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CART 263

Reflection #1

Ryoji Ikeda is a Japanese multi-media artist born in 1966. While he is primarily known for being an audio artist with his major works revolving around experimental usages of noises and digital sounds, he is also keen on pairing them with an equally unique visual, combining both into one unique and inseparable experience. I personally have very little knowledge in the auditory field of art, hence why I will focus more on the visual part of them. First off, his main theme, in both sound and visual, is that of technology, data, and mathematics, and that is by no means he's trying to recreate those "futuristic look" often seen in sci-fi movies. Rather, his colors are minimal, with only the brightest of highlights being something other than black and white. The strait lines and rectangles dominate the scene, with even the rare curved lines looking more geometrical rather than organic. Everything is rooted in a utilitarian, minimalist, and clean aesthetic that resembles the operating systems of old-day computers and machines or some scientific /analytical graphs instead of actual pieces of art. In fact, many of his works can be described either as "a bunch of distorted Bar code/ QR codes" or "images created by a malfunctioning computer." I adore this aesthetic, I love the concept of doing more with less. The way these works create visuals by distorting an aesthetic unique to the world of technology and mathematics, fields run strictly on rules, brings a sense of "orderly chaos", a mess that's functioning but in ways nobody knows how. Furthermore, I love the concept of doing more with less. Seeing how these very simple shapes (just lines and rectangles) can come together to create mesmerizing patterns will never grow old with me.

The artwork that I chose to analyze is *Datamatics (2006)*, an installation that combines a lot of motion visuals and auditory elements. I believe this work is a perfect representation of Ryoji Ikeda's style. Cohesion with the sounds aside, the fact that this installation's visuals are not simply displayed on one flat screen, but rather on multiple screens, with some flanking the sides of a long corridor and others covering an entire

floor the audience walks on, is already fascinating to me. Furthermore, the video format lends to multiple "animations" being created, all with their unique graphical setup, rather than having one or two scenes being looped at nauseam. One of my favorite scenes involves multiple lines of data flowing horizontally past each other, all displaying different information like DNA sequences, radio waves, audio waves, codes, and more. Every line is arranged neatly in a parallel so none interfere with each other, bar the occasional red and blue highlights connecting a few of the data lines, thus bringing your attention to a specific "data point". This whole sequence feels like the actual operation of a database/computer rummaging through its storage to find the correct answer. Another one of my favorites depicts a 3D scenario where the camera pans around a simulated space where "coordinates" are constantly being marked out by the system. The usage of red markers and blue lines made the whole "marking" action stand out in the black background and the white dots represented planes of the space. One unique addition to this scene is actual written words and numbers next to each coordinate, and a closer look will let one realize they're actual data related to said coordinate. Once again, this sequence mimics that of an old 3D render of the actual universe with celestial bodies marked in relation to our Earth. The way these data are presented in such an "unfiltered" way to the point they even override and cluster to the point nothing is readable just strikes a chord with me.