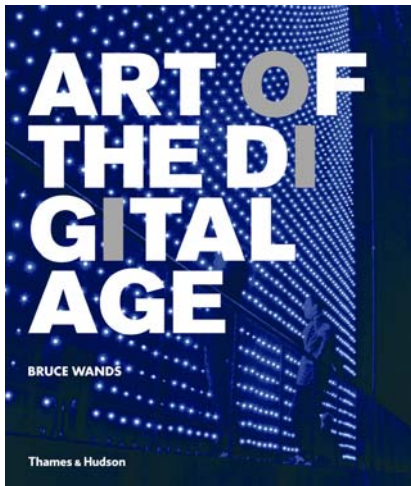


Art of the Digital Age / Bruce Wands. – New York: Thames & Hudson, Inc., dist. by W. W. Norton, 2006.—223 p.— ISBN-13 978-0-500-23817-2; ISBN-10 0-500-23817-0: \$50.00.



If a coffee table book on computer art is not too much of a contradiction in terms, that may be the best way to regard this volume. Its oversize format and vivid images make for a visually stunning overview of the broad variety of creative work being undertaken digitally. Bruce Wands, chair of the MFA Computer Art Department, School of Visual Arts, New York, and a digital artist himself, provides an intriguing introduction for those just beginning to explore the field. His emphasis is on describing the processes and techniques used to create the works.

Following a brief overview of the field of digital art, Wands offers concise information on specific aspects such as digital imaging, digital sculpture, digital installation and virtual reality, music and sound art, animation and video, database and game art, and net art. He showcases the work of over one hundred art-

ists and includes brief artists' statements (in a curiously large font) to provide insight into the individual works. A particularly useful feature is the two-page "Timeline of Digital Art and Technology" which traces significant developments from ENIAC in 1946 through several electronic arts exhibitions and events in 2006. A very brief glossary, a short bibliography, a list of Web sites concerning international digital art, and a list of artists' Web sites round out the supporting material.

Although Wands lays the groundwork for an understanding of the terminology and processes of digital art, readers looking for a substantial discussion and critical analysis of the work will be disappointed. Christiane Paul's *Digital Art* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2003) does a better job of presenting the work from critical, thematic, and historic perspectives, although the compact paperback format does not offer the same visual impact. Frank Popper's *Art of the Electronic Age* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1993), Michael Rush's *New Media in Late 20th-Century Art* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 1999), and Hans-Peter Schwarz's *Media—Art—History* (Munich: Prestel-Verlag and the Media Museum ZKM | Center for Art and Media Karlsruhe, 1997) all provide a more significant analysis of the work.

For those just discovering the engaging world of digital art, this book serves as a fascinating guide to the possibilities of the media. It would be a suitable acquisition for public library or undergraduate collections.

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