# InterPARES 2 Project
**International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems**

## Diplomatic Analysis

## Case Study 01:
## Arbo Cyber, théâtre (?)

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## INTRODUCTION

Arbo Cyber, théâtre (?) was established in Quebec City in 1985. The troupe produced several laboratories, school workshops and performances between 1985 and 2001. Each project involved audience participation and created relationships of "immediacy" through technology. While the group has now suspended its public activities, it is still conducting experimental research. Two members, Lucie Fradet and Robert Faguy, are currently digitizing materials from the last fifteen years worth of creations, and developing new artistic works in the electronic environment. Arbo views this project as more than a digital record with a memory-making purpose; instead, it is understood as a new activity of artistic and documentary creation emphasizing the research dimension of Arbo's work.

The Case Study, and the following diplomatic analysis, focuses specifically on the *Ludosynthèse*, Arbo's interactive and dynamic Web site. The *Ludosynthèse* is comprised of four modules: (1) basic, providing a brief introduction to Arbo Cyber, théâtre (?), its mandate, mission, and member biographies; (2) chronological, presenting the group's activities in a timeline; (3) systematic, documenting Arbo's research activities; and (4) ludic, which inviting the spectator-users to participate in performance-making processes. The group sees the *Ludosynthèse* as a testimony to past performances, providing a representative overview of the group's artistic activities.

## IDENTIFICATION OF RECORD(S)

A record, as defined by the InterPARES glossary, is a document made or received and set aside in the course of a practical activity. A record must also possess all of the following five components, as established by InterPARES 1 research conclusions: fixed content and form, embedded action, archival bond, persons and contexts. The application of the definition of a record to the creator's digital entities is therefore analyzed according to the following parameters:

**1. To be identified as a record, the digital entity must possess fixed content and form,[1] and be affixed to a stable medium (or physical carrier).**

The *Ludosynthèse* is currently stored on a computer hard-drive; once it goes "live," it will be hosted on the Universtité Laval server. The Web site's medium is thus stable.

The form of the *Ludosynthèse* is also fixed, and its content is stable. While Arbo argues that users can interact with the site, the by-products of these interactions are not contained within the site.

**2. A record must also participate in an action, defined as the conscious exercise of will by an officer of the creator or by an external person, aimed to create, maintain, modify or extinguish situations. A record results as an unintended by-product or product of the action.**

The Web site participates in Arbo's publication activity, which is one of the group's main activities.[2] As such, the *Ludosynthèse* is therefore not a by-product, but an end-product. The entities created were intended products, and the creators have recreated documents that were incomplete or that did not conform to Arbo's standard form of representation to assure the aestheticism and representativeness of testimonies. The artists also produce new documents specifically that recreate missing links to demonstrate the artistic process.[3] The *Ludosynthèse* does not, therefore, satisfy this requirement of a record.

**3. A record must possess an archival bond, which is the relationship that links each record to the previous and subsequent record of the same action and, incrementally, to all the records which participate in the same activity. The archival bond is originary (i.e., it comes into existence when a record is made or received and set aside), necessary (i.e., it exists for every record), and determined (i.e., it is characterized by the purpose of the record).**

The *Ludosynthèse* possesses no archival bond, as the site in an anonymous entity; "no link is established beyond the fact that the information in the *Ludosynthèse* has essentially come from the fonds."[4] This link too, is not apparent or to users, who also have no access to the group's analog fonds. The Web site thus does not satisfy this third requirement of a record.

**4. Record creation must involve at least three persons, whether or not they explicitly appear in the record itself. These persons are the author, addressee and writer; in the electronic environment, one must also take into account two additional necessary persons: the creator and the originator.**

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[1] The InterPARES1 Authenticity Task Force has defined fixed form as the following: 1) binary content of the record, including indicators of documentary form, must be stored in a manner that ensures it remains complete and unaltered, and 2) technology must be maintained and procedures defined and enforced to ensure that the content is presented or rendered with the same documentary form it had when set aside. (See ATF Research Methodology Statement, available at: http://www.interpares.org/documents/interpares_ResearchMethodologyStatement.pdf).

[2] See Case Study 01 Final Report, pp. 18-20; other main activities include administration, research, performance and development.(see descriptions on pp. 15-18 in the final report).

[3] See Ibid., p. 4.

[4] Ibid., p. 33.

- The record's **author** is the physical or juridical person having the authority and capacity to issue the record or in whose name or by whose command the record has been issued.

  Arbo Cyber, théâtre (?) is the author of the *Ludosynthèse*.

- The **addressee** the physical or juridical person(s) to whom the record is directed or for whom the record is intended.

  The general public is the addressee of the *Ludosynthèse*.

- The **writer** is the physical or juridical person having the authority and capacity to articulate the content of the record.

  Robert Faguy and Lucie Fradet, two artists remaining in Arbo Cyber, théâtre (?), are working together to create the *Ludosynthèse*.

- The **creator** is the person in whose fonds the record exists.

  The Ludosynthese is found in the fonds of Arbo Cyber, théâtre (?).

- The **originator** is the person to whom the Internet account issuing or the server holding the record belongs.

  Currently, the *Ludosynthèse* does not reside on a server; it is not yet "live," and is stored on a computer hard-drive. When the *Ludosynthèse* goes "live," it will be hosted on the Université Laval server.

**5. Finally, a record must possess an identifiable context, defined as the framework in which the action in which the record participates takes place. The types of context include juridical-administrative, provenancial, procedural, documentary, and technological.**

- The **juridical-administrative context** is the legal and organizational system in which the creating body belongs.

  In November 1986, Arbo Cyber, théâtre (?) became a non-profit group, and soon afterwards changed its status to charity organization. This status created certain funding restrictions and necessitated specific reporting obligations. The group is subject to several legal obligations, including copyright and disposition laws, employee laws, and the stipulations of UDA, the union representing French artists in Quebec and Canada.[5]

- The **provenancial context** refers to the creating body, its mandate, structure and functions.

  Arbo Cyber, théâtre (?) was founded in 1985. The group's aims include: to gather persons interested in researching all aspects of theatre production through a multi-disciplinary

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[5] See Ibid., pp. 13-14. A full listing of all applicable laws is found on page 14 of the final report.

perspective; to produce and present resulting performances to the public; to offer workshops towards this aim; to publish all documents that bear witness to these artistic creations, and any associated critical or theoretical works; and to interact with the audience. The group's five main activities are administration, research, performance, development and publication.

- The **procedural context** comprises the business procedure in the course of which the record is created.

   The creator's activities can be broken down in the following **procedural phases** of diplomatic analysis:[6]

   a. **Initiative**: the introductory phase of any procedure is "constituted by those acts, written and/or oral, which start the mechanism of the procedure."[7]

      The initiative phase involves the conception, research and exploration of an idea by the group.

   b. **Inquiry**: this preliminary phase "is constituted by the collection of the elements necessary to evaluate the situation."[8]

      The inquiry phase involves the sending of the group's proposal to granting organizations.

   c. **Consultation**: this phase is "constituted by the collection of opinions and advice after all the relevant data has been assembled."[9]

      Once budgetary limitations are known, the group rethinks the project at the start of what it calls the "production phase," which can be understood as the consultative phase.

   d. **Deliberation**: this phase is "constituted by the final decision-making."[10]

      In the deliberation phase, the group makes final decisions involved in mounting the performance.

   e. **Deliberation control**: this phase is "constituted by the control exercised by a physical or juridical person different from the author of the document embodying the transaction, on the substance of the deliberations and/or on its forms."[11]

      Deliberation control involves rehearsals, lectures, and "labs" where feedback is solicited. There is no source of control at this phase (i.e., no juridical person different from the

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[6] The phases of procedure as dictated by Diplomatic Analysis; see Luciana Duranti, *Diplomatics: New Uses for an Old Science* (Lanham, Maryland and London: The Scarecrow Press in association with the Society of American Archivists and the Association of Canadian Archivists, 1998), 115.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.

author who exercises control), but the UDA controls the timing of the rehearsals, and preliminary audience feedback in labs may indicate how effective a performance may be.

f. **Execution**: "the documents created in this phase are the originals of those embodying the transactions."[12] In other words, the execution phase results in the issuing of the first record capable of producing the consequences intended by its author.

The Execution phase comprises all the actions giving formal character to the transaction; Arbo's transaction is the performance as a project, and the records generated are recordings of the performances. The documentation activities generating the *Ludosynthèse* are not part of the group's original activities generating the *Ludosynthèse* are not part of the group's original activities, as the *Ludosynthèse* was created subsequently as a publication of activities.

- The **documentary context** is defined as the archival fonds to which a record belongs and its internal structure.

  Arbo promotes the reuse of performance material in subsequent projects; this includes databases, text, digital photographs, sound recordings, lectures, and videos. This material is found in the group's fonds, and is currently stored in one of the artist's homes. The group is considering the deposit of this material at Aparte, a theatre resource organization that preserves the history of Quebec theatre.[13]

- **The technological context** is defined as the characteristics of the technological components of an electronic computing system in which records are created.

  Sound, video, radio, and new multi-media technology are used during an Arbo project.[14] Arbo feels that most recording technologies only offer a singular viewpoint and are therefore incapable of capturing an accurate record of any one project.


**CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the above diplomatic analysis, it is clear that the *Ludosynthèse* is an autonomous entity, and not generated as the by-products of the group's research or performance activities; instead, original records are being modified and edited for publication on the Web site.

The Web site, as it is currently, is a potential record, as it has been specifically constructed as a publication, rather than having been set aside during the course of any of the activities documented. If Arbo was to include the by-products of user-spectator interaction, the *Ludosynthèse* could then be considered a continuation of Arbo's artistic activities and their pursuit of interactivity. As it is, the *Ludosynthèse* does not constitute a portal to records

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[12] Ibid., 116.
[13] See Case Study 01 Final Report, p. 22.
[14] The limitations of Web and recording technology, with respect to its capacity to convey the dynamism of any Arbo project and to recreate the interactive elements of the projects, are noted in the final report (see p. 40.)

generated as by-products of Arbo's past activities, because it is instead content pulled from those records, and often altered for publication. Arbo is not using the *Ludosynthèse* as an active record of their activities since the group has disbanded and ceased all activities except publication.

Based on the above analysis our recommendations for preservation include the following:

1. To establish formal policy and standardized procedures with respect to technological obsolescence, the preserver:

   a. needs to be aware of any technological changes, and
   b. must prepare for necessary conversion or migration.