

Video, as the youngest development in the visual medium, is still in the process of defining its grammatical structures to form its own language. Rooted in cinematic tradition, one of a photographic, representational, narrative, *mimetic* approach, the particulars within the development of video technologies were a striving to achieve a more “malleable”¹ handling, capable of being both captured and transmitted in one simultaneous action.

Video, once intended for the purposes of broadcasting of mass media networks, finds itself at an age of accessibility to the public in a set of inexpensive and culturally incorporated tools. It has moved away from its original purpose and has landed at a point where it is finally an accessible medium for the arts.

Taking into consideration technology as *means*, as a tool for creative expression, and not as an *end* in itself, it is necessary to introduce to the viewing public (now more than ever, now that video has become so commodified), that the moving image has evolved to a state where this quality of “malleability,” together with the increasing technological developments of computerized real time processing, gives the medium characteristics similar to those of paint for the painter, clay for the sculptor, words for a poet, or sound for the musician. In essence, it has the potential to become the contemporary medium for a visual, creative, artistic expression.

As metaphors are to the written word, poetic representations and beautifications inspired in our surroundings, the elements in video composition begin to take the form of an individually inspired process of reading/seeing in between the lines/frames.

The spectator, thus, acquires an *essential role* in the observance of the message—role that has been hindered by the overpoweringly controlled messages of mass media. The spectator becomes an active agent, where both their individual sensation of the visual

¹ Video is an immediate form. In the sense that the distances between the recording and the final product have been bridged. What you see in the viewfinder of a video camera is what is being recorded, as opposed to film and analog photography, where the final product of the recording is a process of chemical reactions that occurs *after* the fact of seeing.

stimulus and the process of concept-formation (what has been called “perception”) are the synthesizing factors of the reception of the final message.

Art is a communicative process. A bi-directional set of interchanges between the artist (voiced through their work) and the spectator. In a work where the spectator receives representational and recognizable images, the interchange is dulled by the transmittance of messages that are driven to specific and mapped out concept formations and reactions.

A work that is composed of non-recognizable elements, on the other hand, becomes an exercise in contemplation for the observer, where the formation of concepts is a derivative of a series of interpretive events. The spectator’s role is active in that the message is constructed by intuitive and individually formed reactions to a perceptive experience.

The “malleability” of the video medium allows for all possible gradations between the representational, the concrete, and the abstract, or the imaginary. Balanced carefully, the results convey messages that are a product of both the transmission of a particular message and the result of an interpretive process of the viewer, who, engaged in contemplation and deep observation, is able to come away from the work with reminiscent images of new patterns and shapes present in our everyday surroundings.

The perceptive process is like a muscle, and can be expanded by “educating the eye” into finding the magical and imaginary in everyday things. Video has all the attributes necessary (color, form, time or rhythm, and space) to be yet another vehicle for the expression of the inexpressible, of the imaginary, of the unreal.

Bibliography:

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