

Keys of Fury – Type in Beyond the Scrolling Horizon

Raquel Meyers

artist

raquel@raquelmeyers.com

<http://www.raquelmeyers.com/>

We live in a time where hardware and software become obsolete before most of the users have learned how to use them, or they disappear into the obedience to standards that made us passive observers and consumers. Keys of Fury is brutalist storytelling about technology and keystrokes, and an artistic statement based on the concept, research and practice of KYBDslöjd, which I define as “drawing and crafting by type in”. It is based on the text-mode, where the grid is the framework and the character set is the instructions, using the Commodore 64 computer, teletext system, typewriter, mosaic and cross-stitch as media. I claim that old technologies are an unravelling force, a critique of the parasitic abuse of technology by postmodernity and capitalism, instead of a case for nostalgia. A new understanding, a message in an unknown language that we are still learning. Keys of Fury (Les Clefs de la Fureur) is also the name of the ‘Artist in Residency Le Shadok & Strasbourg European Fantastic Film Festival’ exhibition, curated by Esté-elle Dalleu and Arnaud Reeb in September 2016.

Keywords: Commodore 64, teletext, slöjd, demoscene

I am ready to burn. I am ready to shine. No fear, just text. You will see the mistakes and the wonders. Nothing is to be hidden, everything is to be typed. Brutality itself. Because type in is the noise of my ♥.

In 2010 I started to research the concept and formats of the text-mode, a computer display mode in which content is internally represented in terms of characters rather than individual pixels. In collaboration with Goto80, we started the Tumblr site called <http://text-mode.tumblr.com> (2012–2014), where we collected all kinds of media related with

the term. But my interest was not only on art research: it was, as well, a starting point for my own epistemological practice. As Mersch and Radosh (2015) pointed out:

Like the process of writing, it has no end, it collapses in on itself and despairs of ever achieving closure. The artistic experiment has no utilitarian result. It is content with the adventure of finding the paths that can taken (*meta hodos*), and their endless labyrinthine branches are a source equally of agony and enjoyment.

I had been working with pixels since 2004 to create animations and designs, but it was just the beginning of the lo-fi adventure. When I changed pixels to characters, the joy of the text-mode began. The path I was looking for. The origin of *KYBDslöjd*, which stands for keyboard dexterity.

To be more precise, for drawing and crafting by typing, using just a character set provided, in this case, by the Commodore 64 computer, the teletext system, and typewriters. *KYBD* is the acronym for keyboard, on which a drawing or an animation is typed in by using different keystrokes for each mark on the screen or the paper. *Slöjd* means dexterity or skill. A complete method of craft stored in text. *KYBDslöjd* uses keys, references and applied media instead of Manovich's (2010) concept of new media, "When new media objects are created on computers, they originate in numerical form. But many new media objects are converted from various forms of old media." The following sections define the whole spectrum of what it is and what it stands for. They are: 'Slöjd', 'Demoscene and PETSCII', 'Teletext', 'Brutalism', 'Typewriter, Cross-Stitch and Mosaic', 'The Language', 'Myopia for the Future' and 'Talk Is Cheap'.

Slöjd

Slöjd is a Scandinavian system of handicraft-based education from the nineteenth century. Hoffman & Salomon (1982) noted on the origin of the word:

The word Sloyd (Swedish, *Slöjd*) is derived from the Icelandic, and means dexterity or skill. In old Swedish, we find the adjective *slög* (artistic or skillful). In the Low German dialect, the word *Klütern* has a similar signification.

They also wrote about handicrafts' need for attention, physical powers and perseverance, which are in clear contrast to the basic, fast knowledge that creates emulation of a skill, of art. Handicraft is dependent on bodily labor through the dexterity of the hand and requires training and cultivation of our bodies and our senses:

Slöjd has for its aims, as a means of formal instruction-to instil a love for work in general; to create a respect for rough, honest bodily labor; to develop self-reliance and independence; to train to habits of order, exactness, cleanliness, and neatness; to teach habits of attention, industry, and perseverance; to promote the development of the physical powers; to train the eye to the sense of form, and to cultivate the dexterity of the hand. (Hoffman & Salomon 1892)

But *slöjd* was also gender restricted, all forms were not accessible to everyone. The system of *slöjd* “established manual schools in which spinning, sewing, and weaving were taught to girls, wood-work to boys, and gardening to both”, asserted Hoffman & Salomon (1892). Nowadays these definitions are not as binding as they were in the past, but they still have a strong effect on the Scandinavian society, close to what Rodríguez Carrión (2013) declared:

The word “craft” brings to memory the “handmade” object. It is generally associated with manual dexterity, skilled artistry, and the art of making (process), but can also express cultural identity (such as folk art) and past traditions.

Considering that I did not grow up in the Scandinavian system, I do not have the same relation with the word as they do. Bauman (2000) noted: “To create (and so also to discover) always means breaking a rule; following a rule is mere routine, more of the same - not an act of creation.” In my opinion, nowadays the definition of *slöjd* is connected to what Dormer (1997b) wrote: “It is not craft as ‘handcraft’ that defines contemporary craftsmanship: it is craft as knowledge that empowers a maker to take charge (assume control or responsibility) of technology.” Responsibility rather than control, or even better, commitment. As Sennett (2008) pointed out: “The craftsman represents the special human condition of being engaged.”

In the long battle between art and crafts, low and high status, *slöjd* opens up an opportunity to take back the concepts as honest and rough labor, like the statement by Walter Gropius in the Programme of the Staatliches Bauhaus in Weimar 1919 (quoted by Conrads 1970): “Let us then create a new guild of craftsmen without the class distinctions that raise an arrogant barrier between craftsman and artist.” A mixed medium between craft and technology. A challenge, as Dormer (1997b) noted, “Computer technology now provides craft with its most serious philosophical and practical challenges.”

Demoscene and PETSCII

George Borzyskowski (2000) defines demoscene as: “[...] the subculture which survives on the basis of liberty and cooperation in the absence of coercive or cohesive structural influence”, and presents an overview of the ‘demo’ genre form in terms of function and audio visual syntax. In regard to *demos*, Borzyskowski continued:

Demos are not made without a cost. The amount of time, patience, knowledge and skill development required are far from trivial. To make a competent production in this genre, graphic, musical and programming ability must be integrated and the work can occupy from a few hours for an intro by a veteran group, to several weeks or months for a major demo release, as is often recollected in included texts.

*AcidT** is my C64 demoscener name, and my first demoparty was *Datastorm* in February 2011, Gothenburg, where I started to work with PETSCII, one of the key media of *KYBDslöjd*. I learned the software and drawing technique at several demoparties along the years. PETSCII, also known as CBM ASCII, is the character set used in Commodore Business Machines’ (CBM) 8-bit home computers, starting with the PET from 1977 and including the VIC-20, C-64, CBM-II, Plus/4, C-16, C-116 and C-128. The character set was largely designed by Leonard Tramiel and PET designer Chuck Peddle.

Rodríguez Carrión (2013) noted:

We are seeing a new craft-resurgence in the figure of the digital craftsman within the subculture of hacking and tinkering (crafting) the algorithm (code) or the conception of parametric constrains. These computer enthusiasts are passionately pushing the

boundaries of their work and are determined to investigate design boundaries within the virtual world.

This could also be related to Barbrook and Pit Schultz, who in their 1997 ‘Digital Artisans Manifesto’ propose the concept of a ‘digital artisan’, whose autonomous work is made possible in the manner of past craft workers (quoted in Cox 2010).

KYBDslöjd uses a particular way of working with keystrokes and PETSCII on the Commodore 64 with software developed by Mathman (Johan Kotlinski) called *Nop*. The program consists of two parts: a block of data statements containing the instructions where all the keystrokes are recorded and a section of code which reads in the data and outputs it as an animation and speeds it up. There is no menu, so all the instructions, like color, position and character shape, are typed on the keyboard. Only a black screen with just a blinking character is waiting for you to do something. This is the starting point, like a blank sheet where you are alone and no one else is to blame. Not even the technology for being *obsolete*. Sennett (2008) noted: “Getting better at using tools comes to us, in part, when the tools challenge us, and this challenge often occurs just because the tools are not fit-for-purpose.” In *KYBDslöjd*, hardware and software are a challenge, they are not decorations or sources of nostalgia. There is a narrative, a dialogue with the technology. I use the screen as a canvas, a rectilinear grid on which, one keystroke at a time, I build graphics and animations character by character, like crafting or the typewriter technique as Saper (2009) described: “In terms of the procedures to make your own typewriter poem, you should know at the outset that you cannot make corrections, so any unintended strikes force the artist to start over.”

It seems obvious to me how the notion of “skillfully executed” applies to the demoscene and *KYBDslöjd*, building the connection with craft and the link to typewriter art. The canvas and the characters are common to all, with the exception of hardware and software. As Saper (2009) noted:

Instead of looking to painting, drawing, or even typesetting as an analogy for typewriter poetry, one might look to a traditional folk art, embroidery on canvas, because both use a rectilinear grid on which to build the design one keystroke or stitch at a time.

Alan Riddell (1975) agreed, “One traditional craft has a similarity to typewriter work: embroidery on canvas. This has a rectilinear grid on which the design is built up one stitch at a time.” You cannot make corrections, so any unintended strokes force you to start all over again. This software is not meant for generative graphics. One special feature is that you can scroll up, down, right and left. As Hawking (1988) pointed out, “Imaginary time is indistinguishable from directions in space.” But when you go backward, the black blankness appears again. What you do is what you get. Straightforward. No shortcuts.

“The solitude of the draughtsman before the page is a way of understanding life... Enjoying the creative process is a unique privilege of the author. A pleasure-almost-exclusive for which it is worth to lose oneself”, as stated by Crespo (2015). I lose myself and I type.

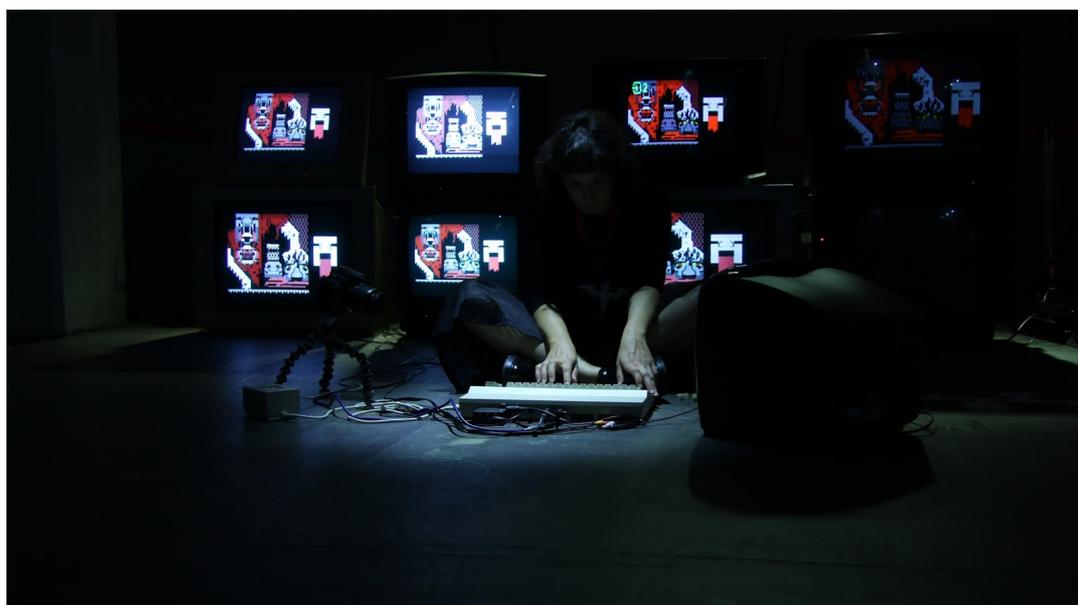


Figure 1. *Keys of Fury: Type in Beyond the Scrolling Horizon* (Le Shadok + FEFFS Strasbourg, 2016). Courtesy of E.P. Baron.

Teletext

In 2016 I wrote a chapter called “Is it Just Text?” in the anthology *Teletext in Europe: From the Analog to the Digital Era*, edited by Hallvard Moe and Hilde Van den Bulck. The chapter looked at teletext from the perspective of an artist and of its artistic value:

It is argued that teletext is not just news on demand provided by television networks or a character set, and that it is about much more than nostalgia, profit, constraints, domesticity or zombie technology stored in a garage, because teletext performs in ways we have not fully designed it for and not yet fully understood. (Meyers 2016)

“Basically, what teletext did was make it possible to transmit digital text and graphics in color simultaneously with normal television programming... The viewer simply pushed a button on a remote keypad to switch from the network or locally originated video program to the main menu screen of the teletext service”, noted Graziplene (2000). By definition:

Teletext is a news and information service in the form of text and graphics, transmitted using the spare capacity of existing television channels to televisions with appropriate receivers. What the viewer sees on the screen of his teletext TV is a page of characters, 40 in a row, 20–24 rows, 800–960 characters per page. These characters can be presented in a limited number of colours, including coloured backgrounds, and the character set contains all the letters of the alphabet (both uppercase and lowercase), numbers, punctuation marks, special symbols, and graphics. (Meyers 2016)

Teletext is a means of building text and simple geometric shapes from mosaic blocks, and the second key media in *KYBDslöjd*. In 2011, when I got in touch with the teletext engineer Peter Kwan, who had developed an open source USB teletext inserter (VBIT), we started to work together in a long-term project for teletext live visuals. Teletext is not a physical object; it is the dark band dividing pictures horizontally on the television screen, used by the PAL system. Vertical blanking interval lines are like REM (rapid eye movement) saccades, a door to unlock the imagination. In the aforementioned chapter “I propose to look at teletext as techne, i.e. as knowledge of techniques and knowledge of a skillful or artful use” (Meyers 2016).

Teletext itself is free, a free technology. Business interest from television broadcast companies is long gone thanks to the internet – hobbyists took over as in the late 1970s. “The earliest users were home electronics enthusiasts who had built their own decoder units as add-ons to their television receivers using plans published in a popular electronics and

wireless hobbyists' magazine”, as Graziplene (2000) pointed out. Nowadays you can create your own teletext inserter with a Raspberry Pi and make your own teletext pages with an open source software called *edit.tf*, created by Simon Rawles. In late February 2017, at the “Block Party 2017: Teletext is the Future” event held at the Centre for Computing History in Cambridge, Dan Farrimond, Kieran H.J. Connell, Jason Robertson, Peter Kwan, Carl Attrill, Peter Fagan, Julian Brown, Alistair Cree, Steve Horsley, Simon Rawles and myself began to work as a collective to combine our skills, practice and knowledge with a technology that still has much to say. As Sennett (2008) claimed: “In technology, as in art, the probing craftsman does more than encounter mess; he or she creates it as a means of understanding working procedures.” Teletext, as well as PETSCII, become arousing tools that awaken the challenge between craft and technology. The future is not obsolete.

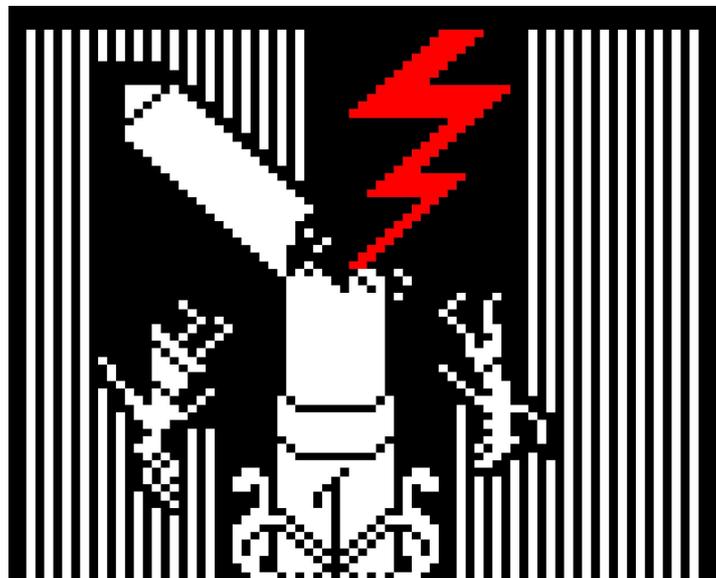


Figure 2. *Thread of Fate* (2014). Award: Teletext Art Achievement Award / International Teletext Art Festival ITAF 2014, Berlin, DE.

Brutalism

As Yuill (2004) wrote:

Brutalism, more properly known as "New Brutalism" in its heyday, is arguably one of the most unpopular and least understood architectural styles of the 20th Century. It is mostly associated with rough-cast concrete buildings where its name is linked with the "beton brut" casting technique used by Le Corbusier.

I claimed that *KYBDslöjd* is brutality itself. The character set, provided by PETSCII and teletext, is used unadorned and rough cast, like concrete, which connects it to the Brutalist architecture. Both capture the spirit of their time and contradictions, like in the novel *High-rise* by Ballard (1975): “An architecture designed for war, on the unconscious level if no other.” – an uncontrollable force. A message in an unknown language, which reveals what it is and what it does without adornment. Brutalism has the unfortunate reputation of evoking a raw dystopia, and old technologies, in general, easily become “objects of nostalgia”. But nostalgic, retro, obsolete or limited are rhetoric qualities earned by constant repetition. Barthes (1989) observed: “Rhetoric, grandiose effort of an entire culture to analyze and classify the forms of speech, to render the world of language intelligible.”

But, most of the time, rhetoric is used to persuade rather than to argue. As Muckelbauer (2008) pointed out, “First, because of rhetoric’s traditional concern for persuasion (rather than communication), it has been intimately involved with questions of force rather than questions of signification or meaning.” A supplement where nothing else can be said. Hila Becher declared: “[Brutal architecture] is honest, it is functional, and reflects what it does. That’s why we like it.” *KYBDslöjd* and Brutalism are alike because their raw aspect and unpretentious honesty are ethical rather than aesthetic. Allison and Peter Smithson claimed that “up to now brutalism has been discussed stylistically, whereas its essence is ethical”. Both quotes appeared in the book *This brutal world* (Chadwick 2016). Yuill (2004) went even further:

It would be more precise to state that they are machines capable of manipulating binary patterns which simulate aspects of human mathematics. It is in those areas of coding that deal directly with this pattern-making process that we encounter a kind of Brutalism.

The rawness of old technologies made *KYBDslöjd* a brutal medium.

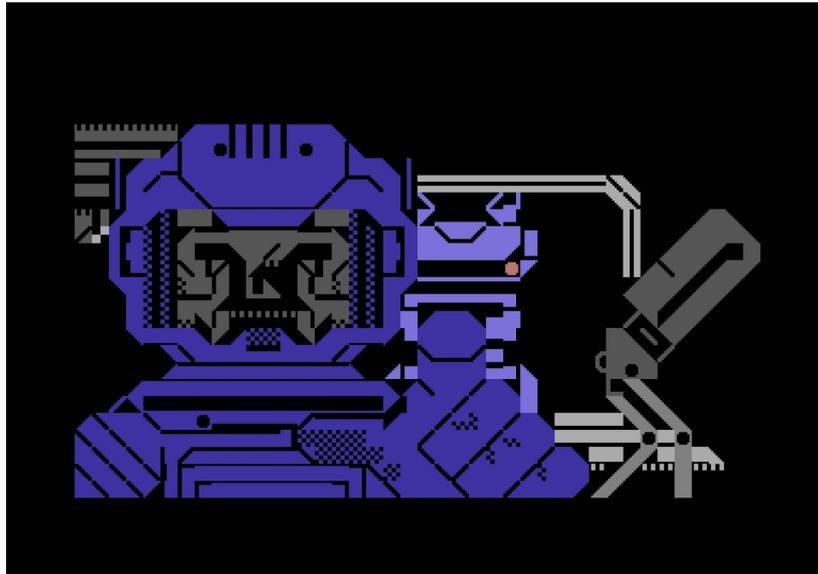


Figure 3. *Vladijenk II* (The corroded mainframe at Tartarus edition) (2015).

Typewriter, Cross-Stitch and Mosaic

Typewriter is a reference medium in *KYBDslöjd*, while cross-stitch and mosaic are media applied from PETSCII and Teletext. “Although pictures have been ‘drawn’ on typewriters for many years in the past, a written pattern for reproducing a picture is something entirely new. They can also be reproduced on many types of computer”, noted Neill (1982) on the program for the Commodore PET micro, written by Nick Higham, which produced a printout of a Prince Charles portrait, included in the book.

I started to work with typewriters with the project *Secretary Part I* (2014) and *Noise My Txt* (2016). Both are live ‘type in’ performances that mixed the Commodore 64 and typewriter. I have been using typewriter as an ironic link to the *secretary* subject. For me the word *secretary* has more to do with the late medieval English meaning, “person entrusted with a secret”, rather than the “female work-force”, which originated at the end of the nineteenth century, as mentioned by Riddell (1975): “More than taking the drudgery from writing, it has transformed business and created the largest female workforce in history, the monstrous regiment of typists.” The typewriter “was instrumental to the emancipation of women” noted Tullett (2014). Typewriter is the machine of modernity and standardization, the reference media whose development “broke the male hegemony in text production and thus completed our modern trinity of the Real, the Imaginary and the Symbolic”, quoting Kittler (2013).

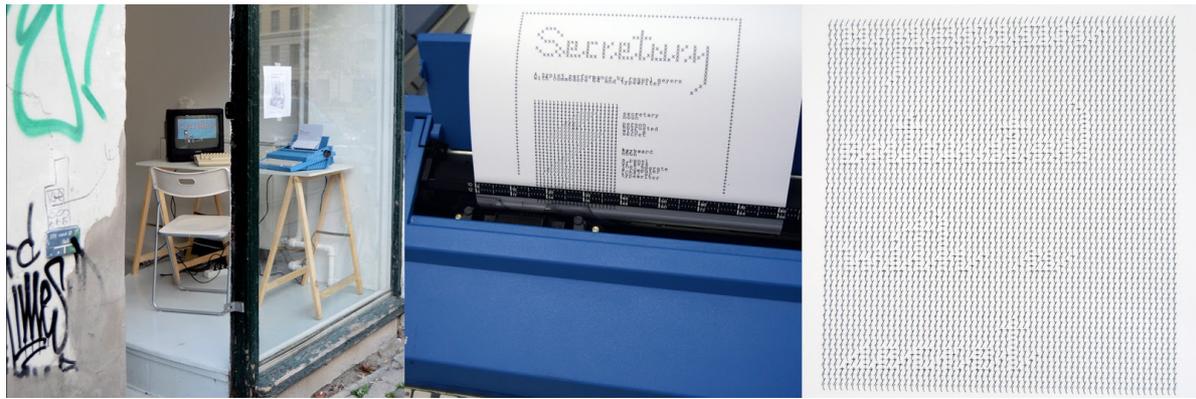


Figure 4. *Secretary Part I*. TYPE IN workshop & exhibition (LOVELACE + C4, Copenhagen, 2014).

Cross-stitch refers to counted-thread embroidery and is a medium applied from teletext in *KYBDslöjd*. A craft that uses the X-shaped stitches in a tiled, raster-like pattern to form a teletext page rather than a picture. It takes *KYBDslöjd* out of the screen and makes it analog. The example below is a teletext page called *Monster Girl* (2015) selected for the Museum of Teletext Art (MUTA), broadcast on the Finnish teletext Yle page 805 and at Der Teletext im Ersten / MUTA im ARD Text pages 884–5 (2016).

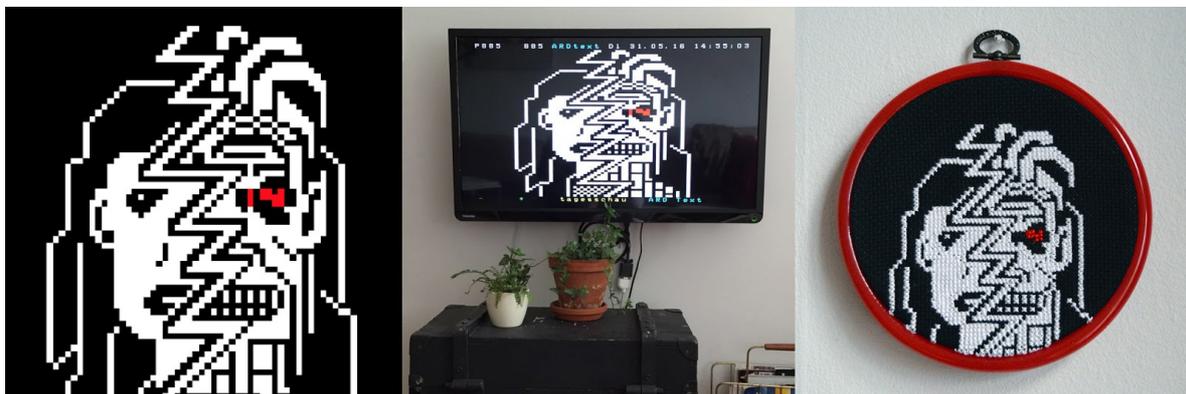


Figure 5. *Monster Girl* / *.TTV-file. (MUTA im ARD Text, 2015). *Monster Girl*, cross-stitch (2016).

During the residence at Le Shadok, Strasbourg, in September 2016, I laser cut several text characters from the Commodore 64 character set into acrylic (PMMA) objects. A PETSCII drawing was produced by arranging together the PMMA pieces. The result was a mosaic built off-the-grid, shown at the exhibition *Keys of Fury (Les Clefs de la Fureur)*. Mosaic became a medium applied from PETSCII in *KYBDslöjd*.



Figure 6. PETSCII mosaic (Keys of Fury / Le Shadok + FEFFS Strasbourg, 2016).

As well as with the mosaic, I made several rubber stamps with some of the Commodore 64 characters. During a workshop I conducted at Campbelltown Arts Centre in March 2017, the participants used the PETSCII stamps to create patterns and designs – another example of applied media in *KYBDslöjd*.

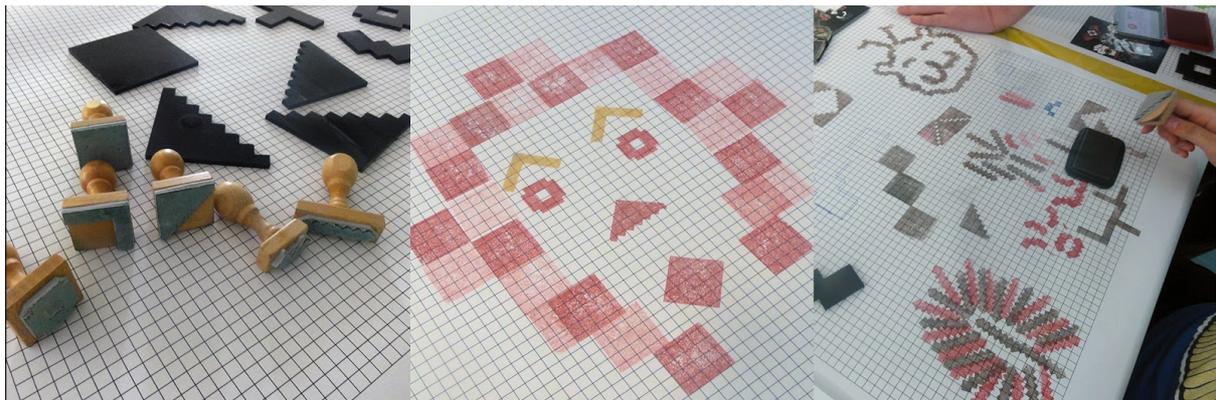


Figure 7. *KYBDslöjd* workshop (Campbelltown Arts Centre, 2017).

Lord (2014) noted: “Ancient Greek potters saw the clay bodies of their vessels as surfaces that could be painted initially with geometric patterns, but then increasingly with imaginative narratives.” The geometric patterns included in the Commodore 64 character set do the same. It is how you connect them together in an additive way, where one character follows the other, that builds the imaginary using the grid or off-the-grid canvas.

PETSCII and teletext give redundancy and practice economy in construction, like Arnheim (1971) observed on a child's drawing that represented a skyscraper:

He has recognized the redundancy of the window pattern and has practiced economy by a shortcut in communication. If his procedure strikes us as amusing, it is because we realize that to display structure to the eyes is the very purpose of a picture. [...] In dealing with structure, as is constantly done in the arts, regularity of form is not redundancy. It does not diminish information and thereby diminish order.

The shape of the characters and how they are combined is like crafting, but in the sense of how Greenhalgh points out that the phrase “‘the craft’ had (and still retains) the meaning of power and secret knowledge”, as cited by Dormer (1997a). Imagination is shaped into characters, a new language to be learned. Based on what Saussure (1959) said: “Language is a system that has its own arrangement.”

The Language

KYBDslöjd is not only a type in method, but also a system of text characters (signs). It is a language. Saussure (1959) noted: “Language is a system of signs that express ideas, and is therefore comparable to a system of writing, the alphabet of deaf-mutes, symbolic rites, polite formulas, military signals, etc.” Its arrangement uses them as instructions on the grid. “The grid as a controlling principle in the form we know it today still remained to be invented”, noted Müller-Brockmann (2008). The grid is the *ethos*, the system of order. The character set is the narrative for technical knowledge. Like Rodríguez Carrión (2013) describes:

In the context of the digital medium, craft exploration refers to the circumstance where designers apply specific technical knowledge (skill) in an undetermined and open exploration of form, constrains, and limitations that they establish to guide the form generation that is their unique expression.

It is not arbitrary that part of the character set is based on basic geometrical shapes. As Frutiger (1989) pointed out:

It appears from archaeological evidence that humankind has an innate feeling for geometry. Traces of primary signs of the same form are found in many regions of

earth, and it may be assumed that they expressed similar meanings for the most varied races at widely different times. This survey is deliberately restricted to a small number of characteristic figures: the square, triangle, and circle among the closed figures; the cross and arrow among the open ones.

The character set is now the property of everyone, control over it is lost. In the case of Teletext, VBI is on the PAL signal, and in the case of PETSCII, Commodore International, defunct in 1994. As Saussure (1959) noted:

The prescriptions of codes, religious rites, nautical signals, etc., involve only a certain number of individuals simultaneously and then only during a limited period of time; in language, on the contrary, everyone participates at all times, and that is why it is constantly being influenced by all.

It is a straightforward language based on keystrokes. Like in ‘tangram’, you have to use your imagination to assemble the characters. Frutiger (1989) stated:

We form one complete sign from the basic signs of the square, triangle, circle, and cross already mentioned in our considerations. This piling up of the different elements produces such a complex and opaque expression that it can no longer be called a sign, but rather a schema with thousands of possibilities.

It is not a task of management or boredom. On the 50th anniversary of BASIC, in the article *Thank you, Basic: Developers remember 50 years of creative coding* (The Guardian, 2014), Bellis claimed “It felt like magic, learning a secret code”.

At this point it is important to admit that I am just a mediator, even if I learnt the basics of the (not so) secret code. As Barthes (1977) put it: “In ethnographic societies the responsibility for a narrative is never assumed by a person but by a mediator, shaman or relator whose ‘performance’ – the mastery of the narrative code – may possibly be admired but never his ‘genius’.” I am a *KYBDslöjd* shaman, a performer who fights the absence of meaning in emerging media technology.

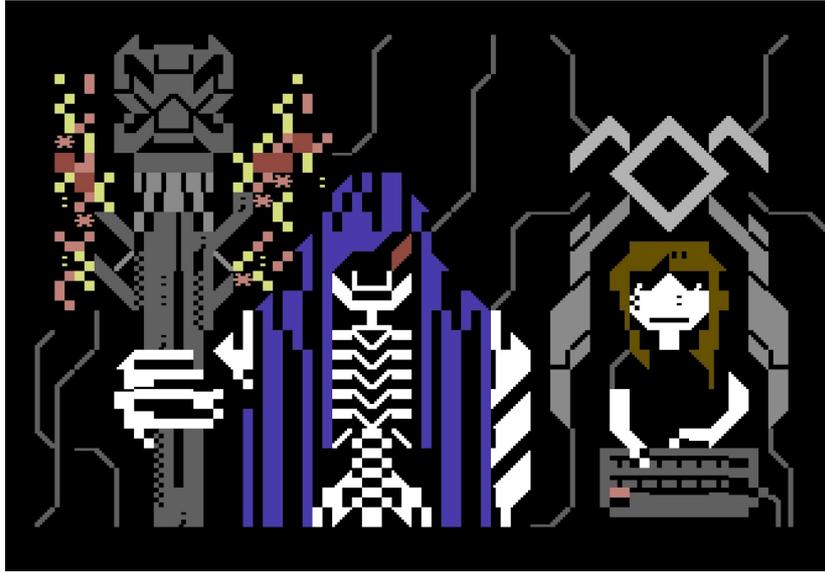


Figure 8. *Keys of Fury* (2016).

Myopia for the Future

THIS IS A STORY OF THE FUTURE – NOT THE FUTURE OF SPACE SHIPS
AND MEN FROM OTHER PLANETS – BUT THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE

Written prologue for Michael Anderson's film *1984* (1956).

The hypersensitivity to reward in decision-making has been termed by Damasio (2006) as “myopia for the future”. To be “oblivious to the consequences of their actions and guided only by immediate prospects”, argued Bechara et al. (1994). Some political scientists apply this concept to society as the tendency to choose that which rewards us now, regardless of the damage it may cause in the long run. I claim that immediate satisfaction can be applied to technology as well.

We hunt and are hunted by fear in our cellphones. Quoting Steyerl (2012): “Your life condenses into an object in the palm of your hand, ready to be slammed into a wall and still grinning at you, shattered, dictating deadlines, recording, interrupting.” As well as Leader (2016): “People complain of being too attached to their phones and tablets, as if their hands just can’t stop touching them. The hand, symbol of human agency and ownership, is also a part of ourselves that escapes us.” We are trapped between autonomy and self-determination. Fuck the long run! Long live myopia for the future!

We live in a time where modern technology does not seem to challenge us, or as Svendsen (2005) noted: “The problem is that modern technology more and more makes us passive observers and consumers, and less and less active players. This gives us a meaning deficit.” Convenience is king and apathy arises. He also mentioned that

Technology involves the dematerialization of the world, where things disappear into pure functionality. We have long since passed a stage where we could keep track of technology. We scurry along behind, as is perhaps particularly clear in IT, where hardware and software have always become obsolete before most of the users have learned how to use them.

There is no quest for knowledge and imagination, only a new order of speed, escape and passivity.

There is a misconception in regard to old technologies, thanks to media archaeology and Bruce Sterling's *Dead Media Project* (1995). They are not “unrealized dead media” or “a recurring pattern of media activity is the use of electronic or technological media to bridge the divide between the living and the dead”, as claimed by Huhtamo and Parikka (2011). They are not zombies to be reanimated or kept stored, they are meant to be used. They are not souvenirs from the past or a nostalgic cliché. As Graburn (1979) pointed out: “Souvenir gift objects can become visual clichés, conforming to the consumer’s popular misconceptions.”

We are now in a future invention nightmare originating from the late 1970s’ computer utopias in California and their propaganda on how computer networks could create order in society shaped by neoliberal wisdom. Simply put, economy is the king. Anything that goes against it must be neutralized (destroyed). Bauman (2007) emphasized that

Progress, once the most extreme manifestation of radical optimism and a promise of universally shared and lasting happiness, has moved all the way to the opposite, dystopian and fatalistic pole of anticipation. [...] Instead of great expectations and sweet dreams, 'progress' evokes an insomnia full of nightmares of 'being left behind' – of missing the train, or falling out of the window of a fast accelerating vehicle.

When I started to work with old technologies in late 2010, it was clear to me that it was a responsibility, not an aesthetic choice, not a pursuit of self-identity, not an ego trip, not an idle occupation to pass time. It is an unrevealed force, which tests me every time and it has always been there. I just did not know the language, so I learned it. It makes me free and my imagination awakes like an earthquake. There are no constraints, only possibilities. I am free and I get out of the “fast accelerating vehicle”, to quote Bauman.

The distorted and oversimplified vision of freedom does not help either. “If you allow individuals too much freedom you will get anarchy”, *All Watched Over by Machines of Loving Grace* (2011). But anarchism is not this egoistic primitive concept of doing what you want no matter what, like Ayn Rand’s libertarian vision and rational/ethical egoism that doomed us to the Californian ideology. For an anarchist as Daniel Guerin, as noted by Chomsky (2005) “freedom is not an abstract philosophical concept, but the vital concrete possibility for every human being to bring to full development all the powers, capacities, and talents with which nature has endowed him, and turn them to social account.” Virilio (2012) goes even further:

Speed, the cult of speed, is the propaganda of progress. The problem is that progress has become contaminated with its propaganda. The computer bomb exploded progress in its materiality, its substance in the sense of reality, geopolitics, temporal relationships, rhythm.

It does not matter what we do. We retreat and do not hope for the future. Curtis rubbed salt in the wound with *HyperNormalisation* (2016):

Even those who thought they were attacking the system, the radicals, the artists, the musicians and the whole counter-culture, actually become part of the trickery. Because they too, are retreated into the make belief world which is why the opposition has no effect and nothing ever changes.

I do not retreat. I am wearing my glasses. I use old and free technologies. I do *KYBDslöjd*.



Figure 9. *Myopia for the Future* (2016).

Talk Is Cheap

Taken from Bold's song from the album *Speak Out* (1988). Bold is a late 1980s' New York youth crew hardcore band. I was born in 1977, the year of punk, but also as Steyerl (2012) noted: "In 1977, human history reached a turning point. Heroes died, or, more accurately, they disappeared. They were not killed by the foes of heroism, but were transferred to another dimension, dissolved, transformed into ghosts." The DIY and hardcore scene is part of my background. Photocopies, collage and analog photography, not computers. That is why I have no nostalgia for old technology – I never had it. When people were at home doing data and learning machinery, I was screaming in a basement with my band or lost in a polluted town with a tripod and a 35mm camera on B exposure. In my opinion, the 1980s were wild and the 1990s sober-minded, at least in Spain. I grew up surrounded by Hammer Horror Monsters and "fake advertising spots meant to ridicule real ads and propose alternatives to the consumer society" (Rico 2003). One of the several spots declared: "Use the machine, don't be the machine." This idea stuck in my mind and never left. Not only as an anti-capitalist, anti-consumerist and anti-authoritarian message, but as a quest for freedom through knowledge, imagination and creativity (Meyers 2016).

To borrow Cohen's (1996) terms, "we live in a time of monsters". But these monsters do not hunt our imagination anymore. "We are all hunters now, or told to be hunters and called or compelled to act as hunters do, on penalty of eviction from hunting, if not (perish the

thought!) of relegation to the ranks of the game”, noted Bauman (2007). We are the hunters, the monsters, the zombies. Not the technology. “Your shell is hollow, so am I”, from *Under The Surface (Neurosis, Times Of Grace, 1999)*, roars in my head. There is a void in front of us and we do not want to look inside. We keep avoiding it. At some point, it will eat us once and for all. It is irremediable. My modest social account to stand against it is my artisan imagination and *KYBDslöjd*. As pointed out by Gordon (2016): “It’s like the famous distinction between art and craft: Art, and wildness, and pushing against the edges, is a male thing. Craft, and control, and polish, is for women.” I will ride and stand along the “male-genius-artist behavior” (Steyerl 2012), wild and free. Fighting with the only weapon I have, my work, even if I fail or burn. I will rise from the ashes because accommodation and domestication are not my place. Type in Beyond the Scrolling Horizon. The *Keys of Fury*. The disobedience.

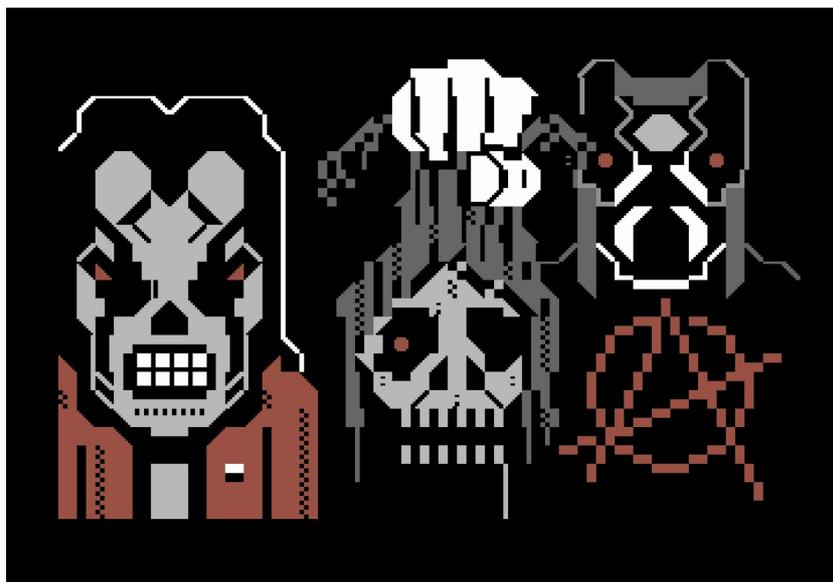


Figure 10. *Ambush* aka. *Acecho* (2016).

Conclusion: What the Hell for?

Quoting the writer (*Stalker*, 1979), “A man writes because he is tormented, because he doubts. He needs to constantly prove to himself and the others that he’s worth something. And if I know for sure that I’m a genius? Why write then? What the hell for?”

Keys of Fury is an artistic statement about *KYBDslöjd*, which leaves and transverses the discourse of old technologies as nostalgic–retro–dead media–archive for the future. They are

not a souvenir from the past for purely aesthetic amusement. It is brutalist storytelling about technology and keystrokes, where I am merely a narrator who builds imaginary on and off the grid, shaped in text characters raw and unadorned. A type in artisan, a *secretary* entrusted with a *secret* code, a brutal language without CTRL-Z I keep learning. A tacit knowledge where there is no immediate satisfaction or gratifying closure. An open-ended form of defiance against the unbearable boredom and simplicity that reassure us behind our screens.

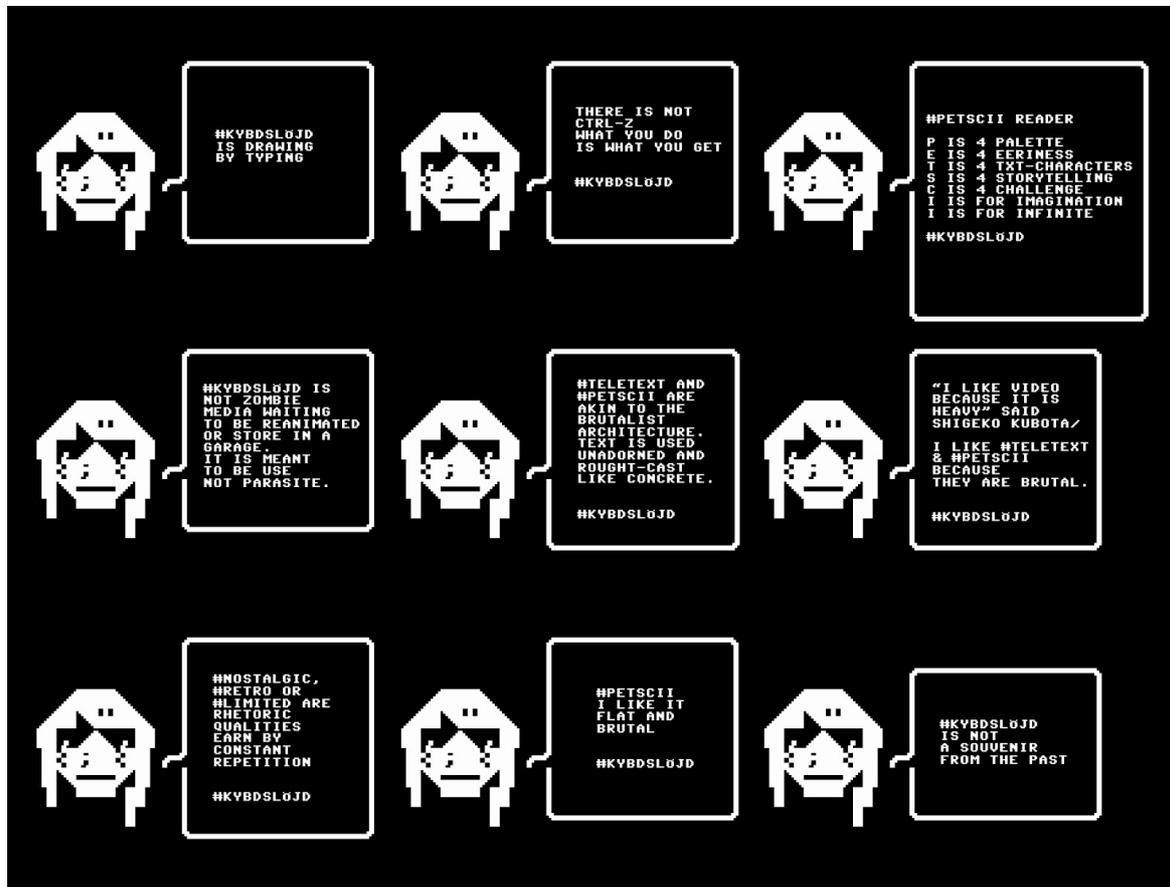


Figure 11. *KYBDslöjd* visual essay (2016).



Figure 12. Poster, *Keys of Fury: Type in Beyond the Scrolling Horizon* (Le Shadok + FEFFS Strasbourg, 2016).

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