

ARTificial Intelligence enters the History of Art

A painting of a fictional portrait was generated using Artificial Intelligence (AI) was auctioned at Christie's for 435,000 USD. But only 3600 miles across the Atlantic Ocean, in Paris, AI-Generated Art made history.



Paris, Dec 28, 2018 ([Issuewire.com](http://www.Issuewire.com)) - Earlier this year, a painting of a fictional portrait of “Edmond de Belamy” that was generated using Artificial Intelligence (AI) was auctioned at Christie's and sold for 435,000 USD. The AI-generated portrait which looks uncanny and unfinished was made by a French trio collective called Obvious. What was not so obvious, however, the generated Edmond had a striking

similarity to portraits initially generated by Robert Barrat. They both used the same training data of thousands of paintings and open source code of Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs). GANs are the result of several contributions by a scientist, namely, Ian Goodfellow. The obvious and the not obvious made news for the past couple of months, however, what remained in the dark till today is that on the same day that Edmond was auctioned in New York, AI-Generated Art entered the history of art only 3,600 miles across the Atlantic Ocean.

On October 24th, 2018, the prestigious Salon d'Automne art fair opened at the Champs Elysees of Paris, gathering 840 of the finest artists from all over the planet. The Salon d'Automne which has given birth to art movements such as cubism and fauvism and that exhibited artists such as Picasso and Rodin, opened this year with one of the first AI-Generated artworks that won the "Digital Art Award". The artwork was signed "ALAgrApHY".

Artist and scientist, [ALAgrApHY](#), also known as AI or Alaa Abi Haidar, is amongst the pioneers in the field of AI-generated art. His limited-edition series "Components" has each unique artwork composed of thousands of unique faces of all diversities, ages and genders that are generated by artificial intelligence. More precisely, ALAgrApHY uses GANs, that are trained on a database of faces that he captured with his camera for the [1001faces.org](#) project. He uses thousands of his generated faces that are automatically assembled through various algorithms to create giant mosaics of stunning beauty and intricacy.

ALAgrApHY has been teaching machines to create art for the past four years. He's shown and sold his AI-generated work at the Grand Palais at the Salon Comparaison for the Art Capital 2018 in Paris where he will be exhibiting again 13-18 February 2019 (opening on the 12th of February). He has done several exhibitions of his coffee paintings, photography, films and digital images in private and public exhibitions, in art galleries, art fairs, restaurants, hotels and lofts.

The artist is a researcher at the University of Pierre and Marie Curie in Paris after completing his PhD in Informatics at Indiana University. His research focuses on understanding and simplifying complex systems hand-in-hand with Data Science.

ALAgrApHY's art features various themes such as diversity, justice and peace. His AI-generated artwork has the ability to conceptualize human faces of people that don't exist, may have never existed and will never exist in the future, thereby composing larger mosaics. Some of the art images are androgynous in nature, representing all of humanity. The pieces symbolize all genders, races, ethnicities and religions, amply demonstrating that people are more alike than they may think and all are united in a common humanity. The African word, ubuntu meaning "I am because we are" is a leading theme expressed by the artist. "My dream is to see art and science meet in new artforms to promote peace and to connect people" said ALAgrApHY.

ALAgrApHY's exhibit of AI-generated artwork at the Salon d'Automne on Oct. 25-28, 2018 (opening Oct. 24) provided individuals with the opportunity of viewing the unique intersection of art and science and a contact between man and machine. His work is the outward expression of his search for truth and seeking methods in parallel. He believes that AI will not replace artists but will assist them as a tool to better deepen their self-expression.

About ALAgrApHY

ALAgrApHY (or AI) is currently an artist/scientist-in-residency at the Instituto Gulbenkian de Ciência. He is a Paris-based data scientist, filmmaker, photographer and entrepreneur. He earned a PhD in

Complex Systems at Indiana University while interning at the Gulbenkian Science Institute. Photography and filmmaking offered him new perspectives and he uses art and science together to capture and translate beauty and to do his muse, nature, justice. His artwork has been exhibited in a variety of venues ranging from France to the U.S. Connect with ALAgrApHY on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#)

A more animated version of the story is available at
<https://medium.com/@alagraphy/aiart-3874186a9a6>

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