

Towards a Theory of Radical Juxtaposition

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Abstract

This paper will investigate ideas regarding radical juxtaposition in relation to my own generative art. I will define radical juxtaposition for the purposes of this paper as the placement of two things together, such as words, images, or actions, resulting in calling attention to both the relationships and the gaps between them.

I will explore three historical examples of early collage and montage as well as my own recent generative art that uses radical juxtaposition. In our radically fragmented world, the act of SELECTION and ARRANGEMENT are the key artistic actions resulting in transformation.

My first example will explore the effect of consumer culture in the development of

collage looking specifically at the work of Richard Hamilton's work called *Just What Is It That Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing?*. I will then look at the David Lynch film, *Blue Velvet* which uses radical juxtaposition to make the familiar seem de-familiarized. Finally I will analyze the use of concepts and colors juxtaposed within the William Carlos Williams poem, *The Red Wheelbarrow*.

In conclusion I will apply the framework of each of these three examples of radical juxtaposition as a way to better understand and analyze my own generative art I call "Cruft."

We're in an Internet-induced collective hallucination and it's toxic.

My art practice creates code-based automated art that explores the nature of the Internet, its strengths and failures, producing what has been called a post-Internet art that reflects the networks effect on our society and culture. The Internet is the raw material I appropriate and remix by writing computer code that is automated and runs on a 24/7 schedule producing a form of auto-generated collage. The resulting artwork allows me to investigate broader issues of traditional concepts—such as stillness, repetition, overload, uncertainty, and loss.



Staccato Cruft, 2023 (still-image)

Taking into account Walter Benjamin's statement, "Humankind, which once, in Homer was an object of contemplation for the Olympian gods, has now become one for itself. Its self-alienation has reached the point where it can experience its own annihilation as a supreme aesthetic pleasure." He predicted early in the 20th century the resulting sense of pleasure we experience as we march forward toward our own self-destruction while we live in an ever radically fragmented world.

References

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