

How I learned to love the past's future (2009)

Audio-Visual Composition (ca. 8 min).

Selected movie stills as source material, OST as source material. Technology in Max/MSP/Jitter.

2001: A Space Odyssey was produced in 1968, one year before the landing on the moon, and raised the bar in audience expectations towards the Science Fiction Movie genre. It not only held as a showcase of concepts of new technologies and Kubrick's mastery in filmmaking, it also introduced a whole new aesthetic level in various means. Those aesthetics were not only implemented in the futuristic props, also the camera followed a very stringent and minimalist approach to add calmness, a certain degree of coolness and an absence of emotional involvement in the scene. Long shots established a lot of scenes, letting the viewer decide what is important by displaying the grandeur of the setting as an agency which slowly emerges its chilling effect on the viewers. The relatively sparse use of music added to this chilling effect, letting the pictures speak for themselves. When music was used, it added an almost baroque and sharp contrast to the minimalist picture, suggesting the inconceivable, metaphysical statement implicitly communicated, the constellation of stars, the movements in space, the seemingly trivial use of mankind's first usage of tools. The effects of the aura of this movie was tremendous on my personal perception of the world when I saw it for the first time in the 1990s as a young boy. I knew that the lookout was far too optimistic from a technologically and civilizatory point of view (as it is obviously an indicator for the optimism caused by the race into space). But still the movie's implicit meaning and interpretation is still recent, not only because it is concerned with metaphysical questioning, also simply because it is 8 years after and we obviously did not reach the state of development suggested in the movie. This gives the movie a timelessness, at least an up-to-dateness, as it deals with scenarios we still have to accomplish in reality. As a result, I still feel and interpret the aesthetic of the movie as contemporary and as interesting as it might used to be in the year of its release. How could I reinterpret and appreciate this aesthetics at the same time, now from a more mature, but still almost naively appreciating point of view?

The aesthetic of the movie in setting, color, movement and music is complex but coherent. My interest was to articulate a brief exploration in the aesthetics of color, composition and music by deconstructing original content. I remixed the visual with a certain method I call cross-scan. In this method a certain spot in the image is observed and spread over the whole view. The result is a removal of original space and shape, leaving only color, light and gradient of the respective spot in the source image intact. If the spot of interest changes with a certain rate an animation of ever changing patterns with smooth and harsh gradients will occur. Hidden grainy textures from the film material reveal themselves, patterns, both strict and chaotic, become visible through the fast scan of the image. A contentless, marginalized and glitchy aesthetic is filtered out, but still visibly related to its original. In the animation, this aesthetic is added with the strict and linear movement of the technique, the chronologic order of the source images, and, for the auditive part, the granularized music of the soundtrack, loosely related to the original image and its state of plot within the movie. It works analogue to the cross-scan: it takes out points of interest and emphasizes and stretches them to examine its highly aesthetic potential.

How I learned to love the pasts future is a digital structural film I would like to understand as a personal declaration of admittance for the movie, a remix, as well as a magnifier for its often sublime and delicate aesthetic.