V.

ℕᴀɴɴɪ ℬᴀʟᴇꜱᴛʀɪɴɪ

TAPE MARK I

head pressed on shoulder thirty times
brighter than the sun I envisage their return
until he moved his fingers slowly and while the multitude
of things comes into being at the summit of the cloud
they all return to their roots and take on
the well-known mushroom shape trying to grasp

hair between lips they all return
to their roots in the blinding ball of fire
I envisage their return until he moved his fingers
slowly and although things flourish
takes on the well-known mushroom shape trying
to grasp while the multitude of things comes into being

in the blinding fireball I envisage
their return when it reaches the stratosphere
while the multitude
of things comes into being head pressed
on shoulder thirty times brighter than the sun
they all return to their roots hair
between lips takes on the well-known mushroom shape

they lay motionless without speaking thirty times
brighter than the sun they all return
to their roots head pressed on shoulder
they take on the well-known mushroom shape trying
to grasp and although things flourish
they expand rapidly hair between lips

while the multitude of things comes into being
in the blinding
ball of fire they all return
to their roots they expand rapidly until he moved
his fingers slowly when it reached the stratosphere
and lay motionless without speaking thirty times
brighter than the sun trying to grasp

I envisage their return until he moved his fingers
slowly in the blinding ball of fire
they all return to their roots hair
between lips and thirty times brighter than the sun
lay motionless without speaking they expand
rapidly trying to grasp the summit

Over the last fifty years, literature and art have always taken an acute interest in the under-pinnings of the imaginative and constructive processes that shape creativity in these realms, processes that can be summarised in terms of successive phases of disassembling pre-existing material, then rearranging this to produce a creative result.

We have seen combinatorial experiments, along different lines and with varying intentions: Mallarmé's Livre, *work by Raymond Roussel, Arp, Joyce and Pound, the "variations" by Ungaretti, Leiris and Queneau, not to mention the "nouveau roman" narrators, along with Americans Burroughs and Corso, or Heissenbüttel and other Germans, and our own Sanguineti, Vivaldi and Porta. Similar types of experimentation have also had a profound and far-reaching influence on painting (Klee, Dubuffet …), sculpture and architecture, and are even more intrinsic to all music after Schoenberg.*

This context of exploration is the backdrop against which this experiment was carried out, using a computer to combine various linguistic elements according to a predetermined programme.

It is important to emphasise that there is a pronounced difference between this project and other linguistic experiments conducted in the field of cybernetics. In this case, no attempt was made to imitate actual human procedures using the computer; instead the experiment simply draws on the ability of the electronic device ability to carry out certain complex operations inherent to poetic techniques extremely rapidly.

This makes clear that it is both useful and legitimate to deploy methods and means drawn from cutting-edge science and technology as a complement to the work of literary and artistic creation, in keeping with the industrial civilisation in which we live.

Fig. 2 and Fig.3: Nanni Balestrini (centre) and Umberto Eco (right) with IBM engineer Alberto Noris (left) in October 1961 during the realisation of Tape Mark I in the computer centre of the Bank Cassa di Risparmio delle Province Lombarde in Miletto.