

Touch / Toucher

Name of the work : "Touch" (English) / "Toucher" (French)

URL : <https://www.to-touch.net/>

Electronic Literature Collection vol. 2 : https://collection.eliterature.org/2/works/bouchardon_toucher.html

Authors

2009, Flash : [Serge Bouchardon](#), Kevin Carpentier, Stéphanie Spenlé

2021, transcoding to HTML5/JavaScript format:

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Description of the work

It may seem paradoxical to propose an artistic web-based creation on touching. One cannot touch directly: touching requires in this case a technical mediation such as a mouse, a microphone or a webcam. This touching experience reveals a lot about the way we *touch* a multimedia content on screen, and maybe also about the way we touch people, objects in everyday life.

The internet user has access to five scenes (move, caress, hit, spread, blow) corresponding to different ways of touching, plus a sixth one (brush) dissimulated in the interface.

This work requires headphones, a microphone (for "blow") and a webcam (for "brush").

1- Move

What touches me when I touch you? In this first scene, one can « touch » the words to replace and move them. The ambiguous relation between touching and being touched is perceived through the combinatory game.

2- Caress

« The caress seeks, it searches » (Lévinas).

The reader can caress the screen with the cursor of the mouse while being guided by a sound. After a certain number of caresses, a form appears on the screen.

3- Hit

After the caress, the scene "Hit" stages the aggressive touch.

A text about touching, which is chosen randomly, appears on screen. But a calligrammatic fly disturbs the reading. With headphones, you can hear the fly turning around your head. The reader has to hit the fly to be able to read the text, without any disruption.

4- Spread

One can hear music chosen randomly. The reader has to proceed by small strokes while playing on the volume (from bottom to top) and on the stereophonic dimension of the sound

(from left to right). This scene, more user-friendly with headphones, allows the reader to *touch* the music.

5- Blow

Is touching achieved through contact or can it be achieved from afar?

The reader has to blow on the screen (thanks to a microphone) to let a text appear, this text being chosen randomly. Then he can blow again to spread the words away.

6- Brush

« When our eyes touch , is it daylight or is it dark? » (Derrida)

Touching means exploring. This scene is thus dissimulated in the menu, as if there was a sixth finger.

It requires a webcam and enables the reader to *touch* with his eyes (or with another part of the body). Like Narcissus, I can play with my image on a liquid surface.

In this creation, the internet user can experience various forms, various modalities of touching:

- the erotic gesture of the caress with the mouse;
- the brutality of the click, like an aggressive stroke;
- touching as unveiling, staging the ambiguous relation between touching and being touched;
- touching as a trace that one can leave with a finger dipped in paint;
- touching from a distance with the voice, the eyes or another part of the body.

This immaterial work stages aesthetics of materiality.

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