ArtHist.net

Quart 70: Interface aesthetics in digital games

University Wroclaw (Poland)
Deadline: Sep 10, 2023

Jakub Zarzycki

Call for papers for the 70th issue of Quart. The Quarterly of the Institute of Art History at the University of Wrocław: "Interface aesthetics in digital games".

Guest Editor: Dr. Joanna Pigulak

The proposition included in the title above expresses an invitation to reflect on the specificity of the design, use and experience of interfaces in video-games. In this view, interfaces are considered as multifunctional system devices and software elements that serve to communicate between the player and the system –conveying information about gameplay specifics and providing tools to reconfigure individual game elements. In order for interfaces to serve the above functions, they need to be properly designed and made available to the player. The audiovisual design of the interfaces proves to be particularly important. The visual appearance of interfaces –their design –stimulates the user's immersion experience, contributes to the dynamics and fluidity of gameplay and, consequently, to the reception and perception of the game, conveys information about the creative process and the designer's intentions. Interfaces –due to their diversity and originality –are of high aesthetic value. They are not only sense-making elements, tools with a high degree of functionality, but reach the art object status because of the way they are designed. Furthermore, interfaces in digital games are among the most dynamically developing, resulting in the creation of many of their types and kinds. They can occupy a large part of the navigable space of a game, or aim for almost complete transparency; they undergo stylisation and mediatisation, and function as diegetic or non-diegetic signs.

The artistic potential of interfaces, which lies in their constant changeability and the openness of their creators to experimentation, makes them seem worth subjecting to inclusive, inter-and transdisciplinary reflection. In view of the above, I would like to propose a discussion on the aesthetics of interfaces, taking into account the following themes and motifs (however, these are only proposals, which certainly do not exhaust the diversity and complexity of the issue):

- typologies of graphical user interfaces;
- digital game interface architecture: leading interaction models;
- text as interface –the aesthetics of textual interfaces (diaries, memoirs, tutorials and walk-throughs);
- styling in interface design (painting interfaces, book interfaces, comic book interfaces, etc.);
- the intermediality of interfaces –film/ TV series/internet interfaces in games;
- diegetic space of the game as an interface;

- interfaces as a plot device;
- diegetic and non-diegetic interfaces in the context of user immersion/emersion;
- the realism of interfaces;
- the interface as a source of aesthetic experience – comedy, tragedy, grotesque, pastiche etc;
- interfaces versus literary genetics –the specificity of interfaces in genre games;
- the interface as a communication tool between the creator and the viewer;
- designing interfaces –the creative process;
- designing interfaces –leading interaction models;
- interfaces in a diachronic perspective: development and evolution;
retro-interfaces;
- the human as interface;
- types and functions of auditory and voice interfaces;
- interface versus game ontology: issues of space-time;
- interface games;
- virtual camera as an interface;
- space mapping: map interfaces;
- photo mode interface –features, capabilities and development prospects;
- aesthetic text transformations via the interface: overlays, filters and special game-play modes;
- case studies of graphical user interfaces in selected games.

Papers (from 20,000 to 40,000 characters in Polish or English, with up to 10 illustrations) should be submitted in format specified in the guidelines (to be downloaded from the website: https://quart.uni.wroc.pl/guidelines-for-the-authors) before September, 10th, 2023, to the address: quart@uwr.edu.pl.
The editors reserve the right to select given papers. All the submitted papers will be subject to a double-blind review, in line with COPE guidelines.

Printing of the issue: December 2023

"Quart" is a regularly published quarterly journal by the Institute of Art History of the University of Wroclaw. It is indexed in ERIH+, CEJSH and BazHum databases. It was awarded a grant under the "Support for 500 Scientific Journals" Programme of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education. It is included in the list of scientific journals of the Ministry of Education and Science as of 1.12.2022 with 70 points.

The current number can be purchased in EMPiK chain stores. Archival issues are available in libraries and in a digitalized form in Polona website: https://polona.pl/search/?query=quart.

Reference:

CFP: Quart 70: Interface aesthetics in digital games. In: ArtHist.net, Apr 23, 2023 (accessed May 29, 2025), <https://arthist.net/archive/39088>.