

PUSH: the Quest for a Voice, in Search of a Body

“Push” narrative design (Linda Lai)

No.	Image Area (Name)	narrative content	interactivity (mouse behavior)	text behavior
1	PUSH	<p><i>A blue door stands in front of the visitor. “PUSH,” it says on the door in big characters. Turbulences stream in from the side at the lower part of the blue door, quietly. It is recognizable language: words, phrases and fragments of sentences, comprehensible and yet elliptical, as if someone without a voice or body is blowing her thoughts into the air to let them flow. Yes, someone is making an effort to push open the door, but hesitating, struggling with something... and mumbling seems to be the final resort...</i></p> <p><i>Feel and touch the big blue door. Every now and then, fragments of sound and speech could be heard, apparently from behind the door. Music without melody, speech without sense...</i></p>	<p>-Scratches: downloaded John Cage music fragments -Rub (hold down L key of mouse)</p>	<p>Running text at bottom or top of screen (from L to R; or from R to L)... Use text on first page of manuscript → Once rubbed open, bright white background –</p>
2	TEXT/CHARACTER SPACE: running text across the screen (no Photo)	<p><i>Door opens. No sign of a human world. One enters a white world of horizontally running texts busily crossing the empty space without running into each other, just like a huge flyover highway complex in the form of multiple parallel tracks of busy traffic.</i></p> <p><i>It is a world of speechless articulations: there are utterances in words, but only unrecognizable, broken sounds... It is the mind world of someone who needs to express but has no voice.</i></p> <p><i>Any attempt to interrupt the running traffic may provoke squeaks in the form of more pop-up texts like someone yelling out in pain, helplessly, and calling for attention.</i></p>	<p>Click – -To open more pop-up text (fragments from John Cage’s music or from Linda’s <i>One Take</i> video) -To open to the next image world (lines in the far-off background)</p>	<p>Bright white background – Text¹ crossing the screen L to R and R to L randomly with variation in font size (running text should show 3-D convergent perspective) – *Some lines could be clicked open to more pop-up lines² *Some lines could be clicked open to the next photo</p>

¹ Use text from page 2 of PUSH.

² Use phrases on p. 2 with the “PUSH” punctuation.

3	Kafka	<p><i>The busy, restless mindscape of inexhaustible thoughts and desires opens to a sunny graveyard in Paris bathed in warm sunlight.</i></p> <p><i>A feminine face is staring at the visitor, almost like smelling the camera lens. It is no doubt an inviting face, her stare soliciting one's queries, not without a touch of sarcasm or mockery.</i></p> <p><i>The graveyard looks strangely ordinary, even a bit monotonous. It is just a graveyard in the broad daylight, or in the flip of a second it blinks the backyard of a sleeping house. The place seems to be hiding all kinds of secrets. One sees nothing, but murmurs (of some female voices) rush in and off like breezes, roaring up this moment and subsiding the next,</i></p> <p><i>Restless murmurs, somewhat suggesting a disorder in language: a mixture of Cantonese, Mandarin, French, English...</i></p> <p><i>Were one no longer capable of resisting the face or its gaze, caress it – it's just a plastic mask of enchanting appearance that easily dissolves into a featureless mass upon an eager rub.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Rubbing off the face -Clicking of leaves & other corners in the space -Text input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Clicking: generates murmurs in Cantonese and Mandarin -Input of visitor's secrets to be stored and read at random clicks
4	Frances	<p><i>The void in the feminine face opens to the white wall of a house. The actual landscape gradually normalizes from an over-exposed glaze to normal vision, just like an exposed photograph in a developing fluid. The shapes and lines are emerging. ... It is a house in the evening. A woman, Frances, seems to have</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Voice input: call "Frances" -Mouse click at windows, roof-tops or lawn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Text or sound responds to volume level picked up by microphone. -text: info on France -voice: soliloquy³

³ Use text from 会过期的艺术 or 男生女生.

		<p><i>rushed out from her house and now running on the lawn. Whenever someone calls her, Frances, fragments of personal details on her; depending on the voice's volume, will show up on screen.</i></p> <p><i>The house is apparently a fiendish dwelling with memories haunting it in the form of murmurs, speech and poetic recitative.</i></p>		
5	Legs and chair / window	<p><i>One hidden piece of memory hangs in the form of a voiceless image...</i></p> <p><i>Two pairs of legs hang from above. They belong to two young women whose face and body we can't see.</i></p> <p><i>Are these legs real? Caress and rub. The legs dissolve, and so does the background setting. Another image behind it reveals itself: a window with barred grid frames opens to a dazzling "outside."</i></p>	<p>Rubbing off on "legs and chairs": "window" behind "legs and chair" is seen.</p>	<p>"window" can be clicked to next photo</p>
6	Graffiti with phone number	<p><i>The grid frame disappears. There is no open space with sunlight, but an iron surface with phone numbers scrapped on it like someone was leaving a message in a hurry, or desperately.</i></p> <p><i>It's up to the curious visitor to discover which numbers have hidden messages and which ones sheer pretense. Or if chance allows, some numbers are there for the visitor to leave his/her messages.</i></p> <p><i>The woman is still missing, her voice suppressed, or her speech fragmentary.</i></p>	<p>-Click number: some of them allow user's Text input</p> <p>-Click number: some of them has short messages</p> <p>-Some of them can be rubbed off and broken conversations could be heard</p>	<p>-Write up one's own message.</p> <p>-Pop-up texts are a combination of pre-input texts⁴ OR messages input by users.</p>

⁴ Use text from the "Graffiti" or any other texts from book.

		<i>One of the numbers is a secret key to a special switch where one is free to say what you want...</i>		
7	Button	<i>Here, whatever you feel, whatever you think or want to say, just say it. Drop your words. Your thought will flow like a jet fountain, cleansing off pockets of dust and muffling. Capture a floating word or two. Some of them take you to a deeper reality.</i>	-Key in text -Press button to turn the words into a smooth stream of expressions	Original text and newly keyed in text pumped up
8	Melodrama	<i>A woman is walking alone in the deep, blue night. Prison bars are building across the screen up-down and left-right, closing the woman behind the bars from the on-looker.</i> <i>The material of imprisonment is one no doubt: the plot lines of a “normal” woman’s life, like those one reads in popular fiction, or perpetuated in the long histories of melodrama east or west, or the everyday culture of the contemporary times. The prison bars are themselves running texts from novels of pathetic love. Save her. Demolish the bars. Free her from her entrapment.</i>	-Building prison bars with text -Removing lines	Original text running as bars
9	Speechless	<i>Setting free the love-battered woman, the feminine of the feminine, a different woman is seen sitting by a bath tub, performing her gender, subverting the taboos of a well-bred female of propriety, undaunted.</i> <i>Who she is doesn’t matter, for the face is nothing more than a flattering icon.</i> <i>The room smells rosemary and thyme, pregnant with fecundity and sensuous aspirations. The air is thick with molecules of saturated voluptuous earthiness: breasts, body parts, volumes and weights of a expanding flesh. Upon a casual stir, the thick</i>	Chinese characters moving in various patterns based on set mouse movement: *Sideward slide: slanting wind *Forward motion: raining from screen top *Backward slide: fountain jet *Diagonal slide: circular whirlpool *Press-down random drag: mad storm and rain with whispers ⁵	Double click at photo opens to next photo

⁵ Do random whisper. Material can be drawn from “Gibberish” and “不再自己的天空”.

		<p><i>air gathers its momentum to spill out winds, rains, fountain jets and whirlpools. Every now and then, the storm maddens with vague chants and agonized mutters.</i></p> <p><i>Who says consciousness requires a physical body to exist? Here, thoughts and yearnings live without a body. Beyond the human subject and substance... : just take a deep breath and smell my thoughts.</i></p> <p><i>She remains anonymous, but is ready any time to push the shuttle button for a playful self-portrait when someone smells enough of the room.</i></p>	<p>*Click: open meaning of the character</p> <p>*circular motion: rubbing off characters</p>	
10	Love Doll	<p><i>Shutter clicks. The on-looker expects the spectacle to begin. Shutter clicks continue, taken up by a simple melody on a percussion instrument of single strike at a time. The speechless woman of many breasts opens to another face with big blue eyes.</i></p> <p><i>Talk to her, write to her. Free her from the burden of doubt and queries. Free her from unconvinced surficial plasticity. She's ready to show anyone a few episodes of real life through her eyes.</i></p>	<p>Type in phrases and lines to remove the blocks of texts loading on her shoulders</p>	<p>Texts lined up like pillar blocks are pressing on her shoulders from above.⁶</p>
11	Lantern	<p><i>The doll-like face shatters and goes like vapour. The melody continues a few more seconds after the face is gone and finally fades.</i></p> <p><i>A still red lantern blinks like it is signaling a muffled tune of briskly rhythm. The red hue keeps changing in intensity, brighter now and dimmer then...</i></p> <p><i>Four episodes on four different weddings are written, recorded and preserved, like four museum pieces gained from an archaeological excavation.</i></p>	<p>Single click - four stories for recall⁷</p> <p>Double click – users can write down their own wedding stories based on simple guide questions</p>	<p>-留言 message box for input of visitors' own wedding stories + 4 pre-input write-up</p> <p>-message box should carry outline questions:</p> <p>*Date</p> <p>*What color would you use to represent the atmosphere of the wedding?</p> <p>*beauty and oddities of the</p>

⁶ Use text in the original piece for that photo.

⁷ Four stories for recall and reading from 记婚.

		<i>More collectibles are wanted. Visitors, please leave your wedding stories.</i>		event:
12	<i>Je tu il elle</i> (re-edited video clips of woman moving furniture in her bedroom)	<i>Many things may happen to a woman. And most map the wedding day as a peak moment or a dividing line.</i> <i>But this story ends with a self-assured woman, fathoming space and finding room for her body. By moving furniture around within a confined room in the present continuous, she multiplies space for herself.</i>	“Esc” button or click of four corners will bring one back to PUSH	Text works like subtitles. ⁸
13	<i>PUSH</i>	<i>PUSH. You’re back to the starting point of the PUSH journey. Would you like another PUSH?</i>		

⁸ Use lines and phrases from essay “je tu il elle”.