Chapter 5
Thinking Art in the Technological World:
An Approach to Digital Media Art Creation

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter, the authors discuss the use of digital media in the creation of digital art, questioning the evolution of the relationship between technology and concept in communication through art. The intersection of new media and digital art have been opening interesting and seductive new horizons and in parallel, the concept, the understanding, the legitimacy of artistic creation, the role of the artist and the role of the spectator are also redefined. Based on two experimental works of the artist Henrique Silva, the authors analyze and reflect on the relationship of technology, art and virtuality, focusing on concepts like experience, sensory, immersion, communication and interaction in artworks created through digital media.

INTRODUCTION

The diversity of the latest contemporary artistic forms has been (almost) rendering outdated some arts like sculpture, painting, drawing, music or literature, essentially those which remain within the traditional canons of creativity, creation, tools, techniques, exposition, dissemination and relation with the public.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-5696-1.ch005
In the field of digital and computational we are expose to massive stimulations that transposes the most basic senses and feelings. In the digital society, the communication as process gained a new breadth as well the artistic manifestations, as powerful forms of communication. Art is contaminated (and simultaneously contaminates) and by digital tools, concepts and practices and in turn, end up contaminating the public that is no longer passive, instead he interacts, participate sometimes even integrates the process. Digital art promotes immediate and horizontal sensations - contrary to the verticality of the so-called traditional arts – and the changes are increasingly evident.

Nowadays, digital literacy influences the assimilation of the world around us - including art - in this information society where digital technologies have unprecedented developments. However, the ability to read and interpret these new artistic manifestations and its concepts is also dependent on each background, working as self made dictionary to interpret and classify the relations between subjects, objects and its legitimacy as creators and artworks, respectively.

Our memory functions can be metaphorical understood as a big computer that reacts based on data stored throughout life and experiences. This data and its respective decoded process activate the imagination and the creativity itself and can delineate the deductive capacities of each.

People also understand what surround them according to cultural values, creeds and traditions but interpretations are not only related to the influences received from the outside, they are also affected by inner experiences, feelings and experiences with specific techniques, aesthetics and technologies – maybe the alpha tools of digital media art creation.

In the communication process, the languages are determinant as well the participants and their interpretations (not excluding of course, the remaining elements of any communicative process). Focusing on the participant, the degree of culture or the knowledge about the subject can be determinant in understanding and decoding information. Regardless of whether information is transmitted through sounds, gestures or perceptible clues, the messages can be decodable in the first place based on background and other variables, as we already mentioned, but it doesn´t mean those messages will influence the public as receiver. These experiences are especially interesting when it comes to communicate through a work of art. Contrary to what one might think, a high cultural level person is not necessarily able to better read an object and its message, harmonize with the speech of the artist, understanding the technological implications or the work of art itself better than a lower cultural level person, especially when there is a physical interaction. Technical skills or higher sensory can be more important than academic level or education? Based on these more recent intersections between art and digital technologies what is communicating, the artist, the object, the environment or the media?
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