

PREFACE - CMN 2025

We are deeply honored and thrilled to witness the revival of the International Workshop on Computational Models of Narrative (CMN). After seven successful editions, the workshop was paused eight years ago—yet its unique spirit endured. CMN stood out as a rare and vital forum where computer science and narratology intersected in the shared pursuit of understanding the nature of narrative. At its core, the workshop fostered debate around computational models that aim to capture various dimensions of storytelling. In an era where AI often performs without explanation or insight into its reasoning, Nicolas Szilas took the initiative to bring CMN back to life, joined by Fanfan Chen, Antonio Lieto, and Rémi Ronfard. CMN 2025 was held in Geneva in June 2025 and received 29 submissions out of which 18 were accepted (7 as long papers and 11 as short papers).

Reflecting the interdisciplinary essence of the field, this much-anticipated eighth edition features two distinguished keynote speakers—Andrew S. Gordon, a computer scientist, and Marie-Laure Ryan, a narratologist—whose dialogue is sure to inspire scholars from across disciplines. Gordon advocates for abductive reasoning as a powerful basis for modeling narrative understanding, supported by algorithms for automated logical abduction. Ryan’s keynote, in turn, explores why early programs like Jim Meehan’s TALE-SPIN seemed more intelligent than today’s AI, highlighting its ability to reason about character motivations using possible worlds theory.

This pivotal restart year marked a dynamic resurgence, with papers spanning narratives in video games, literature, medicine, history, and psychology. Contributions include models for narrative understanding or generation, updates to classic frameworks, large language model (LLM) applications, benchmarking, narrative extraction, and bias reduction. In the session on game stories, Maisto evaluates the language style of LLM-generated utterances by an AI Game Master in comparison to those of human Game Masters. Barancová and Sileno propose a method for extracting narratives from video game reviews. Escoufflaire examines the phenomenon of metalepsis in human-AI narrative interactions, both in video games and real life. Several scholars address the ethical challenges posed by AI. Sommer and Lohnstein propose a model aimed at reducing bias, while Escoufflaire highlights the biases embedded in LLM-generated stories due to the nature of their training data. Antoniuk et al. introduce a collective annotation and labeling approach to tackle these bias issues.

Some papers pay tribute to and extend classic narrative models. Pérez evaluates MEXICA’s performance in assessing narrative coherence. Monfort assesses the narrative quality of Story Machine and introduces a variation—Miniature (part of the Narrative Nubs project)—designed to create “Gram’s Fairy Tales.” In advancing narrative modeling, Gervás models narrative levels from both reader and character perspectives. Lombardo focuses on narratives for historical research, introducing a software architecture with three distinct layers: narrative, source, and knowledge. Moens identifies the major challenges deep learning models face in comprehending long-form and multimodal narratives, proposing improvements in architecture, training, and context-aware representations. Mani introduces an automatic movie narration system powered by generative AI and structured through NarrativeML, designed to offer rich, customizable experiences—particularly for visually impaired users—while acknowledging ongoing theoretical and technical challenges.

In the Interactive Digital Narrative session, Barbois et al. explore parallels between

dramatic narratives and surgical procedures, proposing a taxonomy of technical actions and dialogues. Park et al. present a character-centric interactive storytelling system that generates branching narratives based on character personality traits, integrating the VIA Strengths framework with the Big Five personality model. Clerc et al. offer a formal framework for describing and comparing Interactive Narrative Systems (INS), grounded in a consistent structure and terminology inspired by contemporary research. Tsai et al. propose a dialogue manager informed by Todorov's narrative scheme and information theory, designed to support high-quality oral history interviews.

Notably, this year's contributions include several papers that focus on the analysis and detection of literary works. Zanin and Battaglia propose a quantitative model to identify literary changes—character, plot, and style—across three censored versions of *The Decameron*. Paige and Culich, meanwhile, annotate scene types—such as dialogue and action scenes—and their internal components in English novels by contemporaries of Jane Austen, aiming to quantify scenic architecture through a hierarchical tagging schema.

Can we measure the beauty of literary works? Palma and Armaselu offer a potential answer. Addressing the challenge of automatically assessing literary quality, they present the *FracTale* project, which investigates the correlation between narrative self-similarity—measured using both the Hurst exponent and Moran's I—and 'beauty' rankings in a selection of Grimm's folktales in English, German, and Italian.

Despite this thematic diversity, all contributions share a common concern: the need for rigorous computational and theoretical models to understand and generate narrative. In recent years, the rise of large language models (LLMs) has reignited interest in narrative within the AI community, showcasing unprecedented capabilities in generating coherent, human-like stories. Nonetheless, these advances also sharpen long-standing questions—first raised at the second CMN workshop in 2010: What is narrative? What does it do for us? And what kinds of representations are needed to model it effectively?

This volume continues that inquiry, offering new insights and directions for one of the most interdisciplinary and enduring challenges in AI and the humanities.

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