CHAPTER 8

Gods and Mathematicians

Antriksh Bali

Abstract

Gods and Mathematicians' is an endless generative, interactive poem developed in Max/MSP as an experiment in surrealism and language development. Built by concatenating over a 100 text files, the poem juxtaposes often-ridiculous and over-the-top imagery with grammatical structures that are meant to evoke humorous, satirical responses and at the same time, encourage thinking outside of conventional norms of what is considered poetry.

Taking on a deeply apocalyptic tone, the poem talks about conflict and how it often stays unresolved owing to inter-personal conflicts or lack of understanding between two different sides.

Broken into two halves, the poem simulates a dialog of sorts between 'gods' and 'mathematicians'. The left side of the poem puts forth the idea that all things are already pre-destined and pre-ordained even though it might be full of conflicts and problematic occurrences. It takes on a more idealistic perception of the world as we know it.

On the other hand, the right-hand side takes on a more 'human' perspective on life, full of biases, anger and pride. It has a very self-centred approach to the world. Yet, the right side somehow feels confused about what it really wants, sometimes even going to the point of ridiculing and mocking the notion of 'benevolent forces'.
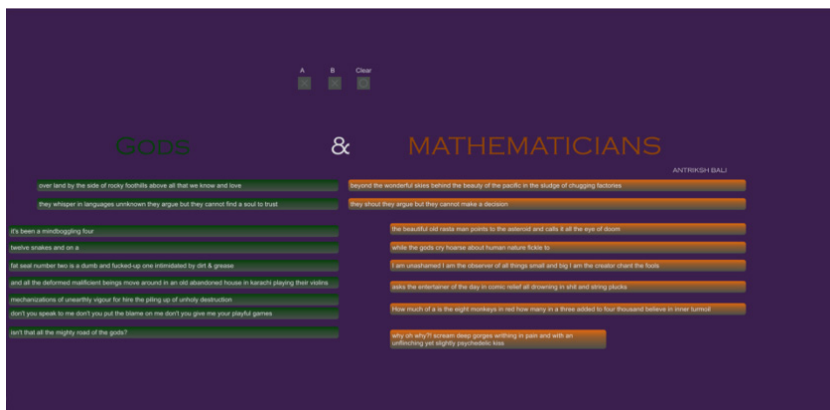
What results is a confusing hodge-podge of phrases, words and sentences that more often than not, make a lot of sense about the world we live in, the different perspectives we have and what happens when opposing ideas clash with each other.

Link to Video Repository

http://dspace.iiti.ac.in:8080/jspui/handle/123456789/10745

Screenshot from Gods & mathematicians

Contributor Biography

Antriksh Bali is an interactive media artist whose work encapsulates generative poetry, text art, audio-visual art installations and video games. He combines old-world vintage sampling and audio synthesis techniques in sound with experimental and surreal generative visual projections. He's also a music producer and composer for film, television and video games with over 10 years of experience creating music and sound design. In 2015, he had the opportunity to collaborate with Native Instruments in helping build a virtual music instrument library based on folk instruments from India. In 2016, he had the opportunity to work with acclaimed Tokyo-based performance artist / visual artists on an animated short film 'Figure A' which won accolades at several festivals around the globe. Being no stranger to interactive mediums, Antriksh Bali has composed music for several video games, written software for interactive art installations and collaborated with spoken word artists on a variety of different works.

He was also awarded the 2019 Music Industry Kanter Award at University of Southern California for his work on Ascension VR which promoted education in entertainment media, and was supported by California Science Center. It made use of voice-recognition technology and the AI Watson created by IBM.