

# HYPERALLERGIC

Sensitive to Art & its Discontents

## Digital Homage to the Old Masters

by Ellen Pearlman on May 15, 2012



Quayola, "Strata #4" (2011)  
(image courtesy bitforms gallery nyc)

Davide Quagliola (aka Quayola) an Italian digital artist, loves art. He loves his Roman heritage, brimming with Renaissance and Baroque innuendos. And he loves classical images, and the beauty of the algorithm.

Quayola has created one of the most startling custom morphing technologies from his super-duper London based server rendering farm, transforming paintings from the ceilings of churches and museum collections to go inside, underneath and outside trompe l'oeil and encaustics. "Strata #4," one of his video works on view at bitforms gallery in Chelsea was commissioned by the Palais de Beaux Arts in Lille, using the iconic paintings from the museum's Flemish collection of Peter Paul Rubens' and Anton Van Dyck's grand altarpieces.

What Quayola really looks for is the alchemist's secret, the golden rule or mean of proportions that can underlie eternal works. His HD video series about two paintings in the Museo del Prado's collection "Topologies — Velazquez, Las Meninas" (2010) and "Topologies – Tiepolo, Immacolata Concezione" (2010), structurally dissolve as you view them. In collaboration with an HDR photographer he works with huge images, 20,000 x 20,000 pixels, running a raw analysis to discover what is really within the paintings. Employing a triangulation algorithm that generates thousands of polygons, he takes these icons of perfection and turns them into a mesh continually deforming itself.

Through distancing himself from the Italian land of his birth by residing in London, Quayola has decontextualized his heritage just enough to thrust it into a new century.



Quayola, "Topologies - Velazquez, Las Meninas" (2010)  
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