



Fontenay-le-Comte
Vendée

DIX

game manual



Made with
GAMEDEVELOP

diX

diX.thefrogstudio.net - 2013 10 26

Game Manual Conception

Scribus - www.scribus.net

Gimp - www.gimp.org

Video Game Conception

Game Engine

Game Develop - www.compilgames.net

Visuals

Gimp - www.gimp.org

Fonts

Dafont - www.dafont.com

Background Music

Music maker diX - www.magix.com

Sound Effects

Audacity - www.audacity.org

CPA Design - www.freesound.org

Installer

Install Creator - www.clickteam.com

Game Manual : creative commons 3.0 by nc sa

Video Game : creative commons 3.0 by sa nc nd





Summary

Game system	07
Characters	99
Frequently asked questions	99
Conception	99
Visuals	99
Walkthrough	99





Game System

This section describes the game and its mechanisms.
If you wish to know how to play it,
without getting spoiled in the process,
it is the part of the manual to read.



Ingame objectives

You are imprisoned inside the medialibrary.



To ease the specter blocking the exit, you must collect the ten pieces of a poem, dispatched through the structure.



To get them, you must resolve the ten minigames among the five main rooms, based on logic and rules of the medialibrary. Seconday hints are hidden in the backgrounds, to help you understand what to do.





A - Use the mouse to move from screen to screen, to activate objects and resolve puzzles

B - A small blue flame hints on a piece of poem

C - The big blue flame hints on at least one remaining secret

D - Your inventory opens up when touching "Invent.". Consult your secondary hints or teleport directly to any floor.

E - A backup is created at each change of room. Online, this backup disappears when the browser is closed

F - Get back to titlescreen, with the lowest-right button, to load the backup

Game time

The time needed to complete the game goes from 40 minutes to one hour. There is no Game Over, failure implying no penalty. If you are blocked at some point, consult "Walkthrough".



Controls

DIX is a Point'n Click (Monkey Island, The Walking Dead), one of the oldest types in the young industry of videogames.

With the mouse only, the player moves from screen to screen, and interact in one click with elements in the background. The game is compatible with mouse and tactile, any action requiring the same one button. This enables the game to be enjoyed on a wider range of terminals (computer, mobile phone, tablets, etc.).



Origins

DIX was made to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the medialibrary Jim-Dandurand, of Fontenay-le-Comte.

The medialibrary is the canvas of the ingame progress, and also serves as bas concept for all interactions. The minigames are inspired from activities, rules and daily running of the medialibrary. The goals are to improve the familiarity



between the structure and its users, and its services. This is another way to communicate opening hours, borrowing rules or available documents.

The game makes use of historical facts and famous citizens of the city. With its unique heritage, Fontenay-le-Comte abounds of ancient places, written legacy and structures hundreds of years old.



The game looks into this past its story elements, but also its visuals. Several parts of the interface come from 16th century writings, for instance the arabesques. The two "heroes" of the game are real historical characters, forgotten by History, despite being well-known in their time.

Technologies

DIX uses HTML5, which offers advanced interactions within Internet browsers. It replaces Flash in website conception.

The game in itself has been made with Game Develop, a free software, designed by Florian Rival.

His software offers Windows, Linux and web export of a project. This enables online gaming, without installation, and executables, to download and install locally. The player has then the choice of its platform, between immediate access and better performances.

The exported project is writable on USB key or disk, to be distributed during events for instance.



Characters

This section describes the game characters.
You will learn more about them and their secrets.
Beware not to be spoiled too early.



The Specter

He is the one who's keeping you locked inside the medialibrary. He is unable to speak or interact directly. But he is the creator of the spectral elements dispatched in the medialibrary.

He's waiting for something from you, and won't let you go before he obtains it. While sinister, he doesn't seem aggressive. At worst, strong-willed.





He's the phantom of André de Rivaudeau, a classical writer who knew some fame during the sixteenth century. Then he was forgotten, his work eclipsed by those of Jean Racine, on identical subjects, published one century after his death.

There is no illustration or painting of him, and very few traces remain of his work. His face has then to be invented. The phantomatic aspect has the great advantage to offer him a generic appearance, simple enough to let some space to imagination. A specter wandering in 16th century clothes might not have been taken very seriously by the player.

Why an obscur author than another more famous?

His identity had to remain a mystery, even for the most expert in local history. The puzzles being based on his writings and personnal story, well-known creations would have spoiled the secret too early. Finally, to shed some light on a forgotten author brings some originality... and tragic... to the game.

A posthume homage, in a way.

The Lady

Hidden in the underground level of the medialibrary, she's despairing herself, waiting for the injustice which stroke her be corrected.

As mute as the specter at the main door, she's stalking you among the shelves.

Will you succeed in answering her plea?





*At the origins of the specter's actions, and of the player's
locked-down in the medialibrary state, this lady is André de
Riveaudeau's spouse.*

*If her husband has only been forgotten as a writer, she has been
totally erased from History book. More specifically, her name is
referenced nowhere, even in genealogic archives.*

*Strongly decided to correct this wrong-doing, far more
unacceptable in the eyes of the early feminist he is than his own
lack of fame, André's phantom transforms the whole
medialibrary into a labyrinth of words.*

*By trapping the player, he hopes his prisoner will understand
what is expected from him, and he will do so accordingly. After
all, it's only a matter of writing a first name in a genealogy book.*

*But this objective gets trickier, when you are a mute specter, and
the first name to write is unknown to all...*





Frequently Asked Questions

This section details the recurring questions you might ask yourself about the game.

Technical issues, tips, web links, etc.

If you encounter a difficulty, this is the part to check.



I'm stuck somewhere in the game!

Click on the menu Walkthrough. As the name suggests, you will find inside a detailed walkthrough about the game, from start to finish, room by room.

Can't we play it offline?

Yes, you can. This is even advised for older computers. An executable with build-in installer is available for free on the website, look into the FAQ section.

Is there any other ingame language?

At the moment, only french and english translations are available. Other languages could be added ingame. But we need translators first...

I hear no sound!

The music cannot be played within certain browsers. We advise you to use Mozilla Firefox, to enjoy an better optimized game experience.

You can also download the executable version, to use the full capabilities of your hardware.

Texts are out of the screen!

Some browsers ignore additionnal fonts. If your ingame texts are too big, play the game again with Mozilla Firefox. You can also download the executable version, which include all the necessary fonts.

The game crashes after a certain time of play!

Some low-cost graphic cards, namely Intel HD series, seem to generate a memory leak. This memory leak forces DIX to use



more and more RAM, until fill it totally. Windows then forces a game crash, to protect the other processes of the computer.

This issue being specific to a graphic card's model, there is nothing we can do on our side, except waiting for a possible update from the manufacturer. If you encounter this problem, launch again the game, and use the gamesave to continue your play where it crashed.

Why is the game so slow on old computers?

Within an internet browser, DIX makes use of the computer's processor to manipulate all the game. It cannot tap into the graphic card's full power, only its base functions.

We advise you to play on a double-core processor, or download an executable version (Windows or Linux). The latter is able to make full use of the graphic card's power, relieving the main processor of heavier operations.

Why does the game run better on Firefox?

Internet is worldwide. It works with numerous standards to remain compliant with various machines, in different languages. So there are lots of rules that browsers must follow, like media managing.

It means some browsers accept what others refuse, mostly because of programming copyrights. In the present case, online version of DIX is made in HTML5, a modern Internet programming language, successor of HTML4, still widely used.

This language enforces certain rules for worldwide compatibility, like sound file extension and fonts. But those constraints are partly ignored by some browsers, like Internet Explorer. Those issues being linked to the browser itself, they can only be resolved by the browser's editor.

Firefox being free, largely available and open-source, DIX has been developed on its basis, until all other browsers follow the same rules.

How has this game been made?

DIX has been made with opensource free softwares:

- Game Develop for the game engine
- Gimp for the visuals
- Dafont.com for specific fonts
- Freesound.org for the sound effects
- InstallCreator for the Windows Installer

The only exception is the background musics, made with Magix Music Maker, a song maker software for general audience.

What are the end-user rights?

DIX is under Creative Commons 3.0 BY NC ND SA. Those signs mean the game must be redistributed under the same conditions (non-commercial, credit the original author).

For instance, sell the game on a CDrom is forbidden. But distributing this CDrom for free is authorized and asked, as long as we are credited as the original creators.

How to contact the game's creators?

About general questions:

Médiathèque Jim-Dandurand

mediatheque.accueil@ville-fontenaylecomte.fr

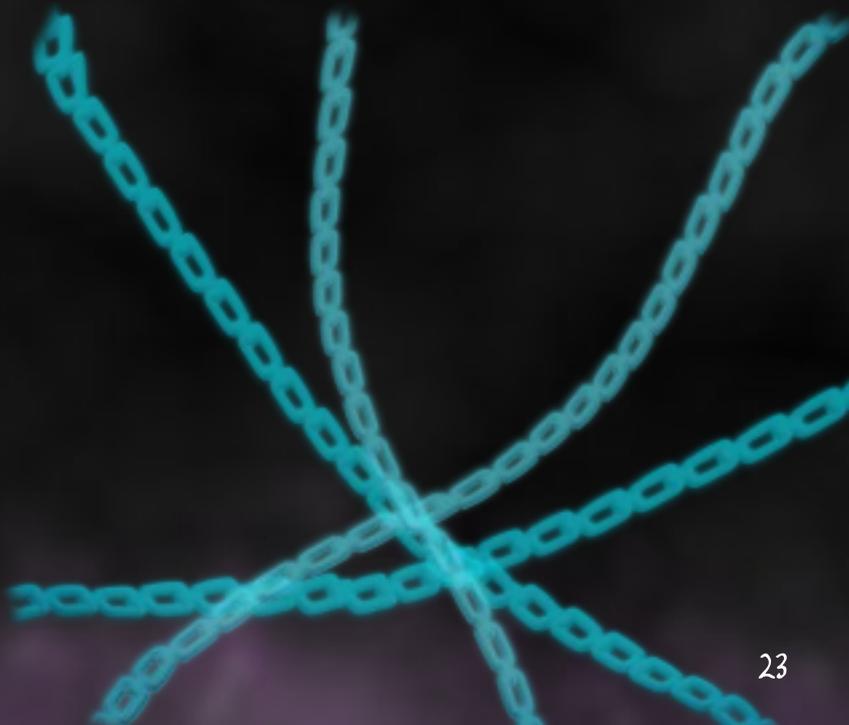
About official demands:

Service Communication de la Ville de Fontenay-le-Comte

communication@ville-fontenaylecomte.fr

About technical questions (bug report, update,
programming):

contact@dix.thefrogstudio.net







Conception

This section presents a summary about the conception of the game. To learn more about the creation of DIX, the tools and methods used, and the historical facts at the core of the story.



Genesis of the game

At the origin of DIX, there is an anniversary. The one of medialibrary Jim-Dandurand, from the city of Fontenay-le-Comte. For its ten years, several events were organized. Like the conception of a videogame using the medialibrary and local history as core concepts.

The objective was to present the structure, its daily working and its catalogue. We had to integrate the aspects of the medialibrary, in a ludic and original way. In addition, its scenario should speak about the local history, while the game remaining playable by any. All this in one month, with legal tools only.

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Historical researches

The first step was to build the historical basis.

Fontenay-le-Comte is a city with a rich legacy, which has made quite a mark in France History. Its most famous citizens, Viète and Rabelais among others, modeled their respective times and influenced their successors. To make a game about their works seemed obvious. Except that...

Except that well-known characters imply a colossal amount of work to be integrated. We would have to check each ingame elements for its historic veracity, their coherence with game mechanics, and of course, their ludic appeal. A less famous hero would resolve all those issues.

The medialibrary being first and foremost a library, the book (and the writer) had to be a central theme. After listing all the more or less famous writers of the city, their personal history has been checked. All were remarkable individuals of their time, but not remarkable enough to assess a place in general history.

We had a good selection of interesting authors, but sufficiently unknown to adapt them into video game material. With a good margin of error... and creativity.

The first idea presented a poet who, unable to send his last words to his lover, died on a regret. This poem, forgotten by all, remained lost among the ancient documents from the medialibrary. The player had to find this poem, and to give it to the good person, so the phantom would be put at ease.

Of course, chances to find a real person matching this story were very small. But this starting point led us to the sixteenth century, and to a particular author: André de Riveaudeau.



History and Fiction

André de Rivaudeau knew success in his lifetime. He was close to the Tiraqueau family, might have frequented Viete and Rabelais, and often illustrated himself for religious tolerance (France was at that time plagued with catholic versus protestants opposition), but also for woman condition. He took the side of renied or unlucky spouses.

He took part in the rediscovery of greek litterature, translating and annoting famous writings. He is the author of the first french tragedy, "Aman, de la perfidie".



Alas for him, Jean Racine's work, born one century later, sent all his work into oblivion.

We had the foundations of a bitter spirit, author in his life, lover of poems and grand causes. Ironically, the most interesting about him wasn't him... but his spouse!

She is absolutely unknown, despite being with him all her life, and having given him two children! There is no hint about her birth or death. Even her firstname. We finally had our historical background, our heroes and our drive.



Genre and Tools

The pitch was settled: the player will help the phantom of a 16th writer to make his spouse's name be remembered.

We needed then to build a game system, made of simple rules and clear principles, so anybody could play it.. to completion. There are dozens of genre in videogames, which interbreed for more variety. But we had specific constraints. The game will be playable by all audience, short, will take place in the medialibrary and present local resources.



The first point is central. "Playable by all audience" implies that anybody, used to videogames or not, can make progress. The use, installation and navigation inside the

game must be easy enough for a beginner. Excluding action and rpg games, given their complexity and playtime.

Remained then the Point'n Click.

In that type of game, the player explore a world with the mouse, moving from screen to screen, resolving puzzles, to progress in the story. *Myst* or *Monkey Island* for instance. That type of game is simple to play: we click everywhere until something happens. It fits perfectly to tactile inputs, offering a wider diffusion.

The type of game fixed, we had to find the perfect tools.

Our choice stopped on Game Develop, a 2D game engine. It's a free software, for both personal and commercial use, all in french. He designed mainly for action and platform games, but works perfectly for more static creations.

The visuals would be made by the obvious option: Gimp. This software opensource and free is equivalent to Photoshop.

The sound design has been made with Music maker, from Magix. A music software. The sound effects come from freesound.org, a free of charge sounds website.

The installator has been managed by InstallCreator, a free software from Clickteam, widely used.



Choices of Gameplay

A Point'n Click is a suite of screens

following a story. Between each scenario's node, a puzzle prevents the player to advance, and he must explore the surroundings to find the solution. In DIX's case, it had to remain simple and easy. Difficulty pushes back beginners, and extends the playtime. Same for complex instructions.

The game should stay playable by anyone. Since the game would be available on Internet, an english translation is a necessity. Implying a minimal quantity of words to translate. Finally, the medialibrary catalogue must be shown.



The game was then designed as follows:

- a medialibrary recreated ingame through pictures
- Minigames, about aspects of its daily working
- Interactive elements linked to historical background
- The game's title must be present within the game (DIX = 10)

Ten minigames, illustrating the activities and the services of the medialibrary, have been designed. Each minigame unlocks a piece of poem. The reassembled poem reassembled, one letter of each piece lights up in front of the underground access door, so the player could spell a firstname. This firstname will then be written into a genealogic chronicle.

Several secondary hints will help the player to understand what he has to do. Finally, other minigames restrict the access to certain zones, to break monotony.

Each puzzle is resolved through left clicks. But each minigame is unique in its progress, giving the illusion of different activities. With the differences in context and presence, the player really thinks he's performing



different actions, while using the same button.

The minigames draw inspiration from the aspects of the medialibrary. The opening hours to open the floors, the paintings to link to their description, or Andre Popp's songs (who gave its name to the phonotheque) are some examples of use of this context.

They respect the link with the scenario local history. The documents in the Adult section are linked to André de Rivaudeau's personal history. The kamishibai in Events room is a simplified retelling of the author's life. The ancient books do exist in the catalogue. The underground books especially, are reproductions of real books.

The interface is inspired by historic designs. The arabesques are drawn from books of the sixteenth century, for some from Rivaudeau works themselves. Fonts are lisible while in context. Interactive elements are identified from the spectral appearance. Except those who are hidden in the background, forcing the player to look everywhere as a detective.

The background music builds the tone, with a theme for each floor, and a common one evoking mystery and unknown.

Finally, a website has been made to assess an online presence. With the exporting function of Game Develop, an HTML5 version has been uploaded online, in addition of Windows and Linux installers. The website contains the same information contained in this manual, in less details. Using the online game guide, any visitor can appreciate DIX.



Public Tests

Even in completed state, the work continues. No game is really achieved without several public playtests. Many details evade the game designer's vigilance. To let the game into others' hands, offer a new way to look at the creation. Highlighting issues he didn't notice by himself. In DIX's case, the public playtests revealed several indirect issues.

The lack of directions was making the neophyte player's progress harder. He didn't knew what to do, how to dot it, and why. From the website, he could check the explicative texts. But in the Windows version, he could only count on his videogame experience, and his curiosity.

Some minigames revealed being harder than expected, depending on the player's level. Hints weren't always evocative enough.

Technical issues showed up. A glitch with low-entry graphic cards provoked a forced shutdown of the game, after a certain playtime. The player had to redo the whole game from the begining. A save system, unnecessary given the shortness of the game, became mandatory.



Fonts and sounds were lagging too much in HTML5.

The game in itself has been well-received. The ingame



progress was fast, as soon the basics understood, and the players completed the game nevertheless. The public testing enabled a better refining of the project, and increasing its appeal.

Post-mortem

A "Post-Mortem" is conducted after the release of the game, when the creators have enough feedback. Last phase of the project, an appraisal is made about what has worked and what hasn't, to resolve it for the next project.

What did we learn from DIX?

First and foremost, never underestimate the delays. Intended on one month, the definitive version, counting all additions and corrections, has been released three months later. This additional delay hasn't been entirely dedicated to the project, some issues being tied to the game engine itself. We had to wait for the updates to be available first. Anyway, for the next project, a six-month window will be preferred.

Another learned fact from DIX is the importance of public testing. The "QA" in professional terms is an essential phase of the development process. Even more in videogame development! While a game in itself can be playable, its details determine his final quality.

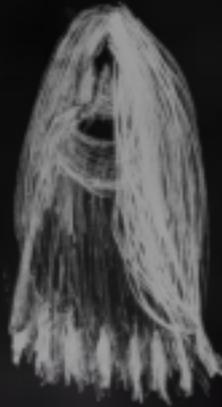
The conception of this manual is also a non-foreseen consequence. The website should have stayed the only external source, decreasing the workload. But here again, playtests revealed how much important a





Visuals

This section lists the different visuals made for the game.
Including the promotional poster.







DIX

How to play

Collect the ten pieces of puzzle hidden in the manufactory

Je le sa
Et tout
est

ACCES STAGES

INVENTE

INVENTE

13:00

Rares Documents de la Manufacture
EXPOSITION

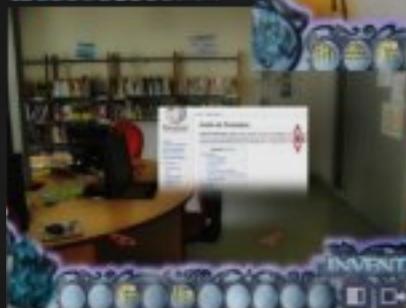
INVENTE

INVENTE

INVENTE

INVENTE

INVENTE



DIX



Made with
GAMEDEVELOP



Fontenay-le-Comte
Vendée



mozilla
Firefox



Windows



Linux Mint
From freedom comes elegance



Walkthrough

This section describes the walkthrough to complete the game.

If you're stuck at some point, you don't understand what to do next, or simply check if you didn't miss anything, feel free to consult this part.



Game Main Objectives

You must put at ease the spirit preventing you to get out of the medialibrary. To do so, ten pieces from an old poem are dispatched among the floors. Each piece is obtained after the completion of a minigame about the medialibrary's rules. There are also several clues in the shelves, to help you guess the good answer. They are put in your inventory when discovered. The big blue flame in the bottom-left of the screen highlights a room hiding something still waiting to be done.

First Piece

Floor: 0 - **Room:** Events room

A line of empty paintings are waiting for their respective portraits. Click on the pile of portraits to begin. Then click on the empty painting matching the short text to the portrait. After the seven portraits in their right place, click on the second from the right to obtain the piece of poem.

Second Piece

Floor: 0 - **Room:** Welcome desk

A subscriber may borrow up to ten documents, except softwares and newspapers. A poster near the desk presents this principle. Click on the pile of documents. Documents appears at the bottom of the screen. Click on those to borrow ten of them. Click on the user card to confirm. If there is no borrowable document at the bottom of the screen, click one of them to put it on the desk. Click it again to remove it.

The Pen

Floor: 0 - **Room:** Newspaper room

You need a pen to complete the final trial. One of the tables

holds a pen on a stand. Add it to your inventory with a click.

Third Piece

Floor: 0 - **Room:** Multimedia room

Click on the computer screen to begin. Several words appear on the screen, symbolizing authorized and forbidden behaviors on computers. The good behaviors increase the green bar. The bad behaviors increase the red bar. The minigame is lost when the red bar is filled. A filled green bar completes the minigame, and unlocks the door to the computer's central unit. Click under the screen, to access the computer's central unit, and click on the piece of poem.

Fourth Piece

Floor: 0 - **Room:** Legacy room

Move to the large books labelled "OF". Those are binded old newspapers. Their respective years are all flushed out. You must put them back in order, from the oldest to the latest. Click on the right year to validate it. Each right year is erased from the remaining ones. The leftest year is 1995. The rightest is 2004. The years in order, the piece appears. Click on it.

Floor Access

Floor: 0 - **Room:** Welcome desk

The door to upper levels is sealed by spectral chains. To make them disappear, you must match the clock in the reception to the opening hours of the medialibrary. Those hours are shown on the door to upper levels. Click on the clock in the reception to begin the minigame. Click on each number to set them accordingly to the current day.

Fifth Piece

Floor: 1 - **Room:** Youth section, desk

Four books are misplaced. Find the blue documents, to replace them in their shelf: Tom Sawyer to romans, Asterix in "Bande Dessinée", Racine's Esther to Theater, just before the event room, and the encyclopedia in the study room.

Sixth Piece

Floor: 1 - **Room:** Youth section, toddler room

Click on the books. Baby books are falling from above, piling themselves on the floor instead of being placed in the correct box. Use Drag-and-drop to put them back in their correct box. The piece of poem will eventually be accessible. Click on it.

Seventh Piece

Floor: 1 - **Room:** Youth section, events room

Pictures from a kamishibai are floating around the screen. Retell the story by clicking on the pictures in the right order: Man from front, Man who's writing, Man and woman looking at a book, Man and woman with children, Man get spoiled of success, Tombstones with one half-destroyed.

Eighth Piece

Floor: 2 - **Room:** Adult section, desk

An exhibition of rare documents must be prepared. For this, collect five documents among the shelves. Search into Romans, Fond Vendeen, Sports, Histoire and Workroom's entry shelves. Go back to the welcome desk, to see the piece of poem, and click on it.

Ninth Piece

Floor: 3 - **Room:** Phonothèque, listening point

You must link some musics from Andre Popp, a fontenaisian composer, to their albums. First, find those five CDs. They are

hidden in the presentation table, in the lower part of the bookshelf, inside the audio CD player, then in the Jazz and Children shelves. Get back to the listening point and click on it. Click on the track number to play the music. Click on the cover to browse the albums. When the right album selected, after a two seconds delay, it is withdrawn from the list. You can also procede by elimination. The five songs identified, the piece of poem appears inside the listening point.

Tenth Piece

Floor: 3 - Room: Repair room, worktable

A book is waiting to be repaired. Use the tools scattered around. Split the book in pieces with the cutter, clicking on it two times. Use the glue then the cardboard sheets. Use the glue again, and click on the pages. Click on the book. Use the red band. Click on the barcode, then on the plastic film. Finally, click on the book. Click to obtain the piece of poem.

Underground Access

Floor: 0 - Room: Underground access door

With ten pieces, you can open the door to the underground storage. Click on the door after the upper levels access door. The poem is re-assembled, and ten letters light up. Click on them to form "florestine". The door unlocks itself.

The Last Trial

Floor: -1 - Room: Underground storage, rightest shelves

Be certain to possess the pen from the newspapers section. A womanly ghost is lamenting about her name to be written in historical chronicles. Go to the right, and click on the red book in the back. Click on "unknown", then a little under. The ghost disappears to the main exit. Go back to it.



This story begins at dusk.
Or maybe at dawn.

He is here, in front of you. He's staring at you.
He doesn't speak. He doesn't move.
Nor to attack, neither to let you pass.

He stays here. Motionless,
waiting something from you.
He isn't busy. He has a whole eternity ahead of him.

Then you are inside, without any exit.
Your only way:
To find what the specter expects from you.

Scattered everywhere, in the medialibrary
Jim-Dandurand, hints remain to be found.
Pieces of paper...
Opened books...
And strange spectral forms.

But to obtain them,
you must explore every place...
Triumph from trials... Follow the rules...
...and finally understand,
who really is this phantom.



<http://dir.thefrogstudio.net>

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