

Video – Applications III

Lev Manovich: Soft Cinema

http://softcinema.net/?reload

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Lev Manovich

SOFT CINEMA : AMBIENT NARRATIVE

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PROJECT SUMMARY

Soft Cinema project mines the creative possibilities at the intersection of software culture, cinema, and architecture. Its manifestations include **films**, dynamic **visualizations**, computer-driven **installations**, architectural **designs**, print **catalogs**, and DVDs. In parallel, the project investigates how the new representational techniques of soft(ware) cinema can be deployed to address the new dimensions of our time, such as the rise of mega-cities, the "new" Europe, and the effects of information technologies on subjectivity.

At the heart of the project is custom **software** and media databases. The software edits movies in real time by choosing the elements from the **database** using the systems of rules defined by the authors.

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SOFT CINEMA: NAVIGATING THE DATABASE DVD now available

Lev Manovich and Andreas Kratky

SOFT CINEMA: Navigating the Database

DVD-video with 40 page color booklet
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SOFT CINEMA: NAVIGATING THE DATABASE is available through The MIT Press <mitpress.mit.edu>, online resellers <www.amazon.com, www.barnesandnoble.com, etc.> and selected bookstores.

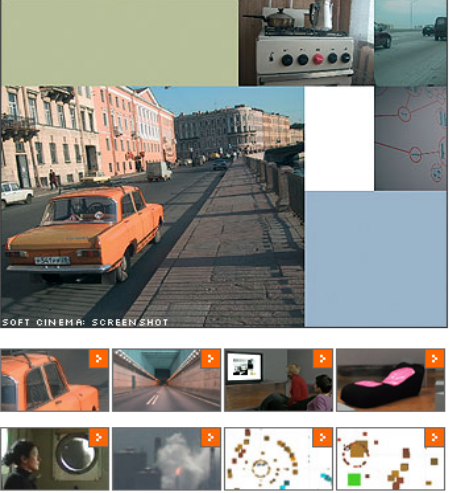
What kind of cinema is appropriate for the age of Google and blogging? Automatic surveillance and self-guided missiles? Consumer profiling and CNN? To investigate answers to this question Lev Manovich - one of today's most influential thinkers in the fields of media arts and digital culture - has paired with award-winning new media artist and designer Andreas Kratky to create the Soft Cinema project. They have also invited contributions from leaders in other cultural fields: DJ Spooky, Scanner, George Lewis and Jóhann Jóhannsson (music), servo and Andreas Angelidakis (architecture), Schoenerwissen/Office for Computational Design (data visualization), and Ross Cooper Studios (media design).

SOFT CINEMA: Navigating the Database is the Soft Cinema project's first DVD published and distributed by The MIT Press (2005). Although the three films presented on the DVD reference the familiar genres of cinema, the process by which they were created and the resulting aesthetics fully belong to the software age. They demonstrate the possibilities of soft(ware) cinema - a 'cinema' in which human subjectivity and the variable choices made by custom software combine to create films that can run infinitely without ever exactly repeating the same image sequences, screen layouts and narratives.

'Mission to Earth' is a science fiction allegory of the immigrant experience. It adopts the variable choices and multi-frame layout of the Soft Cinema system to represent 'variable identity'. 'Absences' is a lyrical black and white narrative that relies on algorithms normally deployed in military and civilian surveillance applications to determine the editing of video and audio. 'Texas' is a 'database narrative', which assembles its visuals, sounds, narratives, and even the identities of its characters from multiple databases.

The DVD was designed and programmed so that there is no single version of any of the films. All the elements - including screen layout, the visuals and their combination, the music, the narrative, and the length - are subject to change every time the film is viewed.

The development of Soft Cinema project was made possible by the commissions from ZKM Center for Art and Media and the BALTIC, The Centre for Contemporary Art. The resulting computer-driven installations and films have been exhibited in museums, galleries, media and film festivals around the world.



SOFT CINEMA: SCREENSHOT

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