



The artist Davide Quayola used algorithms such instruments

Written by Sonja Peteranderl



WIRED: Your abstract, geometric art works one sees no longer, that their starting point was Renaissance masterpieces. The idea behind the series "Iconographies" that you just in Nome Gallery are presenting in Berlin?

Davide Quayola: If you look at the pictures, it is impossible to see what is behind them - on purpose. For me, art is like Botticelli of a starting point, the starting point where the journey begins. I have the series continued to develop in the last decade. I grew up in Rome, so close to these paintings, which have thus become a part of my DNA. When I moved to London at age 19, I fled before these images, on the other hand I started to interest me for me and deal with them in a new way. The beginning was a series of photographs of churches. I then started to make videos, to algorithms based prints and engravings, recently I deal also with sculptures, so that it became physical again. In addition to the personal narrative that technological narrative is central to me. Mediation has become so present: We see the world through the eyes of machines.

WIRED: As technology changed your view of art?

Quayola: It is an exciting opportunity to look back through these new lenses to about painting - and different thinking. Misuse of technology is interesting, to discover new things. When Google Art Project paintings were scanned and you can suddenly discover these paintings as topographic maps. This was also a great inspiration for this project. An image to be considered as it was not provided completely opens new ways. I am fascinated by computer vision, certain forms of aesthetics and new languages that belong to the eyes of the machine.

WIRED: Take these algorithms work from?

Quayola: I develop tools such as algorithms, which I use as musical instruments. This is not an analytical input that allows the algorithm then spits out a new image, but I use this as an input source, and then I start with the instruments playing around until I create an image, which I think is valuable.

WIRED: Do you have the algorithm with which you work, even developed?

Quayola: Technically, it's not rocket science. I use common software, but it is a toolset and I have developed their own approaches and workflows over time. I was abusing the technology more or less. Because you could

digitally produce a very good image of an original image as a painting. Instead of algorithms to develop, that would give me an insight into the historical aspect of the work, I do it but abstract.

WIRED: How would you describe the process in concrete terms?

Quayola: I can almost a kind of MRI scan generating an image influenced by various parameters. You can scan through about by the Saturationslevel or search for other features of the image, different areas and the image break a way that would not create your own look. I let several studies through until I find something I find exciting, what stands out from the original, and emphasized certain aspects.



WIRED: How would you describe the relationship between the original and the new plant describe?

Quayola: I like it when you do not see the relationship with the original at first glance - these objects are now no longer there to document the process, but they have become new objects. They stand for themselves. Only when you would view the original image, the relationship would be clear. You can see the works then either explore more deeply, read more, like a jigsaw puzzle, or you can view easily.

WIRED: Did you previously have an idea of how the final work might look like, or do you let yourself be surprised?



Quayola: It's like making a documentary - in contrast to a film. If you were to make a movie, you had previously a very precise storyboard, a script, everything is set and organized. To make a documentary itself is a process of discovery. I like it to develop systems and to use them as a framework for research and to be amazed by this dialogue. Technology is for me as an employee, something with which I can share. My exhibition is a

result or an intermediate result of this ongoing research.

WIRED: Do you work only with machines or with people?

Quayola: Collaboration for me is extremely important - from printers to programming and developers. Sometimes I work alone rather, for larger, complex projects, the team is then greater. The software I have developed well with good developers together. I like to think about the systems and the mechanics behind it after, but the concrete development I can not do it alone. I work for example with industrial robots that manipulate large blocks into sculptures. It is very complex and only possible because I work with engineers. Technology is becoming more readily available, but also more complex.

WIRED: Much of your work is digital - Have you ever even a solid studio?

Quayola: I have a studio in London, a kind of storehouse, in the beginning I lived with friends and where we have always organized parties. Then it gradually became more civilized, I live there no longer, but some artists and I share the place now, to work there. It is now a bit boring, because I mainly work with computers and there are primarily servers and computers around, hardly physical works. The works are created only in cooperation with various workshops and manufacturers and in different places of the world. I work with computers and am hardly hands dirty, but still one has to digitize and all these digital pipelines more and more control over the process, even if you're not at the production site.

WIRED: How would you describe the state of the art digital art scene, what developments you'll find just interesting?



Quayola: There is a new generation of artists who enter into a dialogue with technology and create a certain aesthetic that influenced by the tools is. There is not yet such a long historical heritage in this area, so you can enter virtually undiscovered territory and open up and that's interesting.

Davide Quayola

WIRED: If you let yourself be inspired by digital art?

Quayola: I do not consume as much digital culture, feeds, or Pinterest-images. I am interested in traditional paintings, I explore archaeological attractions. Even nature is important to me - last year I set myself to work in the country house of my father in Italy, where there is nothing. I then work back into the computer, of course, but still surrounded by nature.

WIRED: How do failure and frustration in the digital age from?

Quayola: It is quite suicidal, because the projects are complicated damn, you have to research a lot before you can realize something. You need some kind of entrepreneurship approach, also to raise the money to implement these highly complex projects. Therefore, there is a lot of frustration. On the one hand one works on the computer, you can test things at once, work independently and fairly low - only if you want to then materialize the project, it will be difficult. I am used to work at a high speed, and then everything will be delayed. Sometimes it takes years until a design is actually a real sculpture that looks good.

The exhibition "Iconographies" can be seen from 15 January to 5 March 2016 in Nome Gallery, Dolziger Str. 31 in Berlin.