

Landmarks Guide for Adolescents



Casey Reas

American, born 1972

A Mathematical Theory of Communication

2014

Inkjet print

Subject: New media art and conceptual art

Activity: Compare the work of new media artist Casey Reas with conceptual artist Sol LeWitt

Vocabulary: software art, conceptual art, new media art

Introduction

Casey Reas is one of the leading artists in the field of software art, a type of new media arts. Reas builds programs that create works of art based on a set of instructions input into a computer. This is similar to what conceptual artist Sol LeWitt was doing in the 1960s. LeWitt said “the idea becomes a machine that makes the art.” While LeWitt’s designs were intended to be followed by other people, Reas’ designs are processed by a computer.

Questions

Can you name other professions where one person’s idea is executed by another person?

Who plays the more important role, the person with the idea or the person who creates it? Why?

Activity

Casey Reas is inspired by the conceptual art of Sol LeWitt. Take 10 minutes to look at both Casey Reas’ work and Sol LeWitt’s located in this building. Think about the following questions:

- How are they the same? How are they different?
- Can you imagine what LeWitt wrote as the instructions for the wall drawing? Reas inputs an image into his computer and then runs it through the program. Can you guess what the original image looked like?
- LeWitt uses a common shape through most of his work, a cube. Look closely at Reas’ piece, do you see a common shape or pattern?
- Why do you think LeWitt is one of

Casey Reas, continued



- Reas' favorite artists?

BTW



Casey Reas created software called Processing that was used to create this piece *And That's The Way It Is* by Ben Rubin, also in the Landmarks collection.

Vocabulary

Software art - Art that is created when an artist inputs a set of instructions into a computer program, which generates the work of art

Conceptual art - Art in which an idea or concept for a work is more important than its execution

New media art - Art that is created using new technologies such as digital art, computer graphics, interactive art, video games, and computer animation