HARRY, ZELDA AND ANTOINETTE

Approaches to Shape and Perform Narrative
During the course of working on *Permutations*, where I made one film a day for a year, I became fascinated with the idea of narration, where this legibility happens and how.

I had for some time been thinking about rules-based art, algorithms and ideas for a database cinema, which I had been using in various projects. My interest in cinema had now morphed into new media and the venues for the works I was making tended to be museums, Kunsthalle, galleries. In fact I debuted *Permutations* at a gallery, the Sara Meltzer Gallery in New York.

I wanted to proceed with the ideas from *Permutations* in an internalized way, procedurally, not literally. I wanted to engage these strategies as approaches to shape, and perform narrative. I had written a film scenario for *Harry, Zelda and Antoinette* called *Zanzibar*, my last great effort at screenwriting. I knew the dramaturgy very well. But again, the process of financing, even getting some good interest in the script, was achingly slow. So after a few years and having done *Permutations* and *Talk Show*, it occurred to me to make the film myself and to work with all the restrictions that entailed.

The recording event in this new approach would now also more prominently need to become an event of continuous narration. The *Permutations* were in a sense one scene, one mise-en-scène, presented as an all-at-once film. This new work would need the momentum of story, scene following scene.

The work consists of six parts, each composed of some twelve to twenty multiscreen films. I released it in two ways: first, compiled as a single film, and second, using my Max MSP player, with each film or video playing simultaneously as a discrete file, one next to the other, cycling through each audio track, one after the other, until that set finished and the next set of videos started.

The work, initially a study for *Zanzibar*, became a work in its own right about narrative as a performed event. It is cinema both as a language always entwined with its technological armature and an event of narration of cinema itself.

Two brothers, one an intellectual, the other, a man of appetite. Two wives, an artist and a madame. Three children—one shared between them. Each character in love and in search of beauty and ideals.