

Nil Yalter's Trilogy: A Turkish Style in Interactive Media.

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Overview : Turkish Interactive Media.

The same as all over the world, initially, interactive work is created in CD-ROM and web environment, as merging significant and historical examples of Turkish Art and Architecture to digital format. In this period, the first Turkish multimedia work was made for the Architecture of The Topkapi Palace in 1990 (OZCAN 1990), the first web-museum, Istanbul Museum of Painting and Sculpture was completed in 1995 (IRHM 1995) and extended to Interactive Museum of Turkey in 1996 (OZCAN 1997). Following years, The number of Turkish Artist such as Adnan Coker Painter, Tan Oral, cartoonist tried to adapt their work to interactive environment (TR-ART 1996) or more originally, Bulent Erkmén, graphic designer, created his third self-promotion work on the web in 1996. (ERKMEN 1996).

But, as original digital work, one might say that contemporary Turkish painters who have started to use computer graphics in their work such as Balkan Naci İslim Yeli They have been interested in popular visual effects generated by image editing software that can be defined as photo-montage. Even if there are a number of Turkish artwork, which allows user interaction such as video installation, and web-based multimedia, perhaps the first real Turkish interactive artwork has been made by Nil Yalter.

Profile

Nil Yalter was born at Cairo in 1938. Having completed her studies in Istanbul, she went to Paris where she worked on painting, sculpture, installations and media for many years. She currently lives in Paris, since 1965.

Yalter gave several courses on video arts at Sorbonne University for 15 years. She is interested in new technologies such computer graphics without giving up her other pursuits. Her interests in interactive art is not suppressing after preferring to use media related to action, installation and performance.

Her Interactive Works: Terra Nomada and Pixelamus

Her early interactive works is created just after the Nomad Tend, which is exhibited at Paris Museum of Modern Art, and a later work, named Women Prison. It is based on the combination of photography, drawing and video installation. According to Lucy R. Lippard, Yalter was used "oblique objects" in these early works; especially in Rahime which was exhibited in "Issue" at Insitute of Contemporary Art, London, 1979 (LIPPARD 1995 s:153)

Looking at these works, it is easily understood that Nil Yalter does not have difficulties to use multimedia technology, which appeared in her work as early as 1990's ; because multimedia technique also have the combination of different mediums.

In paralleled with the concept of internet: without nationality, as in the Terra Nomada CD-ROM, Yalter focused on nomad life of Turkish worker in European countries. She is especially effected by hypertext form of web environment and concentrated on 13th century Turkish Poetry of Yunus Emre using lines along with images of Turkish workers obtained from different sources. Yalter experimented different visual effects of Photoshop program, on these images and deformed them. These effects come on the screen along with the text when the viewer drags the mouse on the images. During these observations, after each mouse click, images appear in different combinations, sometimes alone itself, sometimes in more than one divided screen. These combination between text, images and visual effects emphasis the culture, reality and a characteristic of Turkish Worker.



a snapshot from Terra Nomada, when click center of image, following image appears:

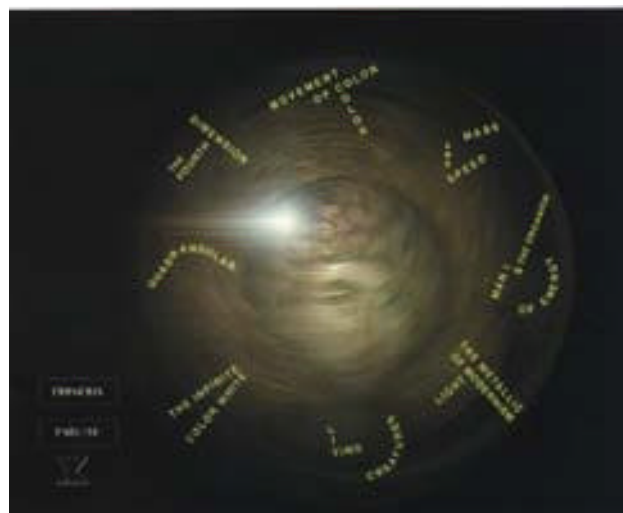


when click one of above divided screen, the image changes as below:



The Pixelismus CD-ROM, created together with David Apikan and Nicole Croiset, is based on philosophical ideas of Russian an avangard-garde constructivist artist Malevich lived in 1876 –1935. In this work, Yalter compares Malevich’s studies of color, light and fourth dimension with computer graphic techniques. This gets more complicated, comparing each piece, which generates mosaics of St.Khora with pixel of computer graphics. In her work, she analyzed Malevich’s crosses concerning Byzantine masons’ 4:4 proportions.

The multimedia work starts a menu which consists of 8 themes realized from Malevich’s theories : movement of color, the fourth dimension, quardengular, the infinite color white, living creatures, the metallic of modernish, mass and speed, man organism of energy. A fresco images, from St. Khora, distorted around a center and embedded in the background of the screen. She has mainly used the crosses and depending on each theme, the form of the cross is changed each time.



main menu of Pixelesmus: when you click, for instance, the fourth dimension, following animated image appears on the screen:



Nil Yalter's interactive works should not be compared with other current popular interactive CD titles and web sites. Because she uses the real meaning of computer graphics and interactive media instead of its temporary technological attractions:

Yalter is such an artist who has perfectly analyzed computer technology, has investigated its limitations and potentials before using it. She has studied operation systems i.e. Unix, PC, Mac, multimedia-based software, i.e. Wavefront, Director, and modeling, rendering and animation techniques for a long time and has directly used them herself. She only works together with software developers if the work requires advance programming. Her artwork is created on Macromedia Director software; all computer models are generated by Wavefront software runs on Silicon Graphics.

Yalter preferred popular computer manipulation techniques i.e. transformations, repetitions, extrusions in her works. She also concerns herself with navigating structures, which are probably the most important principle of interactive design. In this way, she used appropriate arrows, buttons and maps on different levels of info-structure to orient the viewer to right direction. However, playing this technical point of multimedia, Yalter never forget her artistic anxieties. Ignoring technical attraction of computer graphics, she explores the best combination of artistic and technical use.

Considering info-structure, 'tree' and 'network structures' are usually used in her works. In this way, the viewer can freely, sometimes alternatively have access to the following steps. These methods give different tests to the viewer in each different use, which is the main principle of multimedia product.

Yalter breaks the two-dimensional digital screen composition and introduces third dimensional feelings by stereophonic sound extensions. The viewers sense cyberspace, sometimes by musical rhythm or by sound effects depending on storyboard. By these analyses, Yalter has high-end combination of theme and technology. The work runs only on a personal computer and sounds can only be heard by headphones. From this point, we can easily say that Yalter's work suits today's privatized social life and cyber culture and her work is mostly interesting for personal use.

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