

## A CASTLE FREAK PROPOSAL: INNARDS

a collaborative book between Josiah Morgan and Matthew Lang

What does it mean to write generatively?

I (Josiah) have been a follower of the Castle Freak process for a long time, but lack technical know-how and conceptual drive. For a long time, I was convinced that it would be possible to write a 100,000 word book in five days, without using any technological assistance, even though it would probably suck. I understood that this would sit outside the spirit of the Castle Freak residency, but held on to the idea as an item of interest if I could ever hold myself to such a strict schedule.

Matt writes software by day and has little interest in writing. He has now developed (out of sheer curiosity on my end) a very primitive program that inverts all text laid into it. An example is as follows.

Only offered it so we'd start to idolise the cops / some agreement with the  
police college next door  
So we didn't become / undesirables / like so many of our friends and  
parents / called scumbags  
And burnouts by the cops who visited occasionally / to rebuff our questions  
about catching rapists  
Or serial killers / like they did on TV / but never seemed to encounter /  
on Porirua's slow streets.

streets. slow Porirua's on / encounter to seemed never but / TV on did they like / killers serial Or  
rapists catching about questions our rebuff to / occasionally visited who cops the by burnouts And  
scumbags called / parents and friends our of many so like / undesirables / become didn't we So  
door next college police the with agreement some / cops the idolise to start we'd so it offered Only

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So, what's the proposal? I write a 50,000 word book in four days that ends in the middle of a sentence. Generative writing, no self-consciousness, little room for editing. The 50,001st word is the same as the 50,000th word. The 50,0002nd word is the same as the 49,999th word, and so on. The entire text inverts itself and is read backward in the second half.

**This is not a gimmick, but the entire point of the text.**

I propose to write a complex noir narrative about an actor assuming the identity of their character in method acting style. The world around them bends to the narrative they believe they live inside. The noir narrative will be autofictive. I will be assuming a role in Australia at the end of January 2022, method acting for the first time. I will be located in Australia for the duration of the Castle Freak residency, in a landscape that I am unfamiliar with, completely isolated from all friends and family other than my partner. I anticipate that the proposed text would result in a psychogeographic outcome, in which my (real) navigation of (real) streets whilst living as a (fictional) character is reflected in a (fictional) navigation of (fictional) streets whilst living as a (real) person in a foreign landscape.

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<sup>1</sup><https://thespinoff.co.nz/books/02-07-2021/the-friday-poem-what-i-learnt-from-aotea-colleges-forensic-science-class-by-danny-bultitude/>

The inversion mechanism in the book's back half is thus proposed as a transformation of "my work" (i.e. a book that could ostensibly be read as being about myself) into "the book's work," that is, a book that can only be read as a book that reads itself.

This is all that I know about what I intend to write. It is possible that the backwards half of the book would form the first half, and the "coherent narrative" would form the second half - this would depend entirely on what work is produced during the time of the residency and the form the narrative ends up taking.

So, the buzz words: diaspora, psychogeography, noir, doubling, identity, acting, inversion, fiction, reality.

If the proposal is accepted, Matt will develop the software to a slightly higher level (this won't be too complicated) so that formatting can be mimicked and inverted as well as text. I (Josiah) will write the literary content, all 50,000 words.

This bridges my interest in the insane undertaking that is writing an impossible amount of text in an impossible amount of time within Castle Freak's digital conditions in such a way that disentangles "me" from my "authorship" over the text. Thus, the majority of the "residency" will be undertaken by me (Josiah), but the product should necessarily be considered a co-authorship as Matt's contribution is the crucial formal component.

### **What if it goes wrong? What if you can't write 50,000 words in four days?**

I'm a theatre director. The work always goes wrong. I don't know what the answer is yet. I will invent a new generative method on the fly if need be - perhaps the answer is as simple as inviting Matt to co-author the literary elements of the work with me if it is clear I am getting behind (setting ourselves dualised word limits).

### **Isn't this insane? What's digital about this? Why would anybody want to read this?**

Well, yes, it's a simple device that digitally generates doubles - simulacra, and, well, don't you want to read it? and don't you think that midpoint of the book should be a sentence that cuts itself off as if it's it's if as off itself cuts that sentence a be should book the of midpoint that think you don't and it? read to want you don't well, and, simulacra, - doubles generates digitally that device simple a it's yes, Well,

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<p>Only offered it so we'd start to idolise the cops / some agreement with the police college next door So we didn't become / undesirables / like so many of our friends and parents / called scumbags And burnouts by the cops who visited occasionally / to rebuff our questions about catching rapists Or serial killers / like they did on TV / but never seemed to encounter / on Porirua's slow streets.</p>	<p>streets. slow Porirua's on / encounter to seemed never but / TV on did they like / killers serial Or rapists catching about questions our rebuff to / occasionally visited who cops the by burnouts And scumbags called / parents and friends our of many so like / undesirables / become didn't we So door next college police the with agreement some / cops the idolise to start we'd so it offered Only</p>
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