University of Huddersfield Repository

Taylor, Andrew, Unver, Ertu and Benincasa-Sharman, Caterina Amanda

Hyper naturalism and simulacra in Stonehenge art

Original Citation


This version is available at http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/16132/

The University Repository is a digital collection of the research output of the University, available on Open Access. Copyright and Moral Rights for the items on this site are retained by the individual author and/or other copyright owners. Users may access full items free of charge; copies of full text items generally can be reproduced, displayed or performed and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided:

- The authors, title and full bibliographic details is credited in any copy;
- A hyperlink and/or URL is included for the original metadata page; and
- The content is not changed in any way.

For more information, including our policy and submission procedure, please contact the Repository Team at: E.mailbox@hud.ac.uk.

http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/
HYPER NATURALISM & SIMULACRA IN STONEHENGE ART

Andrew Taylor, Ertu Unver & Caterina Benincasa-Sharman.
University of Huddersfield, School of Art, Design & Architecture.
International Conference on Cultural Heritage, EUROMED 2012, CYPRUS.

Unver and Taylor have explored digitally a methodology that has interested makers and observers for decades. In the 1930’s Walter Benjamin in his seminal discussion of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction worried about the destruction of authenticity and aura that reproductions of the real created for the viewer, whilst acknowledging that this reproduction allowed artefacts to be dislocated from their original ritual purposes and therefore making the once sacred more accessible.

In 1977 Roland Barthes liberated the emphasis of construction and understanding of knowledge from the makers to the spectator by proposing that the author [in the case of Stonehenge this is a point for discussion] was no longer the “god” that should be sought out to explain the works on offer. In fact, once the understanding of a text is placed with the viewer he suggested that to try to impose a final reading of an object is ineffective. Baudrillard believed that when a reader seeks out an image of the real (at the Stonehenge monument there is a physical barrier in place between the tourist and the object) the more vast the schism between a lived experience.

Unver and Taylor, have helped to reinstate an immersive experience through the Stonehenge Virtual Reconstruction research. Up for debate is whether their output really is another example of ‘technological inertia’ or whether, because digital life and real life are now so closely intertwined they have enabled new spectators to be perceptually closer to the stones and the surrounding site.