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GameSpace

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GameSpace

My work uses gameplay, the experience of interacting with a gaming system, as a strategy to generate paintings. I interact with a set of rules, challenges and goals loosely derived from the structure of early videogames as a method to compose a painting. I am interested in how game strategies can address formal aspects of painting. I am also interested in how gameplay as an indicator of game quality or the desire to continually be challenged will continually advance the paintings.

Like videogames the paintings are strategic plans for well structured problems. The act of painting is simultaneously an act of gameplay. Rules are implemented to create challenges that require a skill set to overcome, and the goals produce rewards once they are achieved. Like a painting the overall composition is considered when designing the rules and goals of the game. So, the game is structured not only for its ability to produce interesting game-play, but also for its ability to produce an interesting composition.

The basic objective of the game is to move from base to base without crossing over your own trail and using the least number of units possible to reach the bases. A limited number of crosses are allowed, and once that limit is reached the game is over. A number of obstacles occur that may bring the game closer to its conclusion if they are not overcome properly. There are also rewards that may extend the game. There is no winning state that brings the game to an end, and so the objective is to get as far as possible before running out of moves.

My paintings reference an early period in videogames when rather than just a single vantage point is available to the viewer the entire universe is visible. This allows the viewer to perceive the game in its entirety from beginning to end. It also corresponds well with painting since both are low-tech images. I am also interested in this period of videogames because the fictions themselves are much more open to interpretation. Ascribing meaning to the clunky graphics requires more of the viewers imagination.

Alongside the game-paintings, I also make paintings that are less bound to a set of rules. These paintings use only one shape at a single scale in a single orientation. Although there are limited rules in place here I focus more on the act of formal play rather than gameplay, and this formal play has its own more traditional set of rules and goals such as composition, balance or harmony. Many times these formal based paintings allow me to experiment with different painting techniques that I can then incorporate into the rule set of the game paintings.

The fusion of videogames with painting alludes to a complex relationship between game strategies and social systems. What interests me most about this relationship is how interaction with a gaming system can yield consequences in a non-gaming environment.