



# Form+Code in Design, Art, and Architecture

*Casey Reas*

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The last decade has witnessed a proliferation of artists whose primary medium is software. Algorithmic processes, harnessed through the medium of computer code, allow artists to generate increasingly complex visual forms that they otherwise might not have been able to imagine, let alone delineate. The newest volume in our Design Brief series Form+Code in Design, Art, and Architecture is a non-technical introduction to the history, theory, and practice of software in the arts. Organized into themes linked to aspects of code—repetition, transformation, parameters, visualization, and simulation—each of the book's sections contains an essay, code samples, and numerous illustrations. An accompanying website ([www.formandcode.com](http://www.formandcode.com)) features code samples in various programming languages for the examples in the book. An ideal introductory text for digital design and media arts courses, this unique primer will also appeal to students and professionals looking for a survey of this exciting new area of artistic production.

## Form+Code in Design, Art, and Architecture Details

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Author : Casey Reas

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## From Reader Review Form+Code in Design, Art, and Architecture for online ebook

### Johnny says

A valuable compendium of design, art, and code ideas that blend and blur the edges between art and technology.

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### Janis Godins says

Excellent and easy-to-read book on aesthetics of Computer Science.

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### Bertrand says

Like many outsiders I tend to recoil in horror from any mention of the contemporary tech milieu: over-inflated jargon ("disruption", anyone?), hypocritical celebration of start-up capitalism (uberize my \*\*\*), and collusion with the contemporary obsession with pointless gadgets. In other words, despite some affinities with computers and with coding, I have moved progressively away from those activities as they ascended to their current popularity in the the 90s. But the tech mansion has of course many rooms, and some far enough in the basement so as not to hear about how VR will solve the problems of drought in Africa, and some which work actively at bringing the tools of production within the consumer's reach. Here's something I can salivate about.

Anyway - I picked up this book after I ran into a coding language called 'processing' ('p5' pour les intimes) which seemed to be tailor-made for my ilk: those with little or no knowledge of coding, and the puerile need to see immediate results, in view of using it in artistic or design pursuits. I was impressed by the on-line community that aggregated around this free-ware project, born of the MIT media lab, with many highly competent people willing to help out new comers like me, with dozens of free courses and exhaustive tutorials, and a lively world of events and irl groups committed to move the tech world in the right direction. I am learning p5 slowly, but I also know I have a relatively short attention span, and need all I can to sustain commitment like those. Buying books out of my precious pennies actually plays its part in that process, so I decided to order this one, as it was often mentioned in online discussions as a good introduction.

It's a nice little book, full colour and with a modern and efficient layout, full of generous illustrations displaying the unique aesthetics of creative coding, and concise explanation of the central concepts coding in an artistic context, with examples ranging from the Jacquard loom to the genetic simulations.

Why three stars then? Well I am not too sure, but I feel that had I not been already immersed in learning the code itself, the book would have been of little use. No doubt, the book format does not lend itself that well to works which are most often animated, or even interactive. Plus the concepts are approached without much depth, with the author no doubt careful not to frighten his reader with too much maths. So in the end it is well made and well written, by a major figure of the field, but it seems too light for the practitioner, and maybe too intricate for everyone else...

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## **Hans Gerwitz says**

Casey Reas can sometimes seem like a one-trick pony, following Sol LeWitt with new tools. Assembling this book, though, he re-asserted himself as a leader in generative art. It's inspiring and I expect will remain relevant for the ideas longer than the tools used in the examples.

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## **Stephen says**

Really enjoyed this book. The book does not require any knowledge of programming and at the same time it provides a survey of the fundamentals of code and how it relates to digital art. The examples of art work shown in the book are just as interesting as the writing. This is the type of book that leads me to many more books to follow up with.

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## **Ezekiel says**

Good overview of different approaches to digital media.

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## **Maya Man says**

Really great comprehensive book surveying art made in the ~creative code dev art generative form~ world that also describes core coding concepts in simple terms. It's kind of everything that got me into this realm so was fun to read a breakdown of the history of lots of these things and how someone else would tackle talking about it.

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## **Myat Phyo Thu says**

Interesting concepts. But this could've been more than a book to the readers with programming background if algorithms are provided.

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## **Keisuke says**

The aesthetic values are constantly changing. The age of the industrial revolution brought modern aesthetic values such as: Romanticism, Impressionism...in all artistic fields. Now it is the age of code. We understand anything in the way of coding. Even our body can be decoded in DNA. There are codes behind forms. The book is written in the context of not only "coding" but also the art history. Even if you are not familiar with any technological aesthetics or hate computers, it is still worth reading this book.

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### **Nitant Hirlekar says**

THis is Good Start Up Material For the people who want to get an Idea about use of Code in Creative manner....just blows your Mind with the possibilities of the CODE .....

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### **Justin says**

This book is an excellent introduction to anyone interested in new media and how coding is developing as a medium of artistic expression in our culture. This book is graphically immersive; if you're anything like me, you will spend as much time reading the graphics as you will the accompanying text. This book will introduce you to the ideas, purpose, and relevance of each piece, and serves as a sort of cliff notes of this particular mode of expression. They mention some of the programs and languages that are used, but what this book does not do it go into any sort of depth as to how each of these artists used the tools to accomplish their artistic vision. Casey Reas seems to be a great person to introduce someone new to this topic, and give them a basic understanding, but this book moves only slightly beyond coffee table fare for those who are genuinely interested in the more intimate details of how artists are actually using these various coding languages. If you want to learn Processing or MAX, or some other sort of scripting program, I'd dive deeper elsewhere. Otherwise a greatly entertaining and fun read.

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### **misa bretsneider says**

mm, nothing much to say. pretty images, everything makes you drool, wishing you were some super hyper-cool design-FREAK. but reality set its. thought it would be a bit less of a superficial look into the formulation.generation of form.design through computers and code, but i guess it's more a coffee table book than a academic one.

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### **Vlad Anghel says**

Graphically immersive, this is only an introduction to various new media tools and techniques. I recommend looking for smth else if you want a deeper understanding of these tools.

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### **John Hajdar says**

good source of cody artists and what they do.  
not much on the how.

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### **Lauren Meranda says**

The first portion is great and informative, touching on theory of creative coding However, I was much less interested in the case studies. The connection to the first half of the book was slight.

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