
Shaping Form S17

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Abstract

Shaping Form S17 is the latest work in the *Shaping Form* series, the time-based works that consist of unique abstract interactive artwork that are each generating colours and forms in time from a set of unique rules: rules that are rather like their DNA. They also take data from a camera and continuously calculate the amount of activity seen in front of the work. The computer software then steadily modifies the rules.

Author Keywords

Interactive, art; Computer, art; Color.

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ACM Classification Keywords

J.5 Arts and Humanities. Fine Arts

Introduction

Shaping Form S17 is the latest work in the *Shaping Form* series [1], the time-based works that consist of unique abstract interactive artwork that are each generating colours and forms in time from a set of unique rules: rules that are rather like their DNA. See an example in figure 1. They also take data from a camera and continuously calculate the amount of activity seen in front of the work. The computer software then steadily modifies the rules. The artwork and its development over time is, then, influenced by the people who look at it. The audience help to shape the work. *Shaping Form* is a representation of computed life, moving and changing of its own accord but maturing and developing as a result of the movement of audiences. The shaping of the form is a never-ending process of computed development.

Statement

I am interested in seeing how computer generated art systems can interact with the most purposeful enquiring systems - human beings [2]. I am also interested in how humans react to artworks that behave differently because of their presence and whose form and appearance change over time. Artworks that are purposefully dynamic and ever changing in our world are a novel dimension to the centuries old

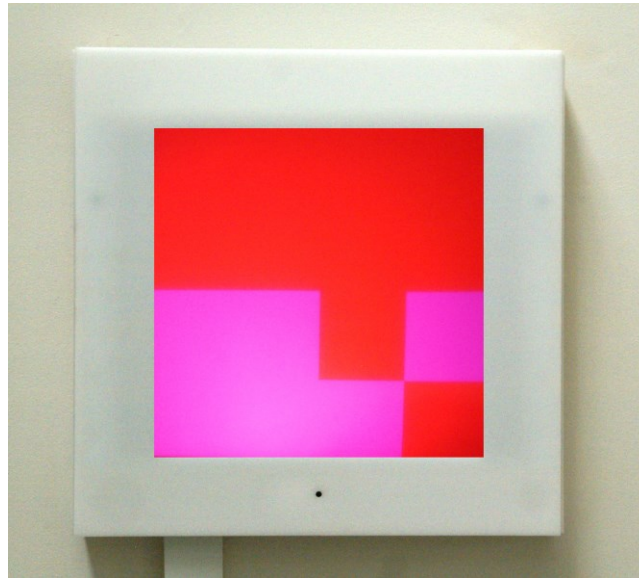


Figure 1: Shaping Form 5.5.2013 by Ernest Edmonds, as shown in Conny Dietzschold Gallery, Sydney in June 2013. © Ernest Edmonds.

relationship between human experience and the art form. When I first started exploring interaction between audiences and artworks, the means to make participative art were limited. Back then I was asking questions about the nature of such interaction and what its form might be. I was wondering what kind of relationships might exist between audiences and this new type of artwork. Now I am able to make works that hang on a wall like a conventional painting but with the crucial difference that the works, like the human, are programmed to respond to events in the environment around it and through learning, develop their own long-term memories [3].

Our appreciation of visual art depends on seeing it in context. The atmosphere, the light, the space, the audience are all part of the experience of a work. When we view an oil painting screened by plate glass, the glass is a component of the experience of the work. When we peer through to a work surrounded by a crowd, the audience becomes part of that experience too. In interactive art, the audience is *deliberately* made a component of the work: the person in the art space becomes an active participant. In participative interaction, the artefact is just one element of the whole experiential space. But what exactly do we mean by *interaction*? I believe that the words *influence*, *stimulus*, *interchange* are more evocative and appropriate for my works [4]. If we add a layer of meaning to the situation, we can say that the *influence* of the human system on the art system comes about as a result of *stimulus*, *interchange* or even *co-operation* and *conversation*. The artwork and the audience are interacting systems that influence one another. Generative art systems like *Shaping Form* are open to influence and develop over time as a consequence of that influence. This kind of computational generative art is an *open system* at the very heart of its design.

References

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