybernetics,  
poetics, networks, technique

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<sup>1</sup>. Una versión del documento fue publicado en <http://isea2011.sabanciuniv.edu/paper/cyvers-city-1>

## Cybers city: poesía y práctica

### Resumen

El presente artículo justamente reflexiona en torno a la obra denominada *Cybers City*, cuya intención por combinar la *poïesis* con la técnica, la ubica en los ámbitos de las profundas preguntas que se han hecho en la estética occidental desde la misma separación que los artistas realizaran de la producción artesanal. La vinculación con la ciencia que ha perseguido el arte desde el Renacimiento, encuentra en proyectos como *Cybers* uno de los caminos, que propuestos desde la autora, propenden por transformar nuestra percepción e idea del mundo.

Palabras clave: Cibernética, poética, redes, técnica.

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Poïesis and tekhné form a loop in a digital feed-back and both synthesize the actual language of a digital civilization. It is also in this way that the neuronal network can be compared as a cloned weaving of a merging cyber - poetical - culture.

With cyber-space and cyber-electronics, we should reach the immersive environment, the synthesis of this huge totality of meaning and sensor-perception, sensitive knowledge in a high level of poetical substantiation. In this conception of technological art the consciousness is like a permeable skin.

It can be cloned and cultivated in a new extended gene-poetical way which would be the result of the development of technology.

Cyvers is a synthesis of morphogenetic and physic contents, built after a process of research and multidisciplinary practise.

Cyvers is a concept I created to identify the relationship between poetry and technology in the cyberspace. Cyvers is a configuration of different words from french and english: verset, cyber, vers, verse, poetry and towards.

The objective for this work in progress is to use a generative grammar, in using a similar grid as the one used in biotechnology.

This work is a reflection of a poetical-scientific cosmology. Two new worlds: a macroscopic one and an invisible one develop before our eyes. The values of technology and plasticity are questioned by a different sensitivity.

According to Plato, poetry is the principal exercise, a primordial practice: to produce, to build and to construct are synonyms of poetry. For Aristotle tekhné-poïetiké is an autonomous art.

Poetic is a field of creation and composition of works. In literature is a question of language, that it is at the same time the substance and the medium. But as far as we consider the development of the technology, we agree that we are at the beginning of a new approach.

The conjunction of science and human cleverness with intelligent machines and environments are the new windows that with the biggest open eyes let us go further in information and experience. In the global era, Cyvers is a synthesis of morphogenetic, physiological, chemical and physics contents. As far as the human being increases his own capacity of transforming the world, new ways of perception and understanding arise.

But it is also creating new perceptions with synesthesia, haptic interfaces or searching for new introspective meanings, which can produce a challenge concerning the poetics contents.

DNA, virus and bacteria are considered actually normal subjects of art. The borders between visibility and invisibility are closer.

The bio-technology goes beyond the machine in the global society era and is an implement of war, an artistic tool, a philosophical reflection, and has an unlimited capacity of mutation. There are artistic subjects that find its mutation between sign, image, text and the significant. The images mutation is also related to the epidemics that motives the scientific environment.

Receiving a digital feed-back we can also explore and activate an understanding of our cyber culture as an extended mind in a poetical way.

Looking for a total art work conceiving bio-cybernetic windows we've just abandoned the linear conception of both thinking and understanding. We've just gone further with the fractal movement, but with the quantum leap we are nearer of the qualitative jump.

The spectator travels from the past to the contemporary time and from the present to the virtual space.

Two radical revolutions allows us to enlarge the vision of our global world and open the door of a new scientific imaginary. Connexions between disciplines such as biotechnologies, physics and art are representing by making immaterial artworks located in the abstract space of communication.

As a result of these formal works, I become aware of a complex web, the cybernetic polyptich where each one can explore and experiment with the concept of expanded Cyvers poetry. For these creations the events don't occur as a succession, thus it is necessary to introduce a different concept of time. The related texts have no logical grammar, but a fragmented one, acquired through a cyber immersion determined by the perception and the role of the observer as co-author, as I mean.

While the arts and the topology of texts change, according to the observer, the narration opens itself to a natural fragmentation.

With the application of an algorithmic- poetical language, we reach the essential meaning of Cyvers. That it means not only to write verse or poetry in a configuration of different words but also to behave, to act. From the text on the base, a peculiar dynamic in which the words are transformed into images is generate: letters, pixels, viruses, molecular and nano- structures melt in an hypothetic city.

Movements of evolution and degradation emerge from the text in a non-linear space-time, in an extra-temporal text-space. The spectator travels from the past to the contemporary time and from the present to the virtual space. Images are mixed with the words and therefore produce a poetical and scientific decontextualisation.

The deciphering of the genetic code as well as cloning cells in order to create living creatures, show us the way to understand the biological world.

I apply a formal genetics connecting living matter: as the objective is to create a kind of generative grammar, in using a similar grid as the one used in biotechnology. In my project *Autophagocytosis* (1995-97) work in progress, the images are considered like informational ecosystems: they are generated by the activity and the movement of artificial entities. Cyberspace is a space where the self is manipulable: an intellectual artefact.

The human body is reconstructed through technology.  
A result of these manipulations and process is the cyborg.

The cyborg can be defined as a kind of hybrid between human and machine where technology replaces and supplements the body, its flesh, its membranes, its tissues.

The so-created body-character endures several metamorphosis through a virtual space grid. In the literary text which is on the base: passing from one space to another transforms the character from actor to narrator. Each cell metamorphosises into a block, each block into pixels, and from these to a building. The text changes its topology like rotating windows. The verticality and the point of view evolves and the narration opens naturally to fragments. The sequences- pages- or better, the screen- sequences produce an open vision.

Following a temporal flux, we wander from one space to another through cybernetic windows. The text has no logical grammar, but a fragmented one, acquired through a cyber hypnotic immersion and poïesis. Poieetikee is the art of composing. Poetry and techné converge and generate Cyvers poetry: the whole global-world is translated in algorithm like the projection of an expanded univers.

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Those stories reflect a poetical - scientific cosmology. Two new worlds: a macroscopic one and an invisible one take life under our eyes. The values of technology and plasticity are questioned by a different sensitivity: a techno- scientific sensitivity in plastic arts is revealed. Science becomes a poetic: notions of dream and unknown got higher in a fantasmagoric way.

In a peculiar dynamic pixels melt in an hypothetic city: the Cyvers city and the informational one... A particular idea of space-time is generated by stretching the time.

Movements of evolution and degradation merge from the text in an ambiguous and apparently linear space. At the first sight, the spectator does not recognize the place or view of the city.

The first sequences that become visible concern changes that men produced in the environment. The images mutation is related to recent epidemics and environmental catastrophes that motivates the scientific environment. After a while the signs and indications appear in a kind of loop, but in an extra-temporal text-space.

By technological means I create a metaphor of living processes and represent the historical changes produced in the environment.

In the hypertext open link, simultaneous direction of lecture are acceptable. If the notion of time resume specific aspects of the human experience, our perception and consciousness coordinate the relation of the elements. Cyvers events don't occurs as a succession, and for this reason I introduce the concept of extra-temporality. This includes aspects of incertitude and also a complex dimensionality of time. So, the basic structure of the text is under the influence of a virtual and order. The cyvers-poetry conception adds versatility and polyvalence as a result of the disembodying experience, better saying a sensible disembodying mind.

In this concept, the image - the permeable computer skin and digital flesh are part of the virtual body: a super-sensitive structure of reality.

Poetic hypnosis regardless of which medium we use, expands or amplifies the power of our brain. The creation of a poetical algorithm allows us to reach a new cyber-structure: the cyvers-perception. From the cyvers-perception we can find a new application in criss-crossing it with the concept of hypnosis. The hypnosis is a transitional mental state, in between the state of deep sleep and the state of awakensness. Cyvers-hypnosis is a deliberate transitory mental condition compa-

nable to a dream state. Cyvers-hypnosis is an amalgamation of virtual poetical immersion, cyvers-suggestion and organic paradigms.

Through an analogy between poetry and bio-technology, we reach the reversibility of living process. We know that cells placed in peculiar conditions reverse the aging. In the project, *Cloning Shapes* (Sulic, 1997-2002), the images are born of a flux created by a particular program.

The words are transformed into images, letters, viruses and pixels generated by a genetic, unpredictable and evolutive algorithm.

These are the artistic subjects which I work on, and I find its mutation between sign, image text and the significant as *Viral Icons* (1997).

That was the time that a title virus appeared using modelling scientific images of virus, DNA and enzymatic process as an art work in a laboratory at the ICGM (Cochin Institute of Molecular Genetics, France). During the residence the *Art and genetics Project* (95-99), was elaborate at the ICGM, in collaboration with the INSERM (National Institute for Health and Medical research, France) and Pasteur Institute in Paris.

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The deciphering of the Human Genome should make us conscious of our nano essence: the strictly ancient inner aspects of our body that are visible through augmented reality and with the methodological models of science. The project that determined the structure of DNA in 1953 and all the methods culminated in the sequencing of the human genome marked the life sciences as a major cultural paradigm; as the theories of Mendel did at the mid-19th century.

The inner body has been expanded with the deciphering of the genetic code and in the same way our understanding of the planetary system has been developed. We

are exploring Mars by means of robotic applications and seeking for new planets. But we are just as far from Pluto as from the whole functioning of our inner perception.

The conquest of space brings a new expectation to the accomplishment of acts and collective actions.

The group pronouncing itself in unison is also part of Cyvers: the collective performance in the space within participation of remote observers in other cities or outer space bases. It is even in this way that I understand also the peer to peer network, in the construction of a new poetical and intelligent environment.

The relationship of art and science is not new.

The meeting of art and science is the result of a long social process of evolution. This it started with the human being organizing in groups to find an answer to the survival of the specie and took definitive shape under the Renaissance and the 19th century.

But today the creation of an augmented reality and as by consequence augmented metropolis and augmented consciousness should also cause to humans beings to lose part of the personality. The crisis of our times is also a result of the concentration of capital and technology.

Relaying on the fact that cyvers city is both material and immaterial, is absolutely necessary to put conformities at stake. Creating visual situations where one can improve sense interfering in systems of perceptions and designing and re-designing physical spaces.

It is exactly in this interplay of changeable frontiers in the everyday life through displacements and nomadism that new attitudes towards radical change and

resistance, aesthetics of displacements, contaminating ideas insertion of art and creativity, territories and de-territorializations in urban experience can emerge.

## Conclusion

The hypothetical city is raised in front of and in parallel to the real city but all this phenomena is part of a dystopia. Once again humans should create a new environment to seek answers for the survival of the specie. An interplanetary network should also merge and this is a part of a Cyvers: which means that a real ideological substance is added to the poetical practise itself to create a demystified reality. As the augmented reality evolves, contains itself the risk of bias: the goal becomes un impersonal aspect of technology concerning human beings living this particular crisis of the civilization in a de-constructed system.

In the global era the neuronal network can also be compared to a cloned weaving of a merging cyber - poetical - organism. With cyber-space and cyber-electronics, we should reach the immersive environment, the synthesis of this huge totality of meaning and sensor-perception, sensitive knowledge in a high level of abstraction and poetical substantiation (Cyvers).

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In this conception the consciousness is like a permeable skin. It can be cloned and cultivated in a new extended gene-poetical way which would be the result of the development of technology. By technological means I represent the historical changes produced and creating a metaphor remake in a new cyvers -life the historical process.

Looking for an idea of totality, we can construct with a new value-added expanded cyber- poetry. The general meaning of my project is that with Cyvers: poetry and techné, we can change the world.

It is how we understand the peer to peer in the construction of a new poetical and intelligent environment that will feed up through a permeable network.

## References and Notes

### Notes

In Latin America, is accepted that science education belongs to modernism as part of the emergence of the nations since the XIX century. The Cyvers concept is a consequence of a work in progress unifying physics and biological concepts, that was part of my early studies, poetry and research.

“I. A.” It is a collective, created to introduce a new concept concerning the intervention of technology and the role of artist related to advanced technological proceeded and engineering created in the early eighties by the author. Pierre Restany launched part of this production it in 1992 as he *Language of energy*.

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