

Woody Vasulka: Studies

A SYNTAX OF BINARY IMAGES The analysis of the phenomena of electronic tools and the sequence in which they appear in an art context, from audio synthesis through video as art and craft, has been a preoccupation of mine for some time.

The images are the result of my first encounter with digitally-organized imaging. This process provides clues to more complex types of electronic imaging, more complex in the methods of control and of codifying imaging systems.

The definition of a cultural or a system code has been talked about with various degrees of success. I want to point to the primary level of codes, notably the binary code operation, as a principle of imaging and image processing. This may require accepting and incorporating this primitive structure (the binary code) into our views of literacy, in the form of binary language, in order to maintain communication with the primary materials at all levels and from any distance.

The dramatic moment of the transformation into a binary code of energy events in time, as they may be derived from light, or the molecular communication of sound, or from a force field, gravity, or other physical initiation, has to be realized, in order to appreciate the power of the organization and transformation of a code. The process of analog-to-digital and digital-to-analog conversion envelopes the internal digital-code operations, the state of the world, which is exclusively man-organized and cross-disciplinary. The unity of the coding structure has laid down an astonishingly versatile material from which codes are constructed and from which the hierarchical order of codes can originate.

These states of transformation exist in as many time domains as the generation, organization, or processing of codes require, for the media they represent. (A complex sound, for example, can operate in a lower time domain than a complex dynamic image, while other media—for example, printed text generation—seem more time-immune.)

In this way, time assumes a new compositional meaning, a micro-compositional one, where control over the generation of an image can be exerted even in short or very short lengths of time. That in itself signals an urgency to define the craft, in which the notion of time dominates.