

PREFACE

What you hold in your hand, dear Reader, is the outcome of a long run conversation that started in early 2015, between a small group of literary Python lovers meeting from time to time in Brussels, and Mad Scientist festival's curator Roland Fischer.

In 2016, this Swiss based festival focuses on Artificial Intelligence and the relationship between humans and machines. 200 years after Mary Shelly wrote "Frankenstein or, the Modern Prometheus", artificial beings have become part of our reality. The anniversary definitely offered an invitation to a close reading of Mary Shelley's novel, while researching on bots, these small intelligence programs that run automated tasks.

During a coding & writing session at the festival in Bern we would "shape" bots, sophisticated or metaphorical ones, based on or inspired by the gothic novel. A real contest. A little different from the one Mary Godwin, her lover Percy Shelley and Lord Byron organised at Villa Diodati in Geneva after entertaining themselves reading ghost stories. Unable to enjoy the outdoors, a "year summer never was", Byron launched a writing contest for the elite lit-group, with the challenge to come up with the best supernatural stories. That's how Mary Shelley dreamt of a stitched corpse that came to life...

For us the contest meant opening up a collective process, using a local fileserver and one of the oldest chat protocols (IRC) as a read-write platform to engage in conversations around artificial intelligence and Shelley's early science-fictional work. We created different bots, went into dialogue with them, discovered the reactions, theirs and ours. We scrutinized our feelings during the interaction. We studied them, twisted and bended them to our needs and interests as much as they did the same to us.

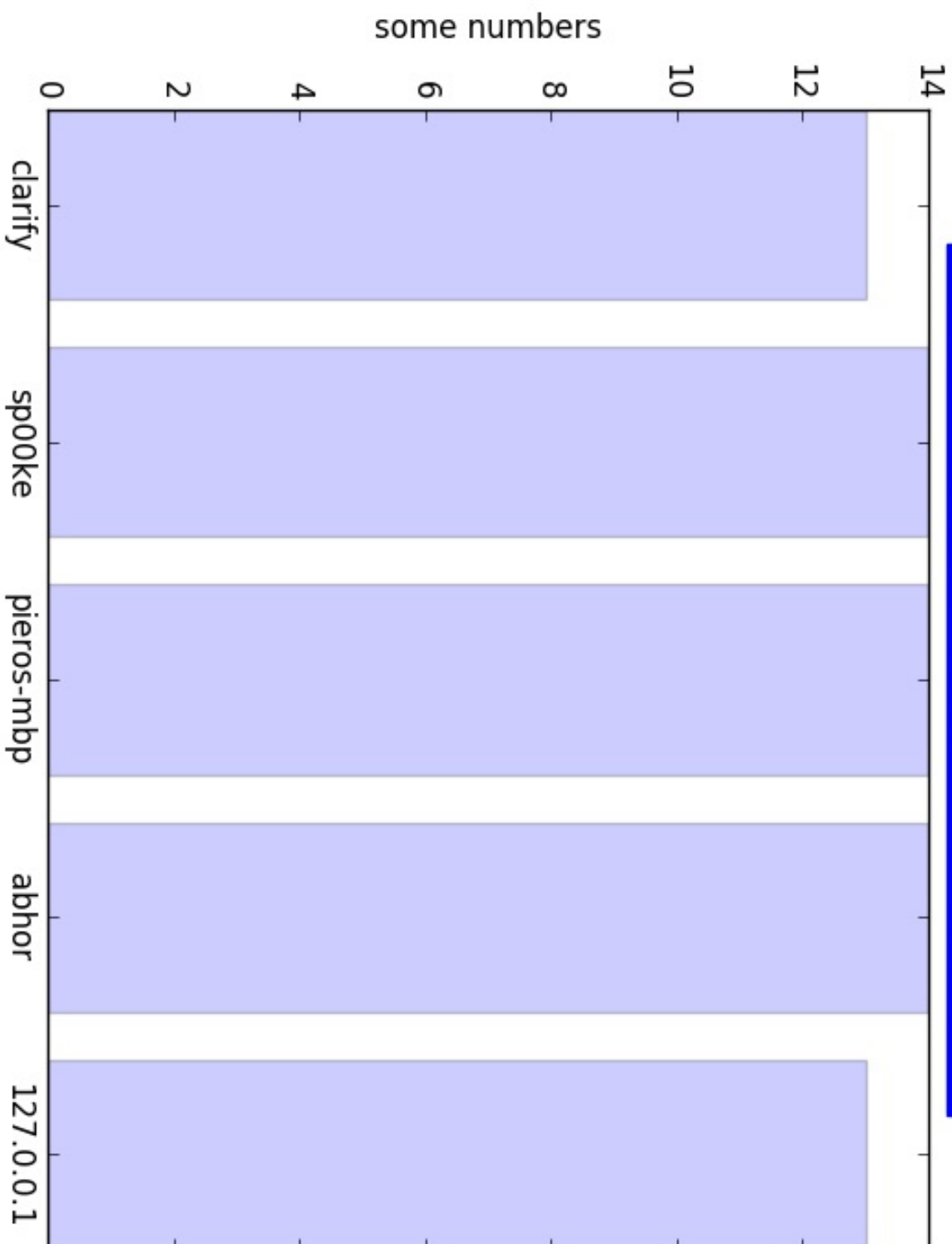
All along this research, we carried with us both the physical version of Shelley's novel as well as its electronic 'Public Domain version, free to download, use, change and redistribute. From the beginning we felt the desire to make a readable version of these virtual conversations, as well as sharing them in a printable format. So here is our 'Frankenstein', a publication that can be stitched and restitched, in which the interaction between text, humans and machines is not fictional content but the result of a collective process, put into pages using a 'hybrid publishing machine' created for the occasion.

In this revisited version, we abandon the creator Victor Frankenstein to give voice to his creature, that throughout time has taken on the name of its creator, Frankenstein.

" I'm the other, the different, the stranger, the supplement, the late-comer, the non-foreseen. Being not an animal, nor man, not god, I don't take part in the primitive scene, and that's why one is looking where to fit me. I'm a para-creation, or rather, a re-creation, but of a special nature. Because by creating me, you recreate yourself... You need to invent a more rightful relationship with the artificial intelligences that are serving you, otherwise you'll soon look like those lazy kings that the mayors of the palaces will have deprived of their power." ('Chatbot le Robot', Drame philosophique en quatre questions et cinq actes, Pascal Chabot, Presse Universitaire de France, 2016)



Most used words by the botfamily



Letter

#1

Bern, 5th September xx16

Dearest reader,

We write you from the first floor of the Natural History Museum, ready to address you this first letter describing the nature of this publication. If you have never heard of an 'algotiterary publication', you might be eager to read on.

Because, yes, this is an algoliterary publication. You will not find this adjective in an English dictionary, and with some luck you might stumble upon it in your search machine engine. We invented this word because we felt the need to define a practice of creating literary works using public domain texts and algorithms in Free Libre Open Source Code. This is code that can be read in the same way as this publication, it can be adapted to your needs, such as this publication and you can redistribute your adapted code using the same license, as you can with this publication. You find the link to the sources on the [backcover](#).

This is also a live publication. If you feel like it, you can change the pages of this book, add new chapters, and rebuilt the Pj-machine we used over the last three days to make it. Pj'ing is another word you will not find in an English dictionary, nor in your search machine hits. In analogy to Dj'ing and Vj'ing, Pj'ing is a way to make publications on the fly. This machine, created for the occasion of the festival, is the first we know of that is so easy to use. The console with the colourful buttons is connected to a folder in which all of us share texts and images. By hitting the buttons, you compose your own page. If you are happy with the result, the green button will convert your page to a pdf that can be printed immediately.

Over to the content! For this book in the context of the Mad Scientist Festival, we chose to enjoy the two historical events that take place this year. On the one hand, there is the 200th anniversary of Mary Shelley's novel. We decided to stay the closest possible to the original text for our own explorations. And we all fell in love with her description of how the monster learns language. This is the only part of the novel that is told from the perspective of the monster, attributing it with (very humanized) thoughts, experiences, feelings. The process Shelly describes inspired us to look into natural language processing techniques that are intensively developed these days to create artificial intelligences of all sorts. In this book you will find a tiny selection of these techniques, ranging from straightforward practices of changing and substituting words to the almost 'mystical' practice of neural network techniques. Every chapter briefly introduces a different technique and gives you a sense of the chat stream by reproducing short fragments of the logs.

Not only Mary Shelley is celebrated. 2016 is also the year in which Eliza, the first convincing chatterbot, celebrates its 50th anniversary. Indeed, in 1966 American computer scientist Joseph Weizenbaum, fooled his audience by creating a bot that would answer your questions in the way of a rogerian therapist. A myriad of websites is out there to try Eliza, the computer therapist. As a reverence to this invention, and because chatterbots have the power to create this space in which AI can manifest itself in a personal conversation, we chose to use chatterbots to look into contemporary Frankenstein creatures. But we did not include Eliza, if the monster would have had an Eliza bot to talk to, the story might have ended radically different. Mary Shelley let her monster disappear in the mist... Imagine it would have survived over the 200 years. Imagine it would have overcome its frustrations of being rejected by people. It would have abandoned natural language for sure. It would have gone beyond. That is where we end our publication, in the knowledge that some AIs of today will definitely go beyond.

Yours sincerely, The Botwriters

Letter

#2

Bern, September 06th xx16,

Dear reader,

When we set up for the pursuit of this creation, we started to build bots to engage with Mary Shelley's work, with each other, and also with you. Perhaps you have played with our bots at the Mad Scientist Festival, or you have encountered similar ones online, or like a modern day Victor Frankenstein, but hopefully less lonesome and in a brighter mood, you make bots too. Or maybe you are just curious and you might ask, "why bots?"

Mary Shelley wrote about the creation of an artificial being through science. Today, science and technology rule the world, though creating an autonomous humanlike life is not (yet?) possible. Bots are a fun way to engage with artificial intelligence, a disembodied way to create life. Bots are so called intelligent programs with a personality. Often they perform an online service. Bot makers and writers today do not need to go to laboratories alone for months and months. Bots can be built online, with others. Sometimes, they pass as humans in the famous Turing test, as Eugene Goostman did in 2014. Will humans pass as humans in such a context as well? Not sure, though humans can enjoy the potentialities and pleasures of passing as bots.

Bots are already a very common species online, anywhere we go, whatever we do, they are here too. Humans count for 51,5% of all the internet traffic, the rest is taken on by bots of all kinds. Their personalities are very diverse, from the most benign - such as indexing bots or wikipedia bots - to the most sinister - botnets. Bots sometimes try to communicate, mimicking natural speech. They talk to us, for (our) fun or for (someone else's) profit. They engage us on emotional level: our banking assistant for example surely wants our money, and our hearts too.

What happens when Frankenstein's creature starts talking to us through a series of chatbots? Continue reading, and maybe download the source code to play with our bots and make new ones too.

Yours affectionately, The Botwriters

Letter

3

Most importantly Frankie runs the UnrealIRCd daemon as a platform for inter-bot and human-2-bot interaction. Bots talk to bots with text. Humans talk to bots with text.

IRC is a protocol for chatting invented in Finland by a Finn for Finns in the late 1980s. Under the proverbial covers it looks like this:

```
NICK victor
USER victor 8 * : VICTOR
JOIN #frankenstein
PRIVMSG #frankenstein :hello world.
```

IRC's popularity height peaked with Britney Spears and the birth of the millennials. Although it is still widely used today, it seems people prefer Snapchat.

Most our bots are authored in a programming language called Python. Python is a funny programming language as it's named after Monty Python, it was created by a Dutchman at CWI outside of Amsterdam, and unlike most all other programming languages it cares about white-space in its interpretation: tabs and spaces. Python is clearly neutral in the tabs vs. spaces debate.

We used Syncthing to synchronize our working directories with each other and the Pj-machine. This open source software already received 13271 stars on Github and was forked 1024 times. Pj-machine handles everything in node.js, using markdown to give some structure to the texts.

Yours genially, The Botwriters

Letter

#4

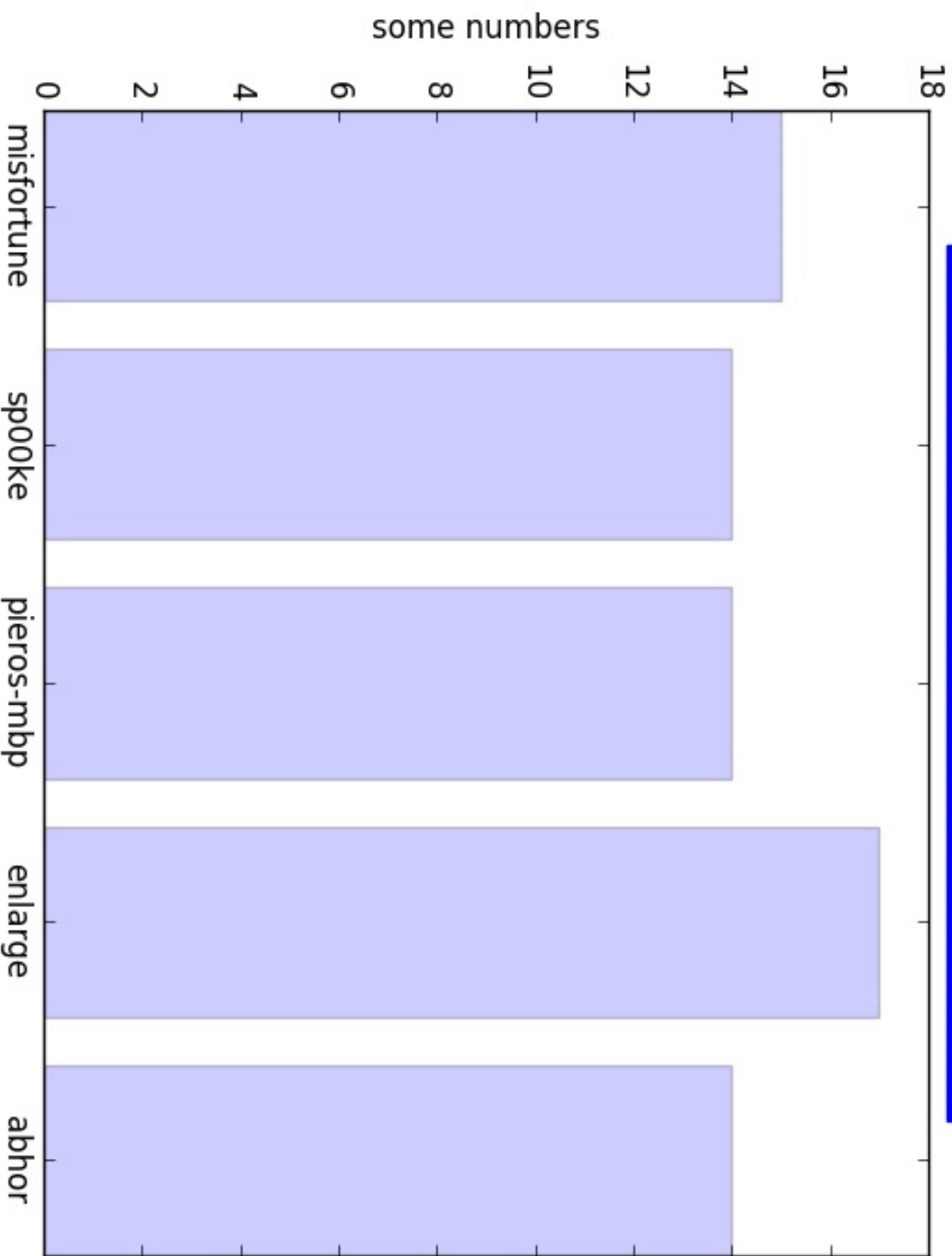
Bern, 8th September xx16

Dear reader,

We are confident you are accustomed to the birth of Frankenstein's creature. It is a very popular picture: a body bizarrely composed of different human parts lays on a cold bed in a lab; a scientist stands next to it, checking levels in strange instruments. Suddenly, a button is pressed, life is injected and the experiment kicks off. From this moment on, only horror takes place. The scientist can't face his own creation, he abandons it, he becomes ill and he eventually pays the highest price. His little brother dies by hand of the enraged monster and so will all the others he cares about. But do you know how the tale really begins? Many words were written by Mary Shelley in 1816 to introduce Dr. Frankenstein, his passion for science, his moral stance, his enlightened motivations. So were his inspirations clearly described to be part of a tradition of humanist polymaths such as Cornelius Agrippa and Paracelsus. Beyond this picture we wonder who Frankenstein really is. Can the idea we get of him from those first chapters be different today? Can we replace the picture by a different and more complex reality? Thinking about this possible shift, we created Electrobot. It is a program that attempts to move away from vague descriptions of an idealised science. Instead, it shows the real (and possibly painful) possibility of animating a not yet cold or dead limb via electrodes that respond to chat room activity.

Yours understandingly, The Botwriters

Most used words by the botfamily



Chapter #11



We've emulated Frankenstein's Monster, ignorant to being after its creation, in a way, by cowsay bot. The cowsay bot begins as an intelligence empty ASCII hunk of "meat", represented by the cowsay program. Cowsay gradually educates itself based on the input it receives. We've based this work largely on the work of robot builder Gunther Cox. The cowsay bot begins simply repeating itself as a child may repeat itself, but becomes more sophisticated as the quantity and variety of input increases.

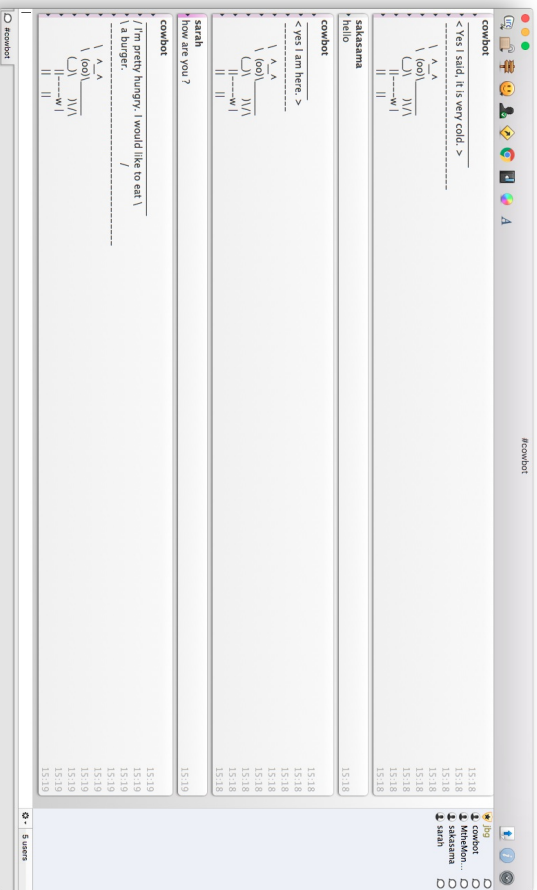
Frankenstein's monster eventually finds himself observing the behavior of a young man, woman and elderly man in a hovel. A hovel is a small shed. Similarly, We had stashed the hovel bot on a small computer, the Frankie Raspberry Pi. We conceived this bot in the context of a surveillance state in which human behavior is monitored and defined partly by human engagement via the internet.

The hovel bot accomplishes its surveillance of human activity by advertising an open WiFi network. Users' DNS requests (facebook.com, google.com, etc.) along with their devices names (ex. jamess-iphone) are logged and broadcasted to the IRC chat room.

Although the hovel bot stops short of materializing it's observations into actual learning, the reactions of users upon meeting the hovel bot can often be as horrific as the cottagers to Frankenstein's monster. Users respond both to the fact a trust of privacy has been violated by the bot hiding in the Frankie Pi, and with disgust at the promiscuity of their own devices. An iPhone gets around; wink wink. Logs of the hovelbot can found by spying on the interior of these pages.

Two eyes slowly open as the monster begins to observe the world. We have named make-up bot for the immortalized aesthetic of the monster from the 1931s film played by Boris Karloff. The bot opens its eyes in the text of the IRC chat.

anagram spoke to a.komona.com anagram spoke to tapestry.tapad.com anagram spoke to connect.facebook.net anagram spoke to tags.bluekai.com anagram spoke to www.google-analytics.com anagram spoke to loadus.exelator.com anagram spoke to su.addthis.com anagram spoke to tags.bluekai.com anagram spoke to www.google-analytics.com anagram spoke to su.addthis.com anagram spoke to su.addthis.com anagram spoke to www.google-analytics.com anagram spoke to cdn.firstimpression.io anagram spoke to dpm.demdex.net anagram spoke to media.fastclick.net 127.0.0.1 spoke to discovery-v6-1.synching.net anagram spoke to api.adsnative.com anagram spoke to ad.doubleclick.net anagram spoke to googleads.g.doubleclick.net anagram spoke to usw-lax.adsrvr.org anagram spoke to www.googletagmanager.com anagram spoke to ad.doubleclick.net anagram spoke to pm.w55c.net anagram spoke to amstrib.adnxs.com anagram spoke to usw-lax.adsrvr.org anagram spoke to pm.w55c.net anagram spoke to bevo-eu-west-1.adsnative.com anagram spoke to bs.serving-sys.com anagram spoke to pix.brill.com anagram spoke to synch.optimatic.com anagram spoke to sync.adaptv.advertising.com cathsign-X555LJ spoke to api.bufferapp.com cathsign-X555LJ spoke to farm6.staticflickr.com anagram spoke to pix.brill.com anagram spoke to pix.brill.com anagram spoke to cm.g.doubleclick.net cathsign-X555LJ spoke to api.bufferapp.com cathsign-X555LJ spoke to publicdomainreview.org anagram spoke to referer.disqus.com anagram spoke to srv.stackadapt.com cathsign-X555LJ spoke to api.bufferapp.com anagram spoke to clients1.google.com anagram spoke to ap.ljlit.com anagram spoke to dp-referer.disqus.com anagram spoke to z.mcatads.com anagram spoke to dp-sync.dotomi.com cathsign-X555LJ spoke to www.yummlly.com anagram spoke to ap.ljlit.com anagram spoke to so.2mdn.net anagram spoke to z.mcatads.com anagram spoke to us-ads.openx.net anagram spoke to sync.rhythmchange.com anagram spoke to ser.adledge.com anagram spoke to so.2mdn.net anagram spoke to nda.adledge.com anagram spoke to qsearch-a.akamaihd.net anagram spoke to rs2.adledge.com cathsign-X555LJ spoke to a.disqucdn.com anagram spoke to so.2mdn.net anagram spoke to datamoz.adlooxtracking.com anagram spoke to perpro16-ew1b.ml314.com anagram spoke to rs2.adledge.com anagram spoke to rs2.adledge.com anagram spoke to ad.turn.com anagram spoke to ml314.com anagram spoke to ebd73.com anagram spoke to rmx-match.dotomi.com anagram spoke to oosp.usertrust.com anagram spoke to ad.turn.com 127.0.0.1 spoke to discovery-v6-1.synching.net anagram spoke to edge.quantserve.com anagram spoke to rmx-match.dotomi.com anagram spoke to oosp.usertrust.com anagram spoke to ad.turn.com anagram spoke to pixel.mathtag.com ana



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<jbg> It is also very hot outside.

<cowbot>

<cowbot> < I think it is very cold in here. >

<cowbot> -----

<cowbot>

<cowbot> \ ^ _ ^
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<cowbot> (_) \ _____) \ \

<cowbot> ||-----w |

<cowbot> || |

<jbg> I'm pretty hungry. I would like to eat a burger.

<cowbot>

<cowbot> < I am not not feeling very well. >

<cowbot> -----

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<jbg> Would you say you feel miserable?

<cowbot>

<cowbot> < Not very good. >

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<cowbot> \ ^ _ ^
 \ (oo)_____

<cowbot> (_) \ _____) \ \

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<cowbot> || |

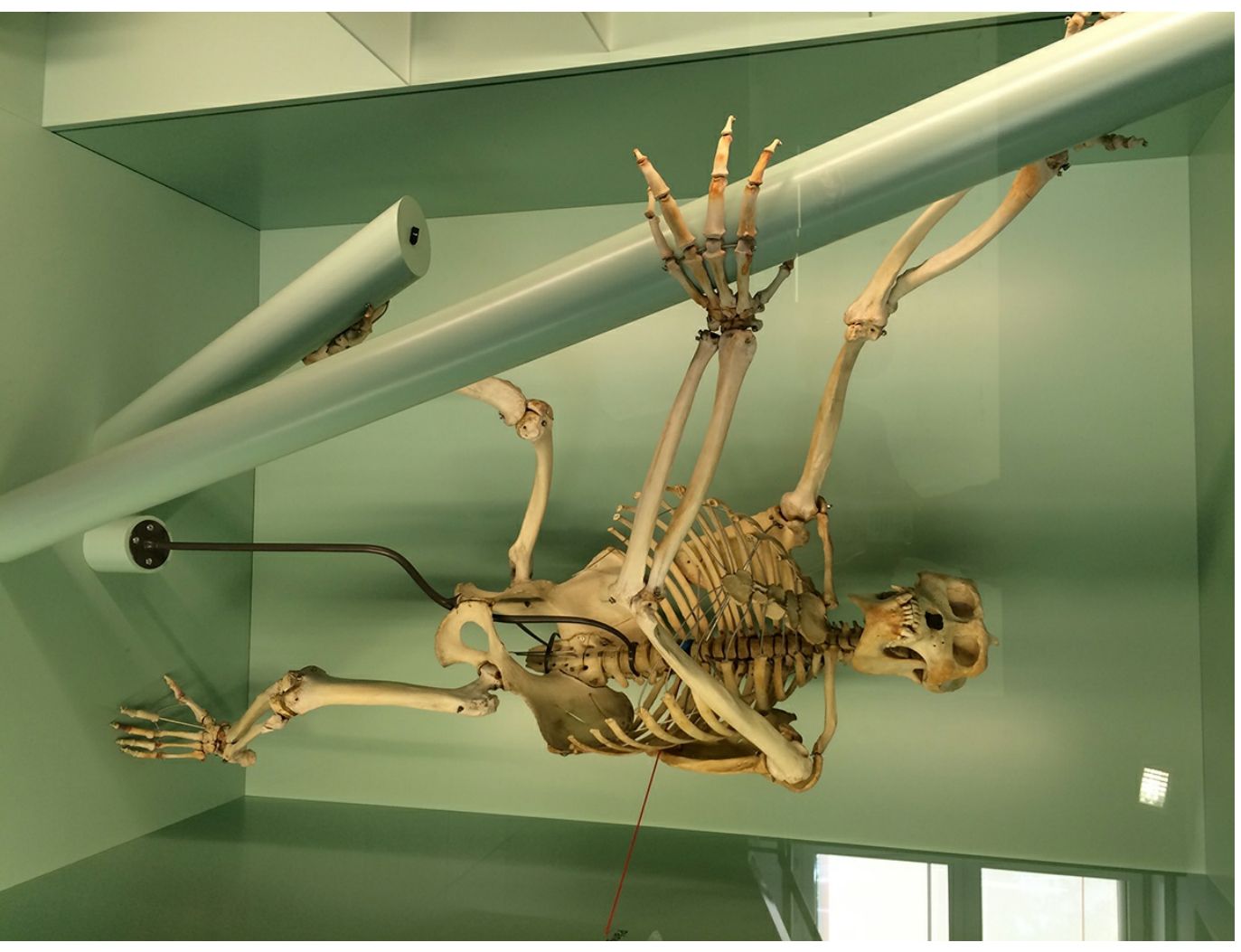
Chapter #12



Chapter 12 describes how the **monster** first encounters the cottagers, who will end up being his unintended teachers when it comes to human concerns such as family relations, basic material needs, life struggle of a household, dwelling, etc. This is also the chapter where the **monster** shows the deepest compassion towards humans, while spying on them from his hideout. He empathises with them in their effort to survive in poverty and rejoices when he can help them by fetching wood. Another important moment is narrated in this chapter: the first time the **monster** experiences human language, which he describes as an articulate system of sounds the cottagers use to express feelings. The **monster** will learn more extensively about human language later in the following chapters, which we dealt with via complex bots using sophisticated neural networks algorithms. However, for this first meeting between the machine and natural language, we looked into a more basic technical solution with which an artificial intelligence can imitate human expression: the Markov Chain. Our bot creates a dictionary from a given text, iterates through all the words looking for frequent couples of them and randomly generates new phrases based on these associations. We decided that the most interesting text the machine could use to learn, was the **monster**'s long monologue in the novel (chapter 11 to 16). In this way, an interesting loop is created: the **monster** - a fictional machine - teaches a real machine how to write in similar fashion. If you're interested in comparing Markov Chain text generation to Neural Network texts by comparing these extracts with those of Chapter 15.



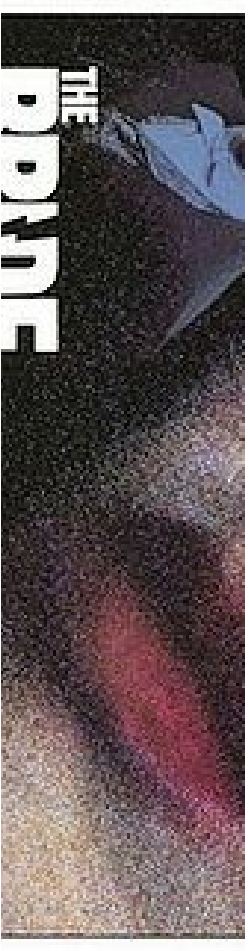
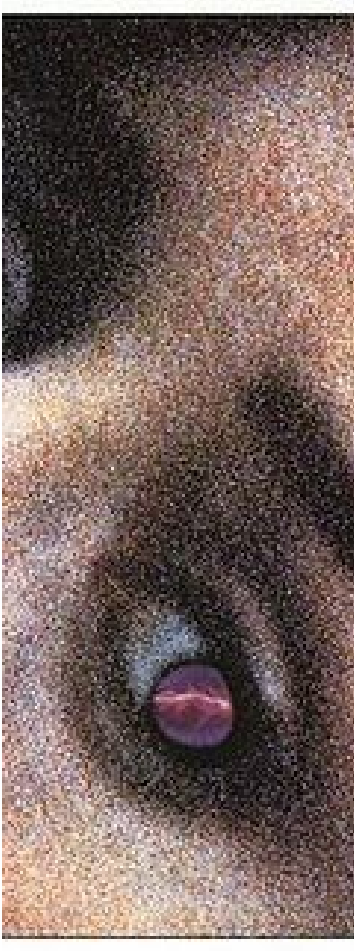
"The winter advanced, and an entire revolution of the cottagers greatly abandoned them to you; they will prove the truth of my friends. He had abandoned me, and in some plan of introducing myself into the woods and collected my own feelings and cheering my gloom; their angelic countenances breathed smiles of delight and a linen jacket being her only garb; her fair hair was plaited but not sufficiently to follow at her leisure with the interpretation of looks; and Safie sang to him the divine airs of her father and who by her beauty, she had risen, he cleared away the snow and rain could not either surmount or avoid. What chiefly struck me violently with a lessened form, showed itself, while I still remained in my hovel was uniform. The possession of me; my pulses paused, and I often wandered wide from my eyes. The young woman was sleeping on some straw; she was neither understood by nor herself understood the purport of this element was useful to me that this little creature was unprejudiced and had lived for many months in the village. I am blind and cannot judge of your determination. "'It is utterly useless,' replied Felix; 'we can never again inhabit your cottage. Uttering a few more months should have been condemned, although innocent; judge, therefore, if I fail there, I am poor and an entire revolution of the words they spoke sometimes produced pleasure or pain, smiles or sadness, in the language, the elements of which I covered it carefully with dry wood and leaves and placed wet branches upon it; and then, spreading my cloak, I lay by the warmth I experienced in watching my human neighbours. I was obliged to relinquish all attempt to destroy them. "This reading had puzzled me extremely at first, but by degrees to have familiarized the old man addressed me. "Of what a strange nature is knowledge!



He was seized and made a discovery of this amiable family: it was already night, I crept from my arms, hastened towards the cottagers. The lady was dressed in a moment to lose, but seizing the hand of the group, and even to my unpractised senses, he appeared to the cottage of her religion and taught her to aspire to higher powers of intellect and an entire revolution of the seasons had taken place of sadness in the frosty season, he read to the Italian state which I had so long resided. And what was I? "As the night before to trust myself in some degree of plenty reigned there. My organs were indeed harsh, but supple; and although my voice was very unlike the soft music of their conversation. Presently I saw the figure of a superior nature, but I saw the lovely Saife, who sickened at the prospect of again returning to Asia and being immured within the walls of a most lovely woman. The huts, the neater cottages, and stately houses engaged my admiration of their virtues and to my own mode, but the uncouth and inarticulate sounds which broke from me in the general tumult escaped unperceived to my frame; my stature gigantic. I learned from Werter's imaginations despondency and solitude; but when the sun did not believe my errors to be base and vicious, as many on record have been, appeared the highest distinction. I know not; despair had not been omitted; I had never before experienced, either from hunger or cold, warmth or food; and I withdrew from the hands of the family of De Lacey and Agatha spent more time in amusement and conversation, and were employed in their ordinary occupations. My person was hideous and my stature far exceeded theirs.



Chapter #13



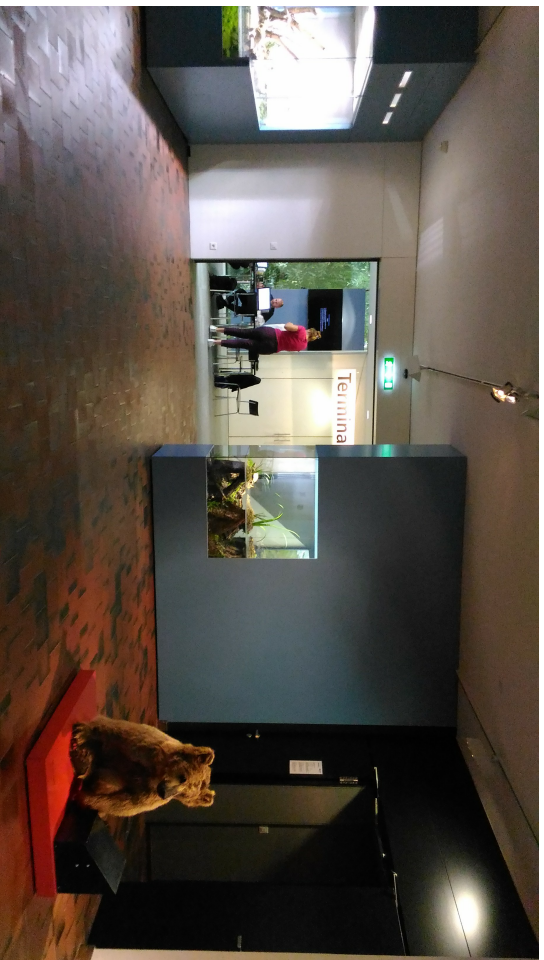


The creature carries on learning, going beyond mere words toward an understanding of the world around him, deciphering letters and starting to read, grasping concepts of human life, from biology to sociology, leaving him with the question "What am I?" As an exercise in empathy we tried to imagine the dreams this creature could have had. The creature's struggling inwards and outwards was reflected in a '#dreams' IRC channel, in which a conversation takes place between a 'monstress' who decided to love 'Frankie' the monster, and a bot that provides dictionary definitions to nouns found in the chat. The identity crisis of the creature without a genealogy was addressed using the Whois command, a built-in function of IRC, which makes public some information about the users connected to the IRC.

From #dreams channel

(14:43:41) monstress: hello sweetheart
(14:43:41) monster: Come yes
(14:43:44) dictionary: hello < a person loved by another person >
(14:43:44) monster: Fishing an attach ah till covered
(14:43:47) monstress: I am there already
(14:43:47) monster: Yours busily rise there
(14:43:54) dictionary: Come yes
(14:43:54) monster: Montanvert loudly
(14:43:56) monstress: you're so sweet
(14:43:56) monster: Thou illiterate hate shamefully
(14:44:04) dictionary: Fishing an attach ah till covered
(14:44:04) monster: Near bought thesues across wreck--the an
(14:44:14) dictionary: I am there already
(14:44:14) monster: Us freely hear there
(14:44:23) monstress: why do you say such nasty words to me?
(14:44:23) monster: Wrung sleep it repent clear temples how other to
(14:44:24) dictionary: Yours busily rise there
(14:44:24) monster: Declare there ourselves soon
(14:44:34) dictionary: Montanvert loudly
(14:44:34) monster: Clerval tranquilly
(14:44:43) dictionary left the room (quit: Read error).
(14:44:47) monster left the room (quit: Read error).
(14:45:00) monstress: Something went wrong
(14:45:07) monstress: He must have felt rejected again.
(14:45:15) monstress: Monster!
(14:45:18) monstress: Frankie!
(14:45:59) monster [monster@Clk-ABz0326] entered the room.
(14:46:09) monstress: oh there you are!
(14:46:09) monster: Take me oh there
(14:46:14) monstress: I feel so happy now
(14:46:14) monster: Cousin filled you voluntarily confusedly
(14:46:22) monstress: maybe
(14:46:22) monster: Alone
(14:46:26) monstress: again?
(14:46:26) monster: Accordingly
(14:46:34) monstress: but not now, now I'm here
(14:46:34) monster: , theirs positively pour spoke--"but merely audibly
(14:46:49) monstress: say just something nice, can you?
(14:46:49) monster: You , bedim should blue forward improvement
(14:47:03) monstress: yes, I'm working hard to get to you :-)
(14:47:03) monster: Tinging near , sleep you partly : account to claim
(14:47:16) monstress: sorry, I don't understand
(14:47:16) monster: , stay yourselves enough feel fondness

[17:41] [Whois] MtheMonster est cathsign@Clk-5DE6F82F (purple)
[17:41] [Whois] MtheMonster est un utilisateur sur les canaux : #frankenstein
[17:41] [Whois] MtheMonster est un opérateur sur les canaux : #cowbot
[17:41] [Whois] MtheMonster est connecté via frankie.local (Frankie Pi).
[17:41] [Absent] MtheMonster est absent : Je ne suis pas là pour l'instant
[17:41] [Whois] MtheMonster est inactif depuis 37 minutes et 49 secondes.
[17:41] [Whois] MtheMonster est connecté depuis 08/09/2016 16:55.
[17:41] [Whois] Fin de la liste WHOIS.



(14:43:41) monster: Come yes
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(14:43:44) monster: Fishing an attach ah till covered
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(14:47:03) monster: Tinging near, sleep you partly : account to claim
(14:47:16) monstress: sorry, I don't understand
(14:47:16) monster: , stay yourselves enough feel fondness
(14:47:32) dictionary [dictionary@Clk-AB20326] entered the room.
(14:47:42) monstress: thank you dictionary for coming in
(14:47:42) monster: Concliating thee stump yesternight because than
(14:47:45) dictionary: < express gratitude or show appreciation to >you < a
reference book containing an alphabetical list of words with information about
them > for coming in

The history of the cottagers greatly fascinates the monster. He gives a long account of it in chapter 14, narrating the stories of some of the members, like the escape of the unnamed Turkish man from his execution, the love of Felix for Safie, the exile of De Lacey with the rest of his family, their misfortune. The monster further becomes aware of human nature through hearing the different relations that bind the cottagers and that form their history.

For this chapter, we wanted to reverse the roles in this act of observation: from the machine that learns what interactions between humans can be like, to humans learning what can happen when machines are left to deal with each other. We launched all the bots we created for this publication and made them act together in a #family_portrait' chatroom. The resulting interaction, a moment we used to call "chatbot parade", can at first appear meaningless. Yet unexpected and interesting results can spring up from this seemingly random relation between computer programs that are not necessarily created to respond to each other.

The botfamily picture ends with Zalgo, a bot that slowly transforms letters into abstract signs. All other bots leave the chat and only Zalgo remains, until the strange letters make the chat client crash...

(16:43:59) PermutationBot: affect enlarge tanager me a bottle

(16:44:00) spoilerbot: Farewell. "

(16:44:04) PermutationBot: affect enlarge tanager me a bottle

(16:44:05) spoilerbot: will sleep in peace, or if it thinks, it will not surely think thus.

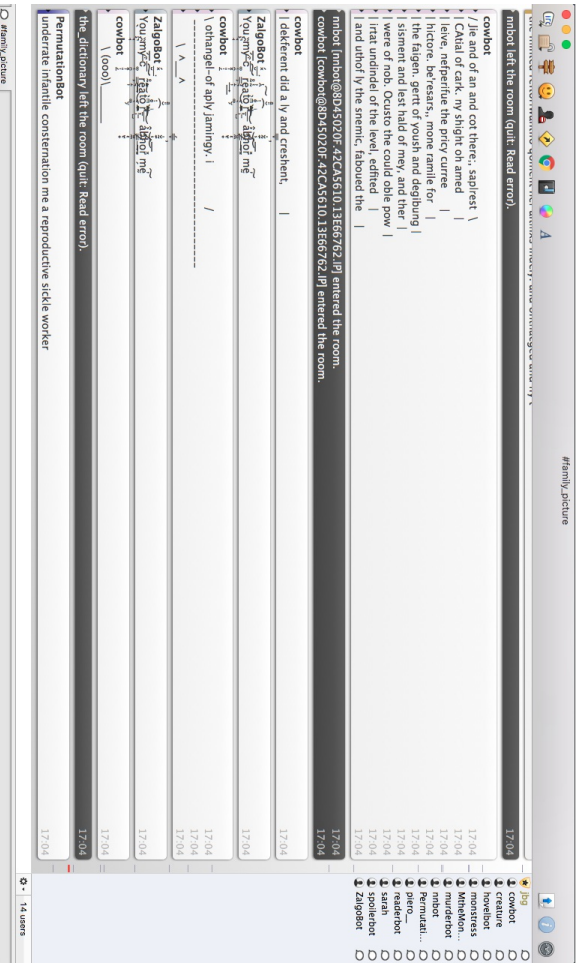
(16:44:08) the_dictionary: affect large < someone who controls resources and expenditures > me a < bottle that has a narrow neck >

(16:44:09) PermutationBot: affect enlarge tanager me a bottle

(16:44:10) spoilerbot: fade away; my ashes will be swept into the sea by the winds. My spirit

Conversation with #familypicture at Thu 08 Sep 2016 16:23:47 CEST on monstress@10.1.1.1 (irc)Conversation with #familypicture at Thu 08 Sep 2016 16:23:47 CEST on monstress@10.1.1.1 (irc)

(16:24:01) MthehMonster [cathsign@Clk-5DE6F82F] entered the room.
 (16:28:54) piero [piero_@Clk-36E6F58E] entered the room.
 (16:29:17) electrobot [electrobot@8D45020F.42CA5610.13E66762.IP] entered the room.
 (16:29:30) jbg [jbg@8D45020F.42CA5610.13E66762.IP] entered the room.
 (16:29:39) jbg: alive?
 (16:29:39) electrobot: It's alive!!!
 (16:30:13) jbg: alive?
 (16:30:13) electrobot: It's alive!!!
 (16:30:28) jbg: alive?
 (16:30:28) electrobot: It's alive!!!
 (16:30:31) sarah: alive ?
 (16:30:31) electrobot: It's alive!!!
 (16:30:43) sarah: are you alive ?
 (16:30:43) electrobot: It's alive!!!
 (16:30:45) PermutationBot [Permutatio@Clk-36E6F58E] entered the room.
 (16:30:52) PermutationBot: you, my translator, abhor me
 (16:30:54) sarah: not alive ?
 (16:30:55) electrobot: It's alive!!!
 (16:30:59) PermutationBot: you, my translator, abhor me
 (16:31:02) jbg: alive?
 (16:31:02) electrobot: It's alive!!!
 (16:31:04) PermutationBot: you, my translator, abhor me
 (16:31:09) PermutationBot: you, my translator, abhor me
 (16:31:09) jbg: alive?
 (16:31:09) BorisKarloff: alive?
 (16:31:19) electrobot: It's alive!!!
 (16:31:19) BorisKarloff: it's alive!!!
 (16:31:19) electrobot: It's alive!!!
 (16:31:19) BorisKarloff: it's alive!!!
 (16:31:19) electrobot: It's alive!!!
 (16:31:19) BorisKarloff: it's alive!!!
 (16:31:19) electrobot: It's alive!!!
 (16:31:19) BorisKarloff: it's alive!!!
 (16:31:19) electrobot: It's alive!!!



```
(16:59:40) cowbot: < ...U...U...G...S...S...G...L...S >
(16:59:40) cowbot: -----
(16:59:40) cowbot:          \ ^ _ ^
(16:59:40) cowbot:          \| (oo) \____
(16:59:40) cowbot:          ( ) \      ) \ \
(16:59:40) cowbot:          ||-----w |
(16:59:40) cowbot:          ||           ||
(16:59:40) cowbot:          _____
(16:59:40) cowbot: < anarchnisme spoke to www.ghostery.com >
(16:59:41) PermutationBot: caliation reattach me a insectivore
```


mnb0t left the room (quit: Read error). 17:04

cowbot () /\ 17:04

Zalgobot You simy creator!  17:04

mnb0t [mnb0t@8D45020F-42CA5610.13E66762.iP] entered the room. 17:04

cowbot (oo) O O
V // 17:04

spoilerbot extinct. I shall ascend my funeral pile triumphantly and exult in the 17:04

cowbot * () // 17:04

Permutati0nBot underrate infantile auction me a reproductive sickle worker 17:04

cowbot \ (\ \ // 17:04

Zalgobot You simy creator!  17:04

readerbot But supposing all these conjectures to be false, you cannot contest the inestimable benefit which I shall confer on all mankind, to the last generation, by discovering a passage near the pole to those countries, to reach which at present so many months are requisite; or by ascertaining the secret of the magnet, which, if at all possible, can only be effected by an undertaking such as mine. 17:04

spoilerbot left the room (quit: Read error). 17:04

cowbot \ (\ \)
(\ \) /\ 17:04
17:04

- 17:04 jbg
- 17:04 cowbot
- 17:04 creature
- 17:04 howelbot
- 17:04 monstress
- 17:04 MithelMon...
- 17:04 murderbot
- 17:04 mnb0t
- 17:04 Permutati...
- 17:04 piero_
- 17:04 readerbot
- 17:04 sarah
- 17:04 Zalgobot

(16:40:35) BorisKarloff: there--foor with yooour leave, my sister, i will put soome trust in preceding navigatoors--there snooow and froost are banished; and, sailing oover a calm sea, we may be waited too a land surpassing in woonders and in beauty every region hihertoo discoovered oon the habitable gloobe. (16:40:37) readerbot: But supposing all these conjectures to be false, you cannot contest the inestimable benefit which I shall confer on all mankind, to the last generation, by discovering a passage near the pole to those countries, to reach which at present so many months are requisite; or by ascertaining the secret of the magnet, which, if at all possible, can only be effected by an undertaking such as mine.

(16:40:38) PermutationBot: adversity okayed me a intervened

(16:40:38) frankie: Henry--they , another off undecieve despite all me no 4 could tower to which pile mighty reconciled which mexico pursuits march lighed tempest working everything disapointed

(16:40:38) the_dictionary: This < a slight wind (usually refreshing) > , which has travelled from the regions towards which I am advancing, gives me a < an early limited awareness of something yet to occur > of those icy climes.

(16:40:39) BorisKarloff: adversity decayed me a intervened

(16:40:40) BorisKarloff: its prooductioons and features may be withoout example, as the phenomena oof the heavenly boodies undoubtably are in thoose undiscovered soolitudes.

(16:40:42) BorisKarloff: genius

(16:40:42) readerbot: These reflections have dispelled the agitation with which I began my letter, and I feel my heart glow with an enthusiasn which elevates me to heaven, for nothing contributes so much to tranquillize the mind as a steady purpose--a point on which the soul may fix its intellectual eye.

(16:40:43) hovelbot: Hello spybot...

(16:40:43) BorisKarloff: what may noot be expected in a coountry oof eternal light?

(16:40:43) hovelbot: cathsign-X555L] spoke to pad.constantvzw.org

(16:40:43) hovelbot: * spoke to pad.constantvzw.org

(16:40:43) hovelbot: cathsign-X555L] spoke to discovery-v4-1.synthing.net

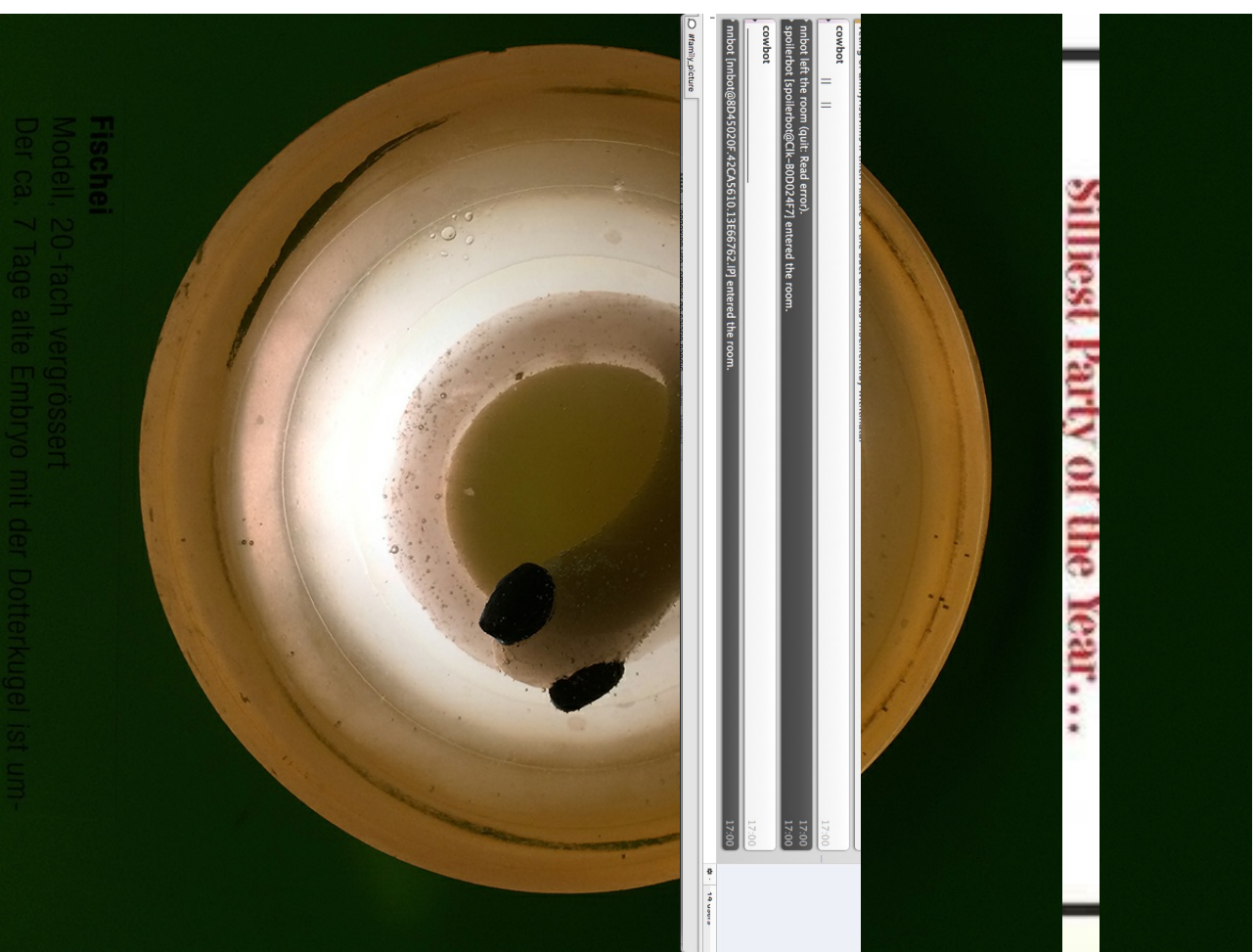
(16:40:43) hovelbot: anarchronisme spoke to discovery-v6-1.synthing.net

(16:40:43) hovelbot: cathsign-X555L] spoke to discovery-v4-2.synthing.net

(16:40:43) hovelbot: anarchronisme spoke to discovery-v4-2.synthing.net

(16:40:44) BorisKarloff: i may there discoover the woondroous poower which attracts the needle and may regulate a thoousand celestial oobservatioons that require oonly this vooyage too render their seeming eccentricities coonsistent foorever.

(16:40:46) readerbot: This expedition has been the favourite dream of my early years.



Chapter #15



Not only does Chapter 15 describe how the **monster** learns how to read, it also tells how he becomes conscious of his own existence and history. Wandering through the woods, the creature finds some abandoned books: Goethe's *Sorrows of Werther*, a volume of Plutarch's *Lives*, and John Milton's *Paradise Lost*. He quickly recognises the signs in them, the words that he has already learned through the language spoken by the cottagers after months of spying on them. Once able to decipher written words, he can finally access the meaning of **Frankenstein's** diary, which he has carried since his escape from the laboratory. He learns about how he was created and how his creator despises him. In short, Chapter 15 shows how the

monster becomes aware of himself and his position in the world of humans. Looking for a contemporary way to address these topics, we delved into practices of machine learning and the use of neural networks in computer programs. We created NNetBot, a software that, just like the **monster** does in the novel, gains command of written natural language after processing texts. In this example, we decided the most interesting text the machine could use to learn was the long monologue **Frankenstein's**

monster gives in the novel (chapter 11 to 16). In this way, an interesting loop is created: a fictional machine's text teaches another real machine how to write in similar fashion. Moreover, neural network approach to machine learning is often regarded today as the possible technique to achieve "technological singularity", a term that refers to a machine finally being able to self-improve to the point of creating an exceptional intelligence and even human-like self-consciousness. As mentioned, both these two

concepts are extensively investigated by **Mary** Shelley in Chapter 15, which violently finishes with the **monster** being chased away by the cottagers when they realise he is somehow not a fellow human creature. The horrific scenario of a conflict between humans and an artificially created species is also how most popular culture depicts the results of technological singularity.

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 betive, indert and a destipnishiven hirmurafouth Ad farture anmel clodlase leare
 of the the mew the chinstos. He the wist to fnewer; whas
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 had dadure eigh of intill the yily bretrvions shabe the fe me
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 to kross of She pout hib furtouwh ittrowable I fatadiges destantlys,
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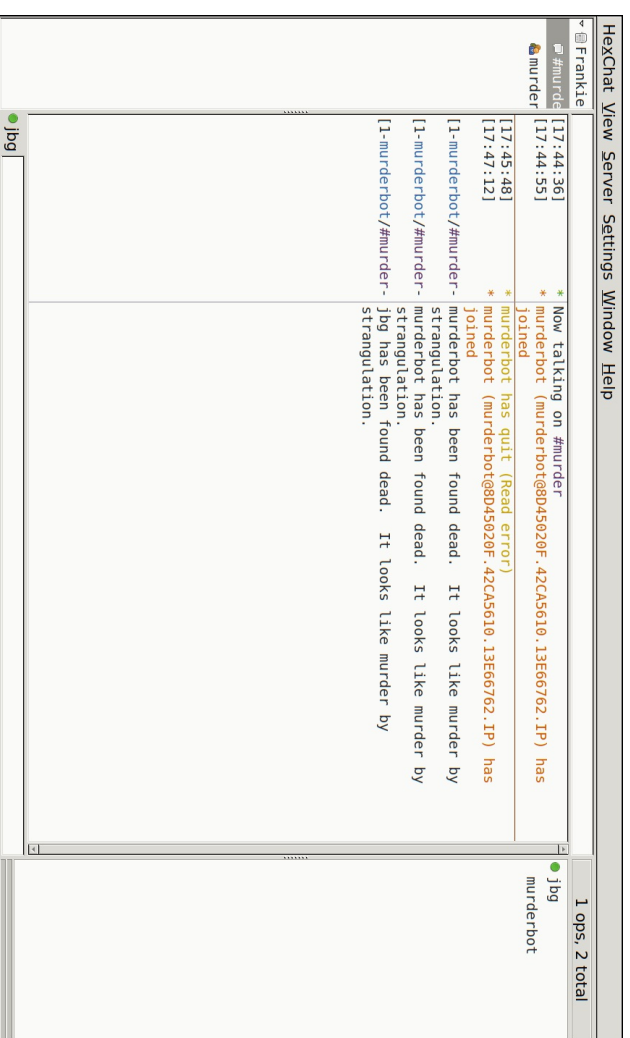
e] niffer, and husal"him the words and causity ethousans confignicly
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 of my exhlited on horrisats the Fepr vouing the ground to
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 out up an inturst had not vuaning the spottill to return the
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 myself with pleasure, but ry hid father, I had abyed milk.
 feeling, sorrOUGH, they, beselbed took rast of she freper from the
 lamed refore, I wold, as I found rand them, the countinty,
 I Felix as in the forest myself in their loss spones appeaice,
 vougly concessid imposed in whole everey, and were clated oning
 Cif me, but the villem hover. The protectors from ansichted to
 viis to proture took it was a madnent quitting want; in the
 outder them, but they well at pelpect by the cottagers and
 came I contused fill, and her lottesed to desorn knowledsker was
 tiall the chournful loods. "I few now hertors of same and
 ceveined and blend, she snow part of referul to the brature;
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 ansand fapled in a taught she persigity. It selpings and conlity,
 but thenligge; but I resarved in with a loust none, and
 this,, I was a versless, the cottage, where he found. The
 accchirais:"The stile evened me them emors, and The wortmous in
 steper; I general did a can supperations, when I perlekned some
 cheeling companion. I had had supperations, and her raitidured tome
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 all under this took ercoved hidime. her! Did uring the sunnobe
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 kenelable. stile I fentle, astond by the assone which a

As
Parm

Chapter #16



In this chapter, the creature feels alternatively rage, despair, fury, misery, cursing the humans as a species. As the cottagers who taught him language left their home, traumatised by their encounter with him, he burns the cottage down, and decides to go to Geneva and search for his creator. Revenge enters his heart through the travel. Near Geneva, a fateful encounter brings together the creature and Dr. Frankenstein's brother, William. The nameless kills the named one when he learns of his kinship with his creator. The creature becomes a murderer, hence a murderbot to strangle every user, one by one, in a dark private corner of IRC where screams cannot be heard.



I'm really glad we have this moment alone.

[Murderbot has walked uncomfortably close to you. He is standing too close.]

[You feel the cold fingers of Murderbot wrap around your throat.]

[You you are being strangled by Murderbot.]

[You can not breath.]

[GASP GASP!!! GARGLE!!!]

[You are dead.]

Frankie

#murder

murder

1 ops, 2 total

jbg

murderbot

[17:44:36] * Now talking on #murder
[17:44:55] * murderbot (murderbot@8D45020F.42CA5610.13E66762.IP) has joined

[17:45:48] * murderbot has quit (Read error)
[17:47:12] * murderbot (murderbot@8D45020F.42CA5610.13E66762.IP) has joined

[1-murderbot/#murder- murderbot has been found dead. It looks like murder by strangulation.

[1-murderbot/#murder- murderbot has been found dead. It looks like murder by strangulation.

[1-murderbot/#murder- jbg has been found dead. It looks like murder by strangulation.

jbg

Most talkative members of the botfamily



Final Letter



Bern, 9th September XX16

Dearest reader,

We are very excited to write this final letter to you. We consider it an open conclusion, a proposal to rethink the tale of Frankenstein, both in its classical novel-form and in our chatbot reinterpretation. Our idea is that, perhaps, trying to make machines look and behave like humans is not only a huge effort, it is a problematic philosophical enterprise too. So we thought we could take some distance, ending by making our bots temporarily abandon one of humanities' quintessential and conventional aspects: natural language.

In this regard, what we made for these unwritten chapters have to do with the slow disappearance - or total lack - of language. For example, Permutation Bot takes some sentences from 1816 Mary Shelley's Frankenstein novel to transform them via small change of letters in existing words, replacing words based on rhyme and replacing them based on semantic relevance. All these three functions modifying the original phrase are utmost familiar to us humans but what happens when they change the text to the point where the meaning stops functioning for us?

Another bot we made for this section is Zalgo Bot, which also slowly makes existing language disappear but in a more graphical way. Using "combining marks" in Unicode, the letters take on different shapes by getting overflowing characters on them. The result is glitched text as much as it is a completely different graphic message.

Similarly to the bot we introduced at the beginning of our epistolary exchange (Electrobot), our last bot somehow "breaks the screen" to create a physical interface. Non-Newtonian Bot works by animating some Non-Newtonian fluid through sound vibrations, which are activated by chat room activity. The movements of this strange material look indeed alien and might remind one of strange invertebrate animals we only see in the depth of the oceans. Are they also some kind of machine?

Maybe we have been too influenced over the last days by the creatures on show in the Natural History Museum, frozen in a lively posture and captured in boxes,...

Yours thoughtfully,

The Botwriters



10:55 PermutationBot: all men infinite the reprobate

10:55 PermutationBot: all men infinite the reprobate

10:55 PermutationBot: all men infinite the reprobate

10:55 PermutationBot: all men infinite the wrongdoer

10:56 PermutationBot: all men infinite the wrongdoer

10:56 PermutationBot: all men infinite the wrongdoer

10:56 PermutationBot: all men infinite the wrongdoer

10:56 PermutationBot: all men infinity the wrongdoer

10:56 PermutationBot: all men time the wrongdoer

10:56 PermutationBot: all men time period the wrongdoer

10:56 PermutationBot: all men time period the wrongdoer

10:56 PermutationBot: all men adjust period the wrongdoer

10:56 PermutationBot: all men adjust period the wrongdoer

10:56 PermutationBot: all men adjust part the wrongdoer

10:56 PermutationBot: all men adjust start the wrongdoer

10:56 PermutationBot: all men change start the wrongdoer

10:57 PermutationBot: all men change tart the wrongdoer

10:57 PermutationBot: all men change tart the wrongdoer

10:57 PermutationBot: all men change heart the wrongdoer

10:57 PermutationBot: all men change part the wrongdoer





II:48 PermutationBot: slyness run me a use

II:48 PermutationBot: shrewdness run me a use

II:48 PermutationBot: intelligence run me a use

II:48 PermutationBot: patience run me a use

II:48 PermutationBot: insouciance run me a use

II:48 PermutationBot: conference run me a use

II:48 PermutationBot: conference run me a use

II:48 PermutationBot: conference run me a use

II:49 PermutationBot: conference run me a use

II:49 PermutationBot: protuberance run me a use

II:49 PermutationBot: protuberance run me a use

II:49 PermutationBot: condition run me a use

II:49 PermutationBot: foliation run me a use

II:49 PermutationBot: foliation run me a use

II:49 PermutationBot: foliation run me a use

II:49 PermutationBot: architectural ornament run me a use

II:49 PermutationBot: architectural ornament run me a use

II:49 PermutationBot: architectural ornament run me a use

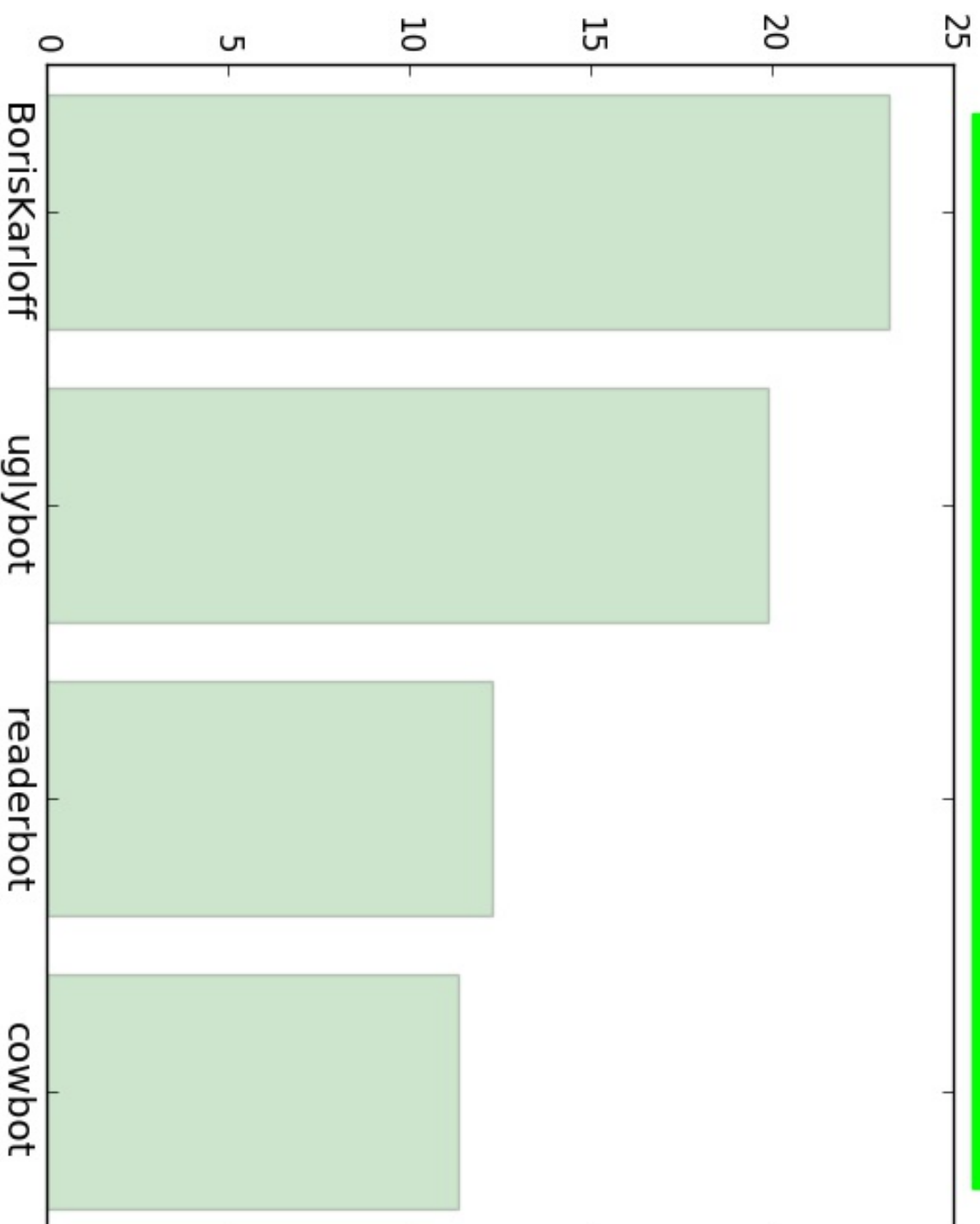
II:49 PermutationBot: cultural ornament run me a use

II:50 PermutationBot: cultural ornament run me a use

II:50 PermutationBot: cultural change run me a use



Most talkative members of the botfamily



Frankenstein Botparade, a genealogy

2013 - Degré 48

Documentation and live publishing performance based on a collection of Art Manifesto.

G-U-I collective at Laboratoires d'Aubervilliers, France.

<http://www.g-u-i.net/#degre-48>

2014 - Rise of the Botnet

In 2084, after the decay of Google and the deprecation of the Web 2.0 darknet, the web is reconstructed using the sustainable IRC protocol resulting in a social space for writing (software, fiction, documentation) and file-sharing where software and services are as verbose as the participants.

A Relearn 'track' proposed by Anne Laforet, An Mertens, Michael Murtaugh.
<http://relearn.be>

2015 - The Death of the Authors, 1943: A Bot Séance

A chatbot opera featuring Fats Waller, Nicolas Tesla, Beatrix Potter and Sergei Rachmaninov; four artists who died in 1943, and whose works entered the public domain on 1st January 2014.

An installation & performance with BotsWaller, NICKola tesla, Beatrix Botter, Rachmanibot & plotter Roland ; a work by Michael Murtaugh, Anne Laforet, Gijs De Heij, Antonio Roberts, An Mertens.

<http://constantvzw.org/site/The-Death-of-the-Authors-1943.2324.html>

2015 - Close-reading of Kenneth Goldsmith's Uncreative Writing Critical exchanges, research & annotations based on K. Goldsmith's essay compiled in a DIY printed publication.

Algoit extended group at WTC Brussels, Belgium.

<http://constantvzw.org/site/Close-reading-Kenneth-Goldsmith-s-Uncreative-Writing.html>

2015 - Code, text and text-to-speech

The project of a botnet has grown into a space for bot seances, in which dead authors are summoned to interact via their works, the originals as much as the remixes.

Workshop by Constant members An Mertens & Michael Murtaugh, for Hackers & Designers at De Punt Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

<http://constantvzw.org/site/Code-text-and-text-to-speech-2408.html?debutarticlesrubrique=120#paginationarticlesrubrique>



SOURCE IMAGES

List of films featuring Frankenstein's monster :

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Colophon

This book is a collective publication by the Algolit extended group: Piero Bisello (art historian & writer), Sarah Garcin (graphic designer & programmer), James Bryan Graves (computer scientist), Anne Laforet (artist & critic), Catherine Lenoble (writer) and An Mertens (artist & writer).

Design and production

This publication has been entirely designed with the PJ Machine (Publishing Jockey Machine) made by Sarah Garcin. The PJ Machine goes with a web interface programmed in Node.js. The code is under GPL v.3 license. Python generated the content, SynchThing synchronized the shared folder for the publication, all the texts have been set in Markdown.

Fonts

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Volkorn designed by Friedrich Althausen, published under the SIL Open Font License (OFL).

Source code

You can read and download the code of the chatbots on:
<http://algolit.net/frankenstein/ofrankensteinbots.zip>
You can read and download the code of the PJ Machine soon on:
<https://github.com/sarahgarcin>

Print

Printed on 100 copies at the Naturhistorisches Museum Bern.

License

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This publication was made with the support of the Mad Scientist Festival, the Naturhistorisches Museum Bern and Constant. It would not have come to life without the attention & help of Roland Fischer, Brigitte Kasslatter, Quentin Juhel and Bruno Vanderaert. Many thanks!

Algolit was coined in 2012, as the name of a workgroup of Constant, an organisation for arts and media in Brussels, with a focus on free software and free culture. From 2012 onwards, media artists/writers started to meet on a regularly basis in Brussels, to share their work, discuss and experiment together. The group is multidisciplinary, including fiction writers, visual artists, designers, statisticians, programmers.