

Three Portals

Visual Music
Compositions

Reflections & Refractions 12:40

Apparitions 11:05

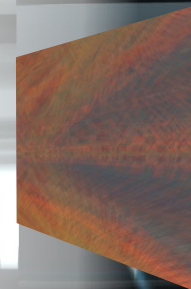
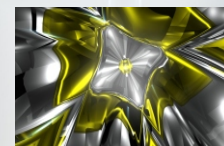
Dandelions and Graffiti 7:06

by
Michael Rhoades

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Blu-ray

Dear Experencer,

Three Portals is a collection of visual music compositions that were realized between the years of 2014 and 2016. The visual aspect of each composition required several weeks of 24/7 rendering, using a four-server rendering farm, to complete. Though each composition will be described in greater detail below, there are some commonalities that should be mentioned initially. The visual elements will primarily be described since the musical approach is well documented in other places.

To begin, each piece was approached from a choreographic perspective. The visual elements were as dancers performing in relationship with the music. At times the two elements are in unity, at others times in harmony and yet at others in counterpoint. The music sometimes pushes or pulls the visual elements and the reverse is true as well. They are at times in sync and at others completely disconnected... often they were somewhere between the two extremes.

A perspective of non-linearity, in terms of time and space, was intrinsic to each composition. The music was composed from a 3D paradigm, with regard to spatialization. In a manner similar to the way a 3rd dimension is inferred in 2d visual art, a 4th dimension is inferred in the 3D spatialization of the music. Hidden layers are often enfolded into the positioning and movements of the musical events within the speaker arrangements. The music was natively generated as an 8-channel sound file intended to be heard through a cuboid speaker configuration. This Blu-ray or DVD is a 4-channel mix and is a fair representation of the original. However, to fully experience the compositions as intended they must be seen and heard in a properly configured concert or installation venue.

Indeterminacy is also an important factor in each composition. The music was generated using algorithmic processes that require that the computer act as an augmented intelligence agent. Utilizing tendency masks to stipulate constraints and probabilities of numerical combinations, a quasi-random number generator was employed as a score synthesizer. This in turn carried over into various aspects of the visual components of the work. The emergence of dynamic musical and subsequent visual material was intrinsic to the overall process and created results that would be impossible to achieve without computer assistance.

Dandelions and Graffiti, completed in April of 2016, was begun in 2014. It was based upon manipulations of a photograph of a spray painting on canvas of the same title. Around ten minutes of video were generated at that time and, due to an inability to achieve satisfactory results, the project was abandoned. In the winter of 2016 it was revisited and subsequently brought to realization as an approximately six minute long piece.

While working on the musical score, it became apparent that a different approach was called for in producing the choreographic element. For this work a very loosely held connection between the musical and the visual was called for. It is perhaps similar to the dancing of a person at a bar... moving almost dreamlike with the music... not really caring to match the beat. The two elements are connected but in a nearly disparate manner.

Throughout the piece, multiple iterations of the same image are sequenced slightly out of sync causing an intended psychedelic effect. The vivid phosphorescent oranges and yellows also lend to this effect as the images fade in and out of focus varying in speed and intensity.

These compositions are meant to provide you, the experencer, with an immersive environment in hopes of evoking a consciousness expanding experience. It is a goal that you be profoundly, and positively, affected by the experience and that it will provide some small aid on your path of ascension.

Thank you for your beautiful attention.

Michael

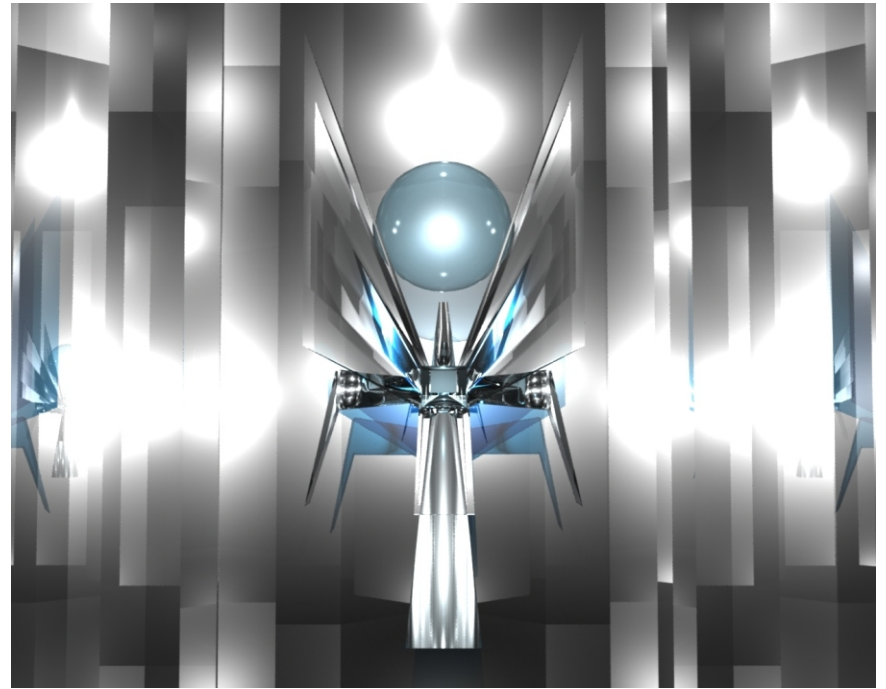
* The term "deconstruction" is somewhat ambiguous in that by its nature it implies reconstruction.

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Dandelions and Graffiti - Spray Paint on Canvas



Reflections & Refractions - 3D Virtual Sculpture

Reflections & Refractions, completed in April of 2015, is a visual study involving manipulations of a 3D virtual glass sculpture. Using light, shadow, iteration, reflection and refraction, a deconstructive* approach was utilized. The sculpture was placed within an eight-walled mirrored room with an eight-sided mirrored floor and ceiling. The walls, the floor and ceiling, the sculpture, the lights and the cameras all rotate and oscillate together in an interactive dance thus producing the images. As light is passed and refracted through the glass sculpture it reflects off of the mirrored walls of the room, which in turn reflects it back through the sculpture where it is again refracted and then reflected... and the process repeats numerous times thus creating a unique manipulation of light. In four parts, the video was first produced and the music was composed afterward. The music was integrated with the visual in much the same manner as a movie score is produced.

Apparitions, completed in February of 2016, is based upon 13,890 variations of an oil painting titled "Thunderstruck". It was one of a series of five paintings inspired by a road in southwest Virginia of the same name. On this isolated pathway, one seems to sense the remaining vibrations of the people who lived there many years before. It is as if a timeless part of them still roams the wooded areas by the river that flows there while living a simpler and slower way of life than we know today. Thus was the inspiration for this work.

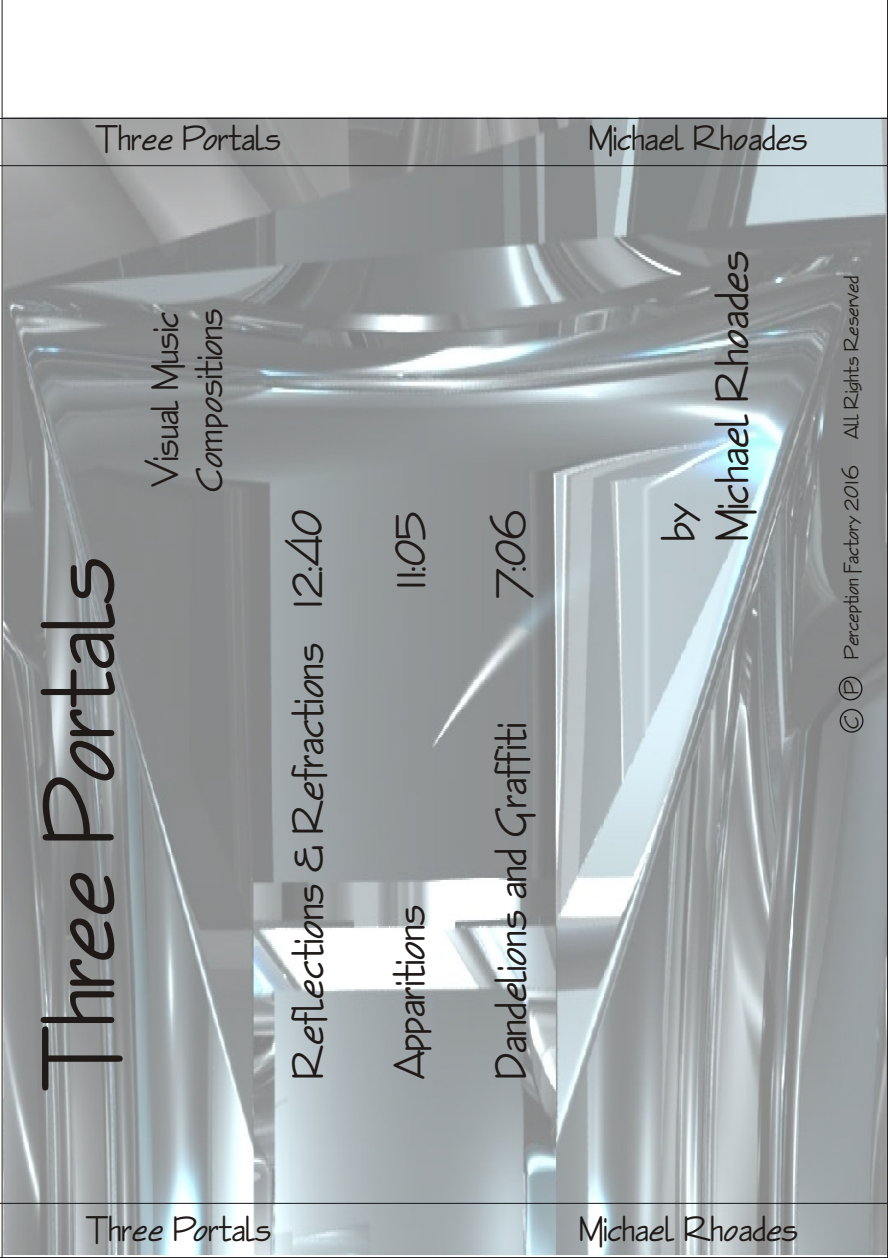
Utilizing light, transparency, reflection and refraction, photographs of the oil painting were mapped onto transparent and/or reflective planes and cubes. These were inserted into mirrored, opaque or open environments and made to move in various related ways.

For this composition, the music was generated first and the visual aspect of the composition was then choreographed to it. This choreographic relationship was very tightly established and maintained through the entirety of the composition. As such it is perhaps similar to ballet in that every movement is deliberate and specific to the needs of each event. The first section is intended to establish a formal foundation from which the second section is expanded.

Motifs correlate each musical theme with a specific visual element. However, as the composition progresses several of these become interchangeable. This approach to unity and cohesion is meant to guide the experienter through the composition and to allow for a cross-pollination of formal elements.



Thunderstruck - Oil on Canvas



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