

Towards A Cybernetic Aesthetic

aesthetics n. 1. The branch of philosophy that provides a theory of the beautiful and of the fine arts. 2. The theories and descriptions of the psychological response to beauty and artistic experiences. 3. In the philosophy of Kant, the branch of metaphysics concerned with the laws of perception.

cybernetics n. The theoretical study of control processes in electronic, mechanical, and biological systems, esp. the mathematical analysis of the flow of information in such systems.

As necessity seems the mother of invention, so it seems also the mother of meaning. The phrase cybernetic aesthetics arose from a necessity to elucidate an aesthetic that would not only expand the corpus of reasonings for art, but would also recognize the reorientation of the artmaker/artuser synergy based on the notions that information itself can be beautiful/ugly, and the mathematics that describe the relations in cybernetic feedback communication systems can inform this emerging aesthetic.

Artists love their tools. With the advent of the personal computer we have at our disposal an exquisitely versatile tool in which artists can find a multitude of visualizations in a unique and encompassing set of media. Computer technology revolutionizes such formerly diverse activities as publishing, music composition/recording, and film/video making. The trend suggested in this revolution seems the empowering of the individual by presenting hir with a desktop creativity lab. Now the possibility for the individual artist to write, draw, compose music, fabricate videos, fabricate environments, explore, manipulate, generate worlds of information as a means of creative and communicative expression arrives. Explore the nature of this mysterious digital medium which can even simulate the very processes of thought itself, as implied by the existence of programs that can mimic psychotherapy.

The cybernetic communications between those artists creating from both aspects of their minds, i.e., the poet right brain and the scientist left brain, and those scientists/engineers that utilize their categorical right and wholistic left, represent the essence of the Cybernetic Aesthetic.
