Gruber, Angela. “Data Art: Fragmented masterpieces,” *Spiegel Online*, January 1, 2016

SPIEGEL ONLINE

Data Art: Fragmented masterpieces

From Angela Gruber

The artist Quayola dismantled the works of old masters such as Botticelli and Rubens with a self-programmed software. His goal: He wants to explore how technology is changing our view of the world.

What he does is best with the work of an MRI scanner comparable, says Davide Quagliola, Pseudonym Quayola , about his art. This scanner illuminates the skin of the patient and makes visible what lies beneath. So also Quagliola going when he rayed old paintings which he has digitized consuming computer. It defragments the originals almost to then assemble them into new works. A Berlin exhibition shows since Friday current work.

“Every day we see the world around us mediated by machines. I am interested in what makes this look and how it changes us,” says Quayola.

The starting point for his abstract paintings, videos and sculptures are works that accompany the Italians since his childhood and youth in Rome: Quayola, who now lives in London, is fascinated by the iconography in the illustrations of painters like Rubens or the Renaissance Artists Botticelli , Holofernes, who is murdered by the story in the Old Testament of Judith. Christian martyrs. The crucifixion of Jesus.

“Growing up in Rome, you are surrounded by these images. Everywhere churches and Christian motifs,” says Quayola. “I have a deep relationship with the old paintings.”

The data remain the same, only their form changes

In those portentous, often copied and referenced scenes Quayola directs the cold eye of the computer: Together with coders he has developed software that analyzes the pixels of the original, surreal,

categorized. “All modifications happen on the basis of information that is hidden in the original image. The image information does not change. I translate the data only in a new form,” says Quayola. “My editor solves the works from their historical context, and so allows for new perspectives. The work stands on its own.”

The abstraction process controls Quayola, by defining and changing software parameters. For example, all pixels with a certain saturation selected and edited or searched geometric structures of images. Using a 3D software Quayola has earlier work visualized as a video. He is currently more focused on color printing and aluminum stitches.

As a basis for his computer work Quayola need digital images with high resolution. This he worried in part from the Internet, partly directly from the museum: Equipped with a digital SLR, Quayola photographed their chosen design hundredfold, in every photo he captured a small section. On computer he then adds all the pieces together in a large file. Because if the data amount is too small, says Quayola, works its software is not as good.