COMPUTER AESTHETICS:
New Art Experience, or The Seduction of the Masses
Patric D. Prince

In the early twentieth century, Modern artists, notably Suprematists, Cubo-Futurists and Constructivists, rejected scientific perspective and descriptive art [1]. Although this dismissal of the world of appearances in art was never accepted by the general public, Modernism evolved from that rejection.

Computer art in the 1980s is, in turn, a rejection of Modernism. The interactivity of computer art is tied to the revolutionary art of the early twentieth century; computer art in general, however, uses the dynamic dimensions of space rejected at that time.

Computer artists are replacing Modern Art concepts with new aesthetic qualities which include not just three but four dimensions, the fourth dimension being that of time. The aesthetic experience associated with interactive computer art is one of the most noteworthy discoveries of the "masses." Computer generated images were embraced by the general public in electronic games early in the 1970s and now through the use of home computers. When amateur artists are drawn to the computer to make images, I call the production of their creative efforts "Volksart." I differentiate between the term "folk art," which commonly refers to primitive art, unassociated with industrialized technology, and Volksart, which is the production of artwork by computer artists without formal training in aesthetics.

Probably because computer art intrigues the masses, it is slow to be recognized by the "art world." One hears the comment that computer-aided art has no intrinsic worth, no discernable aesthetic qualities, and is acritical [2]. Aesthetics is usually defined as the study of beauty. Contemporary usage of the term aesthetics implies a study of the design elements that make up any artistic endeavor, in this case, computer art.

The design elements that contribute to the aesthetics of computer art have developed as computer technology expanded and responded to visual needs. There are eight readily recognizable design elements that relate to how computers function to produce images that make up the computer aesthetic [3]. They are

1. Repetition of forms
2. Randomness
3. Variable viewpoints
4. Modeling of the real world
5. Texture mapping
6. Color changes
7. Interactivity
8. The program as a design element

Artists use the computer as a tool, designing works of art which they then execute in other forms, for example, plotter drawings and paintings.

Artists use the complete computer system as a medium in order to paint in light. The translucent quality of colored light as produced on the monitor is unmatched by any other artform.

Artists use the computer as subject for their visual research. Since art represents the era in which it was produced, some artists provide us with a view of the complexities of the Information Age and the impact of computers on our society.

The history of computers in art parallels the history of Western contemporary art. In the Sixties, computer artists produced Hard Edge and Op-art. In the Seventies, artists attempted to engage the audience in participation; this has its counterpart in the development of interactive animation. In the Eighties, artists returned to figurative imagery. It is the return to the descriptive that draws people to computer art. Artists and the masses have chosen to use the computer to create artworks in order to express our age, the Information Age.

REFERENCES:

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