INTERACTIVE COMICS : A STUDY

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INTERACTIVE COMICS : A STUDY

DESIGN RESEARCH SEMINAR

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BY

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INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, BOMBAY

2017

DECLARATION

I declare that this written submission represents my ideas in my own words and where others' ideas or words have been included, I have
adequately cited and referenced the original sources and authors.
I also declare that I have adhered to all principles of academic honesty and integrity and have not misrepresented or fabricated or falsified any
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APPROVAL

The Report committee for Animation design,
Industrial Design Centre, IIT Bombay certifies that this is approval version of following report on
Interactive Comics: A Study by Dixa Barooah, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Masters of Design in
Animation

Approved by

Project Advisor:

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External examiner:

Chairperson:

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opportunity to work under him and for his
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Aim of the Project

The Aim of the Project is to do a deep study of inteactive comics. What is the state and popularity of interactive comics now, how far they have come and how much have they pushed themselves since motion comics.

How they are created, what are the different set of literature and rules that set them apart from ordinary digital/ traditional books.

Disecting a interactive comic and finally creating a new comic with an original concept and to see what new can I bring to the world of interctive comics.

Understanding Interactive Comics

Interactive books are a sub-genre in literature that require participation by the reader.

Reader interaction is vital to the progression of the story.

Interactive books engage the reader and pull them into the story. This includes books that incorporate the use of modern technology or computerized books.

This medium of storytelling allows the reader to dive into the story in more ways than one. The outcome is not always fixed, and it can vary as per the decisions made by the reader.

Interactive comics grab hold of the reader's attention by involving their senses. Readers must use multiple senses to participate in the story.

Some examples of multi-sensory interactive books include touch and feel books, pop-up books, hidden object books, books that readers can respond to, digital books, coloring books, and game books.

Understanding how interactive comics work

- Multiple paths for the reader
  Interactive comics, apart from being able to tell the story, also gives the option of selecting multiple paths to reach the ending. The path the user selects can decide the flow of the story. Every path may not lead to the same ending, and endins can also be far different from one another.

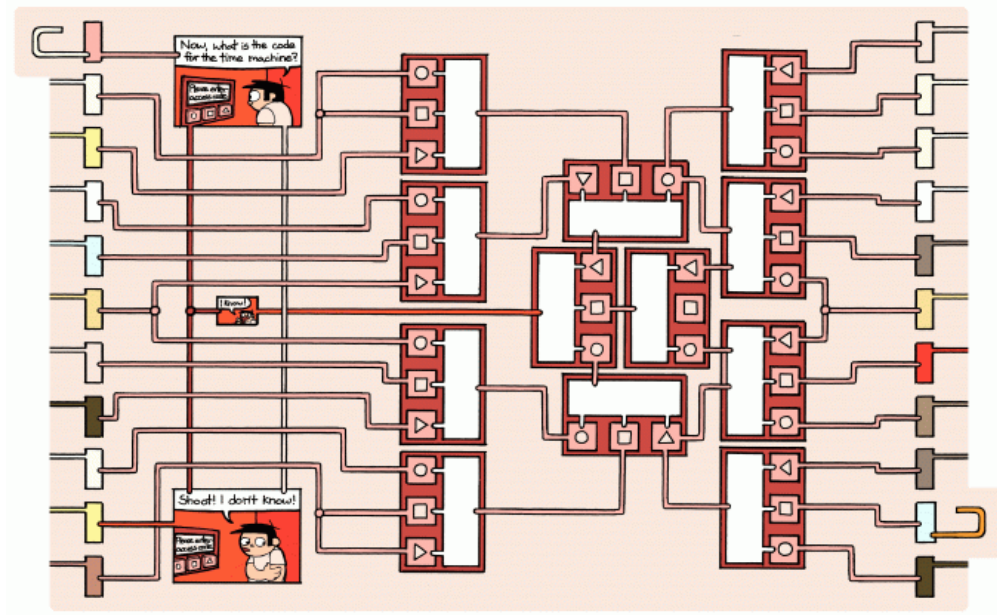
- Play with the structure of the story
  Beginning, middle and end of an interactive story can be decided by the reader in most cases. The entire story structure can be changed on the fly by creating proper balanced dramatic interactions.

- Reader decides
  unlike traditional storytelling, where the reader/viewer is expected to experience the story as it is laid out, interactive storytelling offers the decision making ability to the reader. He/she decides how the story should be progressed.

- Math

- Experience involving their senses.

- Games



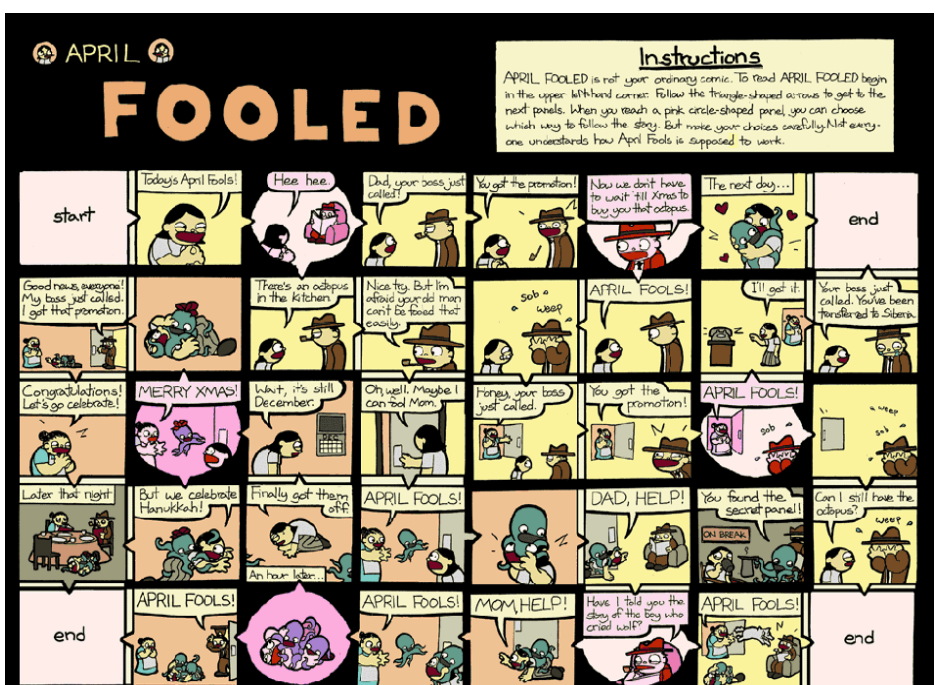
The time travel code in Meanwhile

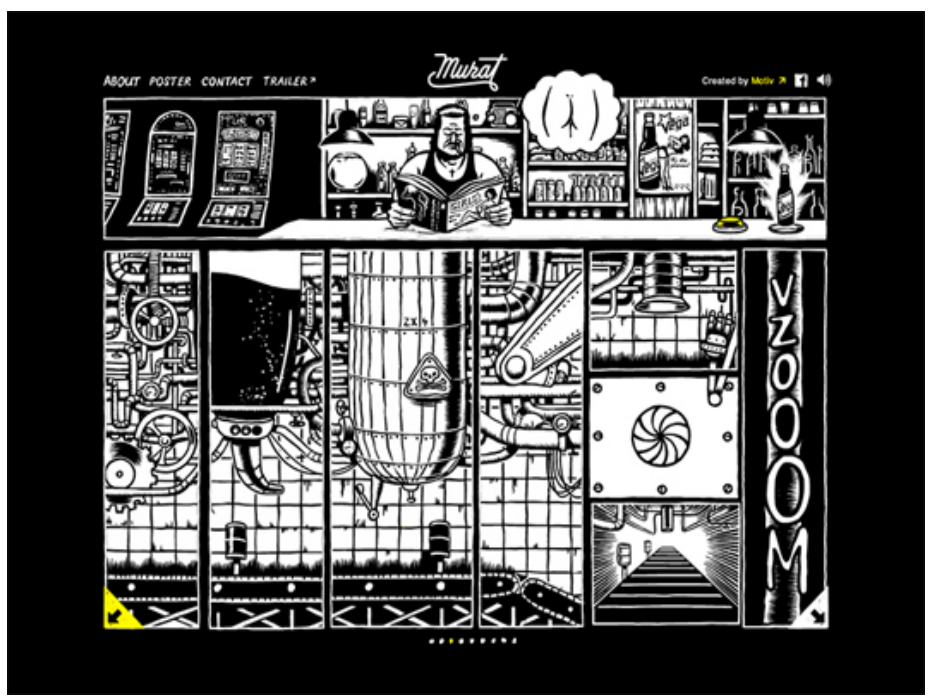
Types of Interactive Comics

Interactive comics can be broadly divided into the following types:

Screen-Based Comics:
A digital comic that demands a digital medium to be presented.

Traditional Digital Comics:
Digital comics, able to be presented in printed media as well as digital media.





Types of Interactive Comics

Screen-Based Comics:

The Multimedia Comic :

Linear stories with fullscreen images which embraces audio and animation (restricted) as instruments to tell the story. It got an incorporated invisible user interface, and the reader controls the progression.

The Motion Comic:

This is a hybrid between animation film and comics. It is a movie, presenting a linear story, with static images and simple animations together with audio. Some are text based, others got audio speech. You watch it progress and the reader has to follow the given progression.

The Hyper Comic:

A non-linear and interactive story created by hyperlinks between the pages/frames, making the reader choose the direction and progression of the story.





Types of Interactive Comics

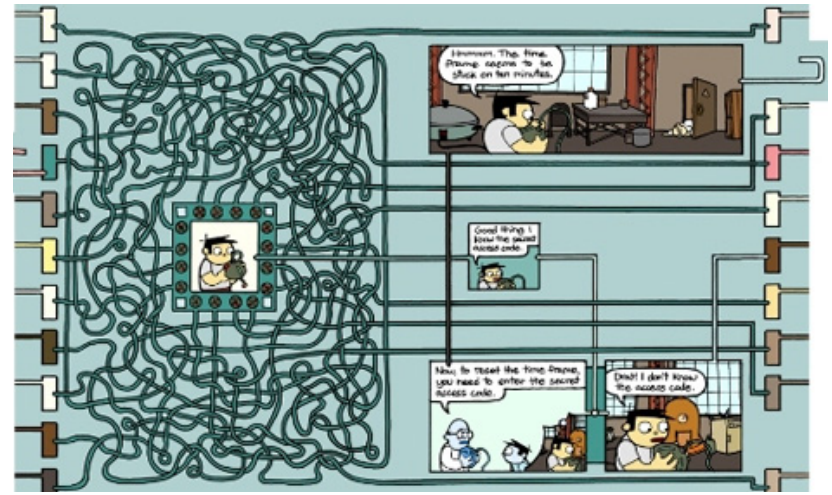
The Traditional Comics: Interactive books grab hold of the reader's attention by involving their senses. Readers must use multiple senses to participate in the story.



Touch and Feel books

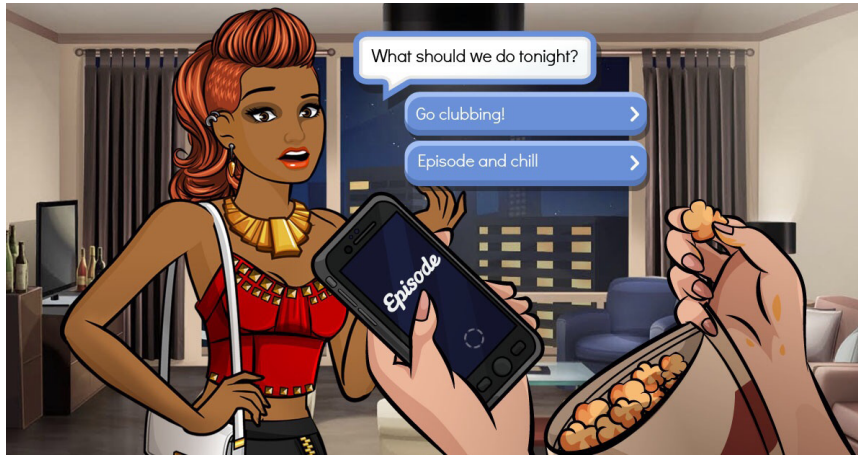
Pop up books

Hidden Object books



Directly Addressing the Reader

Coloring books / Game books





Research and Secondary Research

Usually, The web comic is presented as if it were a log of an Interactive Fiction game (with pictures).

Commands are resolved by a human and only one (or a very select few) command paths are
actually used, the story usually ends up far more complex than is possible to program into a game .

Due to the sort of people who make these comics, these comics also frequently spoof such things as Adventure Games, Simulation Games, Puzzle Games, Role playing Games, or Turn-Based Strategy games.

Comics generally update with only one panel at a time and as such can be updated very quickly. Often even more than once a day.

Research and Secondary Research

Frequently these comics come in the thin line between
Web comic and New Media/Web Original.

Ex. “NAWLZ” by interactive designer and illustrator Stu Campbell.

General examples seems to be to put Interactive Comics in the Web comic category. However, more and more traditional comic creators and web comic creators are experimenting with the medium.

Ex. “Meanwhile” by Jason Shiga.

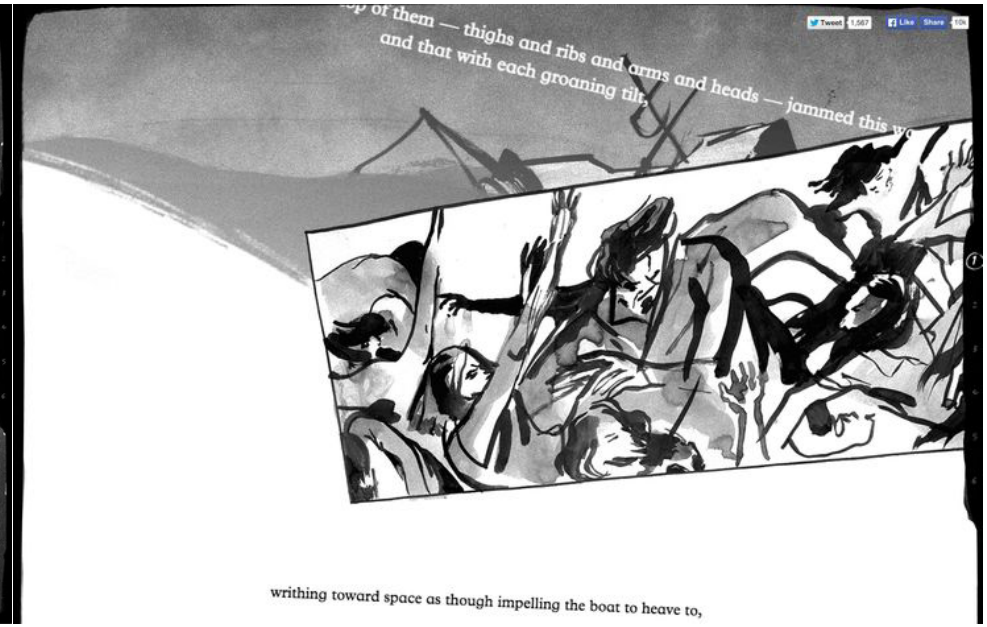




Secondary Research

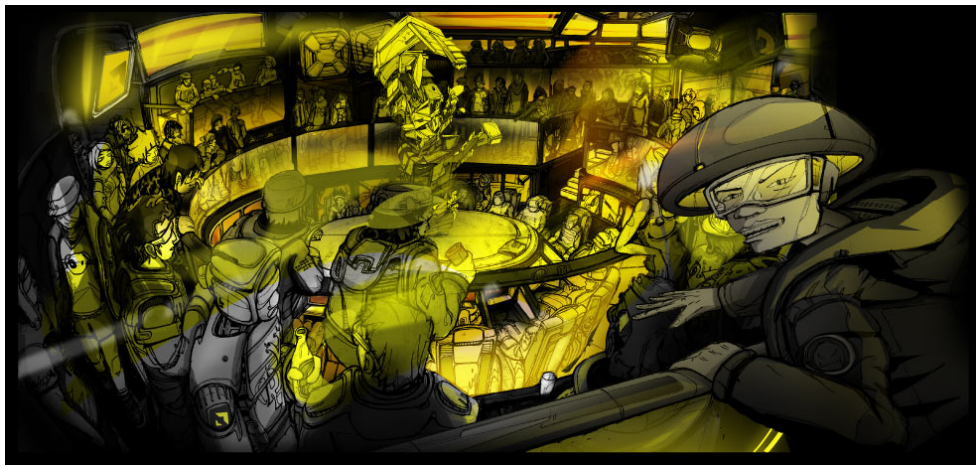
‘The Boat’, an interactive graphic novel about escape after the Vietnam War. Based on the story by Nam Le, adapted by Matt Huynh.

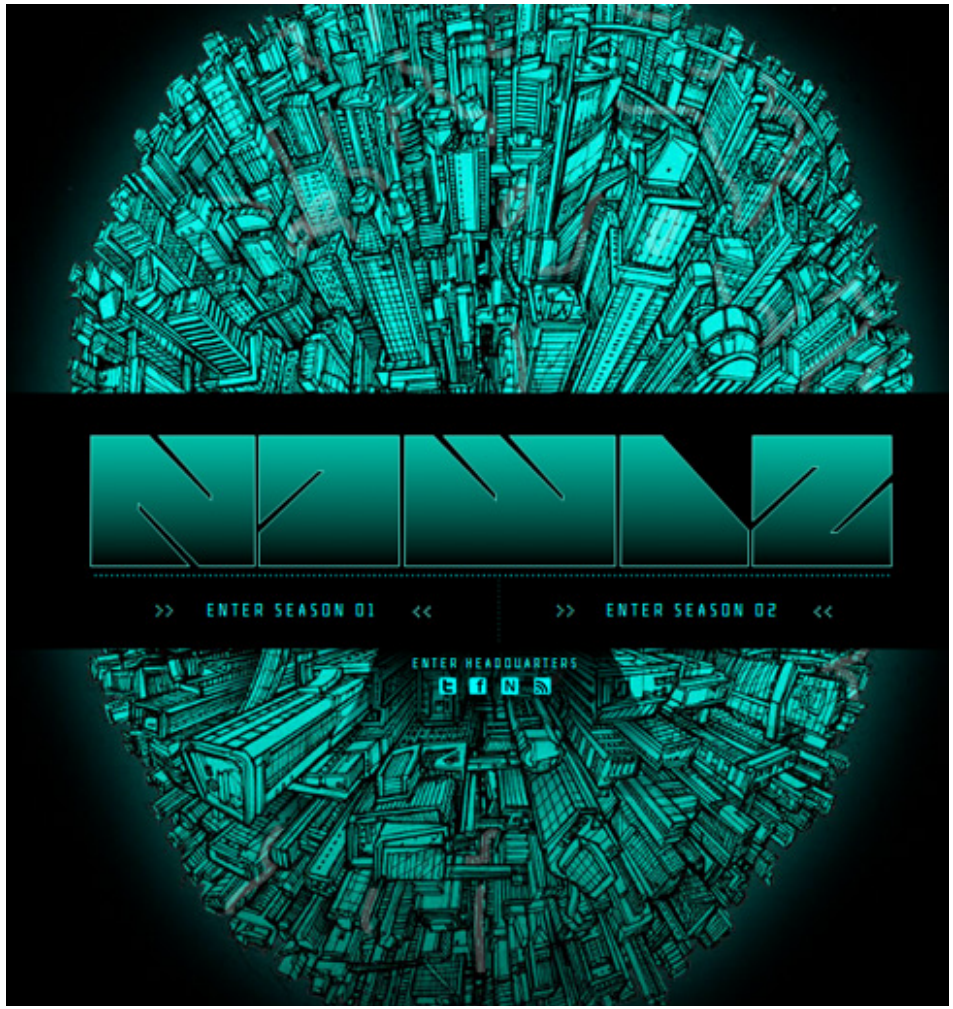




Secondary Research

•“NAWLZ” is an interactive comic that combines text, illustration, music, animation and interactivity to create a never before seen panoramic comic format. By Stu Campbell.

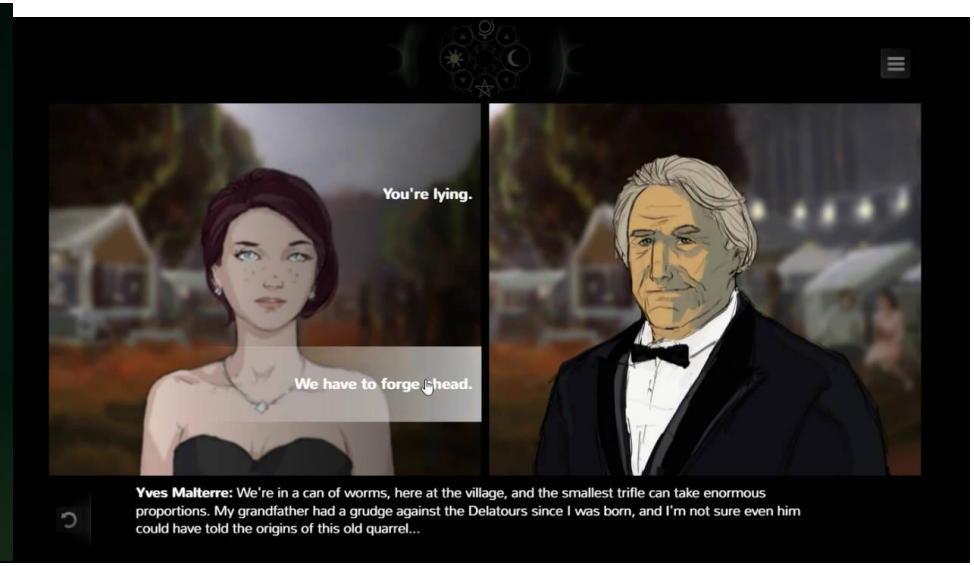




Secondary Research

“Along the Edge” is an Interactive Graphic Novel for PC, Mac and Linux. It is an adult narrative game set in the European country-side, where your choices impact the main character’s personality and appearance.





Secondary Research

•A collaborative project between BETC Digital, interactive and backend developer Sylvian Tran and Marvel illustrator Gérald Parel, “The HYbrid4 graphic novel” is an intriguing cross-over between a comic book and a screen experience.

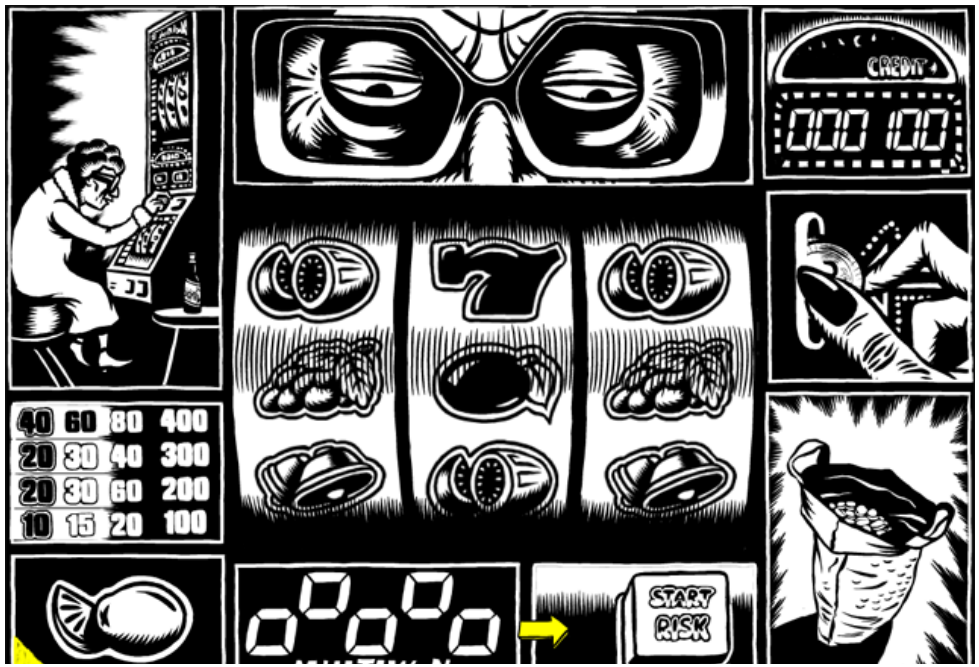


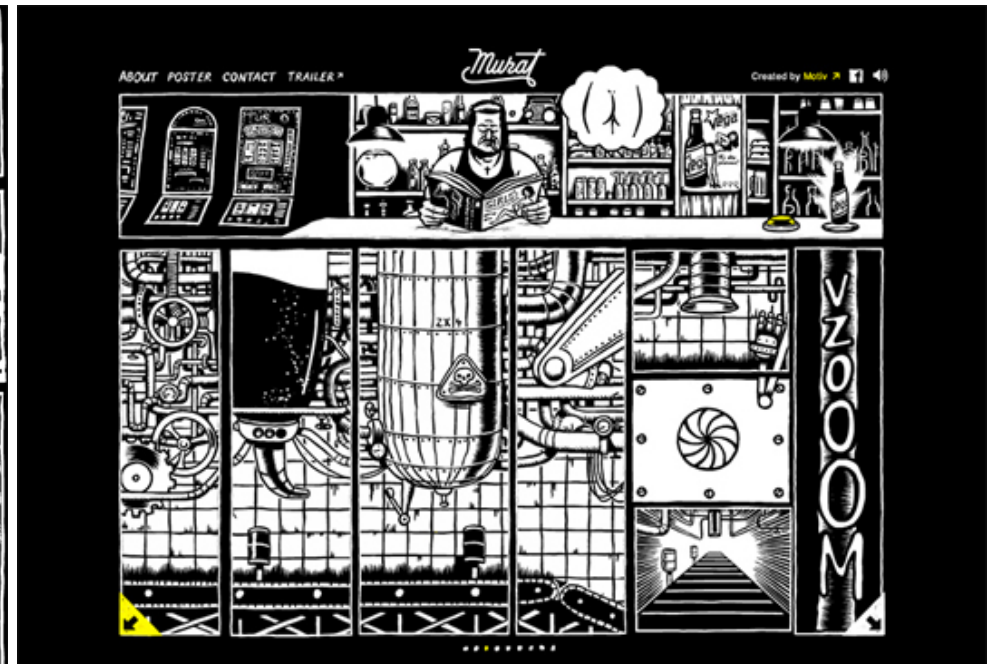


Secondary Research

•“Murat” is a fully interactive comic that allows the reader to dive into the story in more ways than one. Czech Republic based independent collective consists of Ondrej Novak and Vojtech Seda.







Dissection of an Interative comic

Ontological Mystery:
“You may find yourself living in a shotgun shack
And you may find yourself in another part of the world
And you may find yourself behind the wheel of a large automobile
And you may find yourself in a beautiful house, with a beautiful wife
And you may ask yourself, “Well, how did I get here?”
— Talking Heads, “Once In A Lifetime”

In an Ontological Mystery, the characters are locked in, have no idea how they got there, why they’re there, or how to get out, nor do they know exactly who is behind their predicament.

Fandom:

Even more interesting is that without suggestions, fans still affect the comic in small ways as community jokes and theories often appear in the comics or have nods to them.

Present Tense Narrative
Traditionally, storytelling is done in the past tense. This makes sense, since it generally describes events taking place in the past. Far more common, however, is to write in the present tense. This seems to be a growing trend in modern literature, and is most popular in short stories.
The present tense tends to give a work a sense of urgency and immediacy, and as such is often used to increase tension in the story. The narration may switch from past to present — with or without explanation — to fulfil this end.

Second-Person Narration
Most of the books you’ve read are written either in the first person “I” “Me“ or in the third “he” “she”. Occasionally, though, in the second-person, the subject of the narration is you.
Second-person narration is very rare. On one hand, like first-person narration, it has a very intimate feeling. On the other hand, while the intimacy of first-person narration is that of storytelling, the intimacy of second-person narration is that of telepathy: the book is telling you what you experience and how you experience it, which often includes directly telling you what you think or feel. You may find this rather presumptuous unless it’s done carefully.

Schrödinger’s Gun:
So, when faced with an impending “Off the Rails” event, The author can subtly tweak the facts the reader hasn’t discovered yet to suit the changed plot.
Improvisation masquerading as planning.
Author can change plot events based on what (s)he hears in the fandom.

Dissection of an Interative comic

Ascended Fanon:

“ Tell them what you’re doing but not why. Then let them speculate. Listen to them as they speculate. When they come up with an idea you really, really like, tell them, ‘You finally guessed right. That was my reasoning all along.”’
— Hobbie Klivian, X-Wing Series

Beyond direct suggestions, authors often take direction of the future updates by canonizing fan speculation. Canon means that which counts, in terms of continuity.

Cerebus Syndrome:
Specifically, once the Ontological Mystery is slightly less of a mystery, the author will often reveal a back story for the world and the character. This generally tilts the comic away from silly hijacks to plot-driven story.

It can also be intentional, with the lighter mood at the beginning allowing readers to meet and become attached to the characters before the story arcs with the dramatic elements begin.

Foregone Conclusion:
Has proven that as any interactive comic becomes popular enough, it begins to defy the medium.

Ex. “Homestuck” web comic written, illustrated and animated by Andrew Hussie
Homestuck is also an interesting case study in that the author eventually got incredibly fed up by endless streams of countless moronic suggestions; something usually considered a strength of this genre.

Dissection of an Interative comic



<u>Genre Savvy or Genre Blindness:</u>

Depending on the quality of reader suggestions, the protagonist in question can be an idiot with no brains or an incredibly smart ninja who knows all the trappings of his fiction, or anything in between.

A condition afflicting many fictional characters, seen when one demonstrates by their behavior that they have never in their life ever seen the kind of story they're in, and thus have none of the reactions a typical audience member would have in the same situation. Worse, they are unable to learn from any experiences related to their genre. Ex. Im most ghost stories, instead of sticking together, the crew splits up thus giving the story a reason to kill them off easily and moving forward in plot.

<u>Fourth Wall:</u>

Breaking the barriers of comic making
The character is no longer a character but is aware of the surroundings and humans of the real world.
Interaction with the reader directly one on one.
Ex. when a comic character addresses you (the reader) in person or is aware that he is in a comic and has to act funny.

“Life and Death of Anna Macarena”

Two page Interactive comic done using Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Flash.

- Ontological Mystery ~ Anna doesnt know why she’s there, or how to get out, nor does she know exactly who is behind her predicament.

- Second-Person Narration

- Reader finds out more about her ordeals the more he interacts with the page

- Clue finding game incorporated in the narrative. (Reader must find the clue that takes him to the next page) This almost turns into a game of hide and seek. The reader must look for clues suggesting who is responsible for gher death everytime.

- reader can change her appearance (in this case, her clothes) and decfide what she does next.

“Life and Death of Anna Macarena” : Story

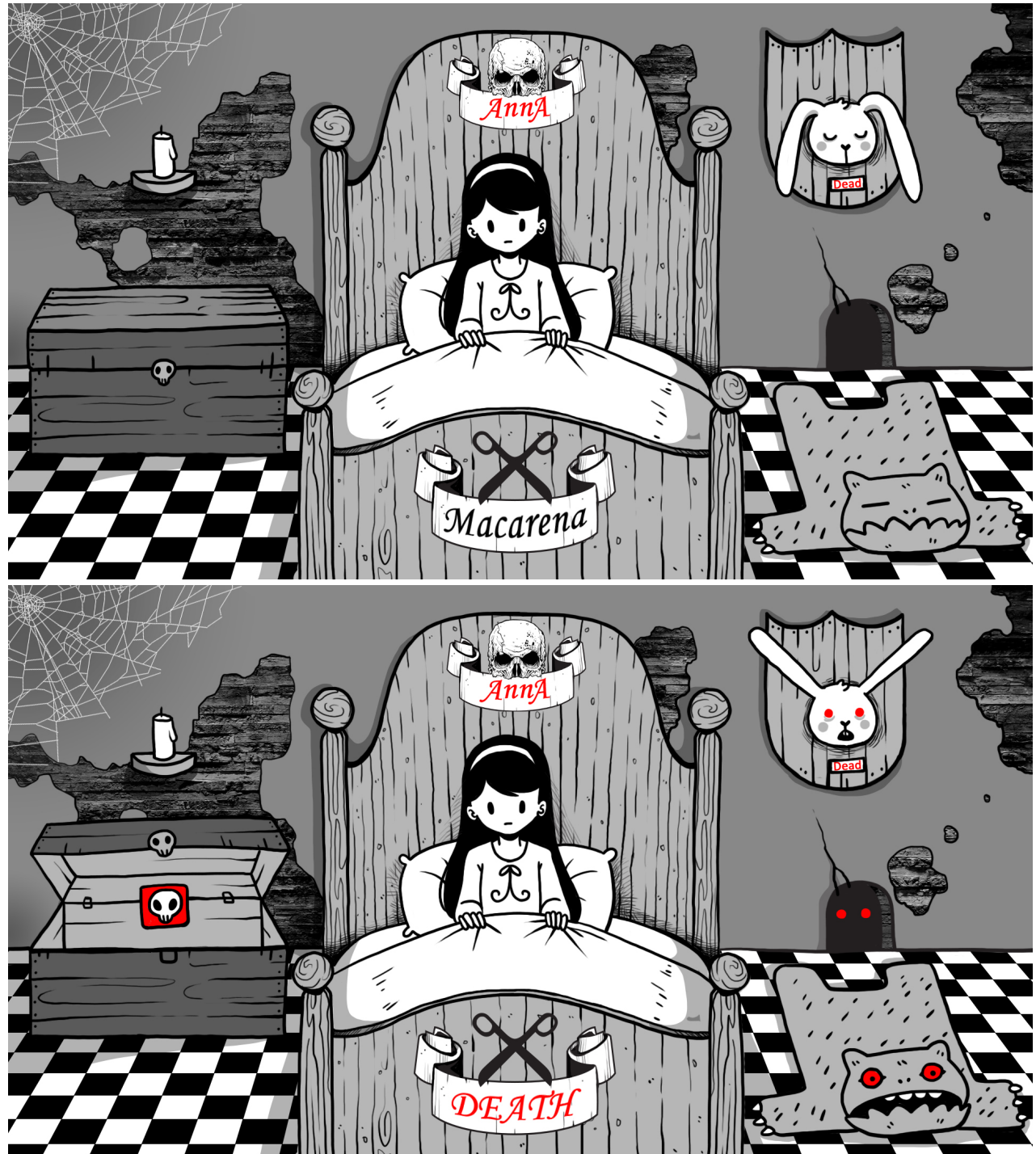
Two page Interactive comic done using Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Flash.

The core idea being ~ A girl named Anna Macarena inherits her grand mother’s castle.
In every page a series of events lead to her death.
In the second page she is magically alive only to live a little and die again.

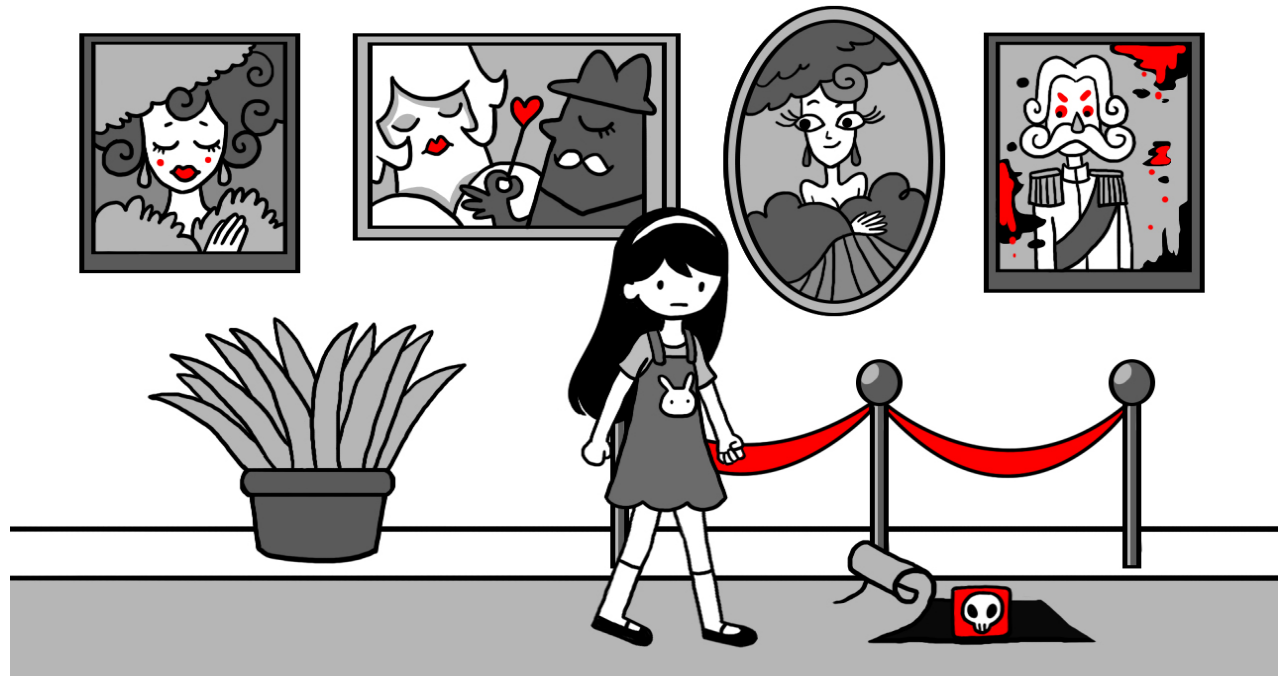
the castle is left to her by her late grandmother to Anna in a her will
and the place is haunted. Anna ultimately is killed off each time by a ghost only to come alive again.
The story goes on when the reader tries to find out who / where is the famed ghost and interacts with Anna to let her know of the problems before they occur.

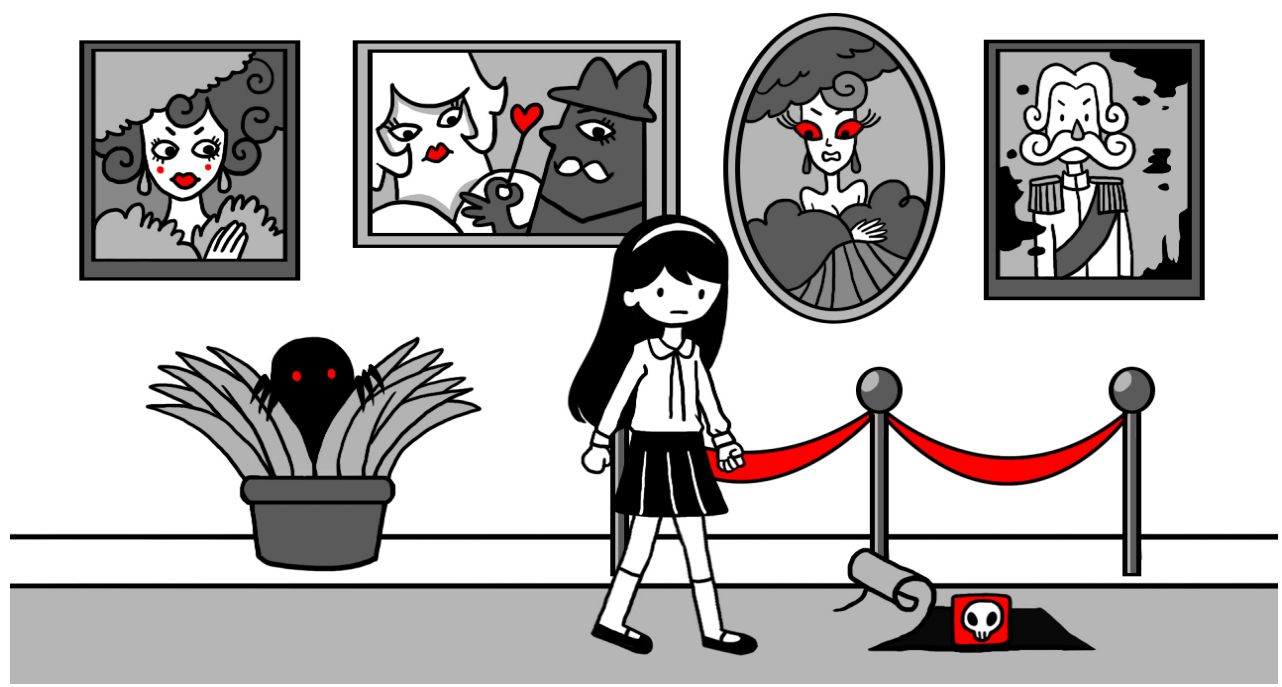
it is a short story. can be continued further if wished but is short enough to fit 2 pages also.

On each page there is a logo that leads on to the next page. The reader has to interact with the comic,
FIND THE LOGO HIDDEN IN THE PANEL, and only then continue to the next panel. This almost doubles up as a room escape game or a game of hide and seek.



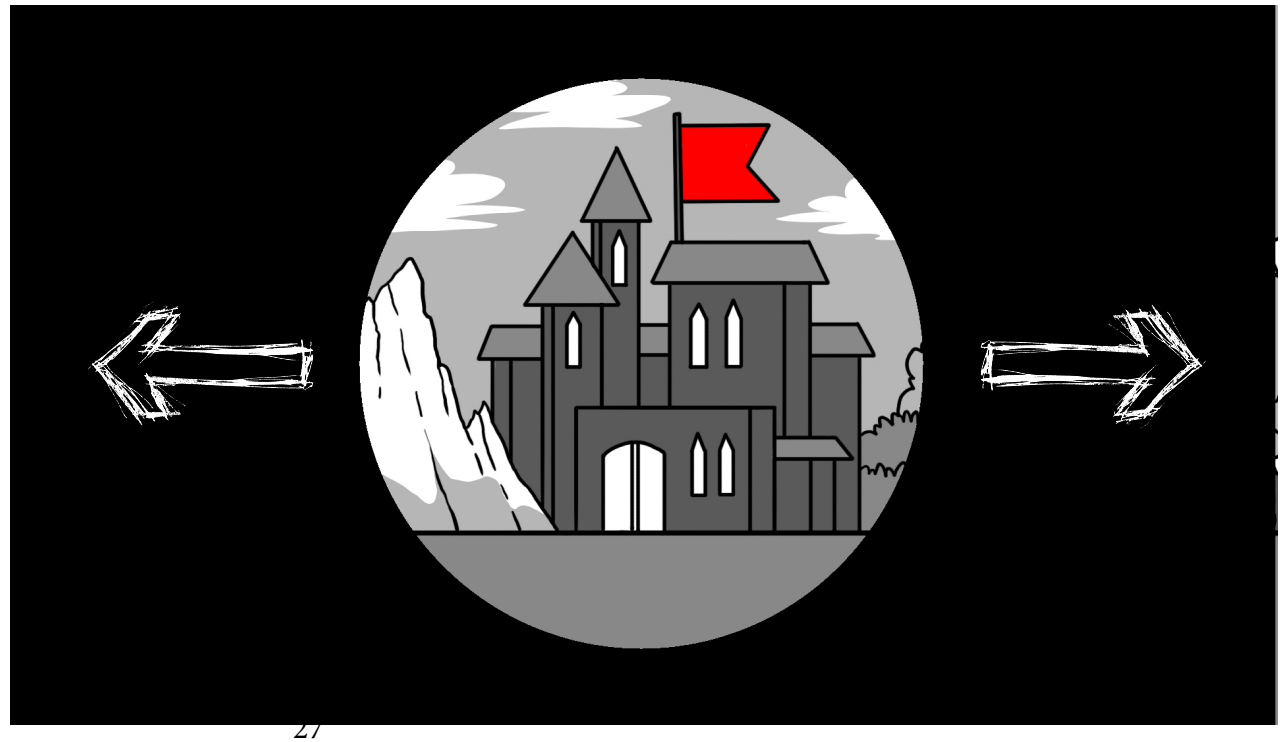
- Interact with objects.
- Find the logo.





- Interact with objects.
- Change her appearance
- Find the logo.





- Interact with objects.
- Choose where to go next.
- Find the logo.

“InTact”

Creating Interactive Comics for Sighted as well as Blind Audience ~

- Development of a device that uses an inexpensive webcam or a camera phone to make Tactile Graphics and comic books interactive.

- A camera is mounted at a fixed height above the Tactile Graphic/Braille comic and a finger is marked with a colored sticker. As a user explores the Tactile Graphics with their hands, the marked finger’s motion is tracked, and is used to interact with the voice system.

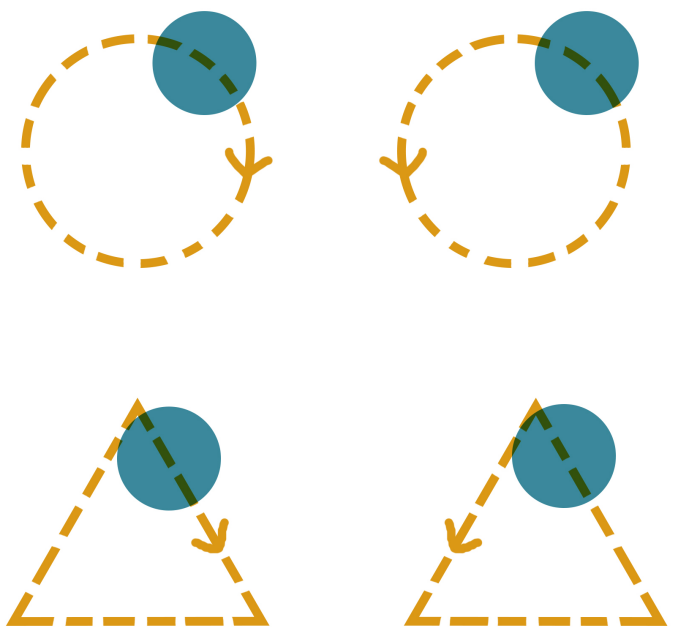
- Interactive comics can be used to enhance the learning experience for sighted children, for children with learning disabilities, and used to create inclusive learning environments.

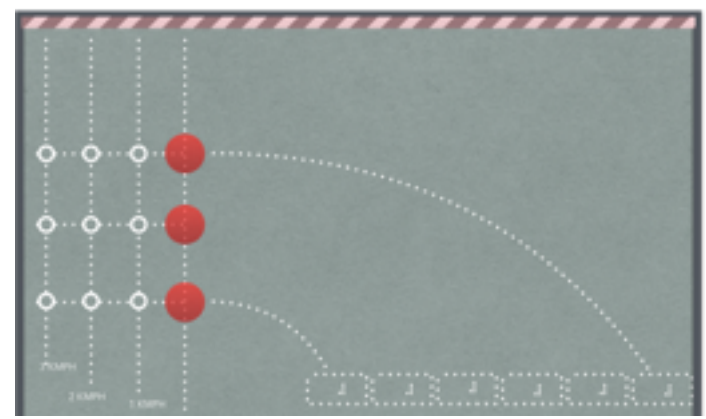
- This medium can be used to make books and comic books interactive to both sighted and blind audiences.

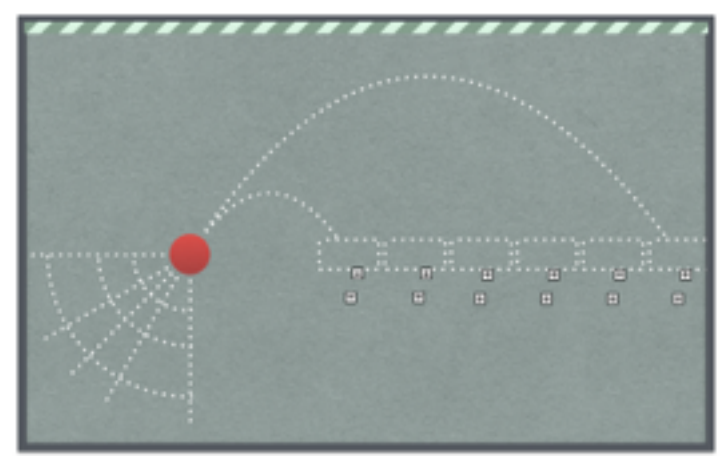
“InTact” How it works:

Interactive books

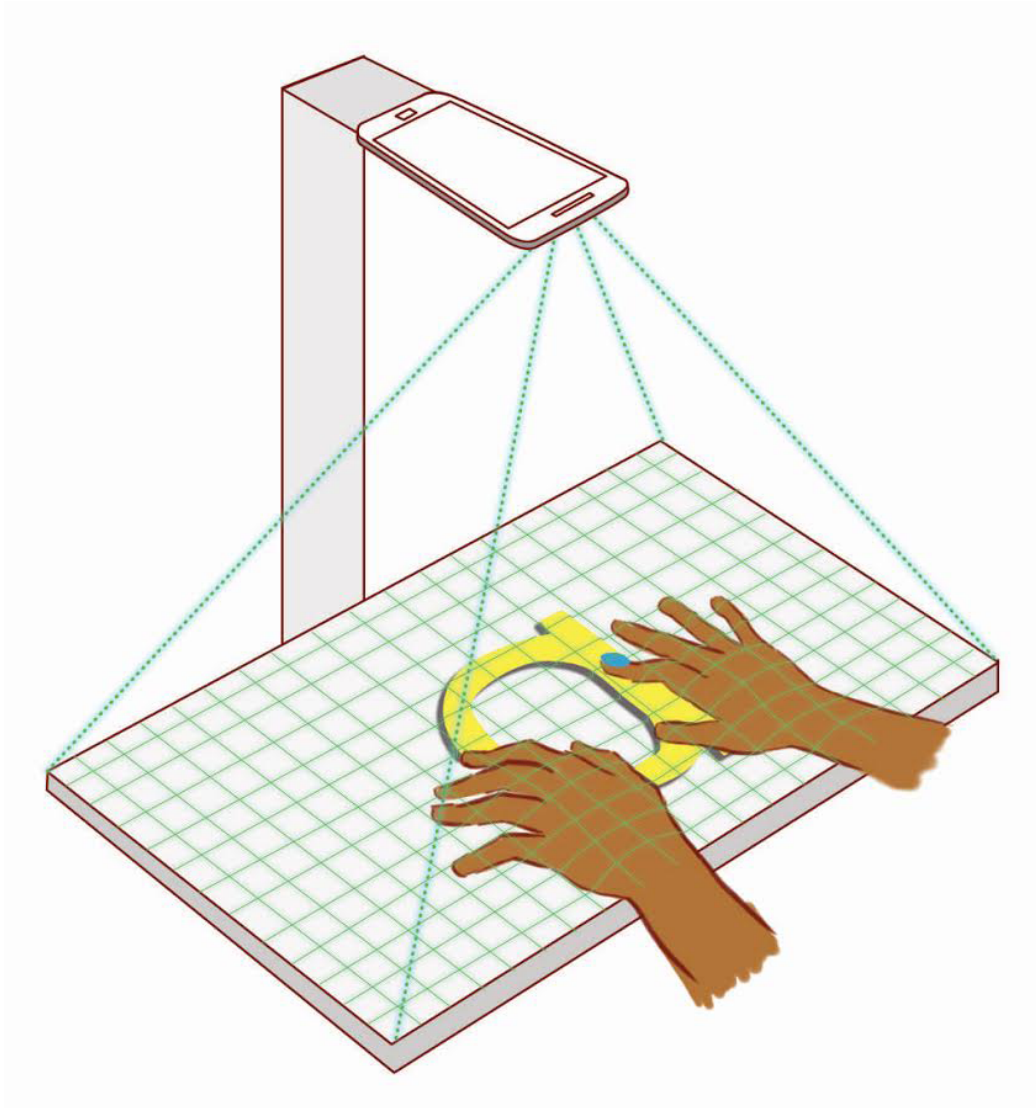
Blind/Sighted readers can use their (Braille) books to read, but also ask for more information about the printed material. Ex. the meaning of words they have not yet learnt, or make conversation with the illustration through gesticulation.

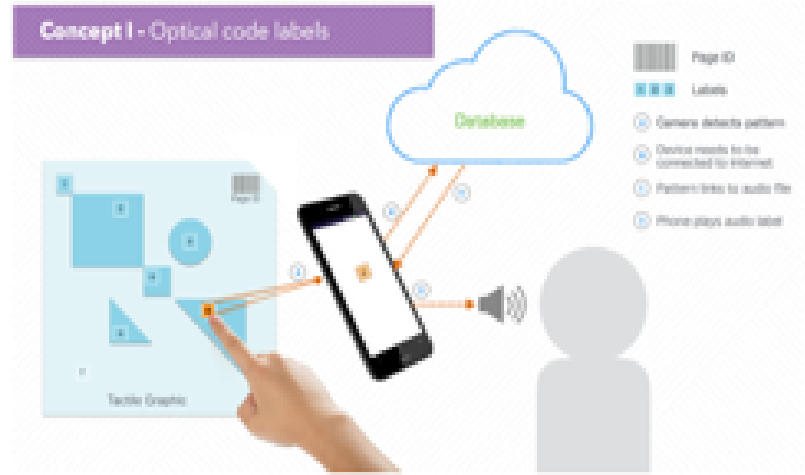


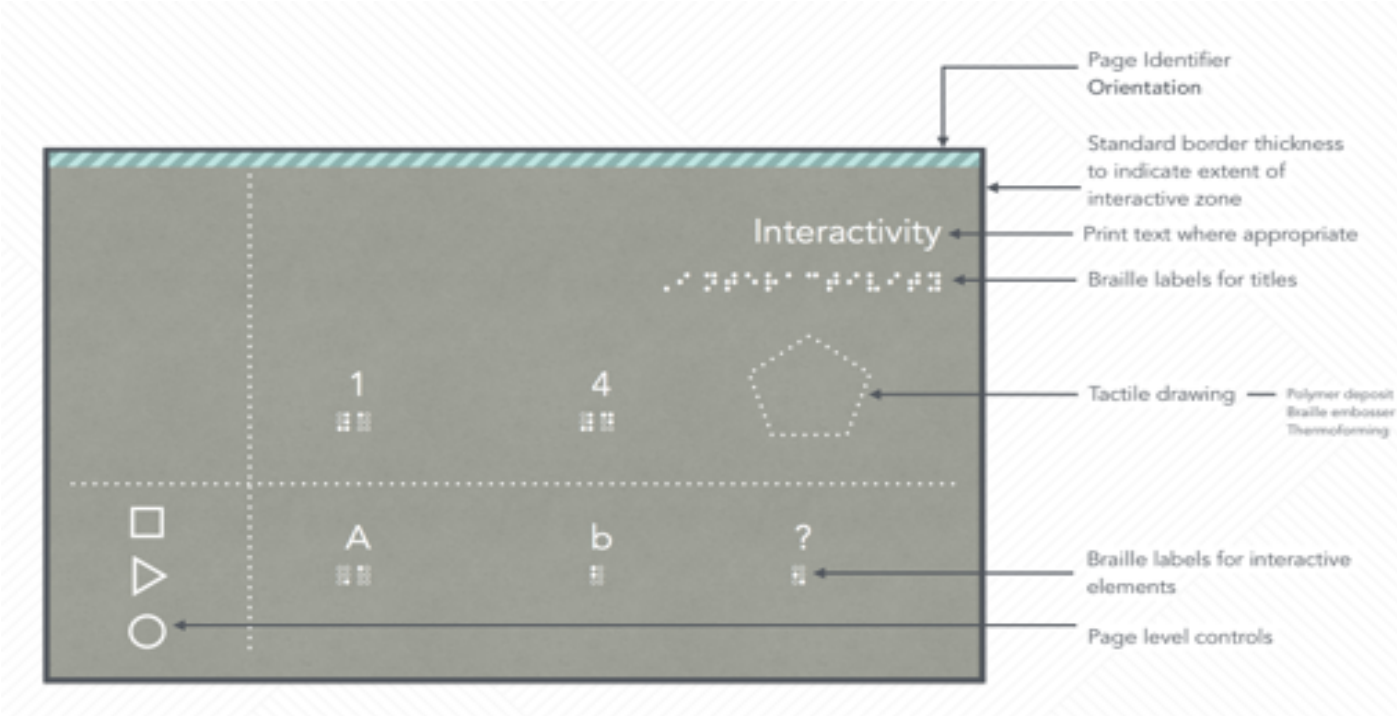




“InTact” How it works:

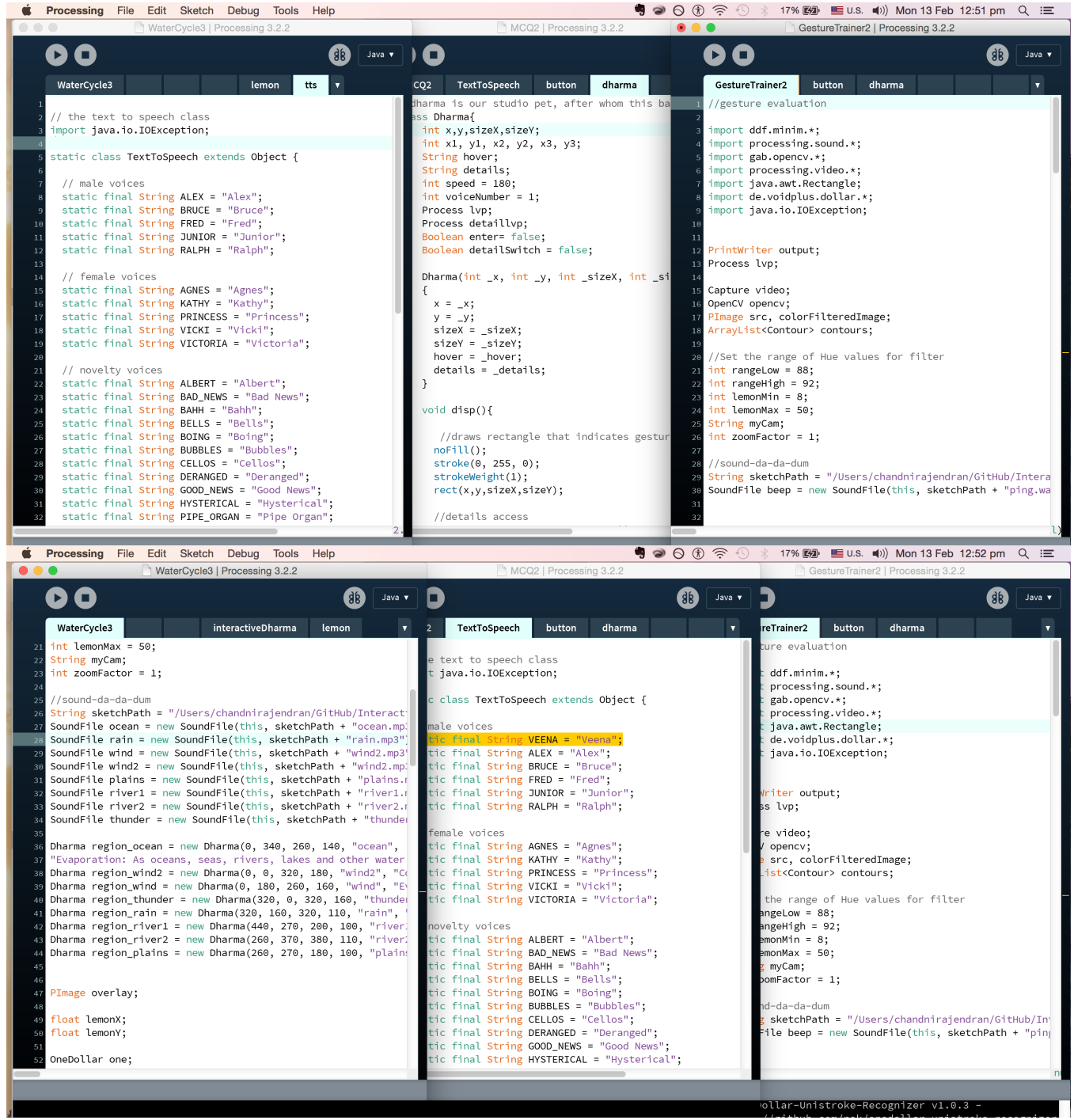






actions / categories	touch	hold (1s 2s 3s)	circle	anti-clockwise circle	triangle	anti-clockwise triangle
unassigned space	none	may be used in game interactions	home	mute all current audio	none	none
shapes .svg	label + ping if long descriprion is tempty or soundFX		long description or sound FX	mute all current audio	select (if selectable) + feedback ping	deselect (if selected) + feedback ping
buttons	label		specified action + feedback ping	mute all current audio	specified action + feedback ping	none
labels	none		home	mute all current audio	none	none

Coding done in Processor



<u>Contribution by:</u>

Chandni Rajendran
(Senior UE)
Dixa Barooah (senior AD)
Devanshi Saksena
(senior PD)
Raagul M. (Junior GD)



The blind can hover over a braille illustration and receive voice inputs from the mobile.
This can also allow them to ask several questions to the book through gestures, which is impossible with digital comics.

Conclusion

The past few decades has given us some of the best comic book artists of all time. Whilst there's something special about holding a printed comic book in your hands, today's technology has allowed the comic strips to leave the pages and enter the internet. This medim is so flexible and easily accessible to everyone and has such a huge untapped potential that can blur lines between story books and reality.

It was absolutely fun dabbling in such a medium trying to come up with something new as well as keeping in mind the limitations of what it can do and not do. Interactive comics is truly, in all sense a new comic book revolution.