

— Your surprise, chet. Her name is Lil.



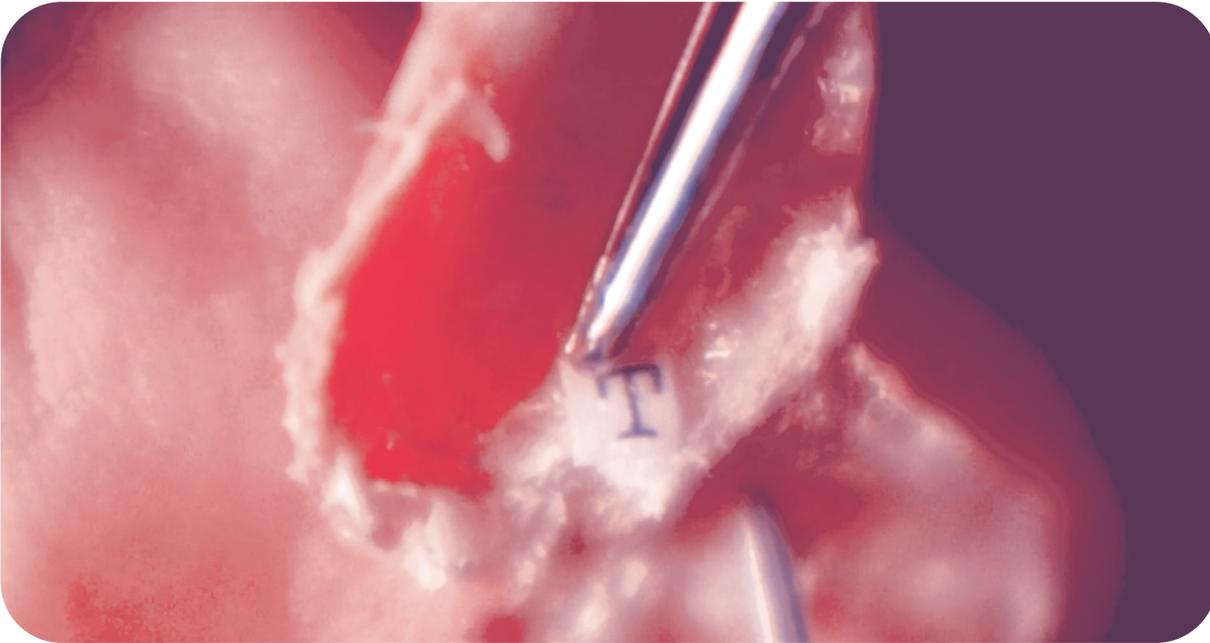
What power does an unintelligible text have?



How do we grapple with literature that doesn't want to be understood?



'Right to opacity' is a foundational part of Caribbean author-theorist Édouard Glissant's work.



Through this idea, he questions whether it is possible—or even ethical—to make oneself legible across cultural lines.

Film has a space in the bottom of the screen reserved for making its verbal text readable in between cultural lines. Subtitles are a transcription tool, with the purpose of eliminating codes to make the text legible. According to the English Thesaurus, “transcription” is a synonym for “image”, as well as “photocopy” and “print”. It is not surprising for anyone who considers reproducibility as a mode of translating. Still, grammar in languages other than English is different. There is a place where the word “text”, for instance, can describe both verbal and nonverbal communication. There is a special occasion when colors, textures and gestures must be read as “text”. The first day of the national exam in Brazil is called “Language, codes and its technologies”, and its guide states that all construction, verbal or not, that constitutes itself as an act of communication can be called a text. Illegible images are read as a text.

In a Sideways Manner
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... is a platform for publishing current activities, research and writing by students of the MA Graphic Design program at the Estonian Academy of Arts.

Readings from a Sideways Manner
João Pedro Nogueira

Presenting the series
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The excerpt behind is sourced from a syllabus presented to students from Bennington College undertaking *The Right to Opacity: Reading Fred Moten and Édouard Glissant*.

During a weekly Monday class, graphic design students gathered to bring and discuss their insights after reading Moten's text *The Case of Blackness*. Many discussions emerged from this group reading, but overall the feeling of contentment for not necessarily understanding was unprecedented.

There was a sense of ease for not grasping all the ideas from a text that didn't necessarily want to be understood by students who were just becoming acquainted with Moten's stature.

LIL walks to them from another room. She goes into a contorted dance. Things we notice: she makes a sour face, she puts one hand in her pocket and makes a fist with the other, while she is doing this, she blinks with both eyes, she is wearing a red wig. At one point during this Cole adds a sentence.

— She's my mother's sister's girl.
Cole holds four fingers in front of his eyes.

ON LIL'S SOUR FACE.

— Remember Lil was wearing a sour face.
— What do you mean?
— Her face had a sour look on it. We're going to have problem with the local authorities. They're not gonna be receptive to the FBI.

ON LIL BLINKING BOTH EYES

— Both eyes blinking means trouble higher up... the eyes of the local authority. A sheriff and a deputy would be my guess.

ON LIL PUTTING ONE HAND IN HER POCKET AND ONE IN A FIST

— If you noticed, she had one hand in her pocket, which means they are hiding something, and the other hand made into a fist, which means they are gonna be Belligerent