Putting the Pig Back Together Again: Dis(re)connection in *Figurski at Findhorn on Acid*

Abstract

Figurski at Findhorn on Acid is a comic hypertext novel originally published in 2001 and reconceived for the modern web in 2021. The novel's scenes are generated from every possible combination of three characters, three artifacts, and three places, and yet it also has an overall, chronological (if unconventional) plot that takes place in the 1990s. At the center of the plot is a valuable 18th century mechanical pig, plus a near-identical forgery, automatons which the characters separately pursue across global and virtual locations. The pigs become a metaphor for the novel—like the hypertext, they both have exactly 147 parts, parts which the characters disassemble and then must try to reassemble in the end when they finally come together "all on the same page." Likewise, the experience of reading the novel involves a constant (re)assembling of its disparate elements into scenes, as the reader traverses hypertext links and chooses navigational paths. In these ways *Figurski* may be seen as both literally and symbolically about disconnection and reconnection.

Keywords

Hypertext fiction, hypertext novel, postmodern literature, electronic literature, interactive fiction, combinatorial novel

In Memoriam:

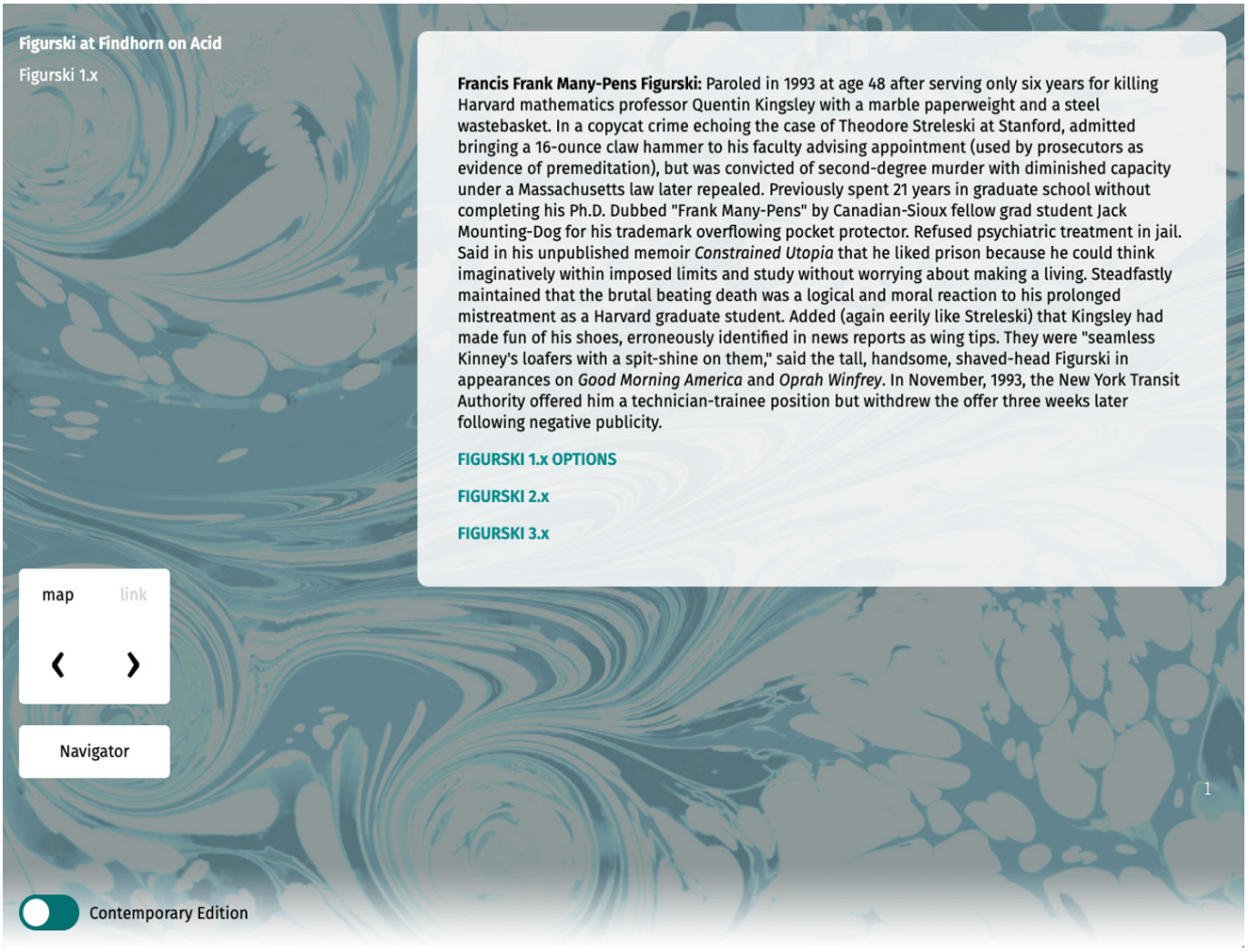
Michael Tratner, 1949-2021

Introduction

Figurski at Findhorn on Acid (Holeton, 2021a) is a hypertext novel that's been described by scholar Mariusz Pisarski as "funny, crazy, ultra-postmodern satire" (2021, para. 1) and by critic Michael Tratner as riding "a thin edge between the most complex recent critical ideas and the most absurd TV game shows" (2021, para. 3). Originally published by Eastgate Systems on the Storyspace platform in 2001, the novel was technically and functionally reconceptualized and reimagined for the web in 2021 in partnership with Washington State University's Electronic Literature Lab under the direction of Dr. Dene Grigar (2021). As a collaborative effort and complete recoding, the result is a new work featuring a unique, dual aesthetic design with two modes that the reader can toggle between—"Contemporary Mode" for modern readers, and "Classic Mode," which pays homage to the look and feel of the original.

Figurski is a combinatorial fiction structured around nine discrete elements, its scenes determined by every possible combination of one, two, or all three characters, at one of three places, with one, two, or all three of the artifacts. The zany plot revolves around one of the artifacts—an 18th century mechanical pig—as the eccentric characters traverse global and virtual locations competing for its possession, before ultimately coming together at the same places and times.

As Tratner notes in his critical introduction to the 2021 edition, the porcine automaton—Rosellini's 1737 *Mechanical Pig*—"is quite clearly identified as a metaphor for the whole hypertext" (2021, para. 2). As such, the pig is a key to the novel's structural as well as thematic layers of "disconnection and reconnection," the theme of the *14th International Conference on Interactive Storytelling and Art Exhibition* that is the occasion for this volume of essays.


Figurski at Findhorn on Acid
Figurski 1.x
Francis Frank Many-Pens Figurski: Paroled in 1993 at age 48 after serving only six years for killing Harvard mathematics professor Quentin Kingsley with a marble paperweight and a steel wastebasket. In a copycat crime echoing the case of Theodore Streleski at Stanford, admitted bringing a 16-ounce claw hammer to his faculty advising appointment (used by prosecutors as evidence of premeditation), but was convicted of second-degree murder with diminished capacity under a Massachusetts law later repealed. Previously spent 21 years in graduate school without completing his Ph.D. Dubbed "Frank Many-Pens" by Canadian-Sioux fellow grad student Jack Mounting-Dog for his trademark overflowing pocket protector. Refused psychiatric treatment in jail. Said in his unpublished memoir Constrained Utopia that he liked prison because he could think imaginatively within imposed limits and study without worrying about making a living. Steadfastly maintained that the brutal beating death was a logical and moral reaction to his prolonged mistreatment as a Harvard graduate student. Added (again eerily like Streleski) that Kingsley had made fun of his shoes, erroneously identified in news reports as wing tips. They were "seamless Kinney's loafers with a spit-shine on them," said the tall, handsome, shaved-head Figurski in appearances on Good Morning America and Oprah Winfrey. In November, 1993, the New York Transit Authority offered him a technician-trainee position but withdrew the offer three weeks later following negative publicity.
FIGURSKI 1.x OPTIONS
FIGURSKI 2.x
FIGURSKI 3.x
map
link
Navigator
1
Contemporary Edition

Origins: Ontological Flicker

As I recall in the author's introduction to the 2021 edition of *Figurski*:

In 1995, I wrote a 500-word flash fiction [Holeton, 1996; see Appendix A] about Theodore Streleski, a real-life, perennial Stanford graduate student who notoriously bludgeoned to death his faculty advisor with a hammer in the 1970s. "Streleski at Findhorn on Acid," which imagined Streleski visiting the New Age intentional community of Findhorn, Scotland, while high on LSD, won First Prize in Grain Magazine's 1995 "Short Grain Postcard Story" contest. The construct of my "Streleski" story—"Someone at Somewhere with Something"—seemed to lend itself to replication, and I began to envision a series of sequels. Meanwhile, I had been exposing my Stanford writing students to hypertext tools such as Apple's HyperCard, Eastgate's Storyspace, and the early web, and I'd developed an interest in composing a hypertext fiction. (Holeton, 2021b, para. 2)

As my idea of repeated *Someones, Somewheres, with Somethings* synched up with the affordances of hypertext, I created two more characters in addition to Streleski (Nguyen Van Tho aka The No-Hands Cup Flipper, and Fatima Michelle Vieuchanger, a double-gender-bending French Moroccan journalist), two more places in addition to Findhorn (Shower-Lourdes, an apparitional site in a Florida trailer park, and The Holodeck, from the TV series *Star Trek Next Generation*), and two more artifacts in addition to LSD (Spam, the canned meat product, and the aforementioned Mechanical Pig).

When I decided to replace the real-life Theodore Streleski with a fictional copycat criminal, the novel's title character Frank Figurski, I was inspired to similarly fashion all nine elements as some blend of the actual and the ficti-

tious. Like Figurski, Vieuchanger has a historical antecedent in the early 20th-century French adventurer Michel Vieuchange, who disguised himself as a Berber woman in order to travel to the Western Sahara oasis of Smara. And The No-Hands Cup Flipper learned his acrobatic skills from the real-life Eugene Zanger, who once appeared on *The David Letterman Show* as "The World-Famous Cup Flipper." For their part, the locations and the artifacts also mix the real and the imagined:

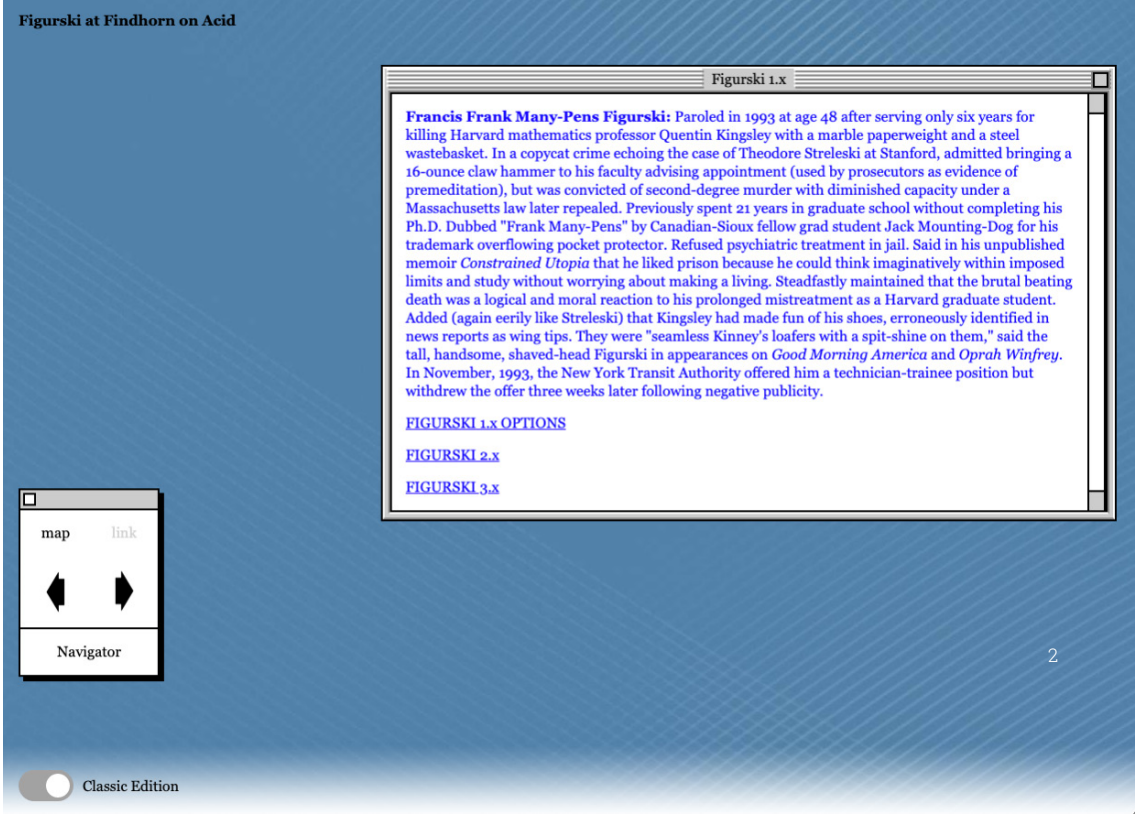
Places

- Findhorn is a real community in Scotland
- Shower-Lourdes is a fictional caricature of actual apparitional sites
- The Holodeck is an "actual fictional" place from a TV series

Artifacts

- Spam and Acid (LSD) are obviously real
- The Mechanical Pig is fictional but based on actual 18th-century automatons

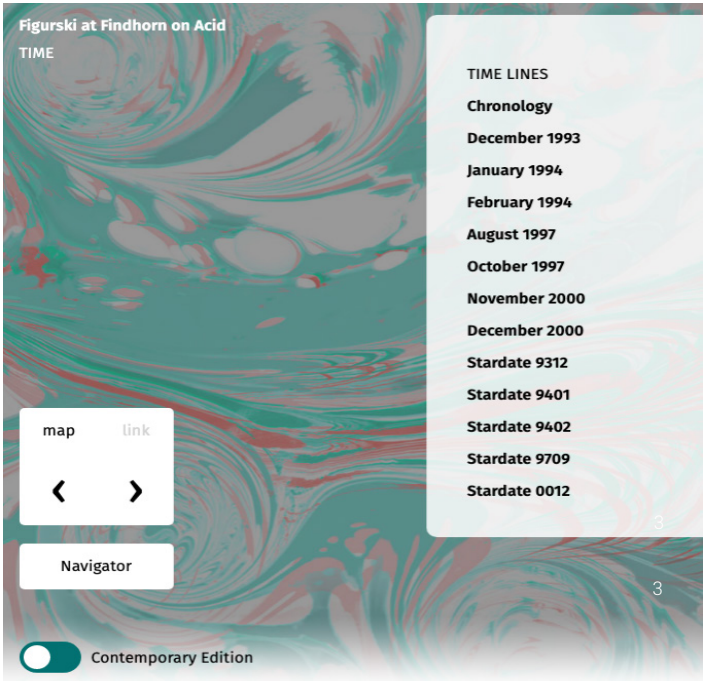
Likewise, many scenes in the novel incorporate both fictional and real-life or historical elements. Alice Bell, analyzing *Figurski* through the lens of Possible Worlds theory, examines one such narrative sequence, in which the real-life last meal and death of the former Princess Diana in a Parisian car crash is repeatedly simulated in the novel's Holodeck, but with the historical figures being portrayed by Figurski, Vieuchanger, and Nguyen (2010, pp. 167-171). Bell suggests that the "relationship between the Textual Actual World of Figurski and the Actual World of the reader is ontological and epistemological and . . . the text takes advantage of both" (2010, p. 184) to create humorous dissonances, for example when readers compare their knowledge of Princess Di



with the twisted versions in the novel.

This "ontological flicker" (McHale, 1999, qtd. in Bell, 2010) in *Figurski* might well be seen as fluctuating disconnections and reconnections between the text world of the novel (what Bell calls the Textual Actual World) and the reader's actual "Actual World"—an ongoing condition of dis(re) connection between the fictional and the real.

Additionally, in the real world, after its original publication in 2001 by Eastgate Systems on CD-ROM, the novel itself became literally disconnected from its readers around 2008, when most computer operating systems could no longer run the proprietary Storyspace software. *Figurski* then languished, in obsolescent isolation if not exactly quarantine, until its 20th anniversary in 2021, when Dene Grigar's team of designers and programmers at Washington State University's Electronic Literature Lab (ELL) migrated and recreated the novel in modern web languages (Grigar,



2021)—thus, happily, reconnecting it with an audience of readers and critics. In doing so, moreover, the ELL performed a higher and pioneering act of reconnection, in their innovative design of the archival web edition.

As Pisarski points out, Storyspace was the "beloved writing and reading platform from the 'Golden Age of Hypertext'" (2021, para. 1). Instead of choosing either a "readerly edition" to meet the needs of contemporary readers or a "scholarly edition" for "archivists, critics, and readers of the past," Grigar and team chose to do both, connecting the present with the past in a single work (Pisarski, 2021, paras. 2-5).

See Figures 1 and 2: Readers can make those (re)connections across time instantaneously and from every screen in *Figurski*, simply by toggling back and forth between the Contemporary Edition and the Classic Edition.

Structure and Navigation: Disconnecting and Reconnecting

Hypertext narratives are "often experienced as disconnected and disorienting" (Zelleweger, Mangen, & Newman, 2002, p. 45) almost by definition, given their characteristic discrete text chunks or lexia, linking structure, and multiple reading paths. "Confusion and bewilderment [...] can be considered a generic feature of this type of writing," says Astrid Ensslin in one of her analyses of *Figurski* (2014, p. 62). And Jaishree Odin writes:

> *Hypertextual linking fractures the textual surface, turning the otherwise continuous and linear narrative into a discontinuous assemblage of textual fragments that can be folded, unfolded, and refolded in a variety of ways.* (2004, p. 453)

Indeed *Figurski* would seem, at first blush, to highlight all this inherent hypertextual dissociation with its building-block structure of three characters, three places, and three artifacts—the nine elements all introduced in separate lexia, each with its own three iterations, emphasizing their distinctness, like intratextual Lego bricks.

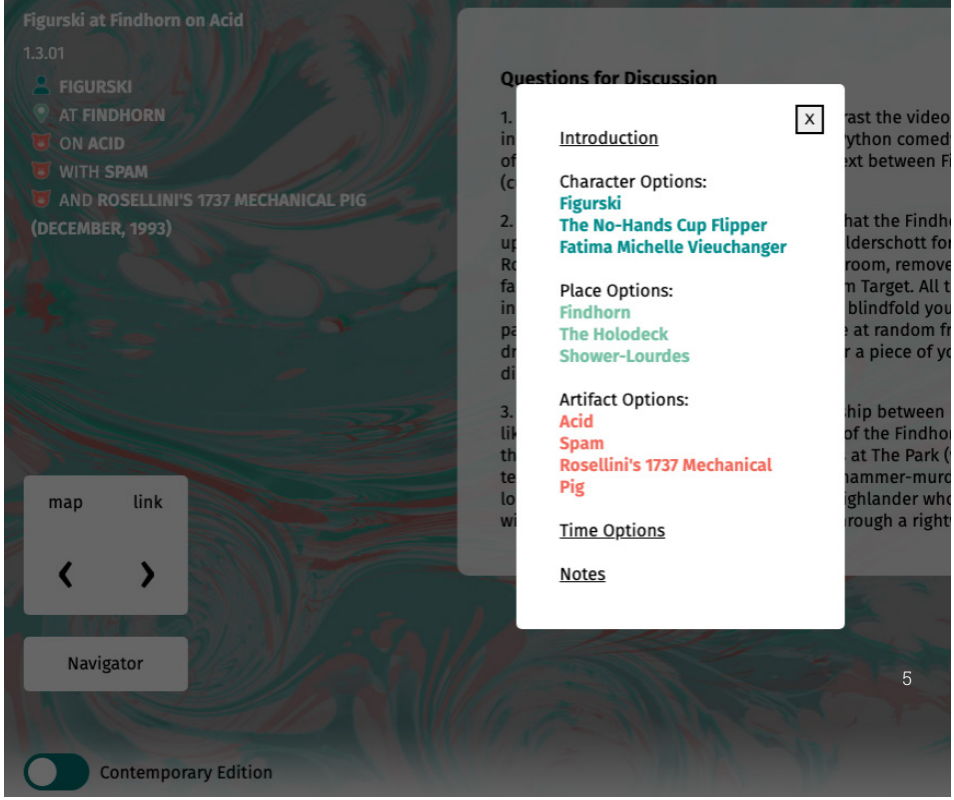
Likewise, each combinatory scene—with one, two, or all three characters, at one of the places, with one, two, or all three of the artifacts—is presented as a discrete narrative with the appropriate title, such as "Figurski and Fatima Michelle Vieuchanger at Shower-Lourdes with Spam" or "Fatima Michelle Vieuchanger and The No-Hands Cup Flipper on the Holodeck on Acid with Rosellini's 1737 Mechanical Pig." Because the characters cannot be at more than one place at a time (in a nod to the laws of physics that the novel arguably violates in other ways), there are "only" 147 of these combinations comprising the main narrative, supplemented by a parallel section of 147 "Notes" which offer metacommentary in text and images. (An additional

[1] Dene Grigar (2019) argues "against any notion of a unity of place in the narrative" insofar as the characters inhabit multiple mental spaces, including hallucinations and Holodeck simulations.

60 lexia consist of mostly navigational pages, such as lists of other lexia or tables of contents, so the novel totals 354 nodes, interconnected by 2001 links. Consistent with the novel's numerology, all these numbers—60, 147, 354, 2001—are multiples of 3.)

All "this fragmentation gives the text a feeling of discontinuity and disjointedness," says Bell (2010, p. 183); each episode of *Figurski* seems "so different that they are almost entirely disconnected from one another" (2010, p. 150). Ensslin writes that the novel's

> *contrived and ambiguous sense of reality […] is determined by a complex blend of seemingly unrelated, random subnarratives: science-fiction and fantasy, issues surrounding pigs and pork ('Spam'), robotics, Boy Scouts, the Vietnam and Gulf Wars, drugs (LSD), New Age spiritualism, celebrities and television chatshows.* (2007, p. 88)



—all of which, she suggests in a separate analysis, "further augment[s] readerly confusion and bemusement" (2014, p. 62).

I wish to propose, however, that the sub-narratives of *Figurski* are connected and unified insofar as (a) they instantiate a coherent overall plot, albeit an unconventional one, with many parallel tracks; and (b) they are organized hyper-logically, mathematically, into multiples of three directories or sections, in an overarching structure made plainly transparent for the reader. "Along with its satirical treatment of contemporary culture, a hallmark of the novel is its structure," writes Grigar (2019, para. 1), a structure she analyzes in detail, describing it as economical and methodical. The logic of the structure includes, for example, grouping together all the scenes that involve just one character, the scenes involving two characters, and those with all three characters. Also connecting "seemingly

unrelated" narratives—along with the rhythm of the repeated locations and artifacts—are parallel sequences of various textual forms: the story marches (or lurches?) forward through a series of haikus, then a series of Nancy Drew Mystery parodies, a series of product disclaimers, a series of heroic couplets, a series of database searches, and so on. This "complicated, even tortured organization" (Tratner, 2021, para. 1) is, Ensslin says in her book about literary gaming, "curiously reminiscent of the way most digital games are structured" (2014, p. 62)—which is to say, at least to my mind, unified in a coherent structure.

In these and other ways, I have tried hard in designing *Figurski* to mitigate the "lost in hyperspace" (e.g., Otter & Johnson, 2000) phenomenon observed about early hypertexts, and indeed have endeavored—more ambitiously, and I realize this may be a stretch—to make the novel a kind of bridge between the new electronic literature and conventional (print) literary novels:

> *Standing on the shoulders of (or, in Figurskian terms, riding piggyback on) [earlier groundbreaking hypertext literature], I wanted to write, first and foremost, an entertaining and humorous hypertext fiction. To do so I wanted to combine the emerging conventions of hypertext (smaller chunks of text connected with hyperlinks) with the older conventions of print text (tell a good story!). I wished to demystify the navigation of a large hypertext, to make the structure and linking scheme completely transparent ([i.e.] make the site easy to navigate). I wanted to write a novel with multiple reading paths and a linear plot line, populated with characters and settings and artifacts compelling enough, or satirical or absurd enough, to sustain hundreds of combinatorial scenes. Those were some of my goals, and of course readers will decide the extent to which I achieved any of them.*
>
> (Holeton, 2021b, para. 6)

I wish, then, not only to help the reader connect the dots but also to reconnect hypertext fiction to print literature in a larger sense, by playing in the space of the tension between them, walking a line between multilinearity and a perhaps twisty, but still lucid, plotline. That basic plot, as outlined by Ensslin:

> *unfolds over a period of several years, starting in 1993, directly succeeding Figurski's release from prison, as he finds a crated 'Mechanical Pig' on a beach near Findhorn, Scotland, unaware of its material and historic value, and of the fact that two malicious antagonists are feverishly tracking the antique. The realistic narrative ends in December 2000 [...] [at] the final meeting of the main characters.* [2007, p. 88]

The story follows each character in turn and in parallel in each "time line" (see Figure 3)—one character at a time in 1993-94, two characters at a time in 1997, then all three characters together beginning in November, 2000. (The "Stardates," although nominally in the future, are The Holodeck equivalent of the same 1990s timeline: Stardate 9312 corresponds to the 12th month of 1993; 9401 corresponds to the first month of 1994; etc.)

"The final sections of the novel don't just wander: they move to a sense of a distinct ending," says Tratner (2021, para. 16). As further evidence of this inchoate linearity, I would point to the 2022 radio play adaptation of the novel produced by John Barber, first broadcast on his *Re-Imagined Radio* series and thought to be the first-ever radio adaptation of a hypertext fiction (Barber, 2022a). For this remarkable audio experience (performed by The Voices, with sound design and production by Emmy-winner Marc Rose of Fuse Audio Design), Barber (2022b) created a script that threads the needle of *Figurski*'s plotline. Using mostly text and dialogue from the novel and emphasizing the final appearance of the three characters at Findhorn,

Barber was able to distill a faithful and harmonious storyline tailored for the linear medium of a one-hour radio drama (2022).

Figurski provides a continuous default route through the chronological plot with right- and left-facing arrows for the reader to click forward and backward, much like turning the (digital) pages of the novel. The default path constitutes at least a quasi-linear reading experience—although one admittedly quirky or "ultra-postmodern" (Pisarski, 2021, para. 1) in its shifting subjects, content, and textual forms.

To deviate from that default route, readers have several choices. Along with the right and left arrows, the navigation panel on every screen offers a "Navigator" button, "link" button, and "map" button (Figure 4).

The "Navigator" (Figure 5) is a pop-up page with links to all nine main elements of the novel, like a table of contents. The "Navigator" also links to the "time lines" described above ("Time Options") and to the "Notes" section (text and images offering metacommentary on the novel).

The "link" button is active on any given screen when there are additional links available within the text on that screen. Those links appear in wire-frame boxes (when "link" is clicked) and usually lead to a lexia in the "Notes" section, like footnotes. See Figure 6.

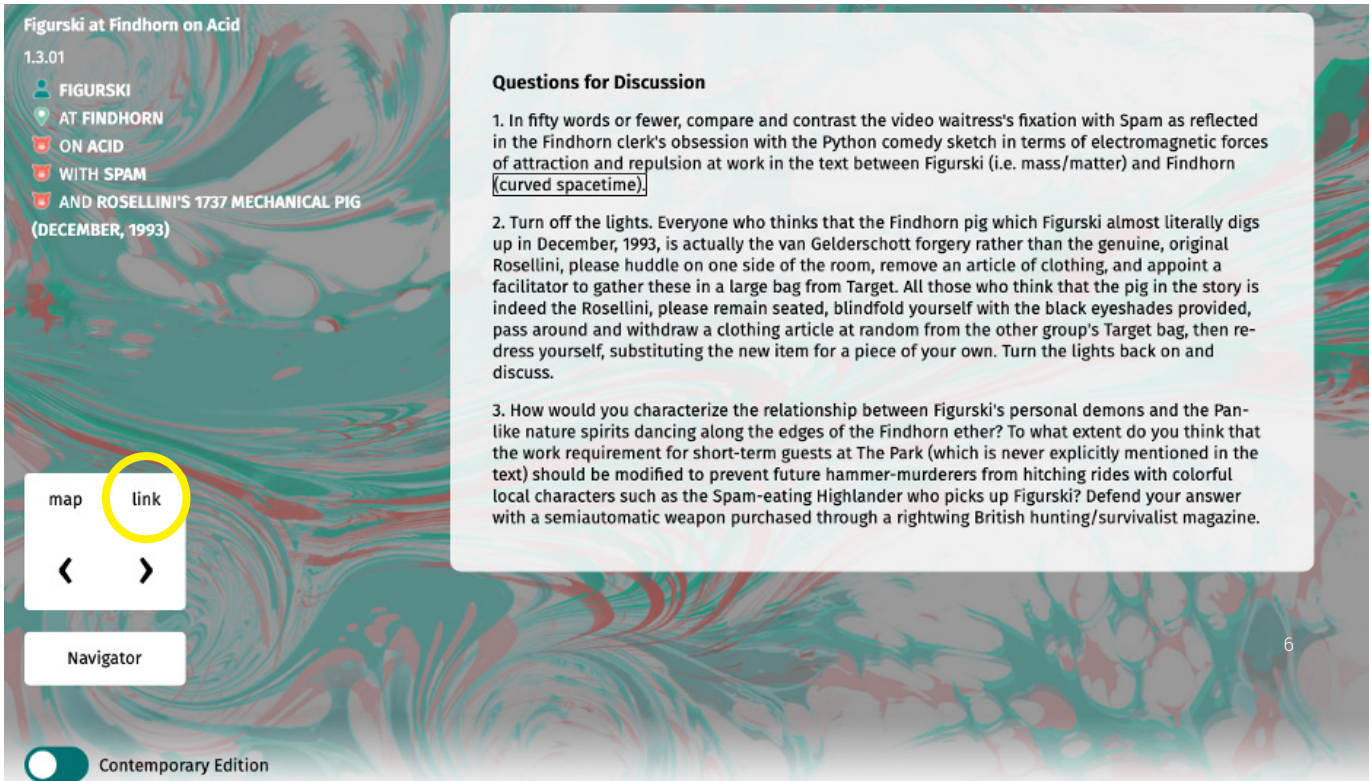
Finally, the "map" function—originally a feature of the Storyspace version and, like the wireframe boxes for "hidden" links (above), lovingly and ingeniously recreated for the web by the ELL team (see Pisarski, 2021)—enables the reader to navigate the text by clicking through a graphical representation of the structure, in which text passages are represented by nested rectangles and links are shown with arrows. See Figures 7 and 8.

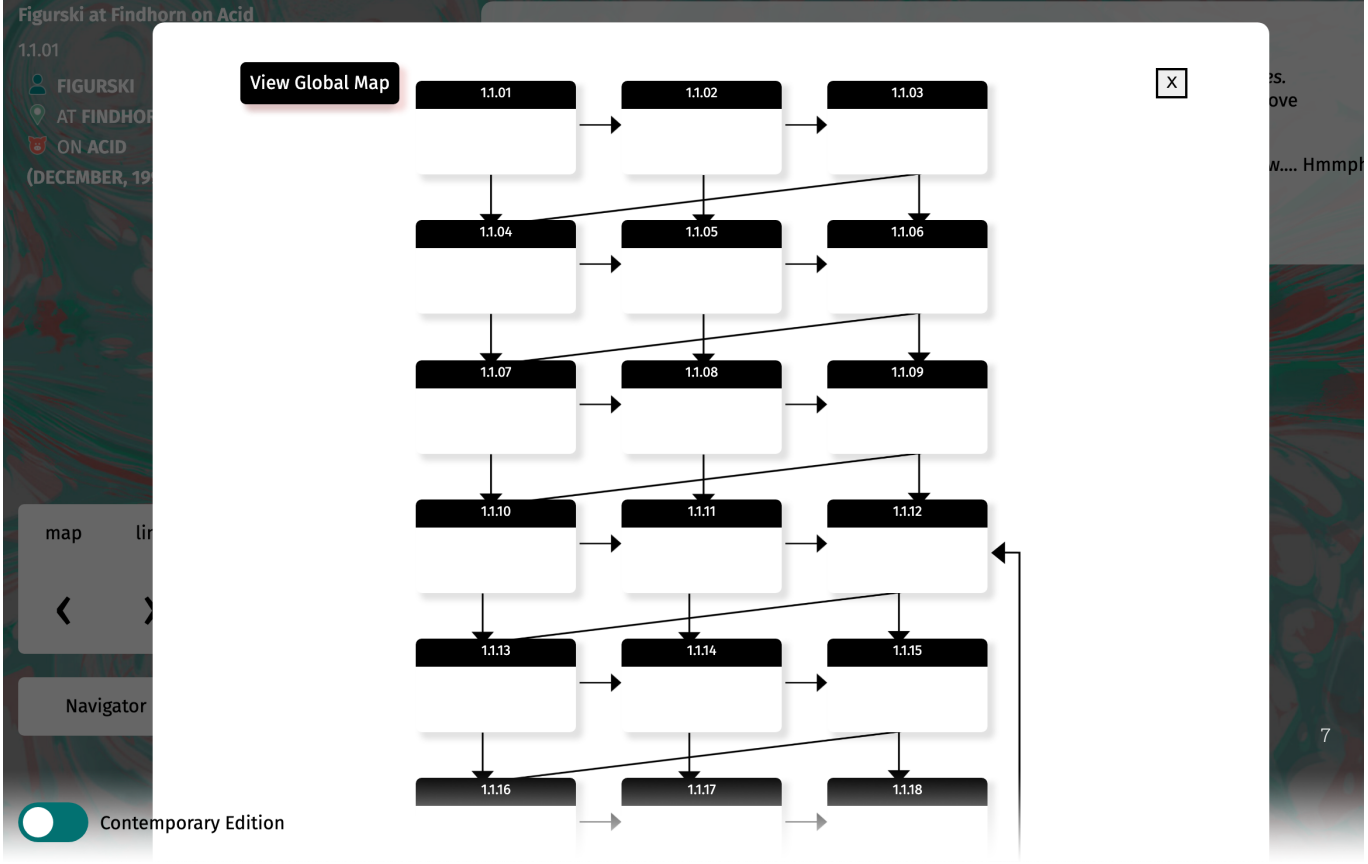
Bell allows that my "desire to 'highlight' the arrangement of the narrative for the reader

is notable because it suggests structural transparency was a factor in [the] design" (2010, p. 152) (as we have seen it was indeed), and she notes further:

In the different linking options, no attempt is made to hide the game in which the reader is engaged[…] whichever configuration is chosen, the alternatives are still available[…] Not only does the [Navigator] lexia list the different options, but the chosen configuration is presented at the head of each destination lexia. ***Readers are always aware of the role they have played in the construction of the text.*** (2010, p. 152; emphasis added)

The role of readers in constructing fictional worlds when they encounter conventional texts (e.g., Eco, 1979) seems even more notable in hypertexts, where readers, as Odin says, "must actively engage the text to discover the complex interrelations among the disrupted narrative threads with one another and in themselves" (2003, p. 453). Put differently, readers





must actively reconnect elements that are presented as disconnected. To facilitate that effort, as Bell points out, in *Figurski* I want readers always to know where they are—each lexia is titled with its unique combination of character(s), place, and artifact(s)—and always to have the ability to move to the location of their choice. The map's global view (Figure 8) shows how the overall structure is organized mathematically or "combinatorially": "1.x" contains all the scenes with one character at a time; "2.x" contains all the scenes with two characters at a time; "3.x" contains all the scenes with all three characters. Both the map and the Navigator (Figure 5) are

available from every lexia in the novel, providing readers a ready way to contextualize their current location in the narrative; to review or go back; to shift their focus to another character, place, or artifact; or to move up, down, or sideways through the hierarchical structure.

Overall, my hope is for readers to have a similar experience as Tratner's when he writes:

> *Whether you mechanically follow the default route or flip around randomly, you can zip through and enjoy the pages. Somehow Holeton has managed to integrate the mechanical structure, absurd philosophical ruminations, characters defined entirely by eccentricities, and intellectual metafictional commentary into a seamless whole*. (2021, para. 1)

Structure Again: Reconnecting the Mechanical Pig

The global pursuit, disassembly, and reassembly of the pig[s] form the spine of *Figurski's* plot and, I think, the beating heart of the novel. Ensslin describes how Figurski, The No-Hands Cup Flipper, and Vieuchanger meet near the end "to re-assemble the previously discarded original of the ubiquitous Pig, designed and built by Guillermo Rosellini of Venice in 1737, and its nineteenth-century [forgery made by Gilbert van Gelderschott], the parts of which they have equally distributed among themselves" (2007, p. 88). Each pig, like the novel, has 147 parts, and as Tratner notes, is also "constructed in three sub-assemblages, each of which has three parts in it, and so on, just like the text" so "is quite clearly identified as a metaphor for the whole hypertext" (2021, para. 2). The parts of the pigs, also like the parts of the novel, have been distributed equally among the three characters. The characters are trying to reconstruct the pigs, just as readers are trying to put the pieces of the novel together. At the same time, reaching

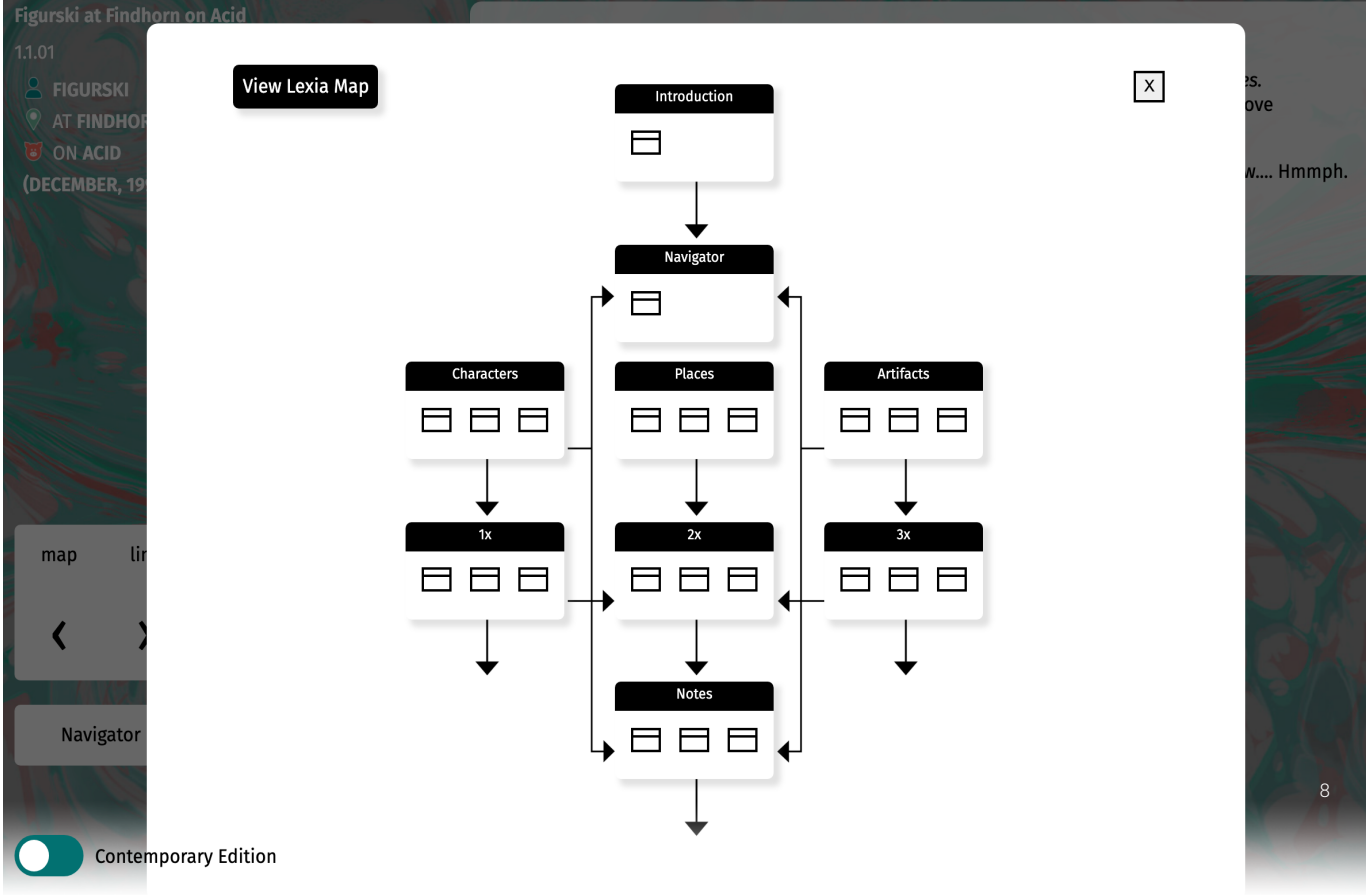
across the nether-world between fiction and reality, the characters in *Figurski* are—courtesy of the fictional-in-the-real-world Holodeck—reverting to their real-world counterparts (Figurski to real-life parolee Theodore Streleski, the Cup Flipper to his real-life mentor Eugene Zanger, and Vieuchanger to historical adventurer Michel Vieuchange), and they are simultaneously "merging into different components of the same character, taking on aspects of one another's personality" (Holeton, 2021a, lexia 3.2.01).

In these self-reflexive layers, Tratner suggests that the Mechanical Pig is not the only metaphor for the novel:

Spam […] is described as created by repeatedly chopping pieces of pork into threes (again, an image of the process of writing this endlessly divided-into-threes text). So the process of mechanically chopping up his stories which became Holeton's method in writing this hypertext novel is mocked by Holeton as his way of producing "processed literature"—Spamfiction. But what then do we make of a scene where the mechanical pig is fed Spam? If the pig and Spam are metaphors for the creation of hypertexts, is the scene of a mechanical pig eating Spam a metametaphor, a metaphor for the processing of metaphors? Is a mechanical pig eating processed pork a twenty-first century version of Stanley Fish's critical category of the self-consuming artifact? (2021, para. 3)

In Tratner's analysis of Figurski as postmodern literature, he says that the novel, similarly to Jean Baudrillard in "Simulacra and Simulations," examines how Late Capitalism has turned the world into simulations—but with a twist:

Holeton's text can be used to do very much what Baudrillard suggests Disneyland does: it gives us the experience of a world entirely full of copies, and we generally react to it as absurd, unlike reality, but that is precisely how the novel



misleads us. The novel seems unreal, but yet also suggests in many ways—such as citing Baudrillard—that to see the world of copies in the text as unlike what is "real" is misreading the text. (2021, para. 8)

To elucidate that "misreading," Tratner cites Jacques Derrida's argument in "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences" that the nature of structure itself has been "ruptured," leading to the world of Baudrillardian copies, which lack overall structure because they have no "center" or self-sufficient central presence (2021, para. 11).

"Much of the novel is about the search

for a center—which is turned into the search for a fully-assembled mechanical pig" (2021, para. 12), says Tratner. In disassembling the pigs, the characters have hidden from one another crucial mechanical parts, central to each automaton's functionality, called Prime Movers. The Prime Movers must be restored to successfully reassemble the pigs, which would also restore the "central presence" that Derrida says has been lost. The search for a center is also the search for structure, which for Tratner

[…] becomes the central concern of the overall work—is there a structure? A structure to the novel? A structure to the vast array of cultural icons and entertainment figures? A structure to the world of sociopolitical issues? A structure to human reality? (2021, para. 14)

As the novel's response to this overall question of structural "dis[re]connection," Tratner finds "hints at an alternative to the chaos which Baudrillard condemns and Derrida in a sense welcomes" (2021, para. 13) in the final "Picture Book" sequence (Holeton, 2021a, lexia 3.1.07 to 3.1.09, 3.2.07 to 3.2.09, 3.3.03). In these passages the characters rendezvous at Shower-Lourdes with their respective pieces of the pigs, including the Prime Movers. The text is accompanied by crude stick drawings that might illustrate a children's book, intimating perhaps the hopes of a "new generation" (Tratner, 2021, para. 19). If a central theme of the novel is the alienation or disconnection wrought by a world of copies in which "bureaucracies and icons substitute for actual communication" (Tratner, 2021, para. 7)—a phenomenon brought into laser focus during the global pandemic beginning in 2020, with our increased dependence on remote institutions and technologies to make human connections—then we can hope that Tratner is right in finding in *Figurski* an "answer to postmodern despair" (2021, para. 19). I will leave it to interested readers to read the novel for themselves and

make their own determination.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank ARDIN and the ICIDS 2021 Jury for their interest in my work and for the opportunity to contribute to this volume. *Figurski at Findhorn on Acid* owes its existence, and especially its rebirth, to a host of colleagues, critics, and friends. Fellow e-lit author Bill Bly generously helped me jumpstart the modern HTML edition. Dr. Dene Grigar, indefatigable director of the Electronic Literature Lab at Washington State University Vancouver and past president of the Electronic Literature Organization, led the effort and the team who technically reimagined and redesigned the novel for modern web languages. Among that team, the talented Holly Slocum led the innovative new design. Finally, I'm eternally grateful to the late Michael Tratner, critic and friend, for his enduring interest over the years in *Figurski*, and for his critical introduction to the archival web edition. It was the last thing that he wrote.

Appendix A

[The flash fiction "Streleski at Findhorn on Acid" (Holeton, 1996) follows in its entirety.]

Streleski at Findhorn on Acid

Theodore Streleski. Paroled in 1985 at age 49 after serving seven years for killing Stanford mathematics professor Karel deLeeuw, his faculty advisor, with a hammer. Previously spent 19 years in graduate school without completing his Ph.D. Refused psychiatric treatment in prison; steadfastly maintained that the beating death was a logical and moral reaction to his mistreatment as a Stanford graduate student. Said that deLeeuw had made fun of his shoes, erroneously

identified in news reports as wing tips. "They were Florsheims and they were seamless," said the 6-foot-4, bearded, long-haired Streleski in appearances on the *Today Show* and *Phil Donahue*. "They were standard oxfords with a high shine on them." In April 1993, San Francisco Municipal Railway offered him a farebox-technician job but withdrew the offer two weeks later following negative publicity.

Findhorn. A New Age community on the Moray Firth in Scotland established in 1962 by Peter and Eileen Caddy and Dorothy Maclean in a trailer park near the fishing village of Findhorn. Anecdotal accounts of the 1960s and 1970s told of remarkable gardens producing 40-pound cabbages, 60-pound broccoli plants, 8-foot delphiniums, and roses blooming in nothing but sand and snow. Love, and communication with Nature Spirits, were credited with the horticultural miracles. The community attracted spiritual seekers from all over the world. The Findhorn Foundation promotes values of harmony, spirituality, ecology, and community building summed up by the inspiration, "Work is love in action."

According to former Findhorn resident David Spangler, "You are either manufacturing darkness through your own inner states of anxiety and fear and separation, or you are creating light and revelation through your abandonment of those past states and your attunement to new ones."

Acid. Street name for LSD (lysergic acid diethylamide), a powerful hallucinogenic drug derived from a fungus that sometimes grows on rye. In doses as small as 50 micrograms, perceptual effects include increased impact of sensory stimuli such as colors and sounds; attention to normally unnoticed aspects of the environment; and the sense of time slowing down. Cognitive effects include impaired short-term memory, enhanced long-term memory and introspection, changes in sense of self and ego, a sense of separation of mind and body, or a sense of unity with the environment and the universe. Emotional effects include increased susceptibility to suggestion; heightened sensitivity; and magnification and purification of feelings such as love, lust, sympathy, gratitude, terror, despair, anger, or loneliness. These effects may bring on paranoia, fear of loss of control, and panic -- or euphoria and bliss.

Scene: Phoenix Shop at The Park, Findhorn, which sells books, crafts, natural foods and remedies. Background music playing (Peter, Paul, and Mary): "If I had a hammer, I'd hammer in the evening, I'd hammer in the morning, all over this land. I'd hammer out freedom, I'd hammer out justice, I'd hammer out love between my brothers and my sisters..."

Streleski: Whoa... Wow... Hmmph.

Clerk/Community member: Hey man, are those wing tips?

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Images

1. Contemporary mode. Lexia Figurski 1.x in Contemporary mode
2. Classic mode. Lexia Figurski 1.x in Classic mode.
3. Time Lines
4. Navigation Panel
5. Navigator lexia
6. Text links. Link button is active; linked text is in wireframe (in this case the phrase "curved spacetime" links to Note 132, which is a quote from The Physics of Star Trek (Krauss, 1995).
7. Map view: Lexia Map. The Lexia Map shows the local structure, in this case local to lexia 1.1.01.
8. Map view: Global Map. The Global Map shows the global structure.

Richard Holeton is author of the critically-recognized hypertext novel *Figurski at Findhorn on Acid*, republished in a 20th anniversary archival web edition by the Electronic Literature Lab, Washington State University, in 2021. His other electronic and multimedia literature has been widely performed, exhibited, and published in venues such as *revue bleuOrange, Notre Dame Review, Counterpath Press Online, Kairos, ISEA, DH Unleashed*, and ELO conferences. His Pushcart-nominated short fiction and experimental poetry have appeared in *Indiana Review, Mississippi Review, ZYZZYVA, F(r)iction, Forklift, Ohio*, and *Cult Magazine*, among other journals. He's been awarded fellowships from MacDowell, the National Endowment for the Arts, the California Arts Council, and the Henfield Foundation. A former writing teacher and administrator at Stanford University, he lives near Half Moon Bay, California.