Sounds Like Corporate Fiction: Data-driven Audiovisual Performance Framework

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Abstract : Corporations exploit a collective vulnerability to commercial aesthetics in consumers, using distinct combinations of technology, language, and media. These communication techniques constitute an under-theorized aspect of contemporary music making. Quigital co-opts these techniques both as a tool to engage audience members and a way to critique traditional corporate messaging.Three Quigital works are discussed: 2020's Quigital: Digital Edition, 2021's Home Comfort Advisor, and the upcoming Corporate Retreat. In each, the audience interacts with 'Quigital,' a fictional company, in ways that closely mimic a typical consumer-corporate interaction: navigating a complex phone tree while wrangling the company AI; using an interactive website to view a smarthome product launch; or using a system of QR codes to interact with other users at an in-person event. However, each work combines these idiomatic interactions with unexpected elements: a choir sings machine learning-generated text trained on smarthome manuals. An audience member receives an automated follow-up text with a recording of their voice, warped and manipulated. The ensuing tension helps commandeer these corporate-inspired processes and technologies, revealing invasive and manipulative behavior in traditional corporate language and consumer interactions.Quigital is powered by a data-driven audiovisual performance framework that harnesses corporate models of iterative design, organization, and development. Quigital's technical infrastructure, built using this iterative process, comprises a collection of components that can be assembled in a modular fashion to create interactive media. This paper examines how Quigital's framework and technology establish a credible "corporate fiction" for audience members and how this fiction is used for aesthetic purposes—creating artworks that both leverage and critique consumer culture, corporate language, and surveillance capitalism.

Keywords : performance framework, virtual performance spaces, corporate aesthetics, machine learning in music, networked collaboration, consumer culture, generative composition, critique of corporate language, co-opting corporate aesthetics