‘The novel as multimedia, networked book’: An Interview with Steve Tomasula

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Steve Tomasula is the author of several novels—VAS: An Opera in Flatland [2002], The Book of Portraiture [2006], TOC: A New-Media Novel [DVD, 2009; App for iPad, 2014], IN&OZ [2012], short stories—Once Human: Stories [2014]—and essays. His work reflects on language, technology and embodiment at the intersection between the human, society and culture. Inventive explorations of the technologies of the book, his narrative image-texts and image-audio-texts are complex multimodal and multimedia compositions that reveal the interconnectedness of print and digital codes. Expressed through graphic devices and source code, these material interventions are functional elements in weaving a transdisciplinary web of discourses—literature, biotechnology, cybernetics, art history. Heterogeneous and dialogical, the novel-form is transformed into a multilayered media assemblage and a meditation on our post-human experience.

In this interview, Tomasula tells us about the process of producing such complex literary objects, describes the feedback of digital culture on his printed novels, and analyses the specificities of print and electronic media.¹

¹ This email interview was conducted by Sandra Bettencourt in October 2015.