

New Generations @ Digital Art Month



Disinformation "Ammonite" – Passengers Offsite, Sluice HQ (London) November 2018

"Ammonite" (2009)

Disinformation

"The "Ammonite" installation by art project Disinformation is a 15 minute long "video organism", a generative artwork created in July 2009, using standard definition domestic TV and video equipment, in conjunction with a 632.8nm helium-neon research laser. "Ammonite" uses laboratory optical and digital film technology to create a minutely-tuned and hypnotic visual feedback loop – an optokinetic artwork, in which emergent form self-organises into the image of a gently pulsing and apparently living organism. From "rules" determined by the physical parameters of the system - feedback is created by using a video camera to film its own output - the emergent patterns display classic features of fractal geometry. "Ammonite" is fully compatible with the notions of Biomorphic Art, proposed in 1935 by the critic and curator Geoffrey Grigson [1], and with the notion of Auto-Creative Art, proposed in 1961 by the artist Gustav Metzger [2]. Video feedback was famously used in the opening sequences for "Dr Who", broadcast in 1963 [3], in that case however creating very different patterns [4][5].

"Fossils fascinate me – they're like time capsules; if only one could unwind this spiral it would probably play back to us a picture of all the landscapes it's ever seen" – J.G. Ballard "Prisoner of the Coral Deep" 1964

[1] Geoffrey Grigson "Comment on England" Axis Magazine, issue 1, January 1935, page 8 - https://monoskop.org/images/d/d3/Axis_1_Jan_1935.pdf

[2] <https://www.bcs.org/articles-opinion-and-research/auto-creative-art/>

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[3]<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/obituaries/norman-taylor-creator-of-the-howlaround-visual-in-the-original-dr-who-title-sequence-2237431.html>

[4] Doctor Who "An Unearthly Child" 1963 – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JfRhyPDtHs>

[5] Doctor Who, unused sequences 1963 – <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tfOG0td7LyE>

Disinformation is an experimental music and installation art project, whose work focuses on electricity, communications and language. Disinformation is best known for exhibiting the electromagnetic sound artwork "National Grid" (1996), and the optokinetic artworks "The Analysis of Beauty" and "The Origin of Painting" (both 2000). More recent artworks include the "Ammonite" video installation (2009), the "Language [as] Meta-Technology" sound artworks (2018) and "The Rapture" video installation (2022).

Disinformation artworks have been described as "visually sophisticated" and as "distinctive and intelligent" by Art Monthly, as "particularly sensuous" by The Wire, and as "mesmerising" and "sublime" by Aesthetica Magazine. The Guardian stated that "Disinformation combines scientific nous with poetic lyricism to create some of the most beautiful installations around".

Disinformation producer Joe Banks is a former AHRC sponsored arts-science researcher at Goldsmiths College and the University of Westminster, and is the author of the book "Rorschach Audio - Art & Illusion for Sound".

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