


# BioFlux: Collective Memory as Generative Video Art through Deconstructed Biographical Narratives

doi [10.34623/2184-8661.2025.tell\\_me.371](https://doi.org/10.34623/2184-8661.2025.tell_me.371)

Pedro Alves da Veiga  
[pedro.veiga@uab.pt](mailto:pedro.veiga@uab.pt)  
CIAC – Centro de Investigação em Artes  
e Comunicação, Universidade Aberta  
Lisboa, Portugal  
 [0000-0001-9738-3869](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9738-3869)

## Abstract

BioFlux is a video artwork that employs generative techniques to explore and deconstruct documental biographical narratives. The piece is derived from personal interviews, which are woven into a seamless and dynamic stream of human experiences, thereby transporting them into parallel worlds where different outcomes and plot lines may (or may not) come to fruition, based on three pillars: place, person, and memory. By harnessing a generative art approach, BioFlux disassembles individual stories, reconfiguring and intertwining them into a fluid, ever-evolving narrative tapestry. The resulting composition is a living, breathing video flux that transcends traditional storytelling, offering viewers a contemplative and surreal – yet profoundly human – journey through identity’s multifaceted and interconnected nature. BioFlux invites the audience to reflect on the complexity of personal histories and the shared threads that bind us all, revealing the profound interdependencies within our collective narrative.

Received 2025-01-15  
Accepted 2025-03-05  
Published 2025-06-30

© Pedro Alves da Veiga

 This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/)

Alves da Veiga, P. (2025). BioFlux: Collective Memory as Generative Video Art through Deconstructed Biographical Narratives. *Rotura – Revista de Comunicação, Cultura e Artes*. [https://doi.org/10.34623/2184-8661.2025.tell\\_me.371](https://doi.org/10.34623/2184-8661.2025.tell_me.371)

## Keywords

Generative Video Art • Collective Identity • Collective Memory • Digital Narrative

## Resumo

BioFlux é uma obra de videoarte que utiliza técnicas generativas para explorar e desconstruir narrativas biográficas documentais. O artefacto deriva de entrevistas pessoais, que foram tecidas num fluxo contínuo e dinâmico de experiências humanas, transportando-as, assim, para mundos paralelos onde diferentes conclusões e enredos podem (ou não) vir a concretizar-se, com base em três pilares: lugar, pessoa e memória. Ao utilizar uma abordagem de arte generativa, BioFlux desconstrói histórias individuais, reconfigurando-as e entrelaçando-as numa tapeçaria narrativa fluida e em constante evolução. A composição resultante é um fluxo de vídeo, vivo e pulsante que transcende a narrativa tradicional,

oferecendo aos espectadores uma viagem contemplativa e surreal – mas profundamente humana – através da natureza multifacetada e interligada da identidade. BioFlux convida o público a refletir sobre a complexidade das histórias pessoais e das linhas partilhadas que nos ligam a todos, revelando as profundas interdependências dentro da nossa narrativa coletiva.

**Palavras-chave**

Videoarte Generativa • Identidade Coletiva • Memória Coletiva • Narrativa Digital

## 1. Context

The BioFlux artwork and associated research were developed within the scope of the Conta.ME (Tell.me) project: “Conta.ME – The biographical narrative as an instrument of social and cultural affirmation”. This project – steered by the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Saint Joseph, in Macau – sought to critically examine the role of biographical narratives as a powerful tool for fostering social affirmation and celebrating cultural diversity within the framework of sustainable human development in Macau. The study was conducted with reference to the principles outlined in the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, underscoring the importance of cultural diversity as a vital asset for humanity and a cornerstone of sustainable development, promoting dialogue, mutual understanding, and peaceful coexistence among communities. The project undertook a comprehensive and systematic collection of 23 biographical narratives, serving as both a method of documentation and a medium for amplifying diverse voices. These participants were carefully selected to reflect the region’s unique cultural mosaic, encompassing its varied ethnic, linguistic, and social identities. Each interview was filmed and turned into a television episode, with an average duration of 30 minutes.

The project also considered the critical evaluation of public reception, analysing how these narratives were perceived, interpreted, and valued by diverse audience groups. Special attention was given to the ways in which these stories contributed to shaping collective memory, strengthening community identity, promoting intercultural dialogue, as well as raising awareness about cultural diversity and encouraging sustainable human development practices. From its conception, the project considered within its scientific objectives (SO) “SO7 – Conception and creation of a video art installation”. This artwork was meant to explore transmedia digital narrative techniques and endeavour to develop its own aesthetic through the combination of biographical storytelling and the interactive expressiveness of digital media art, using as its seed the 23 biographical narratives collected during the project. It is, thus, within this SO that the author was invited to develop the aforementioned video-art project. To this effect, the author considered a transdisciplinary approach, on the borders between cultural studies, social sciences, media analysis and generative art and literature.

## 2. On Identity

Identity is an intricate and multifaceted construct that holds a pivotal role in shaping human experiences. It is

particularly significant during developmental periods and life transitions, as individuals encounter moments of growth, transformation, and self-reflection (Crocetti & Salmela-Aro, 2018). Identity encapsulates both personal dimensions – how people perceive and define themselves – and social dimensions, which pertain to how they are perceived and positioned within broader societal structures. Together, these dimensions form the foundation through which individuals address the fundamental question, “Who are you?” at both personal and collective levels (Vignoles *et al.*, 2017).

Identity may be anchored in time and space, with place playing a crucial role in identity formation. Individuals and social groups construct meanings and identities around places, using them as reference points to position themselves within social and cultural structures (Zhu, 2010). The spatial dimension of identity allows for both cognitive understanding and sensual experience of self. Four processes link selves to space: tropic reading of space, writing of space, placement of self into larger spatial contexts, and anchoring life stories in significant time-space combinations (Yeshurun *et al.*, 2021). Human attachment to place is key in identity formation at local, regional, national, and transnational levels, with landscape features also playing a role. This sense of belonging is fundamental to human existence and political action, though it can lead to both community building and exclusion of perceived outsiders (Rohkrämer & Schulz, 2009).

Recent advancements in psychological and sociological research have prompted a shift in focus from traditional, singular frameworks of identity to more dynamic and pluralistic understandings. This emerging perspective emphasizes the existence of multiple, simultaneous identities that individuals navigate in various contexts. Importantly, it recognizes that membership in a particular category or group is not always straightforward, as identities are often fluid, overlapping, and subject to change. Furthermore, the interaction between different categorical identities can reveal new dimensions of self-concept and belonging (Kang & Bodenhausen, 2015).

This multiplicity of belonging challenges conventional binary modes of thinking, which historically reduced identity to rigid, mutually exclusive categories. Instead, it underscores the potential benefits of adopting flexible identity mindsets that embrace complexity and nuance. Flexible identity mindsets can empower individuals to adapt to diverse social environments, fostering resilience and openness to new perspectives (Gaither, 2020).

While managing multiple identities may present difficulties – such as navigating conflicting roles or expectations – it also offers unique opportunities. For those perceiving others and those being perceived, the coexistence of diverse identities enriches social interactions,

promoting empathy, inclusivity, and a deeper understanding of shared and individual experiences (Kang & Bodenhausen, 2015). This enriched interaction facilitates the breaking down of stereotypes and the building of more interconnected and equitable social networks.

To fully grasp the processes of identity formation, maintenance, and transformation over time, it is essential to integrate insights from a wide range of psychological disciplines. Such an interdisciplinary approach provides a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of identity as a dynamic, evolving construct that is central to the human experience (Vignoles *et al.*, 2017). By exploring the interplay between personal and social dimensions, as well as the intersectionality of multiple identities, researchers can uncover the intricate mechanisms that shape who we are and how we relate to the world around us.

### 3. The Fluidity of Memory

Research indicates that collective memory is not a static construct but a fluid phenomenon, existing along a continuum between the shared recollections of individuals and broader, transcendent social representations, beyond personal experiences (Franken, 2022). This fluidity reflects the dynamic relations between individual and collective dimensions of memory, where personal narratives intersect and merge with shared societal narratives to form a cohesive yet adaptable sense of collective identity.

One compelling example of this fluidity can be seen in studies of bodies of water, which illustrate how collective memory intertwines with the physical landscape. Over time and across cultures, these waterways become imbued with layered meanings – representing not just natural or engineered systems but also symbols of community heritage, historical events, and cultural identity. As these landscapes evolve, so too do the memories associated with them, revealing a reciprocal relationship where memory both shapes and is shaped by the environmental context (Lavoie & Sleipness, 2018).

The malleable nature of individual memory plays a key role in this process. Individual memories, inherently selective and reconstructive, possess the flexibility to converge into shared recollections through processes such as storytelling, ritual, and collective experience. One of the interviewees of project Conta.ME posits: “I have several memories that I know are mine. There are other memories that I think I later absorbed as mine, but they were someone else’s, who told me about them”. This convergence fosters the formation of collective memory, which serves as a cornerstone for social cohesion, identity, and the maintenance of cultural traditions (Brown *et al.*,

2012). In this way, memory acts as a bridge, connecting individual experiences with the broader social fabric.

Interestingly, the concept of fluidity in collective memory also finds parallels in physical systems. Experiments with granular materials offer an interesting metaphor for understanding this phenomenon. Under specific conditions, such as high densities and low temperatures, these materials exhibit persistent collective rotational modes, signifying emergent patterns of coordinated behaviour within a seemingly disordered system (Plati & Puglisi, 2021). Similarly, collective memory emerges from the interactions of individual memories, creating patterns of shared understanding that persist and adapt despite the inherent variability of individual inputs.

The above points and studies underscore the inherently dynamic and adaptive nature of collective memory. It evolves in response to a wide range of influences, including social interactions, environmental transformations, and shifting cultural contexts. Rather than being a fixed repository of the past, collective memory is a living process, continuously reshaped by the present and open to reinterpretation in the future. This fluid nature of collective memory and its role in shaping social identity and cultural narratives is one of the major inspirations behind BioFlux.

### 4. Electronic literature

The integration of Dadaist practices in electronic literature represents a fascinating continuation of avant-garde techniques within the realm of digital media (O’Sullivan & O’Sullivan, 2019). This synthesis bridges historical artistic movements and contemporary technological innovation, demonstrating the adaptability of experimental aesthetics in exploring new forms of expression. By incorporating the radical, anti-establishment ethos of Dadaism, electronic literature challenges traditional notions of authorship, linear narrative, and meaning-making, thus opening new avenues for creative and cultural engagement.

This avant-garde approach resonates with broader themes of collective identity and memory, particularly in narrative works that delve into cultural and ethnic experiences. Through sophisticated and often fragmented storytelling methods, authors invite readers to confront complex issues of belonging, heritage, and shared histories. Such works frequently engage with intertextuality, multilingualism, and multimedia elements to construct layered narratives that reflect the diversity and plurality of human experiences (Trichopoulos *et al.*, 2023).

Experimental texts in shareable digital formats empower readers by promoting self-governing, participatory and collective reading practices. Rather

than adhering to traditional, passive modes of consumption, readers are encouraged to actively navigate, interpret, and even co-create meaning. This engaging process fosters a sense of communal, connective identity, as readers become part of a larger dialogue that transcends individual experience. These texts often prioritize fluidity, openness, and multiplicity, reflecting the complexities of modern identity and the interconnected nature of contemporary societies (Spahr, 2001).

Unlike individual memory, collective memory comprises recollections of the past that are determined and produced by groups. Individuals are restricted in their ability to remember in a coherent successive manner beyond the connections and constraints of their group and thus society plays a large role in determining and shaping their memories. (Yasseri *et al.*, 2022, p. 2)

In the realm of electronic generative poetry, Oulipian constraints and Dadaist methods take on new dimensions through their adaptation to digital technologies, and particularly to generative art. Queneau's rats create their labyrinths (Bellos, 2010) through permutational schemes, combinatory patterns, and syntactic templates, combined in algorithms to create works that evolve dynamically within predefined structures (Kuchina, 2018). These techniques, while rooted in the historical practices of the avant-garde, leverage the capabilities of digital environments to generate texts that appear random or chaotic on the surface but are meticulously crafted according to underlying parameters.

This fusion of traditional avant-garde approaches with digital innovation creates a unique aesthetic space that challenges perceptions of authorship, individuality, creativity, and interpretation. Electronic literature becomes a playground for exploring themes such as memory, identity, and collective experience, offering new ways to engage with the past and imagine alternative futures. By merging historical methods with cutting-edge technology, these works not only pay homage to their avant-garde predecessors but also push the boundaries of what literature can achieve in a digital age. Ultimately, this integration underscores the continued relevance of experimental techniques in addressing contemporary social, cultural, and artistic questions.

In digital space, as an extension to the physical, people with common interests share images, experiences, and others join to create communities of collectively remembering. Giaccardi and Simon argue that digital heritage has changed how memories are created, valued and transmitted in a society where people are increasingly unified by these forms of engagements, consequently contributing to bottom-up approaches of heritage making. With digital media, heritage is actively co-created and it is based on everyday practices and experiences. (Kambunga *et al.*, 2020, p. 786)

Through the lens of electronic and generative literature, we see how the avant-garde's legacy endures, adapting to new tools and mediums to remain a powerful force for addressing collective memory and cultural heritage in the digital era.

## 5. Generative Video Art

The concept of generative art refers to an iterative and algorithmic process through which the final artwork takes shape. At their core, generative algorithms strike a balance between order and disorder, using (computer driven) controlled randomness to introduce variability in timing, scale and scope, and delivering a structured output. In addition, each iteration of the algorithm, can be regarded as a starting point for the subsequent iteration. This process creates an infinite number of unique, potentially non-repeating outcomes within the aesthetic framework defined by the artist-programmer (Dehlinger, 2020).

Regardless of these variations, the term generative consistently implies the presence of an autonomous algorithmic system that governs the production of a specific type of output, regardless of the type of media being transformed: lines, images, sounds or words and sentences. In this context, the artwork exists not only in its code, but also in the process of execution and the resulting output. If the output is an audio-visual stream, then the artwork may be categorised as a generative video artwork.

Generative video art may thus be perceived as both the offspring of abstract generative art with analogue video art, as well as a specialization of generative cinema. Much like video art, generative cinema in digital art became more accessible – and therefore popular – with the democratization of the technologies for digital video recording and editing. The ensuing development of the area, however, was fostered not just by technical aspects, such as the development of software and hardware for manipulating large numbers of equally large multimedia files and complex databases, but also by methodological and conceptual aspects, going beyond the limitations of image and sound synthesis, embracing different poetics, much like video art did in respect to film and cinema. (Veiga, 2023, p. 247)

In generative video art, the image is often deconstructed in its initial stages, before being reconstructed, recomposed, reorganised, and recombined – much as with electronic literature. As a result, the image transforms into a vortex, “from which, and through which, and into which, ideas are constantly rushing” (Pound, 1914). Ezra Pound emphasised vorticism's

focus on the representation of energy, mechanical precision, and concentrated power, positioning it as a legitimate expression of life. Generative video art, as a temporal and dynamic art form, not only encapsulates these vortical principles but also expands upon them by introducing a time-based vortex and mosaic. Each iteration produces a new vortex/mosaic, with continuous and evolving generations of recombinations and transformations:

This perspective is embraced by video art, and most particularly by generative video art, determined by the absence of a formal logical and linear narrative (replaced by sensations and evocations), by recomposing and recombining its vocabulary into simultaneous renderings of different sources [...]. (Veiga, 2023, p. 262)

## 6. Methodology

Arts-based practices have posed serious challenges to methods conventions, thus unsettling many assumptions about what constitutes research and knowledge. Inkeri Sava and Kari Nuutinen refer to these methods as presenting a “troubling model of qualitative inquiry into self, art, and method.” These disruptions to traditional research practices, much like early responses to the qualitative challenge to positivism, have caused concerns and inspired debates. As our methods history shows, such debates are critical to scientific progress, as they create a space for a professional public renegotiation of disciplinary practices and standards. (Leavy, 2020, p. 11)

Creative processes are seen as sequences of generative moments, pathways, and iterations of creative thought, forming open and interactive systems. These systems integrate diverse and dynamic elements – media, techniques, narratives, values, memories, dialogues, individual and collaborative efforts, geography, temporality, and more – situated within academic, historical, social, cultural, political, and economic contexts.

The BioFlux project, comprising both the artwork (and its development) and all the related research, adopts the framework of a/r/cography (Veiga, 2019), which positions creative research along three interconnected vectors, through writing: art (a), research (r), and communication (c). Central to this approach is artistic experimentation, encompassing its intended and perceived meanings, aesthetics, and the research it implies and generates, which is documented in a digital journal (Veiga, 2021). The outcomes of this process materialise in the public presentation of any of the outcomes, whether it is artwork, the connected research or the communication of both. The term a/r/cography also finds resonance in the

metaphor of the arc (a/r/c), symbolising a creative and exploratory journey. Unlike the directness of a straight line, the arc embraces peripheral exploration, prioritising richer and more rewarding paths over efficiency. However, unlike the meandering of flâneurs, the arc maintains a clear starting point and destination, fostering deliberate and purposeful deviations along the way.

Documenting these iterative processes, which culminate in the creation of artworks, provides a tangible expression of creativity’s defining traits: originality, usefulness, and surprise (Simonton, 2022). The study of creative processes reveals that the system is not a simple sum of its parts but a complex interplay of interdependent actions and reactions. This dynamic resembles a network or rhizome in constant transformation, challenging concepts like origin, conclusion, hierarchy, or linear methods of organisation.

While the a/r/cography method involves seven well-identified stages or phases, these can be revisited, questioned, and reoriented at any point, ensuring flexibility and ongoing evolution. Through iterative cycles of analysis, conceptualisation, and refinement, the creation/research process unfolds, culminating in public presentation(s). Over time, earlier stages may be revisited and reworked, reflecting the dynamic and evolving nature of the creative journey.

### 6.1. Inspiration

The concept of inspiration is often elusive, and may be described as a spark of insight, creative intuition, or a motivating force that evokes ideas and emotions. Within a/r/cography, inspiration serves as the initial phase, though its placement may seem contradictory in a framework that resists linear progression. Yet, inspiration can equally emerge as the result of iterative processes in later stages, with its components often becoming clear to the artist-researcher only in hindsight.

A substantial portion of the inspiration for this project was drawn directly from Conta.ME digital materials, including transcripts of the 23 interviews and their corresponding filmed and post-produced versions. Additionally, the interviewees contributed numerous photographs that chronicled their personal narratives, often capturing moments from their childhood.

Inspiration also derived from sources that had been previously gathered. From a visual perspective, Vieira da Silva’s geometrically structured compositions – such as the mural at Rato Metro Station in Lisbon, depicted in Figure 1 – proved particularly influential, alongside David Hockney’s iconic photo collages.



**Figure 1.** Tile mural by Helena Vieira da Silva. Rato metro station, Lisbon

## 6.2. Trigger

Creative processes in art and research often begin with a trigger – an impetus or motivating factor. This trigger may arise internally (from neuropsychological mechanisms), externally (through stimuli), or from a combination of both. It serves as the link between inspiration and reason, guiding the artist towards creation or the researcher towards inquiry. The trigger's impact depends on the artist's motivations, experiences, and context, marking the moment when latent inspiration transforms into a conscious creative process. While it defines the process's intent, the trigger is sometimes only recognised retrospectively, upon reflecting on the creative journey.

However, in this case, BioFlux was clearly set in motion by the invitation to develop a video artwork within the broader scope of Conta.ME project. Thus, this external event constitutes without a doubt the project's trigger.

## 6.3. Intention

The process of creating an artwork is guided by the artist's intentions – much like the research project is driven by the researcher's intentions. These, in turn, imply a series of subjective reactions – effort, doubt, satisfaction, rejection – and decisions. Many of these occur outside the artist's full awareness, particularly on the aesthetic level. This often results in a gap between the artist's original intent and the final outcome, a disparity that may remain unnoticed until they revisit all stages of the process, after reaching the (first) intervention stage. For the a/r/cographer, intentions are multi-faceted, serving as a framework for inquiry, experimentation, and interpretation.

The author's intention was to employ generative techniques to explore and deconstruct the original biographical narratives, and then reassemble, reconfigure and intertwine them into a fluid, ever-evolving narrative and visual tapestry, consisting in a continuous flow of

fragments and glimpses into textual and visual reconstructions of memories, seamlessly woven into a dynamic stream of interconnected thoughts, human experiences, and recollections designed to evoke the audience's own memories. This living and evolving video flux transcends traditional linear storytelling by employing dynamic impressionistic reconstruction and combination. It invites the audience on a contemplative and surreal – yet deeply human – journey, exploring the multifaceted and interconnected nature of collective reflections on identity and their intrinsic interdependencies within individual narratives.

## 6.4. Conceptualisation

Once the project's intention is fully understood, the a/r/cographer is equipped to articulate a concept – a preliminary vision of the direction the intention will drive the research and a conceptual framework for the artwork. To develop this concept, the a/r/cographer synthesises sources of inspiration, seeking creative connections through a process of research, experimentation, and critical assessment. This process involves refining ideas, discarding less viable outcomes, and evaluating the project's feasibility. Ultimately, this leads to an initial written articulation of the concept, formulated as either a research hypothesis or an artistic proposition.

The concept of BioFlux is set in a distant future, where a computer drive is found, with a series of fragmented files containing what will be identified as the collective memories of a particular community in a specific geographic area. Those file formats are no longer used, recognised or acknowledged by current computers, so an automated process of reconstruction takes place, unaware of the origins, content and context of each individual file. As the reconstruction process progresses, the audience catches glimpses of glitched phrases and images, all contributing to the creation of a particular atmosphere: an impressionist portrait of a specific community, place and time.

## 6.5. Prototyping

Once the initial concept for the artwork is established, the a/r/cographer embarks on a cycle of interrelated processes – design, development, and evaluation – referred to as prototyping. This phase is driven by research, experimentation, and phenomenological interpretation. Through this iterative process, undesirable outcomes are eliminated, while promising elements are refined. The concept is then validated or revised by integrating new insights and conducting direct tests on experimental iterations. During this stage, the primary research focus is twofold: first, to conduct a “state of the art” review, identifying whether similar projects have been undertaken by other artists and verifying the originality of the work; second, to explore alternative approaches, variations, and deviations that can enhance and further develop the concept. This iterative refinement ensures both the concept and its implementation evolve into more nuanced and enriched visions.

In BioFlux, this stage began with the identification of four phrase categories and the extraction of phrases from all 23 interview transcripts.

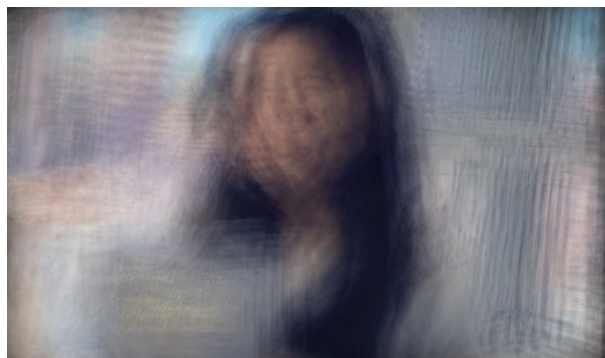
Several photos were also collected from the project archive, including photos provided by the interviewees, several photos taken by the author in Macau, as well as other public domain historic photos of the territory.

A process of deconstruction ensued, affecting both the text and images, to achieve two effects: (1) that of an impressionist animation, transforming still images into a lively tapestry of visual sensations, as shown on Figure 2, and (2) a stream of short “thought” fragments, like glimpses into a collective memory. These phrases were then combined and randomly streamed during the initial stages of prototyping, and they would fill the screen, cyclically fading away and being replaced by other phrases, as shown in Figure 3.

## 6.6. Testing

Once the prototype has been refined by its author, the a/r/cographer progresses to a stage where they feel

ready to present their work to a select audience, consisting of trusted friends, family, and close academic or artistic peers. While this phase shares many processes with the prototyping stage, it differs in the project’s level of development and the a/r/cographer’s readiness for external feedback. This feedback helps to enhance and solidify the project while also boosting the a/r/cographer’s confidence in their work. Audience responses are carefully documented and analysed, allowing the incorporation of valuable insights that further refine and strengthen the project.



**Figure 2.** The deconstruction/recombination process used to animate the still images



**Figure 3.** A screen capture of the prototype, taken at an early stage of development

This was achieved by exhibiting the finished prototype to a reduced number of individuals, including the Conta. ME project leader, several students at the University of Saint Joseph, in Macau, and close friends of the author who live or have lived in Macau. Based upon the (filtered) collected feedback the author then decided to introduce several changes in the original prototype, namely:

- The systematic use of two images as the backdrop, mutually overlapping in dynamic sections of the screen, and the inclusion of a third circular image at the centre of the screen.
- Replacing the succession of text segments that were used to fill the screen with a unique combination of two: one generic segment plus another segment belonging to one of the other three categories (place, personal, memory). This combination remains on screen for a specific amount of time, determined to allow the audience’s own analysis and imagination to develop, but not for too long as to lessen their curiosity on its continuity.
- The inclusion of a generative line animation, encircling the centre image, to convey an artistic sense of “computation at work”, as if a meaning extraction of the text and the centre image is underway, until the whole set fades away.



**Figure 4.** A sequence of four consecutive screen captures illustrating the animation of both text and images in the finished version



**Figure 5.** Focus on the generative line art encapsulating the centre image

These changes also impact the conceptualisation and intention stages, as expected and predicted. This new approach is depicted in Figure 4, showing the progression of one “memory” along with the centre image and generative line animations, which are, in turn, highlighted in Figure 5.

While incorporating the original Conta.ME interviewees into the test group would have been valuable, the author lacks direct connections with them and resides on a different continent. As a result, the agile process that typically defines this stage – relying on in-person, rapid cycles/loops of “comment → change → analysis → comment” – was not feasible.

## 6.7. Intervention

In methodological terms, the intervention stage represents the thesis phase, as it serves to validate the hypothesis – that is, the a/r/cographer’s original intention. By definition, it achieves at least one primary objective of an a/r/cography project, as its culmination involves either a public exhibition, publication, or other forms of communication. However, an a/r/cography project often extends beyond this point, enabling revisitation and iterative development. As with earlier stages, this revisitation may lead to further versions, exhibitions, publications, or communications, incorporating adjustments and modifications that reflect the generative nature of the methodology.

BioFlux was first exhibited on the 14th of June, 2024, during the Tell.Me Symposium – the First International Symposium on Biographical Narratives in Media and Information Literacy Cities, organised by the School of Doctoral Studies and the Faculty of Religious Studies and Philosophy, and hosted by the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at USJ.

The present article is yet another iteration of this stage within the a/r/cography project, taking place several months after the first intervention, and incorporating refinements in several stages that have occurred during this time, as described above.

## 7. Conclusion

Digital media art projects frequently encompass a wide range of interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and systemic roles. A/r/cography integrates three key roles – the artist, researcher, and communicator – to support the interplay of artistic practice and research. In addition to these primary roles, many others – such as curators, writers, critics, and historians, among many others – contribute to a network of interconnections. This network is dynamic, allowing its hierarchy, structure, and flow to adapt to interdependencies within the system.

In a/r/cography, progression between stages is not strictly linear and can often move bidirectionally, with even the initial point of inspiration emerging from a prior project. As a result, seemingly unrelated projects (with shared authors) can influence one another through their interconnected processes. Within the broader Conta.ME scope, such was also the case, as the 23 episodes /interviews – a separate creative process altogether – not only heavily influenced BioFlux but also provided the basis for its development.

The act of documenting these processes, including both the creation and communication of the artworks, is as crucial as the documentation of the artworks and the research themselves. Contextualising these processes is equally vital, as they are considered integral components of the project.

BioFlux, thus, emerges as an artistic exploration of memory and identity, offering a multifaceted portrayal of the Portuguese community in Macau through the prism of individual and collective recollections. By weaving together excerpts of 23 interviews, each contributing a distinct thread of individual memory and history, BioFlux captures glimpses of these accounts, fragmented yet interconnected. The generative video artwork becomes a dynamic narrative, where the stream of images and text mirrors the fluidity of memory itself – elusive, mutable, and constantly evolving. In its impressionistic approach, BioFlux does not merely preserve collective memory: it breathes life into it, conveying the complexity of identity shaped by time, place, and experience. It invites audiences to reflect on how memories, fashioned by both personal and communal histories, create a shared sense of belonging that transcends generations.

As such, BioFlux stands as both an artistic and scholarly testament to the enduring significance of memory, offering a view of the rich, ever-evolving identity of the Portuguese community in Macau.

The author welcomes the possibility to present BioFlux to the original interviewees of Conta.ME, allowing their feedback to contribute to the development of a further iteration of the artwork. Thus far, no such opportunity has arisen.

## References

- [1] Bellos, D. (2010). Mathematics, poetry, fiction: the adventure of the Oulipo. *BSHM Bulletin: Journal of the British Society for the History of Mathematics*, 25(2), 104-118. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17498430903489237>
- [2] Brown, A. D., Kouri, N., & Hirst, W. (2012). Memory's malleability: its role in shaping collective memory and social identity. *Frontiers in psychology*, 3, 257.
- [3] Crocetti, E., & Salmela-Aro, K. (2018). The multifaceted nature of identity: Toward integrative perspectives on processes, pathways, and contexts. *European Psychologist*, 23(4), 273-277.
- [4] Dehlinger, H. (2020). Generative Art. *Journal of Mathematics and the Arts*, 14(1-2), 33-36.
- [5] Franken, M. W. M. (2022). Memorie Collettive Fluide: i Fiumi Po e Tevere fra Fascismo e Rappresentazione Letteraria. *Quaestiones Romanicae*, 9(2), 230-246.
- [6] Gaither, S. E. (2020). The multiplicity of belonging: Pushing identity research beyond binary thinking. In M. J. Bernstein, E. L. Haines (Eds.), *Emerging perspectives on self and identity*, 77-88.
- [7] Kambunga, A. P., Winschiers-Theophilus, H., & Smith, R. C. (2020). Participatory memory making: Creating postcolonial dialogic engagements with Namibian youth. In *Proceedings of the 2020 ACM designing interactive systems conference* (pp. 785-797).
- [8] Kang, S. K., & Bodenhausen, G. V. (2015). Multiple identities in social perception and interaction: Challenges and opportunities. *Annual review of psychology*, 66(1), 547-574.
- [9] Kuchina, S. A. (2018). Sobre Poesia Gerativa: Características Estruturais, Estilísticas e Lexicais. *Matlit: Materialidades da Literatura*, 6(1), 73-83. [https://doi.org/10.14195/2182-8830\\_6-1\\_5](https://doi.org/10.14195/2182-8830_6-1_5)
- [10] Lavoie, C., & Sleipness, O. R. (2018). Fluid Memory: Collective Memory and the Mormon Canal System of Cache Valley, Utah. *Landscape Journal*, 37(2), 79-99. <https://doi.org/10.3368/lj.37.2.79>
- [11] Leavy, P. (2020). *Method meets art-arts-based research practice*. Guilford Press.
- [12] O'Sullivan, J., & O'Sullivan, J. (2019). Electronic Literature. *Towards a Digital Poetics: Electronic Literature & Literary Games*, 23-59.
- [13] Plati, A., & Puglisi, A. (2021). Long range correlations and slow time scales in a boundary driven granular model. *Scientific Reports*, 11(1), 14206.
- [14] Pound, E. (1914). Vorticism. *Fortnightly Review*, 96, 461-471. <https://fortnightlyreview.co.uk/vorticism/>
- [15] Rohkrämer, T., & Schulz, F. R. (2009). Space, place and identities. *History Compass*, 7(5), 1338-1349.
- [16] Simonton, D. K. (2022). Creativity. In R. Biswas-Diener & E. Diener (Eds.), *Noba textbook series: Psychology*. DEF Publishers. <http://noba.to/nwzd6yuc>
- [17] Spahr, J. (2001). *Everybody's Autonomy: Connective Reading and Collective Identity*. University of Alabama Press.
- [18] Trichopoulos, G., Alexandridis, G., & Caridakis, G. (2023). A survey on computational and emergent digital storytelling. *Heritage*, 6(2), 1227-1263.
- [19] Veiga, P. A. (2023). Generative Video Art. In A. Brooks (Ed.), *Creating Digitally: Shifting Boundaries: Arts and Technologies – Contemporary Applications and Concepts* (pp. 241-266). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- [20] Veiga, P. A. (2021). Método e registo: Uma proposta de utilização da a/r/cografia e diários digitais de bordo para a investigação centrada em criação e prática artística em média-arte digital. *Rotura – Revista de Comunicação, Cultura e Artes*, 2, 16-24. <https://doi.org/10.34623/y2yd-0x57>
- [21] Veiga, P. A. (2019). A/r/cography: Art, Research and Communication. *Proceedings of ARTECH 2019, Braga, Portugal*, 23-25. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3359852.3359859>
- [22] Vignoles, V. L., Deaux, K., & Snyder, M. (2018). 12 identity: Personal and social. *The Oxford handbook of personality and social psychology*, 289.
- [23] Yasseri, T., Gildersleve, P., & David, L. (2022). Collective memory in the digital age. *Progress in Brain Research*, 274(1), 203-226.
- [24] Yeshurun, Y., Nguyen, M., & Hasson, U. (2021). The default mode network: where the idiosyncratic self meets the shared social world. *Nature reviews neuroscience*, 22(3), 181-192.
- [25] Zhu, H., Qian, J. X., & Chen, X. L. (2010). Place and identity: The rethink of place of European-American human geography. *Human Geography*, 25(6), 1-6.

## Acknowledgements

The author acknowledges the invaluable support of Professor Adérito Fernandes-Marcos and the team members of the project Conta.ME – The Biographical Narrative as an Instrument of Social and Cultural Affirmation for their contributions in conducting the interviews and providing the final digital materials, several of which are integral to BioFlux. Special appreciation is also extended to the University of Saint Joseph for its financial support, which was instrumental in the development of this artwork.

## Bio

Pedro Alves da Veiga is a Portuguese artist and researcher with a PhD in Digital Media-Art. He is a Professor and Sub-Director of the PhD Programme in Digital Media-Art at Aberta University in Lisbon, Portugal, following a two-decade entrepreneurial career in award-winning web design and multimedia. An integrated member of CIAC, the Research Centre in Arts and Communication, and a collaborator of ID+, the Research Institute for Design, Media and Culture, his research explores the impact of attention and experience economies on new media art ecosystems,

alongside hacktivism and activism. His research also focuses on art practice-based research methods, and digital curatorship. His artworks are based on audio-visual generative creative programming, in socially and

politically driven contexts at the intersection of art, science, and technology. He has exhibited in Portugal, Brazil, Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, Russia, China, Thailand, and USA.