

Looking at Looking at Looking: Engaging Interactions

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Abstract

I am interested in the medium of response, and in the conditions that enable people to experience "flow", or sustained creative feedback with reactive systems. In this regard I have found inspiration in the engaging interactive artworks of Myron Krueger and Toshio Iwai, and in the research of cognitive psychologist Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi. I am drawn to the revelatory potential of information visualization – whether brought to bear on a single participant, the world of data we inhabit, or the formal aspects of mediated communication itself. Here I have drawn from many teachers in the disciplines of conceptual art and information design. And I am fascinated by how abstraction can connect us to a reality beyond language, and the ways in which our gestures and traces, thus abstracted, can reveal the unique signatures of our spirits. My recent projects have explored the gestures of the hand and voice; in my new work, I have turned to the gestures of the eye, with the aim of creating engrossing, uncanny and provocative interactions structured by gaze. This presentation will discuss a wide range of my own works and those of others, with a particular attention to how the use of gestural interfaces, visual abstraction, and information visualization can support new modes of interaction and play.

Biography

Golan Levin develops artifacts and events which explore supple new modes of reactive expression. His work focuses on the design of systems for the creation, manipulation and performance of simultaneous image and sound, as part of a more general inquiry into the formal language of interactivity, and of nonverbal communications protocols in cybernetic systems. Through performances, digital artifacts, and virtual environments, often created with a variety of collaborators, Levin applies creative twists to digital technologies that highlight our relationship with machines, make visible our ways of interacting with each other, and explore the intersection of abstract communication and interactivity. Levin has exhibited widely in Europe, America and Asia.

Levin received undergraduate and graduate degrees from the MIT Media Laboratory, where he studied in the Aesthetics and Computation Group. Between degrees, he worked for four years as an interaction designer and research scientist at Interval Research Corporation, Palo Alto. Presently Levin is Associate Professor of Electronic Time-Based Art at Carnegie Mellon University, where he also holds Courtesy Appointments in the School of Computer Science and the School of Design. His work is represented by the bitforms gallery, New York City.
