

Loss of Grasp

Title: “Loss of Grasp” (English version) / “Déprise” (French version) / “Perdersi” (Italian version) / “Perderse” (Spanish version)

URL: <http://lossofgrasp.com> or <http://deprise.fr> - 2010

Authors: Serge Bouchardon (<http://www.sergebouchardon.com>), Vincent Volckaert.

Presentation

Loss of grasp is an online digital creation about the notions of grasp and control.

Under which circumstances do we feel we have a grip on our life or not?

Six scenes feature a character who is losing grasp.

At the same time, this play on grasp and loss of grasp mirrors the reader's experience of an interactive digital work.

The piece requires headphones (or loudspeakers) and a webcam (for the fifth scene).

The interaction with the piece lasts about 10 minutes.

Prize

New Media Writing Prize 2011: http://newmediawritingprize.co.uk/?page_id=350

Official selections and reviews

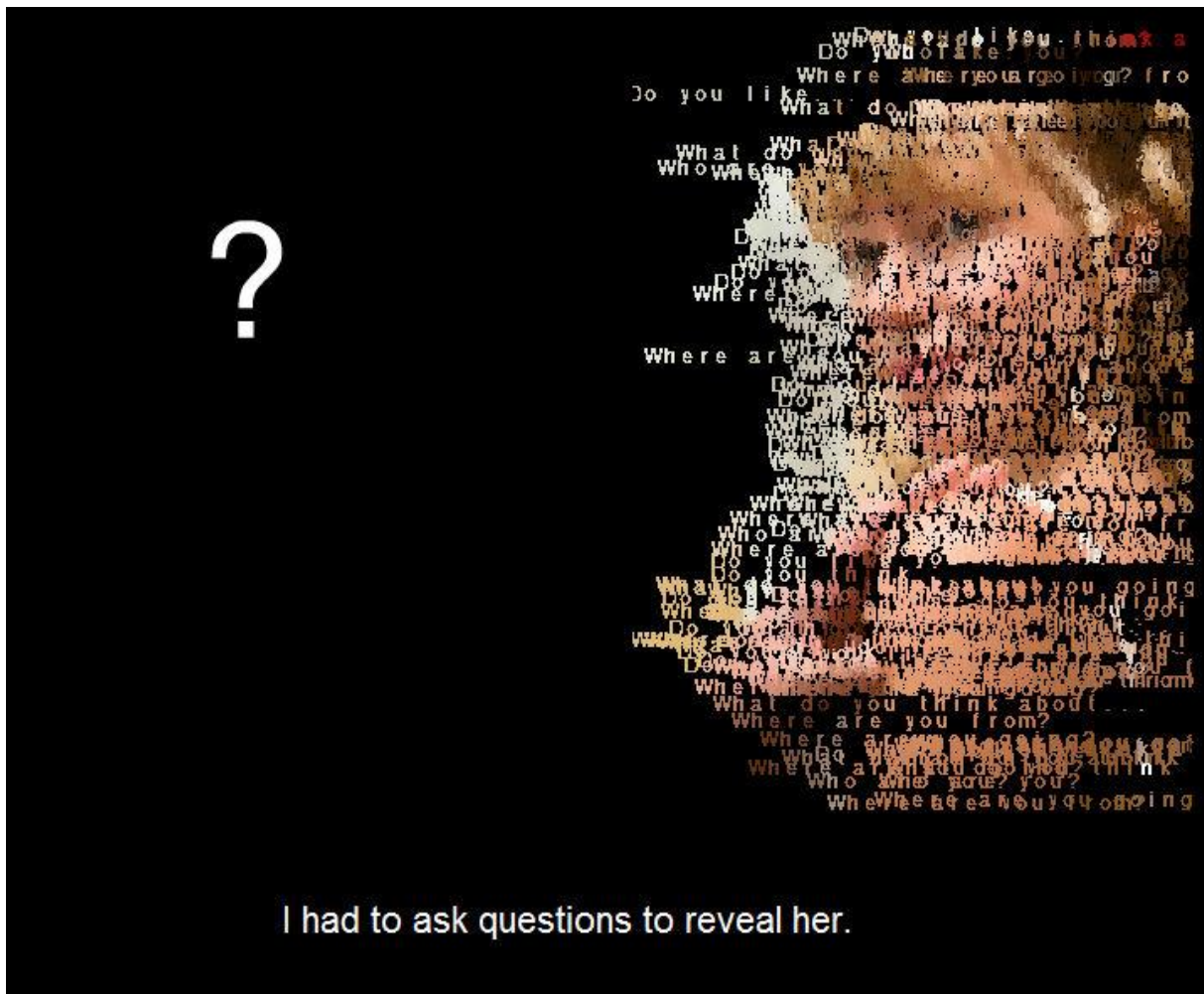
See <http://www.sergebouchardon.com/>

Detailed description

Loss of Grasp is a narrative and interactive experience about the feeling of losing grasp.

In the first scene, the reader advances in the story by rolling with the mouse over the sentence which is displayed on the screen, thus allowing the next sentence to appear. The speaking subject -the narrator- talks about the control he had over his life so far. But after a while, with the sentence "*Everything escapes me*", the mouse pointer disappears. The reader can continue to roll over each sentence to display the following one, but without the help of the mouse pointer on the screen. He can start experiencing the loss of grasp through his gestures.

The second scene takes place twenty years earlier. It is the scene in which the narrator meets the woman who is to become his wife. During this scene, the narrator tries to “reveal” her through questions. The reader can then discover the face of the woman by rolling over the screen, leaving traces that are like questions. The questions are constitutive elements of the portrait.

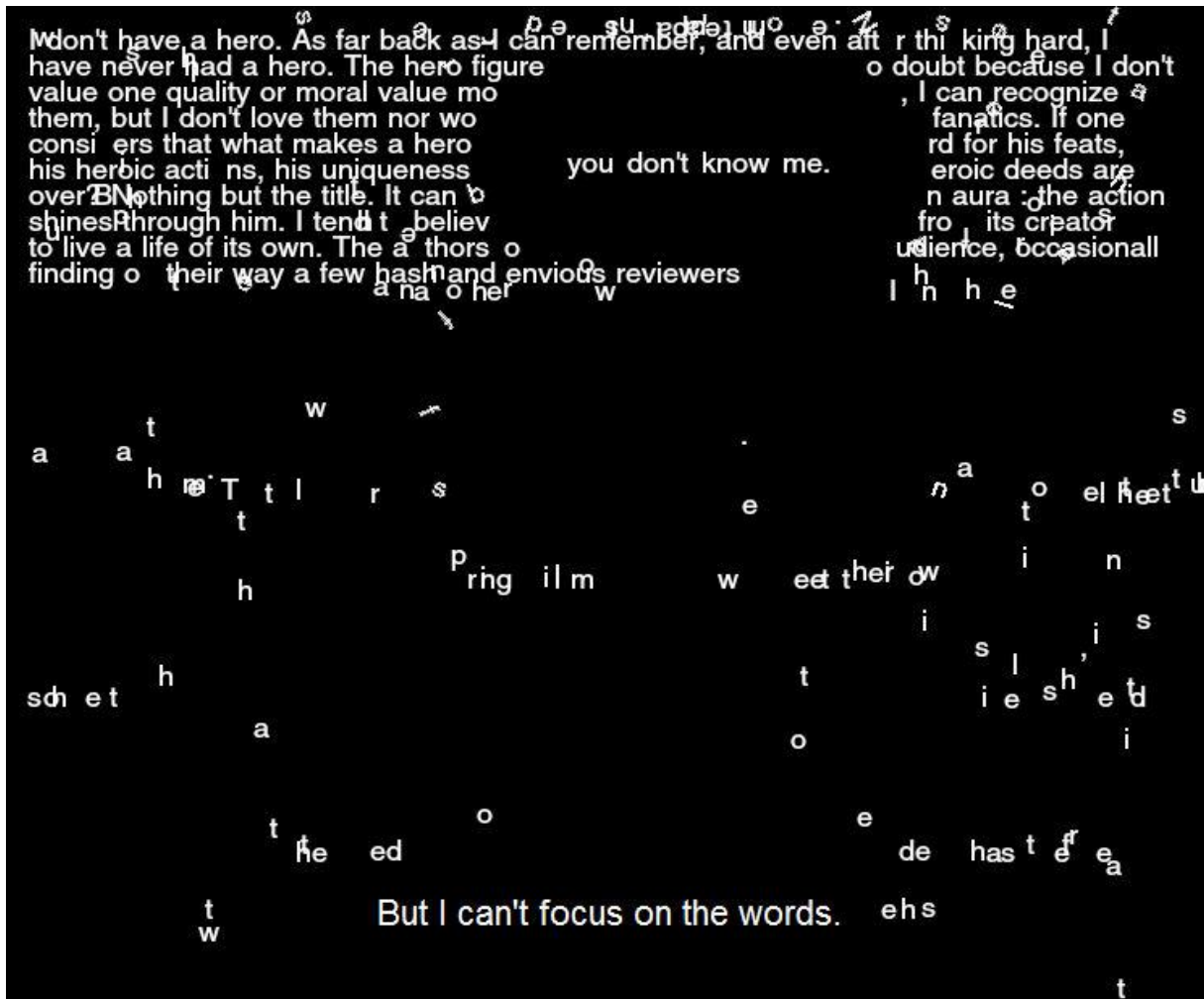


Loss of Grasp, second scene.

In the third scene, twenty years have passed. The narrator is reading an ambiguous note from his wife. He speaks plainly about his loss of control. The reader can read the text either as a “love poem or a break up note”. The reader can experience this double interpretation with gestures. If the reader moves the mouse cursor to the right, the text will unfold as a love poem; if the reader moves the cursor to the left, the order of the lines is reversed and the text turns into a break up note.

In the fourth scene, the teenage son asks his father (the narrator) to read his essay on the theme of the hero. But the father fails to concentrate on the text of his son and reads between the lines. The reader clicks on the text and sentences appear, made up with the letters of the text, such as:

*I don't love you.
 You don't know me.
 We have nothing in common.
 I don't want anything from you.
 You're not a model for me.
 I want to make my own way.
 Soon I will leave.*



Loss of Grasp, fourth scene.

In the fifth scene, even the own image of the narrator seems to escape him. The image of the reader appears on the screen via the webcam. The reader can then distort, manipulate his/her own image. The narrator confesses: "I feel manipulated."

In the sixth and final scene, the narrator is determined to regain control. An input window is then proposed to the reader wherein he/she can write. But whatever key he/she types in, the following text appears:

*I'm doing all I can to get a grip on my life again.
 I make choices.
 I control my emotions.
 The meaning of things.
 At last, I have a grasp...*

Again, the reader is facing a manipulation based on a difference between his/her expectations and the display on the screen. He/she interactively experiments the feeling of loss of grasp of the character. In this interactive narrative, the gesture fully contributes to the construction of meaning.