

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

T2000

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T2000 represents a new relationship between environmental influence and stimulation, based on the concepts of stability and disturbance [1]. The work is endowed with a virtual intelligence that enables it to maintain its internal stability by coordinating spontaneous and interactive responses that automatically compensate for changes in the environment. When the audience enters into the threshold of the virtual space, it is confronted by two digital pieces—*Y2K Virus* and *Stressed Boxes*—that form the appearance of the virtual space (Fig. 1). *T2000* senses the presence of users through their interaction with the pieces. The audience stimulates and destabilizes the environment from its normal relaxed undulation to an excited, rapid palpitation by moving the elements in the pieces with the mouse. Only when the mouse movement stops and the users leave the space does the environment return to its usual tranquil state, as if awaiting the next round of confrontation.

The physical interactions of users modify the structure and rhythm of the elements in two ways: in *Y2K Virus*, users move a wormlike creature simply by moving the mouse, while in *Stressed Boxes*, the mouse is used to juggle five cubes in an empty space. Both pieces concurrently generate two different audio experiences. By default, *Y2K Virus* takes an uncontrollable rhythmic audio order, while *Stressed Boxes* allows users to control the audio order and volume by dropping each cube at a different height and position. Dragging

the cube to the base of the screen will stop all movement and sound.

My work seeks to reconcile technological, aesthetic and artistic factors by placing an emphasis on the relationship between the creator (myself) and the environment (virtual space), on one hand, and technology, the environment, the public and mass society on the other. As *T2000* deals with the impact of technology and its social implications on our daily life, the audience's response to my work is an important factor in the whole process.

One of the most urgent issues in contemporary society is the relationship between proliferating technologies and a sense of social stability. Technological development as a phenomenon has to be induced, stimulated and appropriately guided. People need knowledge and understanding at their disposal, channeled by the human propensity to innovate, the means to do good, and necessary usage. A sense of interdependence based on humanistic values is necessary to distinguish between two kinds of technological development: one in the form of a rising level of material technical devices designed solely for economic and political reasons, and the other in the form of technological development based on the growth of people's abilities and the enhancement of their lives. As we move and juggle with both, a larger conclusion with greater meaning should be alluded to, so that more humanistic values can be elicited. There is ample evidence of such antagonism nowadays, especially when rapid technological development takes place in the sphere of armaments, where it collides with the principles of a balanced ecology and world peace.

Note

1. *T2000* was first commissioned by the Singapore Art Museum in 1999 for the Nokia Art Millennium Celebration as a digital installation. Subsequently, the work has appeared at the Efestival Asia 2000 and Museum Festival 2001, and in a Shockwave version commissioned by fineArt Forum in 2002.

Fig. 1 (facing page). Choy Kok Kee, *T2000*, digital installation, 1999. © Choy Kok Kee) *T2000* represents a new relationship between environmental influence and stimulation, based on the concepts of stability and disturbance, dealing with the impact of technology and its social implications on our daily lives.

STATEMENT

KANDINSKY'S COLOR-FORM CORRESPONDENCE AND THE BAUHAUS COLORS: AN EMPIRICAL VIEW

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The use of primary colors and forms in the fine arts and design at the Bauhaus was a revolutionary innovation of the early 20th century. There was a desire to find a universal, ideal visual language, a quest to establish basic principles of general applicability. To this end, color and form were reduced to their fundamentals. In his theorizing and teaching, Wassily Kandinsky was especially interested in the relationship of color and form. To him, there was an inherent link between the two [1], suggesting a general correspondence of color and form [2]. He developed the following color-form assignments: yellow triangle, red square and blue circle. These combinations became widely used at the Bauhaus when Kandinsky joined it in 1922 [3], being much in evidence in his teaching, and were a repetitive theme throughout the Bauhaus exhibition of 1923.

There are a number of reports that Kandinsky used an empirical approach to investigate his correspondence hypothesis in 1923 [4]. He designed a questionnaire that instructed participants to assign yellow, red and blue to the triangle, square and circle and to give a rationale for their choice (Fig. 2). Reports differ with regard to the reliability of the empirical basis of the results of this survey taken to support the correspondence hypothesis [5].

In a subsequent elaboration of his correspondence theory, Kandinsky argued that the fundamental correspondence of basic colors and forms was informed by the inherent relationships of colors and angles [6]. While

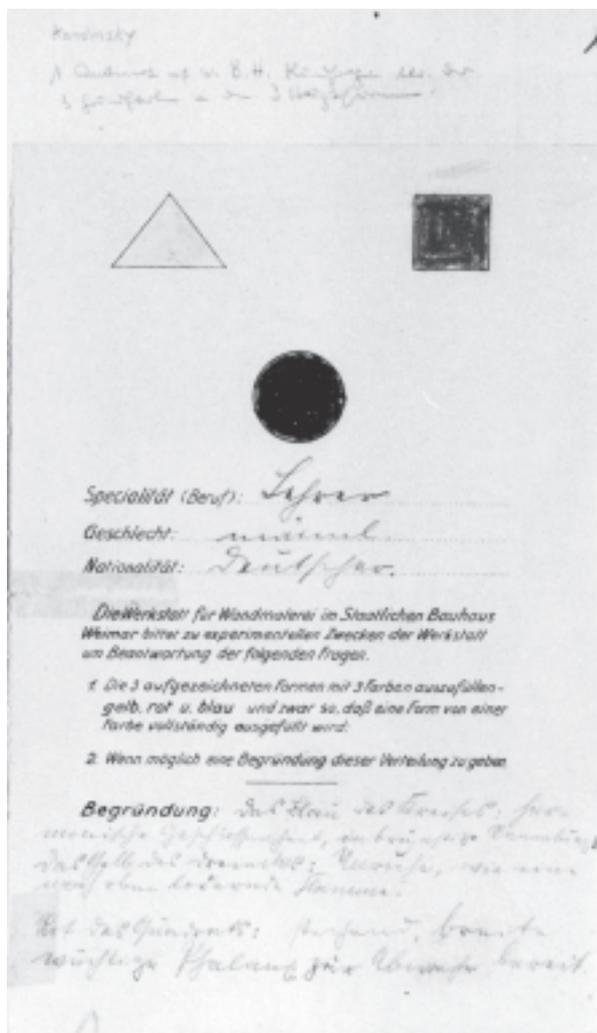


Fig. 2. Original questionnaire of the wallpainting workshop, designed by Kandinsky at the Bauhaus to investigate the correspondence of basic colors and forms, 1923. (© Bauhaus-Archiv, Museum für Gestaltung, Berlin, Germany) Filled in using the Kandinsky color-form assignment by an unknown member of the Bauhaus.

his model was absolute and universal in theory, he did not make it predominant in his theorizing, and he did not preclude that artistic practice, including his own, might differ from it. There were also fellow artists at the Bauhaus who contested his view [7].

Promoted by others than Kandinsky himself, these specific color-form combinations thereafter became a famous icon of the Bauhaus school of design,

gaining worldwide recognition and enjoying frequent use. Today, basic colors and forms can be seen in countless variations in art and design [8].

Using a variant of Kandinsky's historical questionnaire, my recent empirical study [9] demonstrated individual preferences in color-form assignments. About half of the student participants produced a red triangle, a blue square and a yellow circle. The rationales for

this choice frequently stated world-knowledge associations: The red triangle resembles a traffic or other warning sign, and the yellow circle resembles the sun. Half the participants preferred one of the remaining five choices. Kandinsky's assignments were the least preferred.

These results are best illuminated using a framework of present-day psychological aesthetics. A host of determiners, ranging from evolution to local cultural contexts, govern aesthetic processing. Individuals who have experienced a liberal upbringing allowing many determiners to have an effect are likely to develop individualized preferences in aesthetic judgment [10]. My and others' recent findings of individual differences are due to a multitude of factors: world knowledge, education, historical change, and societal, group-specific and individual leitmotifs. Thus, a hypothesis of fundamental color-form correspondence appears primarily idiosyncratic in retrospect. The prominence of the Bauhaus colors is owed to a historical development.

References

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