SHARP 2023 Global Online Conference
26–29 June 2023

Affordances and Interfaces:
Textual Interactions Past, Present and Future

With thanks to the artist: © *Leonardo Ulian/ artwork by @ulian_leonardo*

SHARP 2023 will be an entirely online conference, and so a theme has been chosen to accord with that medium. The aim is to explore the opportunities and distortions or limitations that technology has created or is likely to create for book history.

Hosted by the Centre for the Book at the University of Otago, New Zealand, SHARP 2023 will run over about three days, allowing participation from anywhere, though no doubt offering attractions that are also likely to disrupt your sleep no matter where you might be. Organisers will seek to schedule presenters during the speakers' normal waking hours in so far as panel groupings permit.

Abstracts, full panel or roundtable proposals are welcome. See below for more details about format. Please note that individuals may only present once (book launches excepted),but may also serve as a moderator or chair on a second session.

Papers might consider, but are not limited to, such topics as:

- Collecting pre- and post- digital
- Evolution of libraries: chained libraries to blockchains
- Surveillance of purchases, reading, and exchange of texts
- Censorship and access to texts
- Electronic publishing platforms (Amazon, Goodreads, Audible, Wattpad, AO3)
- Books as vectors: of disease, ideas, colonial power

- Translation and multilingual formats
- Digital publishing, design, and disability
- Aural, screen and social reading practices
- Marketing tangible and intangible texts
- Distribution and control of texts
- Intellectual property: inheritances and disruptions
- Authority control and textual editing
- Large language models and the future of written text production
- Impacts on and opportunities for scholarly methods and exchange
- Visual and neural text processing in various media

Submissions should be sent through the conference portal, a link to which will be announced well before the submission deadline of 30 December 2022. The program committee will draft a timetable and panel structure by mid-February and notify all submitters of their status before the end of February. Please understand that, because of time zone considerations, programming may involve more negotiation than is required for an in-person conference—but at least there's no jet lag.

About the Format

To maximise engagement with all participants, we offer speakers the opportunity to pre-record presentations or to record panels as they stream and make these recordings available to those registered for the conference for 4 weeks following the conference, after which all recordings will be returned to speakers.

Rather than being selected in advance, keynotes will be chosen from among the abstracts received. The organising committee will actively seek to include diverse speakers and perspectives.

SHARP 2023 will include some one-hour 5-1-5 panels based on the SHARP 2021 model, in which five speakers each speak to one slide for five minutes followed by five minutes for questions. Standard one-hour panels will host two 20-minute presentations followed by 30 minutes for discussion. It will be possible to have larger panels, but given the challenges of timetabling and viewers' patience on Zoom, the default structure will be one-hour sessions. Roundtable sessions and Research Labs with pre-circulated papers are also welcome. Keynotes will be held daily, rotating among time zones convenient for various continents. All panel streams will be separated from one another by at least a 30-minute gap to encourage healthy movement and allow for other activities to be fitted around the conference.

Organisers hope to arrange some form of virtual book hall, and will definitely incorporate as many online group book launch sessions we have authors to celebrate. We also hope to experiment with more participant content, such as short TikTok-type presentations of favourite reading spots, or 15–20-min road trip videos introducing members to interesting book sites in your area. Please feel free to suggest other ways we might use the technology to connect and share our common interests.

Submission criteria

Please also take note of SHARP's submission criteria, which have been adapted to this conference format.

- All presenters must be current members of SHARP, though you may submit an abstract and elect to join if your paper is accepted.

- Presenters agree to having their presentations livestreamed, recorded and hosted for up to four weeks on a site available only to those who have registered for SHARP 2023.

- Work presented at SHARP conferences is expected to offer original scholarship, and to go beyond a descriptive account of archival or textual materials.

- Work should outline the wider implications of research presented. Both the thesis being tested and the conclusions drawn should be clearly stated in the proposal.

- To avoid repetition, the Program Committee may ask for the titles of previous papers a presenter has given at SHARP conferences.

- Since SHARP prides itself on attracting members from a variety of fields, language that is accessible to diverse specialists is a priority.

- Preference will be given to proposals that indicate how the contribution sheds light on some issue, principle, or practice of book history (widely understood) and that clearly addresses a specific segment (or segments) of the SHARP membership.

- At SHARP 2023, we welcome presentations in any language, but panel organisers or speakers wishing to present in a language other than English will need to submit an abstract in English and will be welcome but not required to provide an English text or simultaneous written or spoken translation that can be streamed alongside the spoken presentation. The conference software may able to facilitate such opportunities, though any recording of the live stream will only capture the language used by the speakers themselves.

Please feel free to contact Shef Rogers if you have particular questions, and watch for a notice on SHARP-L about the launch of a conference website for this event.