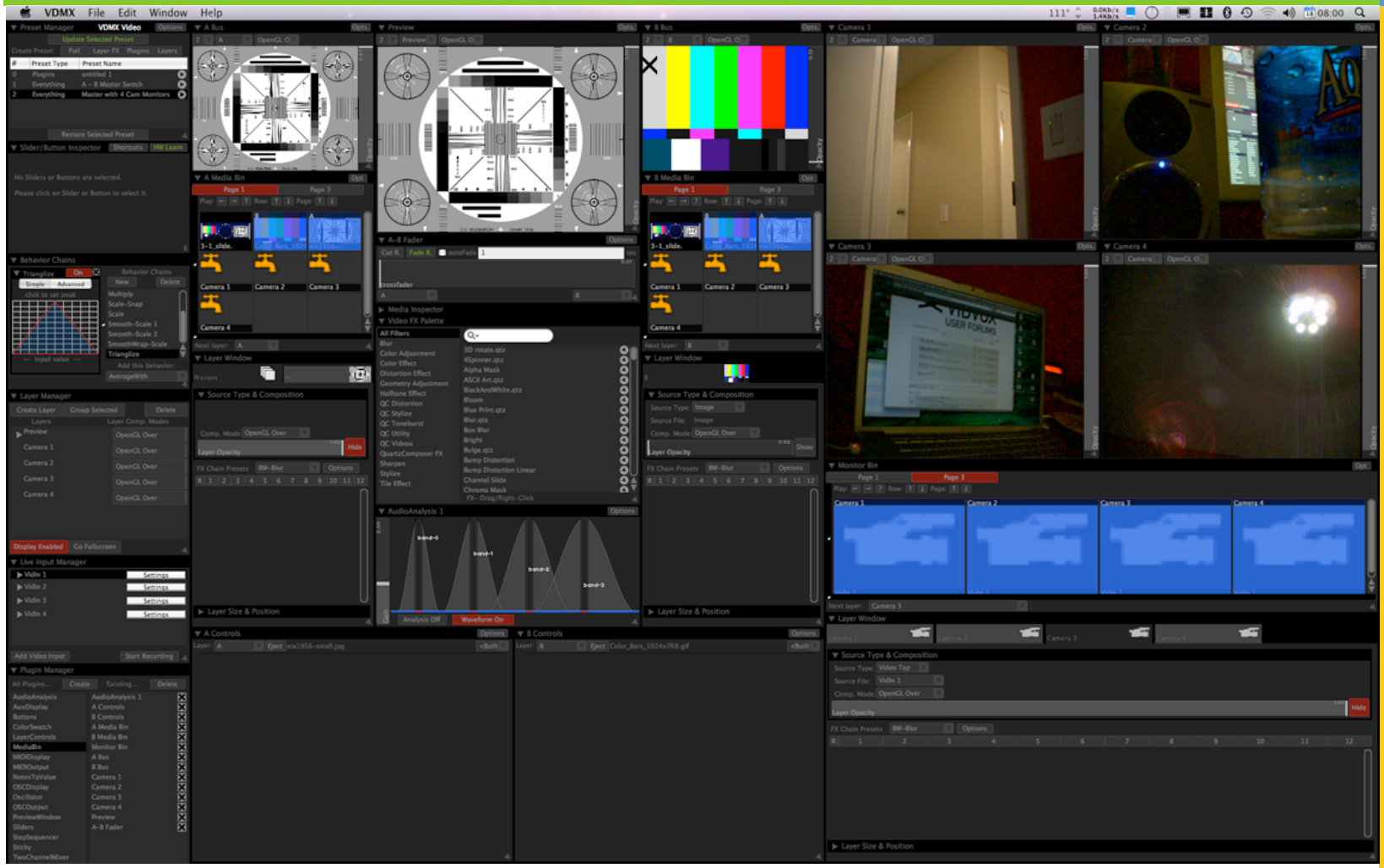
VJ: *A Complete Art*

Janae Almen, Spring 2011

http://www.youtube.com/user/DubPrack#p/u/13/wQn8KJO7XGk

Audio-Visual-Digital



Screen shot of VDMX from http://www.downloadse.net/vdmx-5.full

- *VJing* is **no** longer eye candy.

  Rather it is a **profound** audio-visual **art** form *distinctive* to *performance* in the DIGITAL **age**.

  - Kathleen Forde, gallery curator for EMPAC

    - from *Audio-Visual Art and VJ Culture,* Michael Faulkner, ed.

Still from an EMPAC exhibit. Full video is available at: http://vimeo.com/18632170.

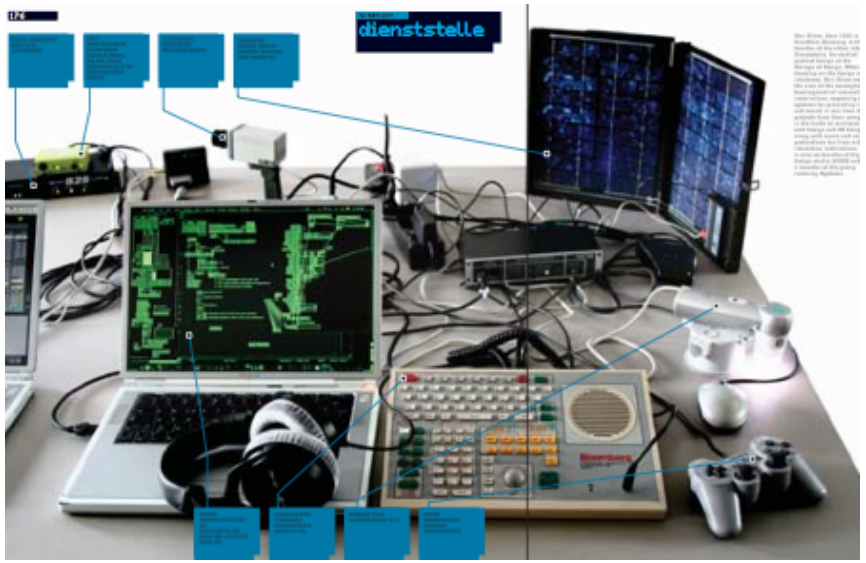
VJ: What is it?

Lights::Video:
VJ
Pronunciation: 'vE-"jA
Function: noun
Etymology: video jockey

Date: 1981
:an announcer of a program featuring music videos

Date: 2000
:an artist who creates and mixes video live and in sync to music

VIDEO MUSIC



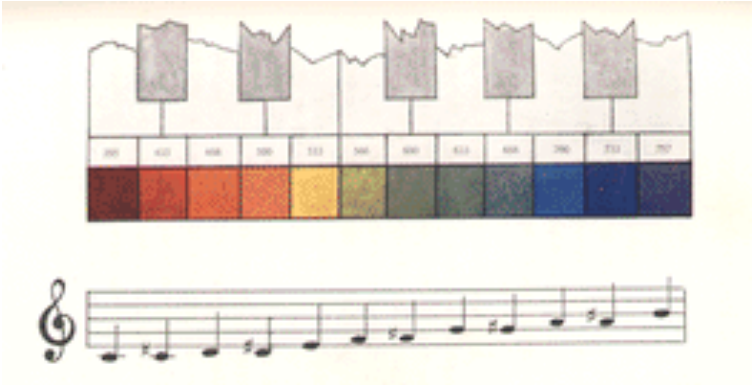
Images: Charlotte Cheethem. "VJ and DJ: Musique, Graphisme et Multimédia." Graphic Design Daily. http://manystuff.org/?p=1713 (accessed April 24, 2011). , Xarene Eskander, ed. *'vE-"jA : Art and Technology of Live Audio-Video.* San Francisco: Lumens, 2005. and Michael Faulkner, ed. *Audio-Visual Art and VJ Culture.* London: Laurence King, *2006.*

Aesthetic Principles

- Synesthetic experience
- Create a virtual world in the real world
- Real-time creation or manipulation of AV
- Temporal art-form, like music
- Galleries, dance clubs, live music performances
- The VJ is the “smoke the unites stage and screen...” - Patricia Moran, Ph.D.

- Fluxxus
- Intermedia
- New Media
- Pop culture vs. high art
- Counterculture
- Commercialization
- Relationship between man and machine
- Drugs
- Remix Culture / Appropriation
- Audience participation / Dance

Issues/Ideologies



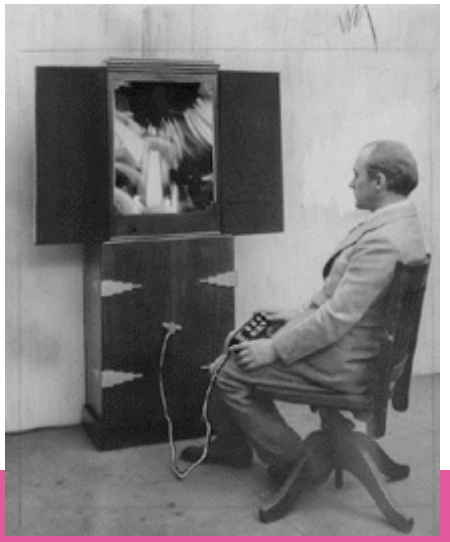
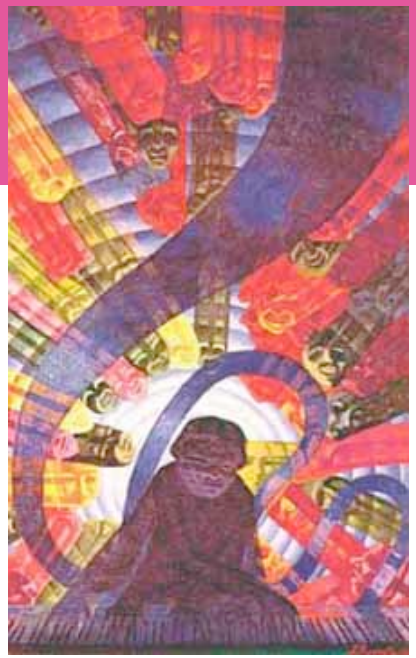
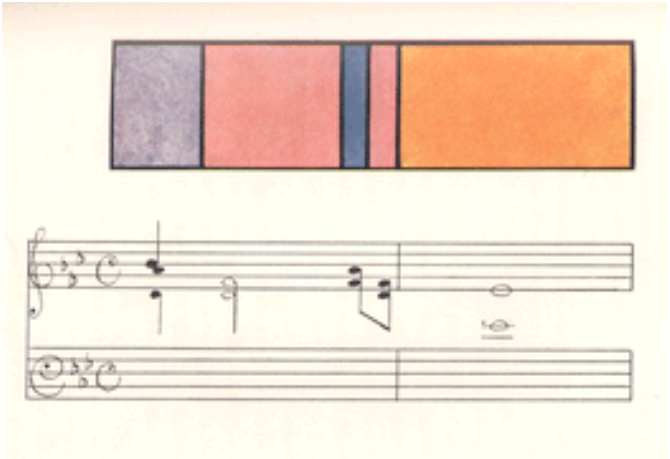


Image and Music: *Beginnings*





Images: http://www.soundingvisual.com/visualmusic/

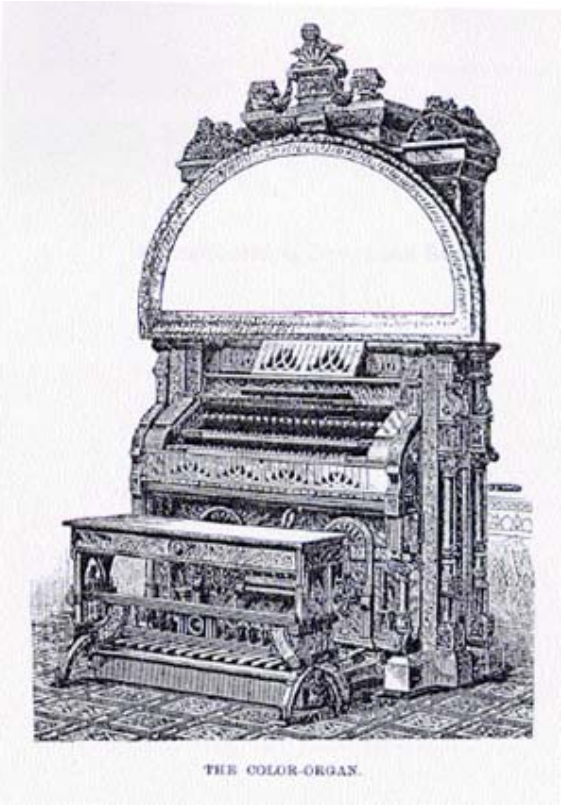
Early Audio-Visual Devices: Magic Lantern

1818

Dream visions were a popular motif in lantern entertainment. This slide with the title "The Holy City" is from the 1880s. Photo: Courtesy of the National Museum of Science and Technology, Stockholm.

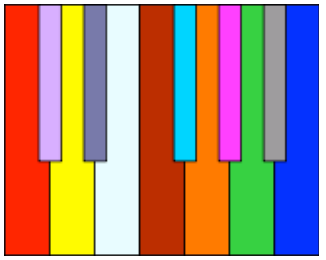
- First invented in1650s, used until the 1860s
- Used along with music and plays
- Strindberg incorporated them into his concept of "democratic" theater

Images: Vreni Hockenjos, . 2003. Time and Place Do Exist: Strindberg and Visual Media. *PAJ: A Journal of Performance and Art* 25, no. 3 (September): 51-63. and http://wikipedia.com / (public domain)



This color organ from 1893 version by Bainbridge Bishop in Essex County, NY.

The color organ consisted of set color associations for each pitch; however various makers and composers had their own systems. This was Scriabin's system.



- Originally designed by Louis Bertrand Castel in (1725-43)
- Some were harpsichords, some were organs
- They worked moving colored papers, discs or liquids in front of candles or oil lamps; they were then projected on the wall.
- Many composers wrote for it, including Handel's *Music for Royal Fireworks* (1749) and Scriabin's *The Poem of Fire: Prometheus* (1908).
- The color organs were used until the 1950s. In the 1960s-70s DIY color organs were a popular novelty.

Early Audio-Visual Devices: Color Organ

Images: http://www.soundingvisual.com/visualmusic/ and http://wikipedia.com / (public domain)

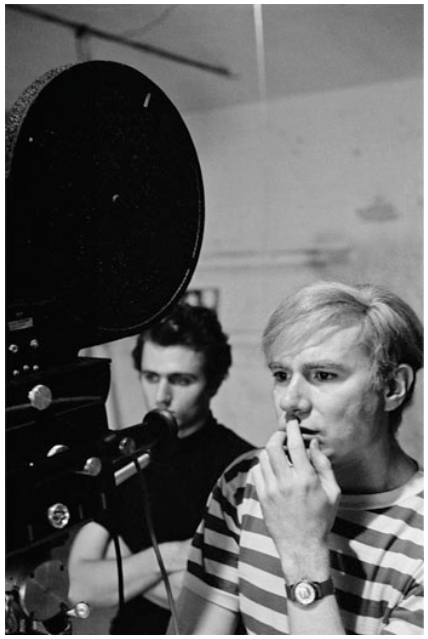
Early Audio-Visual Devices: Stereophone, Illustrated Song Machine and Projecting Phonograph

- Stereophone (1905)
- Illustrated song machine (1905)
  - Both connected to cylinder player and rotated images in time with music
- Projecting phonograph (1936)
  - Slide shows of images and information accompanied the record as it played
  - Originally for music education

Video, Film and Technology Meet Music

Image: http://www.soundingvisual.com/visualmusic/
Aurora created by Golan Levin of the MIT Media Lab (1999)

- Early 60s - Andy Warhol drew film techniques from with La Monte Young's compositional techniques and the two collaborated



- 1968 - Terry Riley's *Music With Balls*
  - Electronics with tenor sax and vox organ; sculpture and processed film

The Minimalists

Art meets Pop

- Andy Warhol's *Exploding Plastic Inevitable* (1966-67)

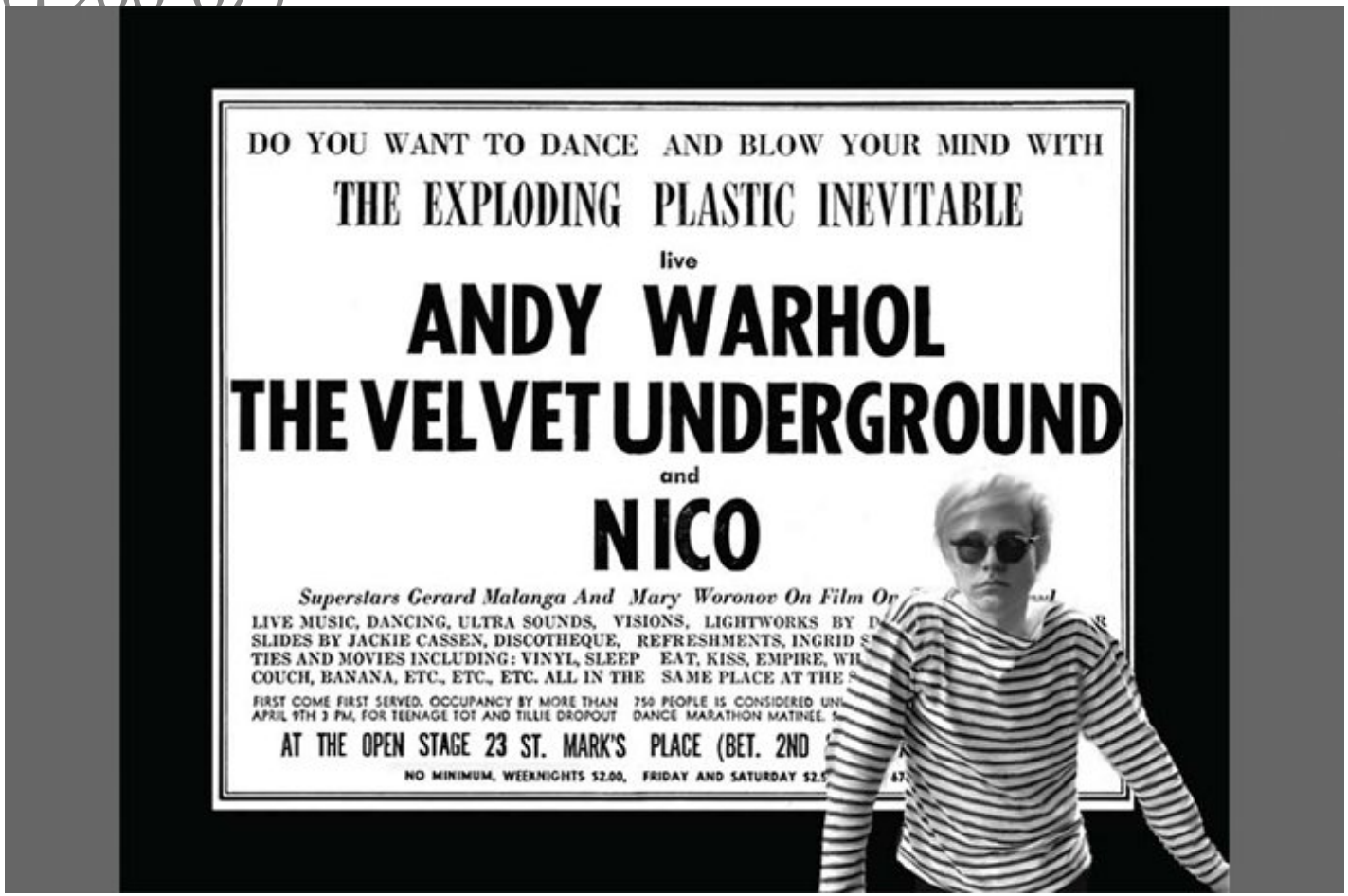


Image: http://en.fotografiska.eu/The-Museum/Previous-Exhibitions/Exploding-Plastic-Inevitable

- Warhol's *EPI* (1966-67)

Images: Branden W. Joseph. 2002. My Mind Split Open: Exploding Plastic Inevitable. *Grey Room* 8 (Summer): 80-107 and http://en.fotografiska.eu/The-Museum/Previous-Exhibitions/Exploding-Plastic-Inevitable

Mid-Century Counterculture

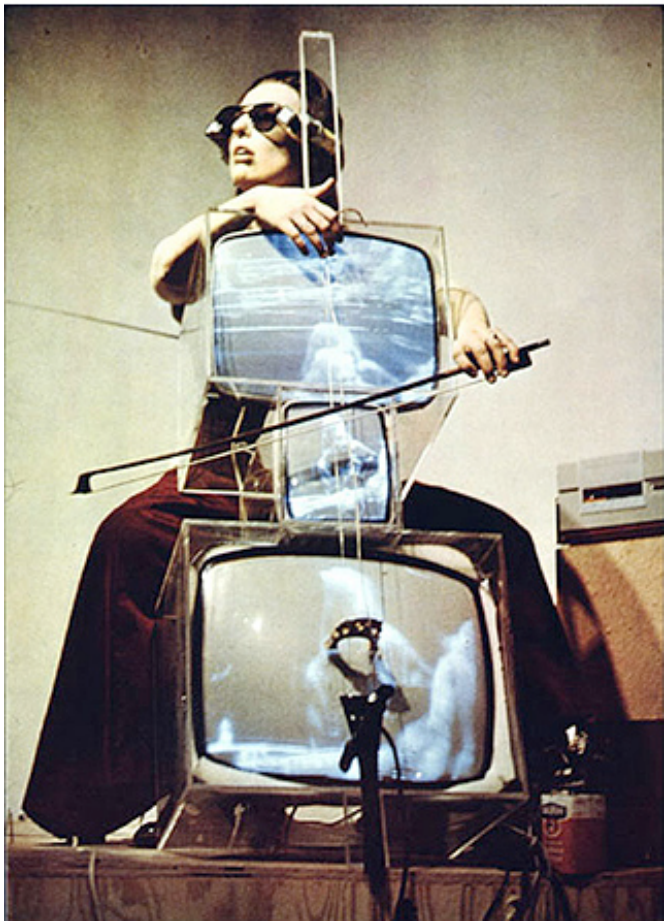
Concert Poster, 1966

Photo from one of Kesey's Acid Tests

Images from http://www.wolfgangsvault.com/

- Seymour Locke: wet shows (1952-today), illuminated liquid color blending with live jazz
  - Throughout the 1950s this technique became a popular at galleries and concerts
  - Featured on a recent Beck tour (2005)
- Ken Kesey's *Acid Test Parties* (mid-1960s) San Francisco
- Stewart Brand's Trips Festival (1966) San Francisco
- Films such as Roger Corman's *The Trip* (1967) and Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968) used psychedelic effects that were derived from wet shows.
- The invention of the hand-held video camera a.k.a. the Sony *PortaPak* (1967)

"TV Bra for Living Sculpture", Cellist Charlotte Moorman. (1969)



"TV Cello", Cellist Charlotte Moorman. (1971)

Fluxus/Multimedia Artist: Nam June Paik

Images from http://nam-june-paik.org

- *TV Bra For Living Sculpture:* Moorman's playing modulated the video screen
- *TV Cello:* Made of three tvs; the first with a direct feed of Moorman, the second with a video collage of other cellists, and the third with an intercepted footage
- *Piano Piece* was built as a memorial for Paik's friend composer John Cage

Piano Piece, 1993

Image from http://nam-june-paik.org

1970s: Club Video

- 1967 - *Professional Rock and Roll* by Herbert H Wise includes closed circuit TV as part of a light show
- Late 70s - VCR became affordable with simple two-deck editing
- Peppermint Lounge NYC video monitors with underground video mixes
    - Called "VJ University"
- NYC club mixers defined the genre
- 1979 - Club Mazzo in Amsterdam, VJ Peter Rubin, was the first to perform live-mixing in a European club

- Art Market Crash after “Black Monday” 1987 stopped the course of the various 1970s art movements.
  - Painting declared “dead” by art critics
  - Installations and video took its place
- In 1991, Apple introduced the Powerbook
- By 1994, Art moved to the computers and the internet
- This opened up the world to the VJ.

1980-90s New Media Art

Image: http://macintosh128k.com/apple_ads/90s/modest_ad/modest.html

1990s-Present Day VJ

Ibiza Club 1990s

DJ Spooky with Bob Moog

- 1992 - London DJs brought back audio-video experience to London clubs from those in Ibiza
- Paul Miller (DJ Spooky) bridged the gap between "intellectualism" and popular music and video
- *Rebirth of a Nation* (2002) combined *Birth of a Nation* with improvised electronic music

Images: http://www.ibiza.world-guides.com/nightlife.html and http://www.zu33.com/moog/

http://www.dfuse.com/downl/movs/Koji_H.mov

Today's VJ Process

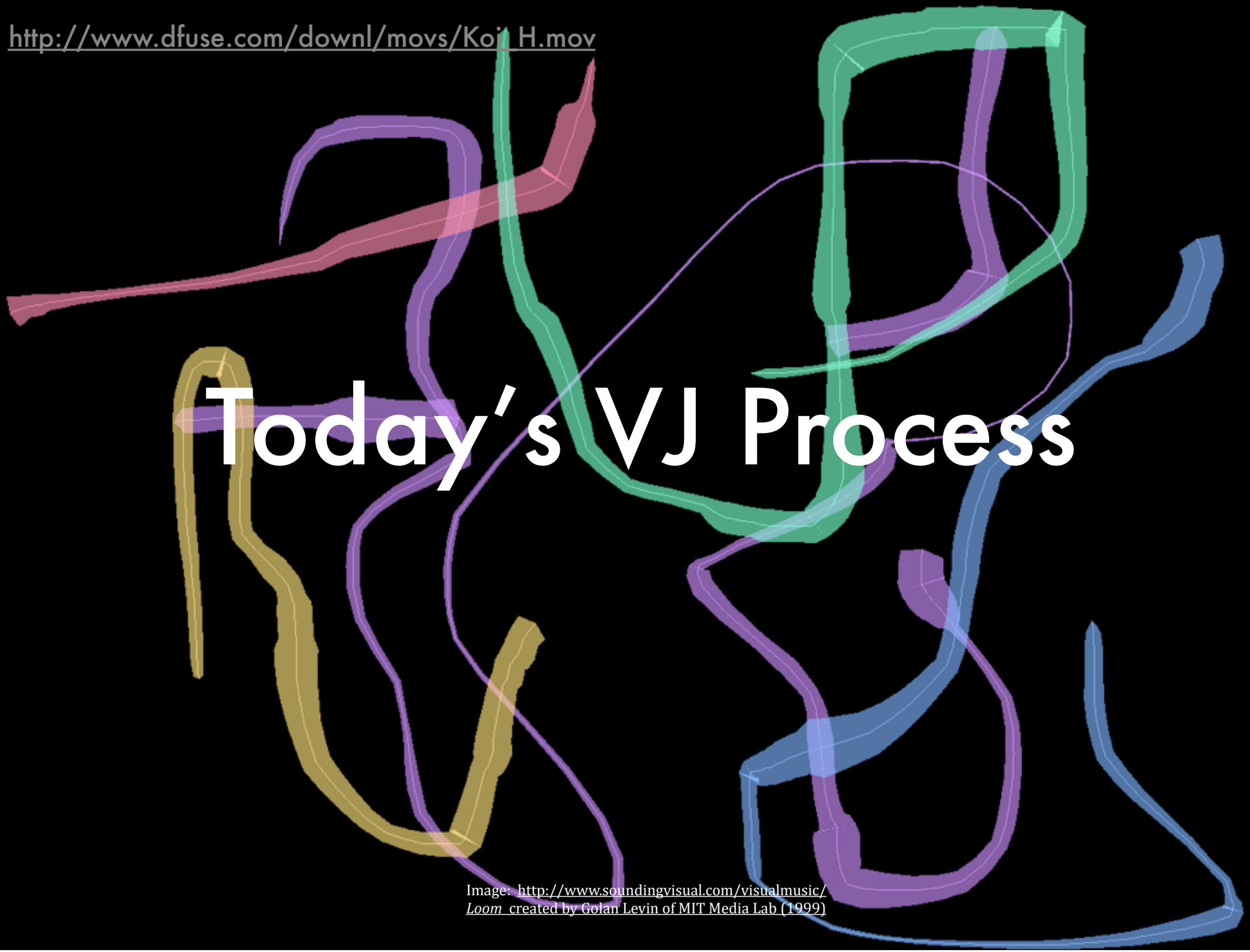


Image: http://www.soundingvisual.com/visualmusic/
Loom created by Golan Levin of MIT Media Lab (1999)

- Laptop(s)
- Tablet
- Camera(s)
- Slides
- Lighting
- Monitors / Mixer / Microphones
- Monome or Launchpad

- DVD Player
- MIDI Keyboards
- Game Controllers
- Turntable / Scratch Controller
- Various Adapters
- Projector
- Edirol Visual Synthesizer

Hardware

Image from http://www.apple.com/pro/profiles/d-fuse2/index2.html

- Adobe CS
- Final Cut Pro
- Isadora
- Blender
- Quartz Composer
- VDMX

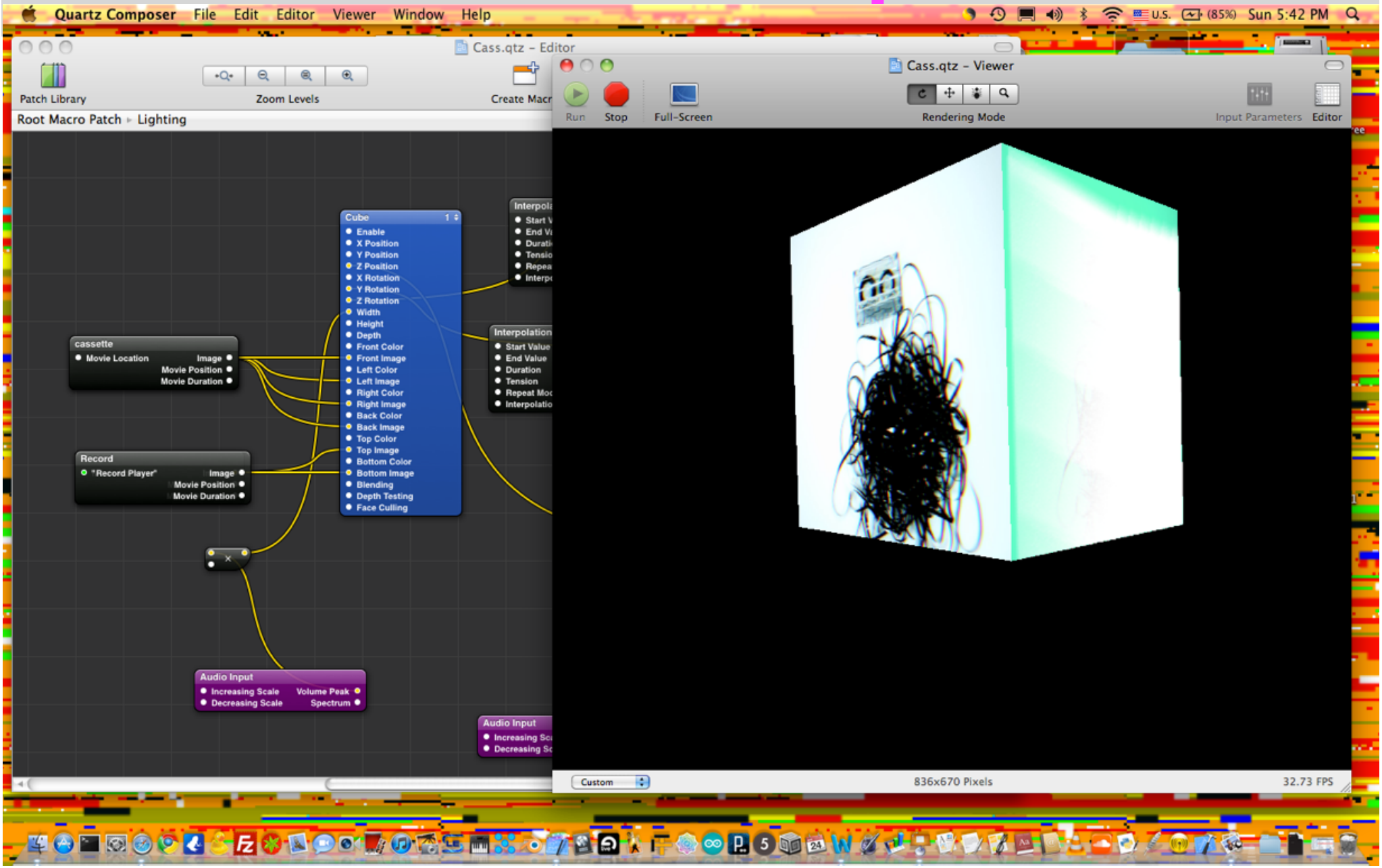
- LIVID

Software

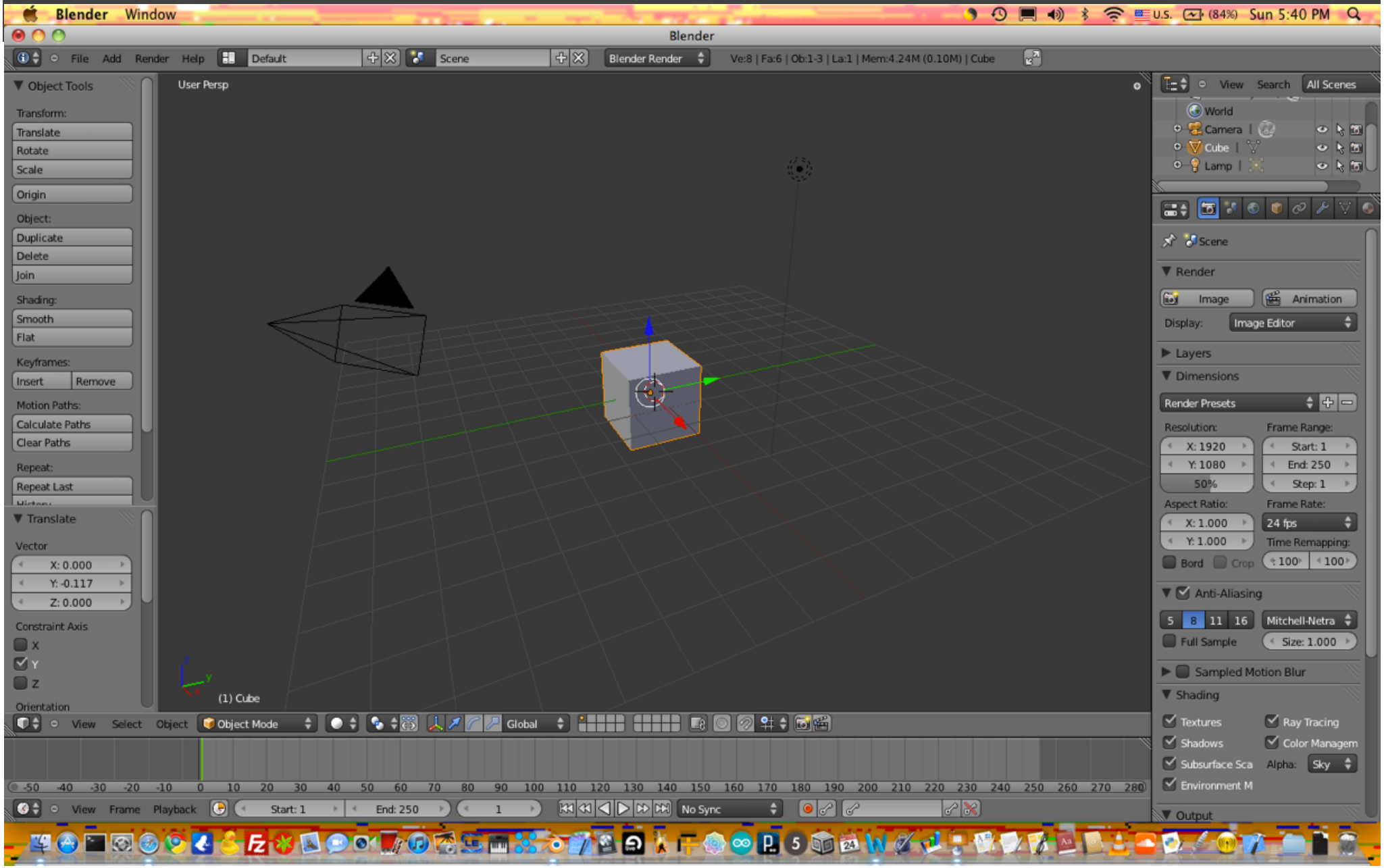
- Arkaos VJ
- Max/MSP-Jitter
- Logic
- Komplete

- Ableton Live
- OSC
- Reaktor

Quartz Composer



Blender


Blender Window
Blender
File Add Render Help
Default
Scene
Blender Render
Ve:8 | Fa:6 | Ob:1-3 | La:1 | Mem:4.24M (0.10M) | Cube
Object Tools
Transform:
Translate
Rotate
Scale
Origin
Object:
Duplicate
Delete
Join
Shading:
Smooth
Flat
Keyframes:
Insert
Remove
Motion Paths:
Calculate Paths
Clear Paths
Repeat:
Repeat Last
Translate
Vector
X: 0.000
Y: -0.117
Z: 0.000
Constraint Axis
X
Y
Z
Orientation
User Persp
(1) Cube
View Search All Scenes
World
Camera
Cube
Lamp
Scene
Render
Image
Animation
Display: Image Editor
Layers
Dimensions
Render Presets
Resolution:
X: 1920
Y: 1080
50%
Frame Range:
Start: 1
End: 250
Step: 1
Aspect Ratio:
X: 1.000
Y: 1.000
Frame Rate:
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Output
View Select Object
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View Frame Playback
Start: 1
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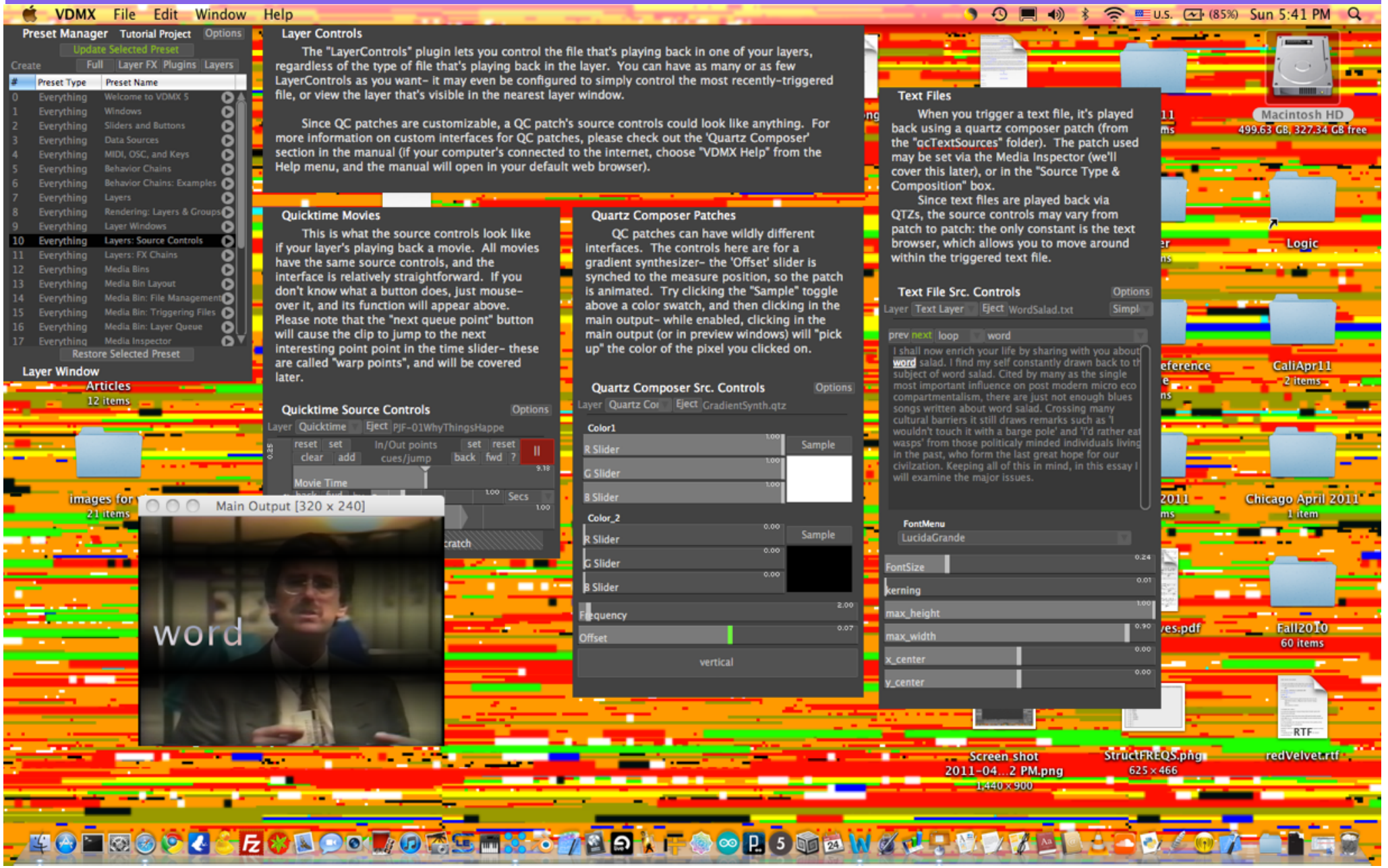
1
No Sync

VDMX


VDMX File Edit Window Help
Sun 5:41 PM
Preset Manager
Tutorial Project
Options
Update Selected Preset
Create
Full
Layer FX
Plugins
Layers
Preset Type Preset Name
0 Everything Welcome to VDMX 5
1 Everything Windows
2 Everything Sliders and Buttons
3 Everything Data Sources
4 Everything MIDI, OSC, and Keys
5 Everything Behavior Chains
6 Everything Behavior Chains: Examples
7 Everything Layers
8 Everything Rendering: Layers & Groups
9 Everything Layer Windows
10 Everything Layers: Source Controls
11 Everything Layers: FX Chains
12 Everything Media Bins
13 Everything Media Bin Layout
14 Everything Media Bin: File Management
15 Everything Media Bin: Triggering Files
16 Everything Media Bin: Layer Queue
17 Everything Media Inspector
Restore Selected Preset
Layer Window
Layer Controls
The "LayerControls" plugin lets you control the file that's playing back in one of your layers, regardless of the type of file that's playing back in the layer. You can have as many or as few LayerControls as you want– it may even be configured to simply control the most recently-triggered file, or view the layer that's visible in the nearest layer window.
Since QC patches are customizable, a QC patch's source controls could look like anything. For more information on custom interfaces for QC patches, please check out the 'Quartz Composer' section in the manual (if your computer's connected to the internet, choose "VDMX Help" from the Help menu, and the manual will open in your default web browser).
Quicktime Movies
This is what the source controls look like if your layer's playing back a movie. All movies have the same source controls, and the interface is relatively straightforward. If you don't know what a button does, just mouse-over it, and its function will appear above. Please note that the "next queue point" button will cause the clip to jump to the next interesting point point in the time slider– these are called "warp points", and will be covered later.
Quicktime Source Controls
Options
Layer Quicktime Eject PJF-01WhyThingsHappe
reset set clear add In/Out points cues/jump set reset back fwd ?
Movie Time
Secs
Quartz Composer Patches
QC patches can have wildly different interfaces. The controls here are for a gradient synthesizer– the 'Offset' slider is synched to the measure position, so the patch is animated. Try clicking the "Sample" toggle above a color swatch, and then clicking in the main output– while enabled, clicking in the main output (or in preview windows) will "pick up" the color of the pixel you clicked on.
Quartz Composer Src. Controls
Options
Layer Quartz Co Eject GradientSynth.qtz
Color1
R Slider
G Slider
B Slider
Sample
Color_2
R Slider
G Slider
B Slider
Sample
Frequency
Offset
vertical
Text Files
When you trigger a text file, it's played back using a quartz composer patch (from the "qcTextSources" folder). The patch used may be set via the Media Inspector (we'll cover this later), or in the "Source Type & Composition" box.
Since text files are played back via QTZs, the source controls may vary from patch to patch: the only constant is the text browser, which allows you to move around within the triggered text file.
Text File Src. Controls
Options
Layer Text Layer Eject WordSalad.txt Simpl
prev next loop word
I shall now enrich your life by sharing with you about word salad. I find my self constantly drawn back to th subject of word salad. Cited by many as the single most important influence on post modern micro eco compartmentalism, there are just not enough blues songs written about word salad. Crossing many cultural barriers it still draws remarks such as 'I wouldn't touch it with a barge pole' and 'i'd rather eat wasps' from those politicaly minded individuals living in the past, who form the last great hope for our civilzation. Keeping all of this in mind, in this essay I will examine the major issues.
FontMenu
LucidaGrande
FontSize
kerning
max_height
max_width
x_center
y_center
Main Output [320 x 240]
word
Articles
12 items
images for
21 items
Macintosh HD
499.63 GB, 327.34 GB free
Logic
CaliApr11
2 items
Chicago April 2011
1 item
Fall2010
60 items
Screen shot
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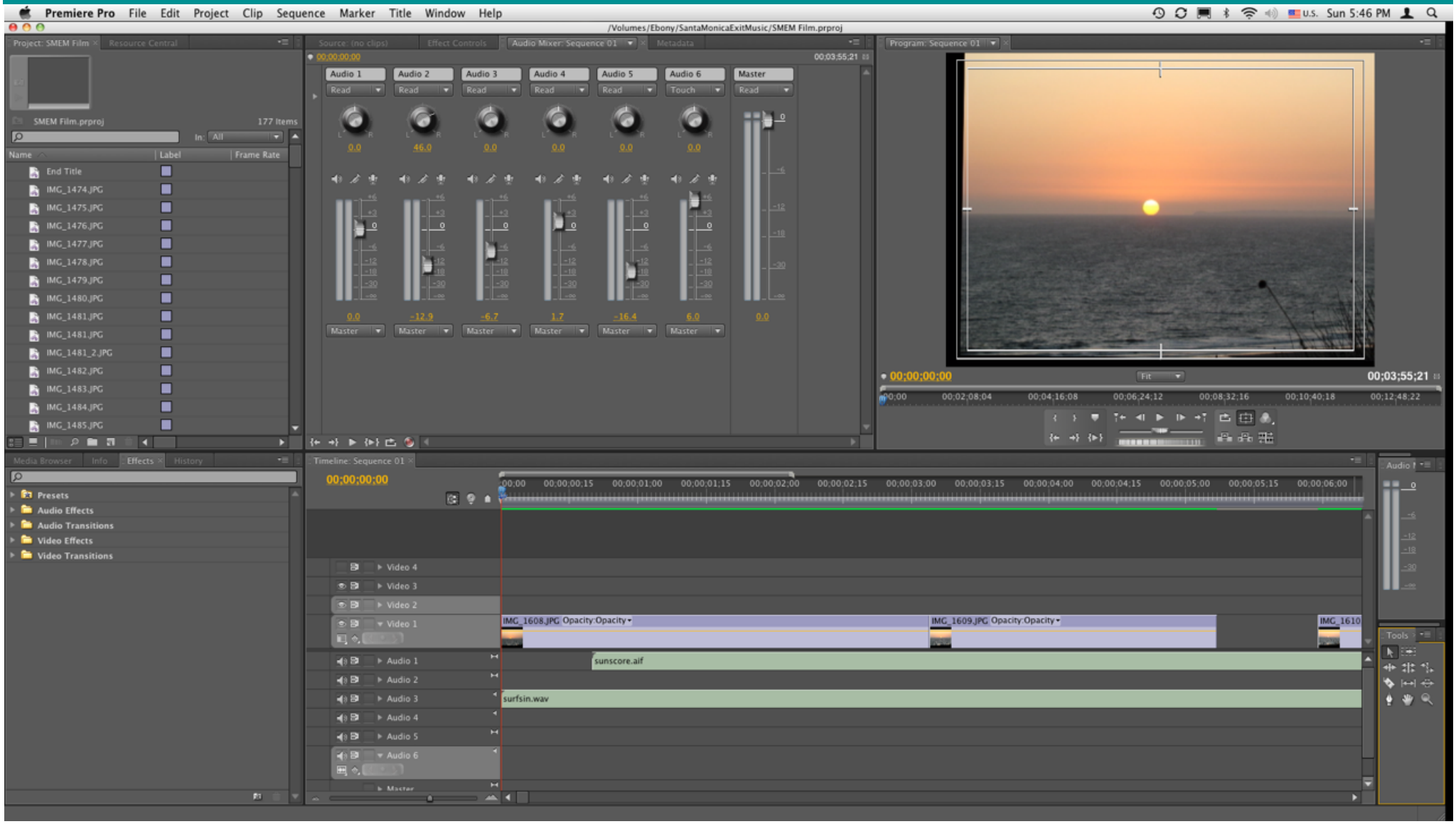
redVelvet.rtf
RTF

Adobe Premier Pro



Example: D-Fuse Collective

- Michael Faulkner, director of D-Fuse, bridges pop culture with "high-art"
- http://www.dfuse.com

Image from http://www.apple.com/pro/profiles/d-fuse2/index2.html

Example: VJ miixxy (Melissa Ulto)

- Max/MSP-Jitter , VDMX and Flash
- Uses video and sound to promote feminist and humanitarian causes
- Creates her own video clips
- Real-time video scratching
- Live bands and uses electronic music

- Her work has been chosen as selections at seven film festivals
- http://www.miixxy.com/
- http://www.multo.com/

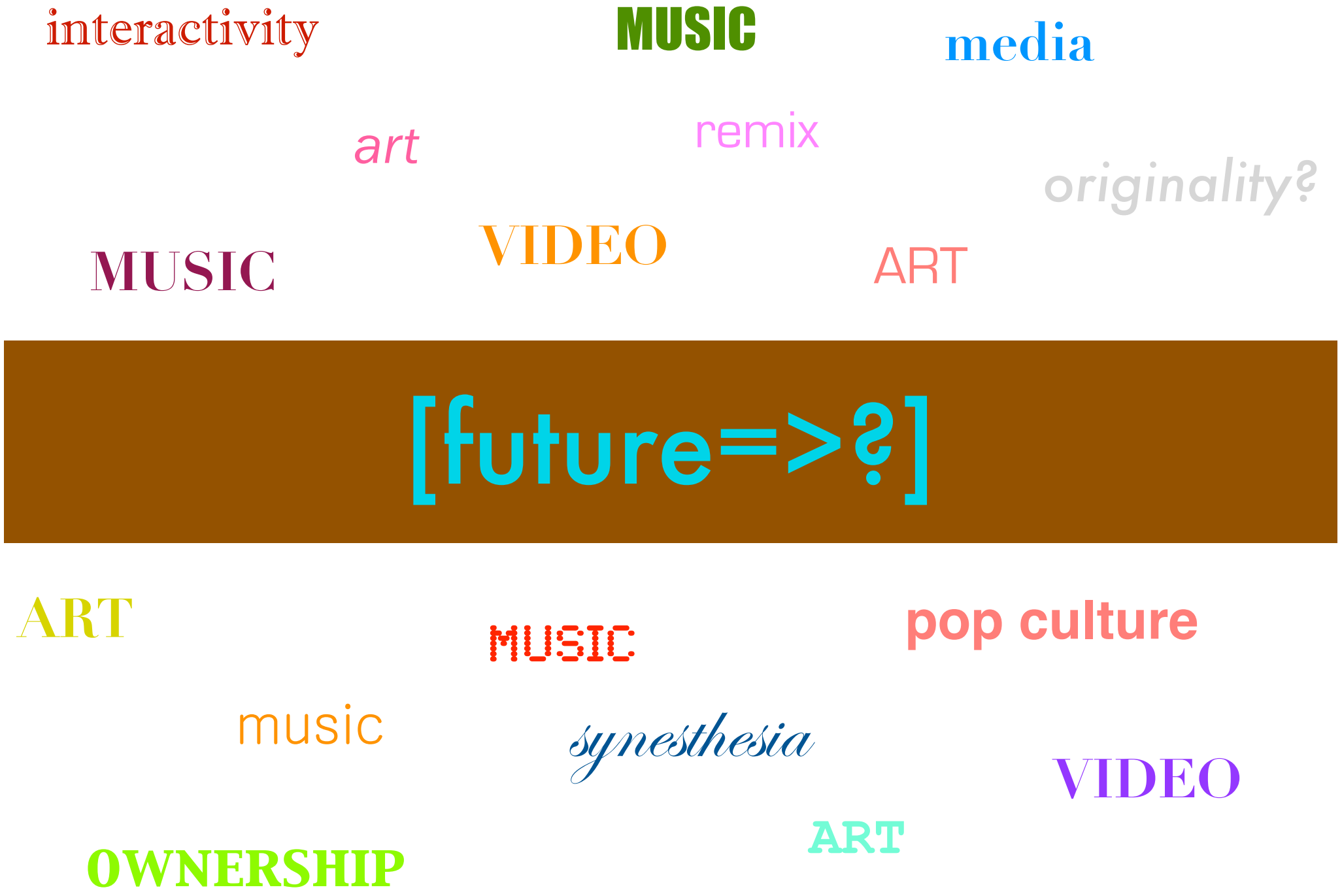
Image from http://www.miixxy.com/gallery.php

Example: VJ Shakinda (Graham Robinson)

- Acclaimed VJ, featured in many publications and MTV
- Quartz Composer and VDMX synced with MIDI

- Author of the helpful *Irishman's Guide Tutorials for Quartz Composer*
  - *see @ http://vimeo.com/430483*
- *http://www.shakinda.com*
- *Co-author of upcoming Quartz Composer Guide Book with Surya Buchwald of www.VJkungfu.tv*

Images from http://myspace.com/shakinda and http://www.shakinda.com


interactivity
MUSIC
media
art
remix
originality?
VIDEO
MUSIC
ART
[future=>?]
ART
MUSIC
pop culture
music
synesthesia
VIDEO
ART
OWNERSHIP

http://www.arkaos.net/ Interactive Media
http://www.audiovisualizers.com/ VJ resources
http://www.centerforvisualmusic.org/ Online Gallery
http://cybero.co.uk/Quartz Composer Tutorials
http://empac.rpi.edu/ Experimental Media Center
http://event.electro-music.com/ Festival in Troy, NY
http://www.hybridvisuals.nl/ Video Experiments
http://kineme.net/ Quartz Composer Plug-ins
http://www.opticafestival.com/ Global Festival
http://www.shakinda.com/ Top VJ/Tutorial Videos
http://www.thepixelart.com/ Tutorials
http://www.vidvox.net/ VDMX Company
http://www.vjkungfu.tv/ Webzine with Tutorials
http://www.vjtheory.net/ Academic Writings
http://www.vjvault.com/ Clips/Resources

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Any questions?

Thank you