

Description of proposed project

An interpretation of works by minimalist artists in a new media/virtual context and possibly original works based on knowledge acquired in the interpretation process. I am going to create 3 – 5 works that seeks to bring out the qualities of minimalist art using computers, software and electronics as my primary materials. The qualities I am interested in are materials, colour, form and space. The works will be in the form of installations that will be on display in an exhibition held in the Students Union gallery at Goldsmiths and is primarily targeted towards other Goldsmiths students with an interest in the cross domain of art and technology. The exhibition will be open for a few days only with a maximum of one week.

Materials

“New” (Donald Judd) or industrially produced materials is a common factor in much minimalist art. Computers, software and electronics are all industrially produced products and even custom software is typically based on commercially produced software.

Colour

The representation of colours on computers have always been a problem and even today we cannot represent all human perceivable colours on a computer display. Neither material nor colour is used to convey a meaning in minimalist art beyond its presence, meaning that the viewer should not interpret the use of a specific colour as the artist trying to suggest a specific mood. This means that the restricted possibilities of colours on computer displays wont be an important constraint.

Form

The use of form in minimalist art can be characterized by “Less is more” - meaning that simple forms do not create a less rich experience for the viewer. Bare use of geometry is very common as is the repeated use of the same form. This ties very well with two dimensional computer graphics which itself consists of geometry and trigonometry and to programming languages which all rely heavily on repetition. Another correlation to software is the KISS (Keep It Simple Stupid) principle of keeping everything as simple as one possible can while achieving ones goal.

Space

Real space is three dimensional and minimalist art engages directly with the space it occupies. The argument is that using real space is more powerful than trying to represent

three dimensional reality on a two dimensional plane. Computer displays of today are two dimensional and no real three dimensional visualization methods for computers are yet being mass produced for private consumers. Three dimensional input methods are only in the beginning state today with the Nintendo Wii controller probably being the most publicly available one. Computers and their connection with three dimensional space is still in an early stage making it an area widely open for experimentation.

Artists

Possible artists to choose works from include Sol Lewitt, Dan Flavin and Donald Judd. Sol Lewitt broke free from two dimensional space with his incomplete cubes series and Dan Flavins light works could provide valuable ideas that could be put to use in three dimensional output from computers. Donald Judds qualities of what he refers to as “the new work” seems like a good place to further explore the theory of minimalism as does Michael Frieds arguments in his “Art and Objecthood” essay even though he is not in favour of minimal or literalist art as he prefers to call it. Ernest Edmonds “Explorations in Art and Technology”, which was kindly suggested by Jane Prophet, also seems very interesting as does his work.

Why

The reason I have chosen to work with minimalism is because of the straightforward accessibility and the immediate power of attraction that many of the works I have experienced myself have on me. I come from a family of craftsmen and the concept of focussing on the idea instead of the craftsmanship intrigues me and a feeling in me demands further exploration. I am also very fond of several main concepts like demystifying art, revealing the materials and processes, the accessibility of the works and trying to communicate truth by not being anything else than it is. During the process of writing this description I also became very pleased with the apparently immediate shared qualities between minimalistic art and software. Helga Just Christoffersen will employ a role as my theoretical mentor and I will be collaborating with her on all aspects of the project except from the actual production of the work.

Possible realizations

The work will take the form of several installations. One piece is likely to engage in the subject of meaning and truth for computers and their users by trying to reveal the process of software development and execution. This will most likely be a piece of software that explores its own source code and hopefully lets the viewer see the self-referring process.

This piece will most likely not use any direct user interaction and the output will be a computer display.

Another piece is likely to explore visual output from computers in three dimensional space. The final method has not been decided yet as I have to build and test some prototypes first. One idea includes using tulle as projection screens as this fabric permits light to flow through it creating the possibility for repetitive display of images or an almost transparent screen when combined with backlight. This technique is similar to what is employed by the VJ Andreas Nilsson in his visuals for the band “The Knife”s live performances.

My second idea is to use smoke as a screen similar to what has been done by Minimaforms in their “Memory Cloud” project displayed at Trafalgar Square in October 2008. The content of the output has not yet been decided on as I would like to experiment with the outputs methods first to get a feeling of what is possible within the timeframe and at the chosen venue. If I can come up with a clever idea as how to use the viewers for input for the piece I would very much like to combine that with the three dimensional output. If it wont fit well it will be explored in another piece instead.

The above mentioned ideas are just that – ideas! They reveal my initial thoughts about experiments I would like to carry out but are not based on any existing works I have interpreted. This means that the ideas could be used in my interpretations instead of being realized as described. I am also sure that new ideas will arise while reading more text on the subject, while looking at, selecting and interpreting works and of course when starting the realization of the works.

Venue

I am working with “Dude” Kevin Byrne to arrange a group exhibition at the Goldsmiths Students Union Gallery and some of the pieces will be created to work optimally in these rooms. After Dude and I hopefully convince more people from our class into joining the exhibition we will settle on how to divide the space between us thus giving me a pretty exact idea about the environment I have to create for. The Students Union Gallery is a great venue because it is available for free and very accessible for the main audience. The exhibition will run for a few days only.

Audience

As the venue is the Students Union Gallery the audience is most likely to be other

Goldsmiths students with an interest in the cross domain of art and technology. The exhibition will be promoted in the Students Union Newsletter and possibly with posters and flyers around Goldsmiths. Furthermore it will also be promoted on Facebook and websites relevant to the subject like www.spatialrobots.com and whoever I can convince to mention it.

Documentation

The exhibition will be documented using both photos and video and made available on my website (gert.dk) once the exhibition closes. My prototype work will be documented the same way and saved in my research journal. Whatever source code might be produced during the process will also be made available online with a Creative Commons license. Depending on the final result of my work one or more pieces might even be available as fully functional online applications.

Evaluation

As I am trying to achieve a specific goal I will probably gain most insight in my result by having an expert on the subject perform an evaluation of the exhibition. Jane suggested the above mentioned Ernest Edmonds and I will get in touch to see if it would be possible should he be in London at the time. An audience evaluation is also a possibility to see if any viewers expresses experiences similar to those mentioned in texts on the subject.

Self-evaluation

Self-evaluation will be conducted by keeping a research journal on the progress of the project. This journal will contain theoretical insight gained from reading, progress and setbacks in the actual production, new ideas that hopefully come to life and my own thoughts and feelings about the process as a whole. The research journal will be written up as a one page summary when the exhibition is closed.

Biography – Gert Jørgensen

Gert lived his first 19 years on the outskirts of Denmark in a place most locals refer to as “Falster”. In his later years at school he got into programming by mistake, but it was something to do and when you find that in Falster, well then you stick with it. Out of school he needed somewhere to go and send out some CV's, luckily this was in the midst of the dot com boom and some companies were hiring whatever could walk, including Framfab where Gert spent the next three and a half years learning the ins and out, ups and downs

of the advertising industry. Leaving the false security of a monthly pay check behind he ventured shortly into the freelance business only to be snapped up by the Danish Broadcasting Corporation to redeem his advertising deeds by doing Public Service work. When all was redeemed Gert set out on a mission to acquire further wisdom about life and computers and how they relate which led him to Computer Science studies at the University of Copenhagen. Disgruntled with the low level concepts of implementation he sought further and farther for high level thinking which led him to Goldsmiths and this is where the story ends so far.

Collaborator biography – Helga Just Christoffersen

Helga was born into a family with strong ties to the Danish art world. Her fathers relationship goes way back to his joyful youth and he has also been an enthusiastic art collector for many years. Growing up in a home filled with art works, where art was and is often discussed during dinner and where a trip to the playground meant the playground at the Danish National Gallery, it was only natural that Helga herself would become very interested in the how's and why's of art. This soon lead to a job as a gallery assistant at Galleri Susanne Ottesen in Copenhagen, assistant jobs for several successful Danish artists and the unavoidable departure from the relatively small Danish art world as new how's and why's was to be asked in Berlin, Germany. Upon her return to Denmark she began Bachelor studies in History and History of Art at the University of Copenhagen which will be finalized within weeks. At the same time she also curated her first two exhibitions before taking on a job as Curator Assistant for the first Quadrennial for Contemporary Art (U-TURN) ever in Denmark. With this exhibition now closing down and her Bachelor studies soon done Helgas next how's and why's will be asked at Bard College, New York where she begins her Master in Curatorial Studies in 2009.

Milestones

January 16: Confirmation of gallery space incl. exhibition dates

January 19: Begin prototyping 1. piece (Non-room specific)

January 29: Decide participants in exhibition

February 1: Decide on implementation details and begin production of 1. piece

February 13: Decide on division of space between participants

February 15: Deadline for 1. piece

February 16: Begin prototyping 2. piece

March 1: Decide on implementation details and begin production of 2. piece

March 15: Deadline for 2. piece

March 16: Begin prototyping 3. piece
March 17: Deadline for collecting and writing materials for poster and flyer
March 20: Hand over material to poster and flyer designer
March 29: Decide on implementation details and begin production of 3. piece
April 12: Deadline for 3. piece
April 17: Deadline for printing of posters and flyers
April 24: 1. batch of posters and flyers distributed at Goldsmiths + Online (Tentative)
April 27: Email material to Students Union Newsletter
May 4: Shop wine/beer/soda/water for opening (Tentative)
May 5: 2. batch of posters and flyers distributed at Goldsmiths + Online (Tentative)
May 7: Deadline for installation of works in gallery (Tentative)
May 8: Project deadline (Mick Grierson)
May 8: Opening of exhibition (Tentative)

Tentative milestones are all dependent on the final exhibition dates which are not yet decided on. My preference is to open the exhibition on May 8th which is also the deadline for handing over the projects to Mick Grierson. This is only an optimal solution if seeing the exhibition is enough “handing in the project” for Mick – otherwise the week before is preferred. Another important aspect to consider is if there are actually any students in College on these dates or if we have to plan with having the exhibition in the last week of the second term (23 – 27 of March) which would be bad. Another thing we have to consider is who will be available in the gallery during opening hours – is it the responsibility of the gallery or us.

Budget

Expenditure

<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount in £</u>
Artists fee £180/day for 4 days	720
Two Mac Mini computers at £391/piece	782
Two Max/Msp software licenses at £480/piece	960
One computer incl. monitor	320
Two video projectors at £240/piece	480
Infrared camera	80
Tulle and frames	60
Smoke machine incl. fluid	60

Misc. installation materials (Gaffa, wires etc.)	50
Exhibition opening refreshments	50
Graphic designer fee £180/day for 1 day	180
Printing of posters and flyers	20

Sub Total 3762

Income

<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount in £</u>
Two Max/Msp software licenses at £480/piece (Goldsmiths)	960
One computer incl. monitor (Goldsmiths)	320
One video projector (Goldsmiths)	240
Printing of posters and flyers (Goldsmiths)	20

Sub Total 1540

Total 2222

Online Press Release

The 2nd year Creative Computing students at Goldsmiths College presents an exhibition of films, online worlds and interactive installations.

For a full year the students have learned about late great artists and all they represent. Now they are ready to show you just how much they have understood and how all this relates to the modern world full of electronic equipment. Come and experience a wide range of art projects employing the latest and greatest in technology combined with the wisdom of centuries. You are guaranteed to leave full of new ideas and insights.

The exhibition is open May 11th to 15th 2009 from 12 – 17.

Time: May 8th 2009

Place: Students Union gallery at Goldsmiths College, New Cross, London

Price: Free (as in beer)

Note: The press release is made with tentative dates and counts on all students in our class participating in the exhibition. This might not be the case so of course it would have to be changed to reflect the actual dates and participants projects.