
Peter Weibel

ABSTRACT

(1993) 1-335

Computer Graphics : The Word of context controlled variables.

In film and video the information is stored on the information carrier in a way that it is difficult to change it. The information is "locked in". By transforming the information from analog to digital code, you can change and manipulate the information in the postproduction process. In the classic picture media the prize for viability of information is its invariability.

In computer graphics the information is not locked or bound, it is free, floating and is changeable. All parameters of information belonging to the image are available to be changed. Instant variability is the unique feature of computer graphics that makes it so suitable for virtual environments, interactive installations, artificial intelligence and artificial life. In computer graphics the aim is to turn each parameter, each point and each dimension of the image into variables. These variables are not controlled by the storage organisation, but by the user or the observer. They construct the context in which the free variables take shape or form an image. Morphing is the latest step in the process of the variabilisation of all elements of the image. You can separate ground and figure, object and texture and manipulate both according to your desire. The context that controls the variables which were the former constants of an image, for example a face, can now be the motion of the observer or the sound of the depicted object or the sound accompanying the image. Through this new conceptual organisation of the image based on digital techniques, we are entering a new world of images that will be multi-dimensional, postlinear, complex and dynamic : the world of context-controlled variables that interface and relate, enforce, multiply and influence each other. The nature of the processes which construct and receive images like multitasking, multiprocessing, algorithms of growth, networking etc, will not only define the way an image will follow another image, but also the way the image will look.