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Tenth Anniversary
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Vectors: Digital Art of Our Time





Toshio Iwai, Japan
Piano—as image media, 1995

Pipilotti Rist, Switzerland
Ever Is Over All, 1997

Masaki Fujihata and Yuji Dougane, Japan
Orchisoid, 2001

Mathieu Briand, France
SYS*017.ReE.06/PiG-EqN\5*8, 2001

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, Mexico
Vectorial Elevation, 1999-2002

Hachiya Kazuhiko, Japan
PostPet, 1997

Carsten Nicolai, Germany
telefunken, 2000

Shirin Neshat, Iran
Turbulent, 1998

Chris Cunningham, United Kingdom
All Is Full of Love, 1999

Ryoji Ikeda and Dumb Type, Japan
Memorandum, 1999

Rafael Lozano-Hemmer, Mexico
Vectorial Elevation, Relational Architecture 4, 1999–2002
Robotic xenon searchlights controlled over the Internet
10-mile radius

Vectorial Elevation was a large-scale interactive installation that transformed Mexico City's historic center using robotic searchlights controlled over the Internet. Visitors to the project Web site could design ephemeral light sculptures over the National Palace, City Hall, the Cathedral, and the Templo Mayor Aztec ruins. The sculptures, made by 18 xenon searchlights located around the Zócalo Square, could be seen from a 10-mile radius and were sequentially rendered as they arrived over the Net. The Web site featured a 3D-Java interface that allowed participants to make a vectorial design over the city and virtually see it from any point of view. When the project server in Mexico received a submission, it was numbered and entered into a queue. Every six seconds the searchlights would automatically orient themselves and three Webcams would take pictures to document a participant's design. An archive page was made for each participant with comments, information, and watermarked photos of their design. A notification e-mail message was then sent once the archive Web page was done. *Vectorial Elevation* received participants from over 89 countries and all the regions of Mexico. To facilitate access, free terminals were also set up in public libraries and museums across the country. The Zócalo's monumental size makes the human scale seem insignificant—an observation that has been noted by some Mexican scholars as an emblem of a rigid, monolithic, and homogenizing environment. Searchlights themselves have been associated with authoritarian regimes, in part due to the military precedent of anti-aircraft surveillance. Indeed, the Internet itself is the legacy of a military desire for distributed operations control. By ensuring that participants were an integral part of the artwork, *Vectorial Elevation* attempted to establish new creative relationships between control technologies, ominous urban landscapes, and a local and remote public. It was intended to interface the post-geographical space of the Internet with the specific urban reality of the world's most populous city. NOTE: The searchlights were taken down at 6:30am, January 7, 2000. However, most of the site's features are still operative, including the 3D interface. The Web site might go live again for future installations in different cities.


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