

Reflections on the artist's emancipation in artistic creation

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The rise of automatic systems based on generative algorithms that are complicated by nature, but easily operable thanks to user-friendly interfaces, has assumed a relevant role in society at its most diverse layers. In the form of Artificial Intelligence (AI) these systems control virtual assistants; chatbots; financial operations; autonomous systems in the automotive industry; enterprise computing, and more. AI is also part of the universe of fiction having penetrated pop culture from renowned box offices such as *Metropolis* (1927), *Blade Runner* (1982), *Her* (2013) and others.

Towards the core of our proposal, we come across AI infiltrating the visual arts and creating, in the cosmos of its black boxes, fictitious universes, and unforeseen works. From the automation of the artmaking and in the sphere of the flat, static image, a bivalent creative dimension represented by figurative and non-figurative images is inaugurated. Figurative because the AI is capable of creating representations similar to those found in real environments: *simulacra*; and non-figurative in the sense that it is capable of proposing works whose traces – or *anti-traces* (COUCHOT, 2003), since it has no physical connections with the real – are close to poetics related to the old masters of painting (in this particular case that we are going to develop our essay).

We want to expand the paths to conceive scenarios that include the machines as independent agents of artistic creation, which dialogues with the aspects of *narrative* and *autonomy*, included in this call for paper. "Artists act out of all sorts of motives, some artistic, some not." (IRVIN, 2005), while algorithms are free of intention and motivation. But, despite the absence of these predicates, it is precisely the same algorithms that are now producing works like *Edmond de Belamy* (Fig. 1), a field still insufficiently studied. It seems crucial when it comes to Artificial Arts and / or Fiction Works produced by AI, to recognize that the manifestation of creativity is machinic. Evidently, this does not attribute to AI consciousness, intention, or any other faculty proper to the human condition, but it is enough to disturb the understanding of the creative process.

Figure 1



Figure 1: Edmond de Belamy, auctioned in 2018 for US\$ 432,500 and generated using an algorithm. If accepted, the article will be developed around this work (Reproduction: Christie's/Obvious Collective, 2018)

Operating beyond the scope of simulation that helps human reasoning, since algorithms act at the edges of artistic-poetic predictability, these tools seem to assume important independence in image imagination. This leads us to wonder if the art that has already emancipated itself from representation (I) and from the object (II) would not also be emancipating itself from the subject (III). Faced with the unpredictability of the image in potential we work with semiautonomous agents capable of surprising us with images whose pre-existences lack *negativity*, as Baudrillard (1999) said, which could establish the emancipation in the third degree. According to Couchot, "at a certain stage of their development, it happens that [*the techniques*] reach a higher form of organization: they then acquire an autonomy that allows them to function without the intervention of the operator (...) They automate themselves" (COUCHOT, 2003).

We do not propose, in this essay, to deny the role of the artist in any way. What we want is to reflect on the sphere of creation assisted by tools whose intelligence surpasses those of the phase of technical images. Our proposal, if accepted, will seek to deepen the understanding about the automation of artistic making, being this aspect one of the three areas of investigation of our Ph.D. project that also includes reflections about man-machine authorship and the appropriation (by artists) of AI based codes and tools in creative processes.

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