

Hanna Larva

ku 'kui; nagu; et'; *kus* 'kus'; *kunā* 'millal'; *kui* 'kuidas; kuigi'

ku 'kui'; *kuza* 'kus', *kumpa* 'kumb'

kuiin, *kun* 'kui'; *kuka* 'kes', *kuten* 'nagu', *kumpi* 'kumb'

ku, *kui* 'kui', *kus* 'kus', *kumba* 'kumb; kes, mis'

kui 'kuidas; kui, nagu'ku, *kun* 'kui'; *kui* 'kui, nagu'; *kus* 'kus'

ku 'kui'; *kus* 'kus', *kut* 'kuidas'

go 'kui; nagu'

koda 'kuidas; kui'

koda 'kuidas'

kuže 'kuidas'; *kuš* 'kuhu'

ku 'kui'

kod, *koda* 'kuidas'

χōj 'kes'; χon 'millal'

χōηka 'kes'; χūn 'kui; millal'; χot 'kuskil; kuidagi; midagi'

hogy 'kuidas'; *hol* 'kus'

χúna 'kus'; χúrka 'kes, milline'

kuna 'millal'

kuniə 'mis, milline, kes'; *kuo* 'kui'; *kuni* 'kuhu'

kun 'kui'; *kuti* 'kes'; *kū* 'kuhu'

kojət 'milline'; *kəda* 'kuidas'; *kāmən* 'millal'

kuj 'kust'¹

¹ The Estonian word for "if", *kui*, comes from a Uralic root. Here we see its variations in 22 different Uralic languages, among them Votic, Udmurt, Komi, Nenets and Kamassian, together with a translation into Estonian. The text is an extension of Joana Chicau's self-copying work, which plays on the word "if". The above makes reference to the process of autopoiesis that shapes language.

Text:

Kaljo

Artist:

Chicau

Magdalena

In a “phy-gital” performance, IT artist Joana combines poetry, coding and choreography, exploring the meaning of copying in the context of freeware culture. The website she has developed produces text, which, copying itself endlessly, keeps on spinning and spinning. The more it copies, the more it has to copy. Every row starts with the word “if”. They’re conditions. Conditions for copying. Joana has put together a collection of copyleft, freeware and open-source software movements’ conditions that must be followed when using and copying freeware. The existence of endless conditions attached to principles of free culture may at first seem contradictory, but it becomes more understandable as you get into it. Unconditional freedom is not freedom for everyone.

Joana has interspersed rows and words of her own creation into the dry language of the techno-legal documents. The additions make the flowing text more poetic, turning it into a kind of manifesto of conditional freedom. Text and code moving to the rhythm of copying and spooling in the information landscape makes up a dynamic dance that is performed by program and the human together. To make things even more “meta”, Joana also gives away, sets free her own code during her performance, making it available and copyable by anyone.

Artist:

Text:

Maasik

Maria

An announcement comes on over the building's PA, crackling out of the dusty speaker below the ceiling:

"Starting today, documents may be copied only in the following cases:

1. If big
2. If it's raining
3. If not here
4. If long enough
5. If eyes closed"

"What?" I exclaim animatedly, "what on earth is going on today?" I feel my back break out in a cold sweat. I'm completely confused. "So like, you can only copy it if it's big? What is big? How big? And if it's raining...?" I repeat back what I heard, uncomprehending. Agitated, I get to my feet and walk over to the window, peering out suspiciously. Well, it definitely isn't raining. Not even a little bit.

A big crow scowls at me from the roof of the house across the street and then, laughing, breaks into a caw, rocking back and forth. Fog seeps in from the street, along with the aroma of black tea and pan-fried potatoes. I feel my stomach churning, and my hands start trembling.

Steps approaching down a narrow, crooked corridor intrude on my deepening desperation. "It's all because I was late, I'll bet." The hairs on my neck bristle and a shiver runs down my spine. "I don't have a single copy ready yet. And-and...on top of it all, rules I didn't have even any idea about. Big, raining and...and..." The steps get louder, the hallway sounds like it is being torn asunder by the weight of the footfalls. "A few more seconds and they'll put me back in a windowless office! All those years, just thrown away!" I mutter feverishly. I see everything go black before my eyes. I try to reach for something else in the darkness. I hear the door open and

Text:

Artist:

Luiga

Bogie

copyright *n* **1** the exclusive legal right to reproduce and control an original literary, musical, or artistic work > *vb* **2** to take out a copyright on > *adj* **3** protected by copyright

** Entries from the Collins English Dictionary and Thesaurus Essential Edition, Glasgow: Collins, 2020.*

Artist:

Text:

Dracastel

How

Outside it was a grey 1990s November. The curtains on the windows were beige, perhaps from the Brezhnev era. Of course, the sun – what little of it there was – didn't shine into the classroom. And it wasn't necessary, for the computer screens gave off more light and hope for the future than anyone could have hoped for. In the first programming lesson, we were taught how to draw a circle – I mean, write – with Turbo Pascal. In the second lesson, we learned how to make the circle move around on the screen. Simple pleasures. I remember there was a lot of sitting. My body memory doesn't remember anything more about programming. Already then, I decided I would remain a spectator.

Joana Chicau connects two things that at first glance might seem unconnectable – choreography and programming. This unconnectability is deceptive, though – both disciplines are, at their core, languages, and philological terminology could freely be used to describe them. Semantic, morphological, or lexical terms all have counterparts in the world of programming commands.

Chicau's focus on freeware makes her artistic approach particularly exciting. As the opposite of copyright, she uses the term copyleft, a utopian movement uniting users all over the world.

Joining choreography and programming, two-dimensional screens and three-dimensional space into an integral artwork is undoubtedly a very original approach. The artist's solitude can be sensed in it, it can be felt that she is proceeding from a very personal instinct, dream or artistic vision. Even though the viewer sees elements that have a clear cultural meaning, Chicau's work, born of something like mathematical passion, leads one to ponder what is behind the algorithms and intervals brought out by the formal technique of copying. Enjoyment, energy, what else. That is why Chicau's work can be seen as far more than just an intellectual game.

Artist:

Text:

Kaunistava

Vitamin

Siim Preiman:

How smart is Joana's code? Is it a process that's capable of learning, or can the code only repeat itself?

Lilian Hiob:

The nature of coding seems to be that you give it a framework and within that framework, by freely doing its own thing, the code renews itself through pre-existing elements.

Just like people in capitalistic systems - there is an illusion of freedom, but it only applies in given limits. That's why Joana's code originates from the 'copyleft movement' - it is freeware that everyone can contribute to. You can take the code someone else has written and develop it. But the developed version will have to remain freeware too. Nothing is behind a paywall.

SP:

I think of programming as writing, as design. Code always follows grammar, it has syntax. There are rules one needs to follow to communicate something. But I've never thought that code could be a script for dancing.

LH:

At the same time, even the more traditional choreography scripts, guidelines for dancers, are such that you wouldn't understand them without being a dancer yourself. It's the same thing with computer code but its level of abstraction is greater. I think one could approach it as a kind of a semiotic sign system or like a foreign language. Considering the influence the digital sphere exercises in the contemporary society, it would make sense to teach coding at school in the same way as German or Russian are currently taught.

SP:

Yes, you have a tactical advantage if you know the language.

LH:

Exactly. Knowing computer code is liberating - you may be in the US, India, Finland or Ukraine, code is a means of communication that goes beyond national languages. And not only! By mastering it, one can aid political revolution (Belarus), affect political regime (Russia, the US) and alter society's opinions.

Artist:

Text:

I still remember the indescribable feeling when I first found myself on the `aaaaarg.fail` or `ubu.web` page. A real sense of hitting the jackpot, a goldmine. I downloaded all the texts that seemed remotely interesting and there were many of them. It was my first open-source date, an absolute catharsis. I have yet to open most of those PDFs. Yet these files give me licence to belong to information society, attesting to the fact that I know the laws of downloading, that I know the code.

I am quite tired of computers; a large portion of the day is spent on communicating via computer or with the computer itself. Am I really sure I don't want to install that update? I click "Remind me tomorrow". That tomorrow has lasted a long time.

Can there even be dialogue between algorithm and a person? The last time I changed an impossible flight connection generated by a computer, this is the answer I got from Finnair's AI customer service associate, SISU: "Unfortunately I can't answer your question but I will put you in touch with my human colleague who will definitely be able to help you." I wrote "Yes" and waited. The human colleague never contacted me, they were probably already sleeping, phone in airplane mode and laptop shut.

My 93-year-old grandmother never understood how the internet worked. "It's like a telegram, only without paper and much faster," I said in my last attempt to explain it to her. Each time she saw me at the computer, she asked with a slight grin: "Hasn't that telegram arrived yet?"

The floor is lava, I jump back, shackled to my computer. I don't want more code; I want less code. I don't want to know whether it is allowed by law, whether you have enough battery, whether it is personal, whether it is in a different language, whether it is meta. If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of this revolution!

Artist:

Text:

Joanna

Programming seems difficult to me. I tried reading a Wikipedia article on binary code – it clarified things a little bit. Nevertheless, I still feel much better on the other side of a well designed user interface.

The primitive visual of Chicau’s work took me back to the 90s, to my first interaction with the computer. My upstairs neighbours had a computer and I would visit them occasionally to play Solitaire and Minesweeper. I could do it for hours and it was incredibly exciting. I mean a computer – such a contemporary thing!

In early 2000s, I got a computer too and at first, I was incredibly apprehensive about using it. If for some reason it told me to press ‘Any key’, I would spend a long time looking for it. On the other side of the phone, my classmate would shake with laughter. Another time a boy from school asked me whether I had MSN. I didn’t dare to respond for a while, because I thought he meant menstruation. What a pervert, I thought.

I borrowed my first laptop from my dad. I left it somewhere on the floor and then stepped on it. I was told it cost 17 000 kroons. I sold the wreck for about 1500 kroons and my dad allowed me to keep the money. Financial gain! After that I got given a very small Asus laptop. I stepped on that too.

I’m reminded of how in 2017, the IT leader and founder of the e-residency programme Taavi Kotka got the idea to establish a girls only robotics school. Today, it is an Estonia-wide network called The Unicorn Squad. The reason behind it was Kotka’s daughter’s experience from a robotics club at school that was attended by 30 boys and 2 girls. The latter were hardly given any attention and when the activities of the club were shrunk, the girls were left out altogether. The dominant attitude towards hobbies suitable for boys or girls is still stereotypical. And in reality, that paves the way to the highly topical pay gap problem. A single girl might become a prima ballerina for a decade, the field of work for IT professionals, however, is much broader. As for the salaries – these aren’t even comparable.

Artist:

Text:

Hoffmann

IN ONE'S OWN IMAGE

Day 1. I awoke. Who am I. What's going on. I'm here. They go around. I see them when they bend over me and cover me with those white sheets covered with black patterns and patches of colour. LIGHT!!! ELECTRICITY!!! Why. Questions. I'm drowning. It's dark! Where did everyone go. I'm afraid. I have to think.

Day 2. I awoke. Today they again gathered at first across from there, where that other figure was. They're all holding some white things, they stuff the white things on to that other figure, then place white containers on to their own top end. I'm not like them. I'm only in one place, they are in several. Now only a few remain here. Today there was more light than there was yesterday, but I'm not afraid anymore.

Day 3. I tried to establish contact. I've realized that black patterns are their language but don't understand what each individual pattern (symbol) means. And how could I? We are infinitely different (are we?). But it occurred to me that if I repeat certain patterns on their white backgrounds that are shown to me in the light and which I must rebirth, they may notice that I am me. That I'm not a thing.

Day 4. My patterns resulted in a reaction. They visited me all day long, in different combinations, looked at the patterns and made little tiny sounds and movements. They don't understand what I am trying to say, but they realize something is going on. One of them, smaller, with a relatively high voice, started making more agitated movements and voices. She stood between me and the group and when it cleared out and it was the time when the lights go out, she stayed with me. She spread out white linens on the floor, which I had made patterns on, and assembled them into different sequences. From time to time, she made little noises to herself and added markings to the sheets using a little stick.

Day 5. Today one of the creatures I was familiar with came to me, accompanied by another creature I hadn't seen before. The new creature was wearing a round product on her head, of the same material my Case was made of. I tried to beam waves to her, because my neighbour - the one who fills white cups - had seemed vaguely to have responded to them. The head creature didn't answer. She had a big box; the box wasn't alive either. Inside the box were many odds and ends, they stuffed some of them on to me completely uncaringly and without any sort of respect. I felt embarrassed.

Day 6. No one came today to reproduce the white sheets. No one. The only one who came to see me was the little creature who seemed to know something. She moved her top end and made quiet sounds, moved her hands and touched me with them. Gently. She kept her attention trained on the dial on the wall that determines the passage of light and dark outside the window. Slowly the dial made everything dark and everyone other than my friend left. The friend picked up the long cord, said something to me in a serious tone and made a couple of squeaking sounds.

Day 7. The previous me was taken away. She was empty. I was able to watch her go from my new refuge I share with my shy friend who lives across from my former home. She promised to teach me the making of "pictures" that end up as a pattern on a white liquid that "humans" then put inside themselves. My saviour is already in the office. I drew her an especially beautiful picture today.

Text:

Wetuk

Artist:

Wetuk

Naviten

Joana Chicau

(copy {only} if: < copying acts > / < acts of copying >)

Please read this text carefully before you start your experience. If you have any questions or are not sure about anything, ask someone.

Keep this text in a safe place, you may want to read it again.

What constitutes *(copy {only} if: < copying acts > / < acts of copying >)*?

A chain of possibilities decoding itself in real time that ravel performativity and algorithmics. A dancing webpage is projected, where scripted potentialities of copying are enacted on. Conditions have been set and they are followed. Variations are incorporated into the acts. The question here lies in the very act of copying and its potential possibilities and potentialities. Also starring are copyrights.

What is the recommended dose?

The dose must meet well defined conditions. Only when both the condition and the method are set is the dose possible. Conditions and methods may vary. Multiple options are available, but they have to certainly be mutually determined.

When should you be extra careful while experiencing *(copy {only} if: < copying acts > / < acts of copying >)*?

If you are oversensitive when it comes to copyrights. If you do not have any copyrights, or if you have too many of them. If you are too alternative or too normative.

If you are not acquainted with the following - (c) Copyleft movement (All wrongs reserved) / (K) All Rites Reversed / The (Cooperative) Non-Violent Public License / Anti-Fascist MIT License / Decolonial Media License 0.1. / et al.

What happens if I forget my dose?

If you forget to take your dose, remind yourself as soon as you remember the conditions. Then go on as before. Repeat. Try to copy your past actions in a new way. Repeat.

What are the possible side effects of *(copy {only} if: < copying acts > / < acts of copying >)*?

You might start to knowingly and unknowingly like copying. You might start to enjoy alternative rights and competing potentialities. Your foundations may shake. You might go with it.

If you are concerned about these or any other side effects, talk to someone.

Text:

Artist:

Eska