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MA Motion Graphics

"The uncertainty of Experience: On George Brecht's Event Scores" - Gascia Ouzounian review

What is the author's main argument?

The authors main argument in this piece seems to be that music does not have to be limited to sound, it can be comprised of nearly anything. Uncertainty is a major factor in Brechts work because it can draw attention to the interconnectedness of seemingly distinct objects, actions or ideas.

How does the author's argument relate to your practice/discipline? Give examples where appropriate.

Both the idea of music being broader than just being comprised of sound, and the idea of incorporating uncertainty into your work have interesting implications for the field of motion graphics. In any audiovisual piece considering that some elements of the audio can be replaced by visuals rather than accompanying them (or vice versa) could be advantageous to the project.

Uncertainty is a tool that I feel is under-used in motion graphics and can be inhibited by the software we use, in a broad sense, digital animation seems to be done in

two ways. Keyframing is the most common, in which you would describe the start and end state of an animated object, then the software interpolates those descriptions over a number of frames, this gives you a great amount of control and predictability in outcome.

Another way is through a generative or procedural process, in which you describe the starting state of an animation object and then assign it a behaviour that dictates its transformation. This tends to be more unpredictable because no one has the computational power of a computer and will often only vaguely know what the outcome will be like.

How could you develop some of the authors ideas through your own design/research?

Interactive performance including a visual artist and sonic artist/musician seems to be a good way to draw out the idea that music shouldn't be limited to only sound and can be a much broader experience, especially if there is a high level of interaction between the artists.

Collaboration also benefits from the uncertainty of what a collaborator might do, giving both parties the opportunity to grow the scope of their art by mixing it with the art of another person, I will be collaborating with a mural painter for my collaborative project so it'll be interesting to see how my work is influenced by this collaboration.

I often try to employ some kind of uncertainty in my own work through the use of generative software. I like to use the work of Jackson Pollock as comparison, He knew that his paintings would look like splattered paint, but couldn't predict the minutiae of detail in those splatters, similarly when making procedural work you know what behaviour you have assigned to an animation, but it's often still impossible to know the minutiae of

how that will look because the logic of a computer is so advanced that it can seem almost random.