Issues of “Interaction” and “Interaction Design”

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# Introduction

Interactive art becomes more common every year as computers and the Internet constructs more ways for people to access and produce it. Interactive artists are concerned with how the audience responds to and interacts with their artwork. The world of digital technology and art is constantly expanding but the interaction aspect seems to remain trapped by the restrictions of programming. Interactive media can be pressed to its limits of interactivity but this interaction can only be pushed as far as the code has been written to go.

# Interaction Design

Interaction is a common action, effect, or influence between two or more things. We experience interaction in many different forms everyday of our lives, but the assimilation of the digital world into the physical world has changed how we view and interact with technology.

Interaction design is the practice of creating interactive digital objects for an audience’s use. When creating any form of interactive design the artist might make assumptions about the viewer’s experience and reaction to their art. Through these assumptions specific paths are created in the designs programming that lead to definite endings that the artist has decided upon. The paths formed from these assumptions are what I find to be a major flaw in interaction design. But it is a flaw that I do not see a way to remedy.

The point I am trying to get at with bringing up how an artists’ assumptions impacts their work is that when other people interact with it their experiences will, in a way, be dictated by these presumptions. The only *solution* that comes to my mind for solving this issue is by having viewers work through the code of an interactive design to create their own paths. (This is not something that I think would be a real solution because in a way it would defeat the purpose of an interactive art piece.)

There are so many agents impacting interaction design and the more I think I have unpacked the topic, the more information I find. Some agents of interactive design that cause issues are: this medium creates programs/applications/artwork that programmed to computerize certain tasks, and interactive design is something that produces or can produce an outcome.

# Interactive Art Project

When I began thinking about this project I thought I would create a processing video sketch but the more work I put into that sketch, the more I realized that through it I was not exploring any issues with interactive design. I got this idea in my head that I would create something that was crude and rudimentary but would get at the idea that interactive design is still art even when it makes no sense.

My end goal for this interactive art project was to create something that looked like it would lead viewers to a game, but instead glitches and shuts down. So I created a processing sketch that appears to be a basic interactive game but actually isn’t. This design is to demonstrate that like physical artwork, not all interactive design and art will have a clear outcome or explanation.

I wanted my sketch to have more “glitches” but was having a hard time finding the right coding required to make it appear to not work without actually causing the whole sketch to not work at all. Even though I did not get my design created the way I had anticipated, I still believe that it challenges the idea of what can be defined as interactive design.

Interactive design is a very open medium that encompasses many forms of digital artwork, I wanted to produce something that most people wouldn’t truly consider art to show how much interaction design encompasses.

# Conclusion

Interactive design encompasses so many focuses in the digital world that continued research on its impacts and issues is needed to explore its full potential and possible drawbacks. I think it is important to challenge this form of art and creativity in order to fully explore and understand its full potential.