



INTERACTIVE VIDEO AS A WAY OF LIFE

As a visual artist, my motivation for creating an interactive video system stemmed from an increasing dissatisfaction with the major limitation of visual media. After finding myself associating with more musicians than visual artists, this limitation became increasingly obvious and an envy developed for musicians and their manner for creating art. Increased exposure to music led to the conclusion that musical media, such as live music, was primarily concerned with life, while visual media, such as painting, drawing and sculpture, were concerned with that opposite state of being, death.

This difference becomes obvious by comparing the experience of visual media with the experience of live music. In a museum or gallery, for example, visitors calmly stare at inanimate objects on display, rarely speaking and never clapping or cheering in approval. These viewers are like the bereaved at a wake, paying respect to a friend who will soon be entombed in the netherworld of a gallery's storage room. What could be so different from the experience of visual art than a live music performance? While music performances come in a variety of styles, from classical to new music to rap, they all provoke audiences to clapping, cheering, dancing and a whole range of physical activities which are strictly verboten in a museum of fine arts.

Could the exuberance of musicians and audiences during live music performances be anything else than a celebration of life? Modern pop music performances can drive tens of thousands of screaming fans into uncontrollable celebrations of life, joy and exuberance. Try clapping and cheering in front of a favorite painting in a gallery and one's sanity will certainly be questioned while being ushered to the front door by a solemn guard.

I am envious of musicians' abilities to create living art because visual artists seem limited to creating the dead. Preferring the living to the nonliving, and being a visual artist and not a musician, this conclusion has caused considerable discomfort to my artistic motivation. To overcome this discontent, I desired to create a visual medium containing the living qualities found in music and music performances. This goal is being pursued through performances containing large video projected imagery and live improvised music. During these events, image selection and cinematic effects are intricately associated with the music's formal structure as an attempt to capture the spontaneity of live music with video.

The result of this pursuance has been the development of an interactive video system and the presentation of numerous international performances in which audiences witness the birth and existence of an interactive video controlled by live improvised music.

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