Propuestas LitELat para Conferencia ELO 2017

Panel #1: Building the Field: National and Transnational Strategies

- Leonardo Flores, “Mainstreaming Electronic Literature”
- Claudia Kozak, “Experimental Communities and Creative Laboratories in Latin American Electronic Literature”
- Verónica Gómez, “E-literature Locations: National Elements for Global Positioning in the ELC3”

This panel presents different strategies for building the field of electronic literature as seen in Latin America: the promotion of publications, festivals, formal and informal institutions and networks of e-literature; the development of laboratories for collective and collaborative creation; the transformation of local languages into instruments for geopolitical territorialization, among others. These actions make it possible to discuss the national and transnational positioning of the works in question, exploring the development of a community in Latin America, as well as stimulating e-literary creation in digital media environments.

Developing the field of electronic literature is of importance to the ELO community because e-lit is still a highly specialized kind of writing with a reduced number of practitioners, even in countries with established e-lit traditions, programs, and communities. The recent emergence of Latin American electronic literature works and communities, such as the Red de Literatura Electrónica Latinoamericana (http://litelat.net) allows us to see how the field can be built in both national and global contexts as well as in academic and mainstream spaces.

Panel #2: Aesthetics and Politics in Latin American Electronic Literature

- Thea Pitman, “Hypertext and Biculturality in the Early Work of Lucia Grossberger Morales and Jacalyn Lopez Garcia”
- Carolina Gainza, “Textualities, Politics and Languages of the digital: poetics and aesthetics in the Chilean Digital Literature”
- Nohelia Meza, “Voices and Figures: Towards a Digital Rhetoric for Latin American Works of Electronic Literature”
- Jaime Alejandro Rodríguez, “Virtuality and intermediation in Hypermedia: *Memorias y caminos*”

This panel spans the conference themes of “communities” and “translations”. It focuses on the issue of “communities”(“community engagement”) in its exploration of a body of work that shares not just a common Latin(o) American origin but also a desire to interrogate such a sense of belonging, of community, of the self in many different ways. The papers in this panel also acknowledge that “there are many different voices” that enter into dialogue in the negotiation of belonging in these works of electronic literature, and they thus focus on making explicit the different “translations” and “transfigurations” that underpin them.

The papers themselves focus on a wide range of different works of Latin(o) American electronic literature, from the pioneering hypermedia autobiographical works of Lucia Grossberger Morales and Jacalyn Lopez Garcia from the early 1990s, to Eugenia Prado Bassi’s ‘installation-novel’ *Hembros* of 2004, to the most recent creations of Doménico Chiappe, María Mencía and Jaime Alejandro Rodríguez, amongst others. They are united by their concern to explore both the aesthetics and the politics of the works in question, drawing our attention to the way in which works of electronic literature relate to issues of collective memory and intelligence, biculturality, multilingualism and offer the potential for ‘cultural hacking’ in the terms of one of the panelists.

Propuestas:

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Mainstreaming Electronic Literature

How can we bring electronic literature to mainstream audiences in a way that helps the field grow?

In its 65-year history, electronic literature has been written by mostly by people with a relatively rare programming skill set and/or access to specialized tools that can be used to produce writing that engages digital media’s potential. These practitioners have congregated around or created their own communities of practice, assisted by conferences, festivals, publishers, online communication tools (newsgroups, e-mail listservs, online groups, websites, social networks, etc.), and academic and artistic organizations, such as the Electronic Literature Organization (ELO). As the field has matured, it has entered academia as topics within existing courses, e-lit courses, academic products (such as theses, dissertations, and books), and as critical mass accrues in higher learning institutions, dedicated undergraduate and graduate programs.

My paper suggests that historical and contemporary digital divides, as well as cultural traditions and institutions, have delayed the emergence, adoption, and institutionalization of electronic literature in different countries around the world. For example, only a few countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have recently begun to discover, study, and share their emergent electronic literature traditions. Even in the U.S., which had the earliest access to digital media

technologies and has some of the the most mature e-lit communities, e-literature is still on the fringes of mainstream culture and thrives mostly in academic environments, online communities, and among privileged social classes and ethnic groups.

This presentation proposes strategies for mainstream adoption in four areas: research, education, publishing, and outreach. Each area has activities with incrementally greater social impact and mainstream awareness, as seen in following outline:

Research

1. Electronic literature: history, genres, practices, theories, preservation, etc.
2. Digital rhetoric: multimodal communications, digital publishing, etc.
3. Popular digital genres: blogging, internet memes, webcomics, kinetic typography, etc.
4. Digital literacy: code, media, information, and other literacies.

Education

1. Incorporating e-lit into existing courses.
2. Creating and teaching e-lit courses.
3. Teaching graduate students and instructors to incorporate e-lit into general education college courses.
4. Training K-12 teachers to incorporate e-lit into their classes.

Publishing

1. Scholarly publishing about e-lit.
2. Resource creation: anthologies, databases, etc.
3. Blogging, podcasting, vlogging, social media campaigns, etc.
4. Mainstream media publishing: newspapers, magazines, television, radio, etc.

Outreach

1. Exhibitions, readings, festivals, etc.
2. Building communities and resources.
3. Connecting and forming alliances with other communities.
4. Creating institutional support from universities, civic groups, industry, local government, funding agencies.

My discussion will build upon research on electronic literature communities-- particularly two special issues of *Dichtung Digital* on Electronic Literature communities edited by Scott Rettberg and Patricia Tomaszek in 2012-- and updating them with recent examples of e-lit field building efforts in Latin America. I will also offer brief surveys two research areas that are not widely used in the ELO community-- digital rhetoric and digital literacy-- connecting them to e-lit mainstreaming strategies. The goal is to offer a strategic roadmap to ELO members for research, publication, education, and outreach activities.

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Experimental Communities and Creative Laboratories in Latin American Electronic Literature

The paper focuses on Latin American electronic literature, particularly collaboratively created works emerging from experimental communities and creative laboratories. In relation to the arts, experimental communities can be tracked back away at least to avant gardes such as Dada and Surrealism, for whom artistic creation was seen not only as collective but experimental (Adorno, Bürger). Postwar movements such as Situationism and Fluxus, which assaulted culture (Stewart Home), also involved collaborative actions, but in the last decades these notions have been renewed in domains explicitly concerning technology. One of them-- where technology is considered in a broad sense-- named by Argentinean artist and sociologist Roberto Jacoby as “tecnologías de la amistad” (friendship technologies), could be associated to relational art practices (Bourriaud). I will focus here on experimental communities who build bonding between their members when producing artworks, been the process of bonding part of the artwork itself. The result of this kind of domain is in some way opposite to social control technologies. I will try to test to what extent this kind of social technologies, usually spread nowadays on different kinds of arts, could be applied in particular to electronic literature practice. Another domain, intertwine with the former, can be conceptualized as collaborative and creative DIY workshops in contexts of electronic cultures. In this case, artists work together in order to share knowledge-- amongst themselves and with other participants-- and to also experiment with innovative solutions facing lack of resources.

Although these practices are much more extended in Latin America in relation to electronic art in general-- robotics, for instance-- the experiences to be analyzed provide evidence of a new field of Latin American electronic literature that can be considered in terms of these collaborative and experimental ambiences. Even more, the paper will evaluate to what extent certain translocal contexts enable and/or stimulate collective/collaborative ways of creation that deny authorship as a main category for literature works and emphasize a libertarian literary philosophy. Among other aspects, this translocal contexts include artists’ biographical localization and delocalization, countercultural network imaginaries with quite a presence in Latin America, local cultural mixtures, expansions and displacements concerning different artistic languages, and emerging institutions giving place to these kind of projects.

I will consider several works included on Electronic Literature Collection, Volume 3, and other isolated experiences with different institutional involvement, which allow to test and measure different implementation degrees of experimental networks and creative laboratories:

- *Tatuaje* (Mexico, 2014) by Rodolfo JM, Leonardo Aranda, Gabriela Gordillo, et al.
- *Liberdade* (Brazil, 2013), by Alckmar Luiz dos Santos, Chico Marinho, et al.
- *Anacrón: hipótesis de un producto todo* (Mexico, 2012) by Augusto Marquet and Gabriel Wolfson.
- *Gabriella infinita* (Colombia, 2000), in its hypermedia version, by Jaime Alejandro Rodríguez, in collaboration with Carlos Roberto Torres Parra, Clara Inés Silva and Andrés López.
- Literary Creative Online Platform by Milton Läufer (resource for Premio Itaú Cuento Digital 2015).
- Literatura digital: el mito, lo nuevo y el mito de lo nuevo, workshop by Milton Läufer in CIA (Centro de Investigaciones Artísticas), Buenos Aires, 2016.

Keywords: Experimental Communities, Electronic Literature Workshops, Collaborative

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E-literature Locations: National Elements for Global Positioning in the ELC3

The third volume of the Electronic Literature Collection (ELC3) is home to a set of Latin American technopoetics that resort to national imagery and come together as a community in the global field of e-literature. The increasing entry of works from a formerly marginal origin into ELO renews the debate over the relation between literature and location (Sapiro), extending this question to cybernetic space itself.

The corpus we refer to comprises *The 27th || El 27* by Eugenio Tiselli (Mexico), which provides a criticism of the necrocapitalism that dominates the maximum national law, i.e. the Mexican Constitution. Also, *Grita* by José Aburto (Peru), which is a performatic and experimental work created in 2005 that demands collaboration and interaction from the reader to be "written" through her/his shout, meaning the language as a material body, the body that shouts as the leading character and Spanish as the language that lives in the machine. Another work included is *Tatuaje* by Rodolfo Jm, Leonardo Aranda, Gabriela Gordillo, et al. (Mexico), a transmedial novel that experiments with messages, images and maps aiming at a national located production. *Anacrón: hipótesis de un producto todo* by Augusto Marquet and Gabriel Wolfson (Mexico), which combines Mexican folklore with videogames logic. And finally, it includes *Bacterias Argentinas* by Santiago Ortiz (Colombia), which is a technopoetic that, on the one hand, focuses on the “micro” level of the Argentine genetics of language and, on the other

hand, considers the “macro” level of trophic networks from natural sciences, where the stronger organism eats the weaker one.

This study analyses how the idea of nation (Anderson; Gellner; Balivar) operates for locating these Latin American productions in global contexts (Grossberg) and consequently for establishing political affiliations with one another. The referred works transform the local languages —legal texts, Spanish language, iconic images, folkloric tradition—– into instruments for geopolitical territorialization (Chun). My objective is to identify the strategic use of national elements in the aforementioned works to build a common zone that defines a position in ELO as a global platform.

Keywords: national imagery, e-literature, Latin American community, geopolitical territorialization

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Textualities, Politics and Languages of the digital: poetics and aesthetics in the Chilean Digital Literature

In this paper I discuss the results of a research project that I have been conducting in the field of digital culture in Chile since 2015, which includes film, literature and music. The project considers two dimensions: the circulation of culture and its forms of production. Regarding reception, I propose that it can be observed in a variety of forms of appropriation in the digital realm, including in forms of circulation and production. To characterize the changes in the circulation of Chilean culture on the internet, I have surveyed web repositories dedicated to cinema (Cinechile and Cinépata) and literature (LetrasS5), and in the field of music, I have worked with a sample of Chilean netlabels. Regarding the forms of cultural production, I have built a corpus of different Chilean works - of literature, film and music – that are all characterized by experimentation with digital technologies to create artworks such as hypertexts, hypermedia works, digital sounds and musical compositions, interactive fictional films and documentaries, none of which can exist in the precedent formats.

Although this project considers three areas, on this occasion I will concentrate on Chilean digital literature. Therefore, the presentation will focus on the analysis of digital aesthetics and the politics of digital creativity that can be observed in the literary works under study. The first part of the presentation will address the analysis of a digital aesthetic through a sample of Chilean digital literature. I will pay special attention to two aspects that I consider relevant for the analysis of digital aesthetics. One is the concept of the network, understood as a structure that allows the subject to experience an aesthetic linked to the existence of an open and random text, as seen in its possibilities of construction, languages and its reading. The other related aspect is the potential of intervention from the reader-player to manipulate this open text by

modifying the underlying computational code, the language behind any digital work. In this regard, I will define *cultural hacking* as the potential of intervention intrinsically related to digital works, which is a consequence of the "digital condition" of the underlying digital code.

I will then concentrate on the analysis of a particular work, *Hembros* by the Chilean writer Eugenia Prado Bassi. *Hembros* is defined as an "installation-novel" because it combines performance, video and text, where these three dimensions dialogue between each other, without losing their singularity. In this sense, it can be defined as a transmedia narrative as well. The characteristics that this work presents in terms of hacking, interactivity and network structure, as in others in the study I mentioned above, will lead me to a discussion of cyborg bodies, the presence of a "commons" (Hardt and Negri 2005; Laval and Dardot 2014) and the politics of digital aesthetics in Chile and Latin America.

Keywords: digital aesthetics, cultural hacking, networks, hypertext, Chilean digital literature

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Hypertext and Biculturality in the Early Work of Lucia Grossberger Morales and Jacalyn Lopez Garcia

Critics such as Jaishree Odin, George Landow and Jesús Martín-Barbero have identified the concept of hypertext as ideally suited to conveying the complexities of living with/between two or more cultures, homelands, temporalities, belief systems and/or aesthetic sensibilities. However, others such as Carlos Monsiváis and Raúl Trejo Delarbre have feared the rampant growth of the internet, facilitated by its hypertextual architecture, precisely because of its potential to impose US culture and values on less dominant groups the world over. Sidestepping such concerns, two prominent Latina/Chicana artists working with digital and networked media in the mid 1990s did indeed identify the expressive possibilities of hypertext as most suited to their autobiographical explorations of biculturality. This paper explores the artistic works produced as a result: Latina artist Lucia Grossberger Morales's *Sangre Boliviana* (1992-2002) and Chicana artist Jacalyn Lopez Garcia's *Glass Houses* (1997). It considers the artists' intentions regarding the representation of a specifically gendered biculturality in their works and how, in their view, a hypertextual (and possibly networked) medium is most suited to this. It also considers their efforts to use these works to create affinity-based communities and connect with audiences. And finally, it examines the various tropes they use to "visualise" their expression of gendered biculturality, particularly with regards to their pertinence to the new media in which they are working.

Keywords: art, autobiography, biculturality, hypertext, Latina

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Voices and Figures: Towards a Digital Rhetoric of Latin American Works of Electronic Literature

From the perspective of discourse analysis, electronic literature is seen as a social practice that demands the formulation of new analytical frameworks especially designed for the study of mediated discourse (Scollon, 2014). Latin American works of electronic literature host within their discursive space veiled voices of history, freedom, identity and folklore that are waiting to be examined and analysed. Through the analysis of the tropological potential of couplings between text, movement and manipulation (Saemmer, 2010; Bouchardon, 2011), I plan to unveil the enunciative polyphony and hyperphony present in several works of Latin American electronic literature, as well as to explore how these voices are recon*figured* within the discursive space of the works. If rhetorical figures are used to emphasize the messages and to define styles in works of electronic literature, it is therefore important to understand how they are formed. My purpose is to analyse how the aesthetic flow of cultural diversity may begin to establish conditions and patterns of appearance in a shared space of culture and knowledge. Likewise I plan to expand the aforementioned theoretical approaches by introducing new concepts that can be seen as a starting point for the study of enunciative polyphony emerging from rhetorical figures within the mediated discourse of Latin American works. For instance, I will examine the representation of "tierra" (land/homeland) through figures of animation in *Cielotierra* (MIDIPoet, 1999-2002) by Eugenio Tisselli, as well as in *Tierra de Extracción* (2007) by Doménico Chiappe and Andreas Meier (*ELC2*); and the traces of political memories through figures of manipulation in *El poema que cruzó el Atlántico* (2015-2017) by María Mencía and *Tierra de Extracción* (2007) by Chiappe and Meier.

Keywords: mediated discourse, enunciative polyphony, rhetorical figures, Latin American e-lit.

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Virtuality and Intermediation in Hypermedia: *Memorias y caminos*

My work *Memorias y caminos* (http://memoriasycaminos.com, 2016) had its original motivation in two initial frames of reference: in the first place, autobiography as a literary and aesthetic /

artistic problem; secondly, the artistic artifacts that promote autobiographical resonances and especially the work of the Colombian playwright Enrique Vargas: *El hilo de ariadna* (1992).

Memorias y caminos inherited from *El hilo de Ariadna* two conditions: the labyrinthine structure and the evocative power that contact with the staged worlds of each gallery produces. If in *El hilo*, that evocative power comes from a sensorial experience carried to the limit, in *Memorias* there is an adaptation of those conditions for the electronic space that seeks the emergence of the virtual body, understood as: "corporal images that dress, expand, interpret, hide or replace the physical body and that we create, project, encourage and present to others constantly" (Ryan, 2004).

The idea of transferring the evocative force of *El hilo de Ariadna*, as well as the possibilities of spectator participation in a virtual space, led to the design of two parallel and complementary strategies: virtualization of perceptual experiences and interactive game mechanics.

Another issue that I wish to discuss in relation to *Memorias y caminos* is the media presence. In the work this occurs in two ways. In the first place, the narratives presented here are constructed by integrating the text with other media: image-movement, use of photographs, drawings, virtual cartography, surround and narrative audio, etc., and are "affected" by interactivity, all of which brings varied dynamics of narrative resolution. Second, almost half of the autobiographical entries are linked to forms of memory unleashed by media consumption experiences. The all have to do with a memory that unfolds thanks to the imaginary media.

Keywords: narrative hypermedia, autobiography, interactive game, media memory, perceptual simulation