

https://dspace.org/

South African digital art practice: an exploration of the altermodern

Whitaker, Carly

2012-08-08
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/11741

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

Abstract

The Altermodern is a critical artistic theory defined by Nicolas Bourriaud, a French theorist and curator. His theory seeks to define a specific way of living and inhabiting in our current globalised state. Bourriaud observes and discusses how artists practise and align this with a global dynamic and via a mobility which he observes through specific concepts. This research report investigates whether this theory of the Altermodern aligns with South African digital artists and their practice and whether this theory can be used as a framework for the South African digital art being produced at present and in the future. Although currently limited, the South African digital art field is developing and a framework is necessary for artists to move forward within the surrounding discourse.

This report discusses the various characteristics and nature of the digital medium, such as its interactivity and dynamism, which are then aligned to the Altermodern. This alignment is carried forward into a discussion of digital art in South Africa which is defined and aligned with the Altermodern. The field of South African digital art is expanded to include specific case studies. Interviews conducted with Nathaniel Stern and Marcus Neustetter, practising digital artists, are reported and their respective artworks, *Given Time* and *relation IV,* are reviewed, while Tegan Bristow, who curated the show *Internet Art in the Global South* (2009), discusses her role as a curator and researcher in the field.

This report aims to make an initial contribution to the discourse on South African digital art through a critical engagement of the Altermodern and the specific case studies.