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Varia: From Letters to Texts and Images, from Texts and Images to Letters: Catching the Reader's/ Spectator's Gaze

Varia: From Letters to Texts and Images, from Texts and Images to Letters: Catching the Reader's/ Spectator's Gaze

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**Keywords:** Letter; image; text; visual system of expression and production; multimodality

**Summary/Abstract:** The article demonstrates that letters can play a visual role close to that played by images. Calligraphy, typography, calligrams, palindromes and anagrams are as many ways of attracting the reader's/spectator's attention and bringing to the fore the material quality of a text. Linguistic games also offer vivid instances of hybrid effects. They all play a part similar to that of anamorphosis. Numerous novels, such as Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, play with the many visual possibilities of letters. Conversely, numerous pictures include letters in their own mode and apparatus not only as signatures but also as simulacra of speech, sound and language. Contemporary art enjoys using letters as the very matter of their production. Ranging from Mantegna to street art, going through Magritte and the works of the Art & Language group, to

quote a few, letters partake of visual systems of expression and production. The article interrogates the functions of images either when they figure in a text and font image (make up an image) or when they are part of a picture or an image. In our digital age, words and images, letters, lines and colours are part and parcel of our relationship to the multimodal world which we inhabit.

## Details

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