

Brian Eno's "77 Million Paintings" Comes to Yerba Buena

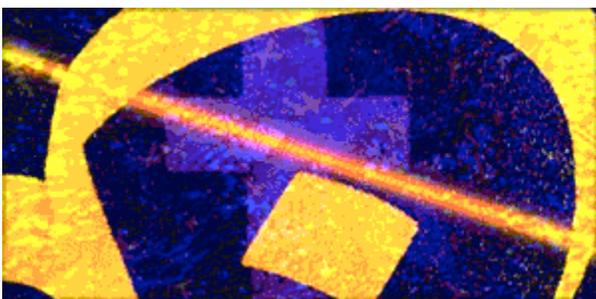
by E. "Doc" Smith, 2007-06-29

A few weeks ago, I was in Cannes, France with ex-patriate cellist-bassist Stanley Adler, reminiscing on our 25 plus year friendship and our time spent performing with Brian Eno and the NYC group "The Same", featuring Clodagh Simonds, Carter Burwell, Chip Johansen and Stephen Bray. (Eno and Burwell recently reunited with Simonds on her new CD, "[Fovea Hex](#)"). Our association with Eno was perhaps the most influential musical force of our lives, and steered us along a creative path we still trod today.

In those halcyon days, Eno was pioneering his video art; a dozen or so video monitors and computer generated images in a SoHo gallery, accompanied by his wonderfully ambient music. This weekend, Eno's vision comes full circle to the Yerba Buena Center with his North American debut of "77 Million Paintings", a video tour de force, art installation and ambient soundscape all rolled into one.

In late 2006, Eno released "77 Million Paintings", a program of generative video and music specifically for the PC. As its title suggests, there is a possible combination of 77 million paintings where the viewer will see different combinations of video slides prepared by Eno each time the program is launched. Likewise, the accompanying music is generated by the program so that it's almost certain the listener will never quite hear the same arrangement twice.

Conceived by Eno as "visual music", his latest artwork, 77 Million Paintings is a constantly evolving sound and imagescape which continues his exploration into light as an artist's medium and the aesthetic possibilities of "generative software". He first created 77 Million Paintings to bring art to the increasing number of flat panel TV's and monitors that often sit darkened and underutilized. Now Eno is also showing large installations of this work, recently at the Venice Biennale and Milan Triennale, and in Tokyo, London and South Africa. The installation at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts will be the North American Premiere of his work.



The installation is indeed mesmerizing; the kaleidoscopic display of the projected images and slow, rhythmic evolution of the artwork create a singular experience for the viewer

The North American Premiere 77 Million Paintings will be held at San Francisco's foremost venue for contemporary art, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts. The art installation will be up for only three nights, and is presented by The Long Now Foundation, a San Francisco non profit dedicated to fostering long-term responsibility. Two evenings are open to the general public and the final night is set aside for members of Long Now, in appreciation of their support for the organization.

In addition to the 77 Million Paintings installation in the Forum, the Grand Lobby will be set up for conversations and refreshments, including a full bar, and will also have demonstrations of Long Now's Clock and Library projects. The Long Now Foundation was established in "01996", (the Long Now Foundation uses five digit dates, the extra zero is to solve the deca-millennium bug which will come into effect in about 8,000 years), to develop the Clock and Library projects, as well as to become the seed of a very long term cultural institution.

The Long Now Foundation hopes to provide counterpoint to today's "faster/cheaper" mind set and promote "slower/better" thinking, and they hope to creatively foster responsibility in the framework of the next 10,000 years. The term was even coined by one of their founding board members: Eno. When Eno first moved to New York City, he found that in New York here and now meant this room and this five minutes, as opposed to the larger here and longer now that he was used to in England. They have since adopted the term as the title of their foundation, and are trying to stretch out what people consider as now.

There is also a Limited Edition 77 Million Paintings DVD available, featuring an exclusive interview in which Eno discusses his creation of the 77 Million Paintings software, the next evolutionary stage of his exploration into light as an artist's medium and the aesthetic possibilities of "generative software." A bonus software disc creates a constantly evolving, slowly changing "light painting" on the screen of your computer or TV with a virtually infinite number of variations accompanied by his music. Also included in this deluxe package also is a 52-page book, featuring an extensive essay by Eno.

Brian Eno's "77 Million Paintings"
The Yerba Buena Center
701 Mission Street, San Francisco
\$25, \$20 for students and seniors

Friday, June 29th from 8pm till 2 am - general admission
Saturday, June 30th from 8pm till 2 am - general admission
Sunday, July 1st from 7pm till midnight - Long Now Members

E. "Doc" Smith is a musician and recording engineer who has worked with the likes of Brian Eno, Madonna, Warren Zevon, Mickey Hart, Jimmy Cliff, and John Mayall among others. He is also the inventor of the musical instrument, the [Drummstick](#), and can be reached at myspace.com/edoctorsmith