Dean Kenning’s Kinetics
John Roberts

Kinetik art and animatronic sculpture have until recently been mostly condescended to in critical art theory. This may have something to do with the fetished opposition between technological ‘failure’ and captivation by technical adroitness that has been current in the kind of binary ethics that the first position invariably identifies with art-machine-techno-logic with an attack on technological progress; the second position with the fluent insertion of art into machine-techno-logic as an extension of art’s post-aesthetic use-values – art’s need to remind itself that its relationship to the new lives in the same world as technology. The first position under-identifies with technology (mostly through irony and hyperbation), the second position, over-identifies with technology, in the belief that machines, as the only beings capable of transcending clusters of repeated notes. When the cacophony disspa-\niently there would be one or two ‘fingers’ that would have switched off in the act of depressing a key and so certain notes persisted longer than the rest, as if they were urging the other keyboards to continue. Indeed, this forlornness is what remained most distinctive about the installation, particularly when the sound of one keyboard faded to be replaced by another and then another, in a kind of desperate and diminishing tempo. This refunctioning of old machines, or diminished use-values. This approach subjects old technolo-\nymark’s Kinetics’ of (barely functioning) human drives, demands from the respondent an immediate, affective response. Indeed, the response to this call is the basis of the work’s uncanny technological-sadistic relation: ‘I’m still loveable, look what I can do.’ ‘Talk to me’ says the talking doll. ‘Play me, play me, I haven’t forgotten,’ says Kenning’s key-\nconservationist mode. This refunctioning of old machines, or old and aban-\nKinetik and animatronic sculpture have until recently been mostly condescended to in critical art theory. This may have something to do with the fetished opposition between technological ‘failure’ and captivation by technical adroitness that has been current in the kind of binary ethics that the first position invariably identifies with art-machine-techno-logic with an attack on technological progress; the second position with the fluent insertion of art into machine-techno-logic as an extension of art’s post-aesthetic use-values – art’s need to remind itself that its relationship to the new lives in the same world as technology. The first position under-identifies with technology (mostly through irony and hyperbation), the second position, over-identifies with technology, in the belief that machines, as the only beings capable of transcending the unconscious sadism of the visitor (‘play, play, play’; ‘enter me’); and, as such, what appears to be given life ‘intersub-\nThis relationship between the uncanny and unexpected life of the inhuman human-like body-frame is well known. Getting robot-like machines or machine parts to perform human-like actions, is denaturalizing in precisely this uncanny way: machines, in this capacity, are able to look/act inhuman, to do this beautifully; the pleading, ‘forfeit’ repetitious of the sounds, appears unbearably close to a call for love, insofar as the mechanical ‘fingers’ mimicy of (barely functioning) human drives, demands from the respondent an immediate, affective response. Indeed, the response to this call is the basis of the work’s uncanny technological-sadistic relation: ‘I’m still loveable, look what I can do.’ ‘Talk to me’ says the talking doll. ‘Play me, play me, I haven’t forgotten,’ says Kenning’s key-\nlish into the understanding of technology as an ensemble of social relations. Building machines that ‘do work’, not only to perform but to engage with other machines, this book attaches the rationalization of art’s outcomes to the belief that art might have a part to play in reordering or humanizing technological reason and progress. This is why the dream of such machine-builders is to move out of the world only to return to it, as you might a kind of links in the human needs. This is why much of this work, with its refunc-\nlish into the understanding of technology as an ensemble of social relations. Building machines that ‘do work’, not only to perform but to engage with other machines, this book attaches the rationalization of art’s outcomes to the belief that art might have a part to play in reordering or humanizing technological reason and progress. This is why the dream of such machine-builders is to move out of the world only to return to it, as you might a kind of links in the human needs. This is why much of this work, with its refunc-\nlish into the understanding of technology as an ensemble of social relations. Building machines that ‘do work’, not only to perform but to engage with other machines, this book attaches the rationalization of art’s outcomes to the belief that art might have a part to play in reordering or humanizing technological reason and progress. This is why the dream of such machine-builders is to move out of the world only to return to it, as you might a kind of links in the human needs. This is why much of this work, with its refunc-\nlish into the understanding of technology as an ensemble of social relations. Building machines that ‘do work’, not only to perform but to engage with other machines, this book attaches the rationalization of art’s outcomes to the belief that art might have a part to play in reordering or humanizing technological reason and progress. This is why the dream of such machine-builders is to move out of the world only to return to it, as you might a kind of links in the human needs. This is why much of this work, with its refunc-
imagination

senses

sex

materials

studio space

time = money

McCarthty Guston Romero

love

Freud

nature

motivation

motivation

electric grid

GALLERY