Proposal for collaborative research
Daniel Kernan

Aim of the project

The aim of this project is to work with Berlin Atonal festival, an audio visual festival known for hosting high concept, progressive shows in derelict, abandoned or disused spaces like old factories or warehouses.

My project would be the visual half of an audio visual show. I'm interested in rejuvenating the visual language of industrial spaces, the familiar yellow and black hazard lines as well as the myriad other patterns and images seen around industrial spaces.

Why is the project important

I believe this is an important project because it sets forth the idea that the spaces we've abandoned for their original purpose can evolve, be recycled and have another use, it's intended to be a representation of the metamorphosis disused places can undergo in the right circumstances, whether it's the repurposing of old factories into new businesses or even just the re-use of the space for a festival, either way we see the factories and warehouses can be reborn into something useful for society.

Who has done similar work

There are a number of artists I've drawn inspiration from for this project, most inspirational for me was likely Chris Saunders and his short film "Ghost Diamond" which also had another influence of mine working on the graphics and animations, Manuel Sepulveda (AKA Optigram). The film is set in a fictional city but filmed in Johannesburg and nearly all the scenes are in disused, industrial or decaying places. It's the use of cinematography, editing, graphic animation, music, fashion and dance that brings these spaces alive and turn them into a vehicle for the narrative of the film.

Another artist I'm inspired by for this project is Chris Foss, whose main gig is paintings of spaceships, his work can be found on a myriad of old pulp(ish) science fiction books. The reason I find his work relevant is because he also uses the patterns we see in industrial spaces and essentially re-purposes them onto spaceships, visions of the future. Often the colours will be extremely vivid, like bright yellows and pinks.

Target Communities

The target communities would largely be young urbanites who attend music festivals and often see the spaces around the city that become disused and decrepit.

My approach

My approach would be in the form of a live visual set, whereby the visual language of hard angles and lines relevant to the industrial space are projected onto the walls of the space but imbued with new life through animation and vibrant colours.

The set would be made largely of pre-made assets animated and controlled through the node based visual programming environment Touchdesigner with the help of a midi controller.

Site

The site will essentially be up to the festival but it has always been held in spaces that are obviously previous industrial centres that are now just cavernous concrete halls.

Materials

Materials needed are simply laptop, projectors, midi controller and a power source with a desk.

Duration

Most of these performances will generally last from two to five hours and given that I'll perform it live, it's very flexible, I can simple extend sections to meet the requirements for duration of the musician or audio artist.