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Foreword : And Yet It Moves

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The following collection of articles revolves around the points of convergence between technology in its broadest possible sense and the limitless space of popular culture. As a result, the phenomena, artifacts and mechanisms discussed by their authors represent a minuscule fraction of potential topics which have been emerging in recent years in discussions on art, culture, media, philosophy, and, ultimately, (post-)humanism. The rhizomatic landscape of postmodernity appears, after all, to be viewed best through the lens of technological media; in fact it seems to thrive on the sort of indeterminacy resulting from the dynamics of obsolescence inscribed in the concept of progress and the uneasy balancing act inextricably linked to the aesthetics of technology. The latter, as an expression of the unique combination of fascination and terror felt when faced with the project designed to explain and harness the principles of the universe, is an especially powerful theme, utilized by numerous discourses, in and outside fiction. Just as traditional mythology relied on the supernatural in the form of magic, contemporary myths subsist on discourses of science and technology.

So much more than a simple collection of tools, technology must now be clearly viewed as a practice, a dynamic science-in-use, constantly transforming the world itself, as well as, inevitably, its users (who frequently remain oblivious to the fact). Mechanisms which shape popular culture and its practices, thanks to their inherent sensitivity to changes in social and conceptual fabric, are best equipped to make use of technology's offerings. In addition, the all--inclusive (and adaptive) character of popular culture predisposes it to serve as space for experimentation for the products of totalizing scientific discourse.

The points of convergence studied in the following articles are thus necessarily temporary, perhaps ephemeral in a sense, but the connections they describe provide the framework for future change and further interplay, for the continuation of the passionate relationship between technology and popular culture – the affair which has given us new language(s), interactive narratives, cyborgized bodies, seductive operating systems and giant mecha. And as its dynamics dictate, by the time we have finished writing this foreword, it will have already moved on, perhaps beyond the scope of this collection, or, as Ashbery would say, will "have adopted a different attitude". In other words: To be continued.