Digital movement: essays in motion technology and performance


Tools

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Abstract

This book is about the evolving relationship between human movement and the technologically mediated process of motion study, particularly in terms of how, through digital media technology, human motion can be captured, rendered, animated, processed, analysed, computed, documented, archived, and through these and other iterations, it can ultimately be turned into an object of discourse and knowledge. Opening up relatively untheorized areas of study, the book argues that digital motion should refer not only to visual forms of capture (movement recomposed through still images), but also to high-level motion-sensor and depth-sensor based forms of capture, which constitute, as it were, a higher-dimensional language of motion analysis. This book then alludes to the ubiquitous technological sensation that is digital movement, as it proliferates through a plethora of sensing technologies including mo-cap, kinect, wi-mote, Leap Motion, vision systems, EMG, fmri, solar sensors and mobile phone technologies including GPS, GSR, and gyroscopes. How can we construct meaningful interpretations of this tremendous volume of motion-data by using representative models that reveal the felt experience living deep within the data? How can we dig for movement meaning in the cultural and somatic landscape of technological design and use?
Digital Movement: Essays in Motion Technology and Performance (London: Palgrave 2015) xx + 317 pp. £55 Hb. ISBN: 978-1-137-43040-3. Digital Movement begins with Sally Jane Norman's history of the discipline that covers early twentieth-century Russia's use of motion capture to study and prescribe human motion at the mass level and Oskar Schlemmer's 1920s research into gestures. In 'Intelligence behind Movement: Laboratories of Biomechanics and the Making of Movement Utopia', Nicolás Salazar Sutil's account of the (pre)Soviets' establishment of a technocracy using 'human movement as a form of intelligence' (36) seems to provide some evidence of methods that serve as a precursor to cybernetics, a Nicolás Salazar Sutil is a Chilean cultural theorist and performance practitioner based in London. His work focuses on the study of mathematical languages and computer languages in human/animal movement analysis and motion representation.