

Artificial Intelligence: New edge of contemporary art? BY GRACE PINEY SPECIAL TO EL NUEVO HERALD DECEMBER 7, 2023 9:07 PM



The creator Claudio Castillo with his work *The Prince*, from the *Ides of March* series (2023). Generative art. Media: Artificial Intelligence, photography, watercolor, animation, video, sound and software. On LED screen.

New this year during Art Basel Miami week will be Artificial Intelligence (AI) and what artists can do using AI. Why is Artificial Intelligence interesting for artistic creation? Because you can create images by following a series of commands. Artists have used technologies and programming for as long as it has existed; Now specific programs and applications have been developed that create images and their use has become widespread. The million dollar question is, is it ethical? It follows: So who “creates”? Or what is the same, who is “the artist”, the person or the computer? The answer cannot be any other: It depends!

In the public spaces of Context, Art Miami, you can find the work of Claudio Castillo using Artificial Intelligence and other media (photography, watercolor, video, animation, sound and software). The Miami viewer knows Castillo's work through exhibitions that have been hosted by various cultural institutions in the city and because he takes it to international BlinkGroup Gallery fairs. There are three themes that are repeated in Castillo's work: concern for time, for its infinity; life cycles and chaos with all that it implies. All of them, related to human transcendence and, par excellence, that of art. *Ides of March* is a series of four pieces. Each is a unique generative clock.

Although there is a movement around the concept of “generative art”, the truth is that there are very few artists producing what we can consider generative art, which is not the same as “art” made by a computer. Castillo is among the 10-15 artists in the world whose generative art is strictly speaking generative and is worth reviewing. There are several clocks in his artistic production. The novelty in this piece is the incorporation of Artificial Intelligence. Structurally,

each piece of Ides of March is composed of eight layers of images and sounds and the combination of the elements makes each image unrepeatable.

For each piece in the series, Castillo chose a Roman mosaic from circa 200 AD (photographs courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum, Getty Museum, RISD Museum, and Princeton University Museum). He asked the AI to recreate the image of the mosaics following the style of 18th century portrait painters and chose more than 100 images for each piece in the series. To this he adds animations made from his watercolors and other media, a variety of generative sounds. A unique software for each piece mixes and orders the images, adds the passage of time, makes a prediction of the phases of the Moon and the tides and incorporates a sensor that captures the presence of the viewer.

The result? A clock that marks the passage of time, the cycles of the Moon, the tide of the place where it is located, that follows the viewer and that combines images that will never be repeated: infinity. On the hour and during the first minute the viewer will be able to see what the AI did: the hundred images present in each piece of the series. During the rest of the time the images are mixed with all the other elements. During the week of Art Basel, December 5-10, the viewer will be able to see one of the pieces from the Ides of March series each day in the public spaces of Context, Art Miami, on a huge and wonderful LED screen courtesy of Ncyclomedia , by businessman Peter Andros.

The work is also transmitted in streaming , in real time, on the artist's website (claudiocastillo.com/live). Inside the fair, BlinkGroup Gallery is located at stand A10 and shows the same piece except that it is presented on a touch screen and, believe it: it is an experience that the viewer cannot miss! BlinkGroup Gallery brings to this fair paintings by Tiffany Trenda, another artist who has worked with Artificial Intelligence. It is a proposal between entertainment and criticism; The viewer will decide how to interpret it.

And continuing with digital art, although it is not their best montage, the Hilton Contemporary gallery brings a very interesting piece by the couple that is presented as "Ouch!!!" (Ferdinand and Alicja). An immersive and suggestive video in which they have also used AI. Let's hope that next year they can deploy the visual means that the work requires, it will be like crossing into another dimension! Let's not lose track of him. For the rest, taking a general overview, there is less Pop Art than other years and much more intervened photography. Which is appreciated. Without fear of being wrong, we can say that this year Context has a higher production level than in previous years. It is very good news and a stimulating indicator of the state of the art or, at least, its presence in international fairs.

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