DIGITAL IMAGING AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Cyberhistories: Cyberspace, Cyber Art and Cyberculture

If we look at the histories of digital media and the computer, we see the development begins somewhere during WWII, with Weiner and Vanevar Bush in America: the beginnings of the military industrial complex and in Britain with Alan Turing (although the computers development can be said to be much earlier).

Postwar we see digital pioneers from John and James Whitney to Benoit Mandelbrot. Computers can be seen as a creative and liberating force, a seductive and progressive idea reinforced by advertising campaigns that promote software such as Photoshop and hardware like the Apple Mac computer. Look at the way Apple promoted the Mackintosh computer. Generally, we see a shift from computers being viewed as part of a culture of calculation (as parodied by Rube Goldberg and Heath Robinson), seen in the examples of the machines designed by Charles Babbage or seen in Bletchley Park in WWII, and stereotypically PCs and Unix and command line environments, subject to hierarchy and centralised control (a tendency of Modernism) to one that includes the Internet and the WWW and emphasises a culture of simulation that is decentralised and fragmented (a tendency of Post-Modernism). The more recent digital and interactive design of John Maybury, Jenny Boulter and William Latham will bare witness to this 'liberation', as they themselves reveal the blurring distinctions between design practitioners and their practices and computer science. These are just of few of the professionals who have shaped the use of this fairly new medium, influenced art and designers and experimented and stretched the creative potential of these technologies.

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