

Pianos. Challenge in the Academy of Art University

Colin Sebestyen comments the difficulties and steps in this CG creation

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As a challenge to his students, Colin Sebestyen, an instructor at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco, assigned German artist Antye Greie's audio track "Pianos" to be animated. Greie, who goes by the artist name "AGF", creates glitched out electronic music with spoken word elements, and Sebestyen thought it would be great fodder for data visualization. The students were each given a section of the piece, and then a series of restrictions. The challenge worked in 2 phases, the first week being 2D animation deliverables followed by a 3D piece the next week. In the 2D design portion, students were only allowed to create graphic structure within a 5x5 grid framework, with no pictorial representations — only abstract point, line, and plane elements were used to represent the ideas of each stanza through rhythm, timing, pacing and feel. They delivered 3 of these movies.

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div.overlay { width:1040px; height:644px; }
#imgplay { margin:88px 0px 0px 190px; }
#player { background:no-repeat url('/videos/news/2010/april/pianos.jpg') top center; }
#splash, #player, #player embed, #player object { width:560px; height:340px; }
```

For the second portion, the students used the power of Cinema 4D's mograph module — cloner objects, sound effectors, as well as the CS_tools series of camera rigs. The geometry was restricted to simple primitives: sphere, cube, pyramid, or cylinder.

After each student completed their study, the final result was re-compiled and Sebestyen bookended the work with beginning and end titles. AGF herself commented on the finished result, along with several other notable c4d evangelists. The most notable achievement of the piece is it's overall consistency from designer to designer, although each artist was essentially rendering independent of one another and was allowed to explore different design iterations, concepts, and technics. Included in the write up on the vimeo page is the full list of restrictions and parameters along with all of the designer's pages.

More Information at www.movecraft.com and www.poemproducer.com. Image and Video Courtesy of Colin Sebestyen.