

Digital Humanities

Lecture 7

April 26

2024

Mario Verdicchio

The Digital in Digital Art

News from 2018

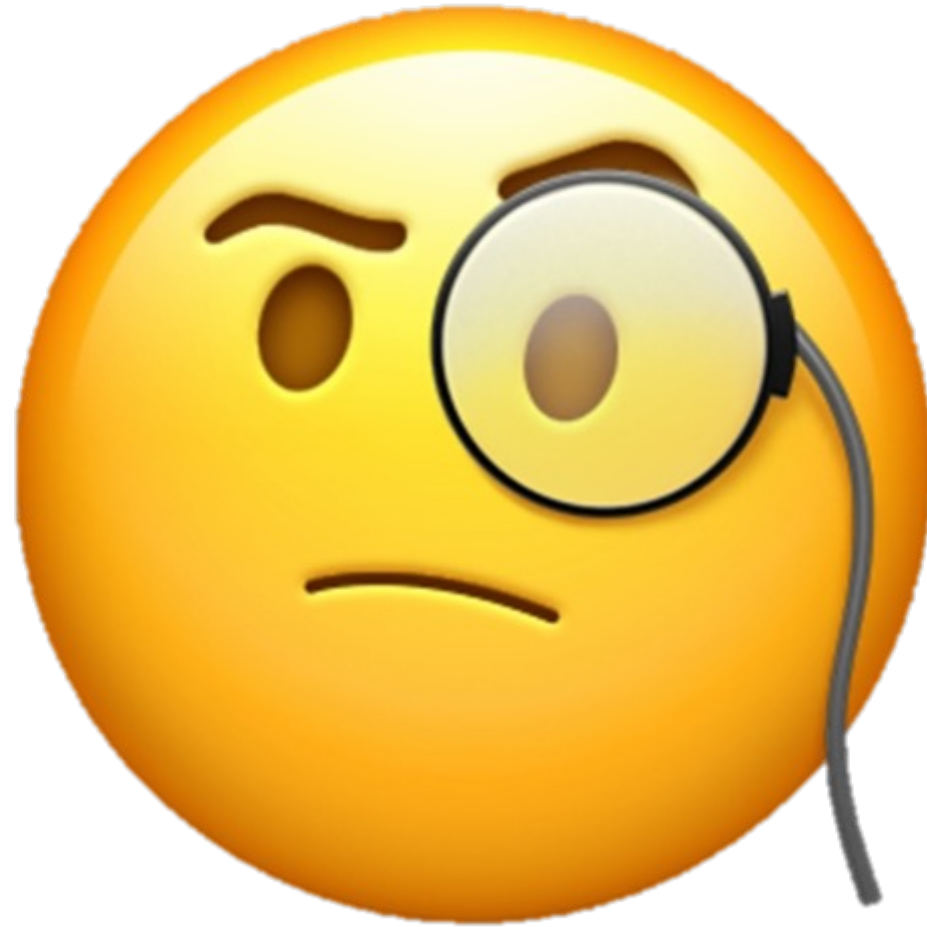
- Artificial-Intelligence-based artwork to be auctioned at Christie's



“Edmond de Belamy, from La Famille de Belamy” by the French collective Obvious

Reactions

Reactions



Reactions

- **“The technology used to create the work, has been used by artists since around 2015. This group is totally irrelevant.”**
 - Ahmed Elgammal, Director of the Art and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory at Rutgers University
- **“When I saw that announcement of the auction, my reaction was ‘you can’t be serious.’ The portrait by Obvious is connect-the-dots children’s painting.”**
 - Mario Klingemann, German artist and artist-in-residence at Google Labs, Paris

2015

since around
totally irrelevant

Do 3 years make a technique irrelevant?

- Artificial Intelligence Technique used by
Obvious: 3 years

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- Artificial Intelligence Technique used by Obvious: 3 years
- Computers: 70 years



1950. The United States Government receives the UNIVAC 1101. This computer is considered to be the first computer that was capable of storing and running a program from memory.

Do 3 years make a technique irrelevant?

- Artificial Intelligence Technique used by Obvious: 3 years
- Computers: 70 years
- Sculpture: 40,000 years

Löwenmensch, from Hohlenstein-Stadel, now in Ulmer Museum, Ulm, Germany, the oldest known anthropomorphic animal-human statuette, Aurignacian era, c. 35–40,000 BP



Do 3 years make a technique irrelevant?

- Artificial Intelligence Technique used by Obvious: 3 years
- Computers: 70 years
- Sculpture: 40,000 years
- Painting: 42,000 years

Found in a cave on Spain's Costa del Sol, six paintings of seals are at least 42,000 years old and are the only known artistic images created by Neanderthal man.

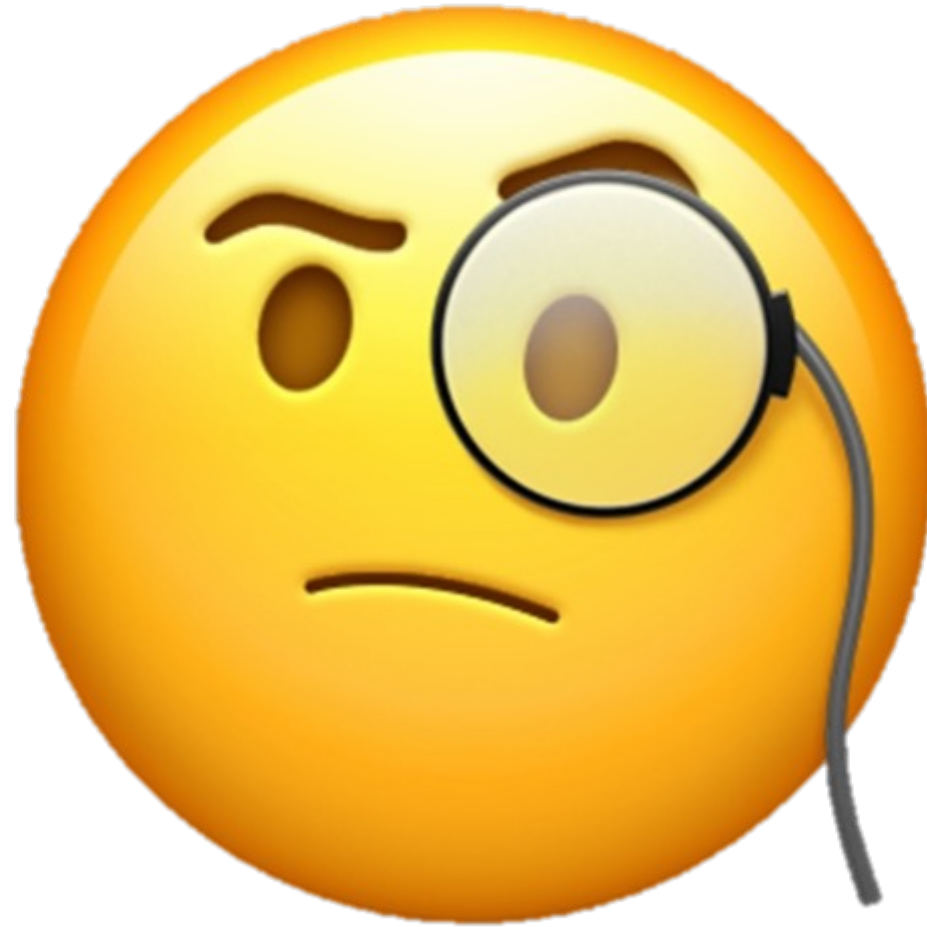


A 3-year-old iPhone



iPhone 13 (2021)

Reactions



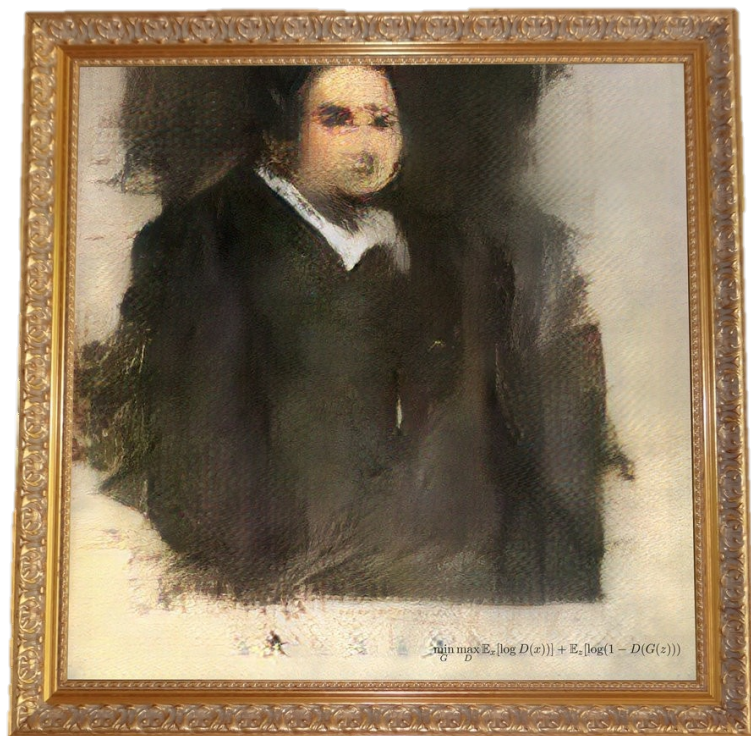
Reactions



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The portrait by Obvious is connect-the-dots children's painting.



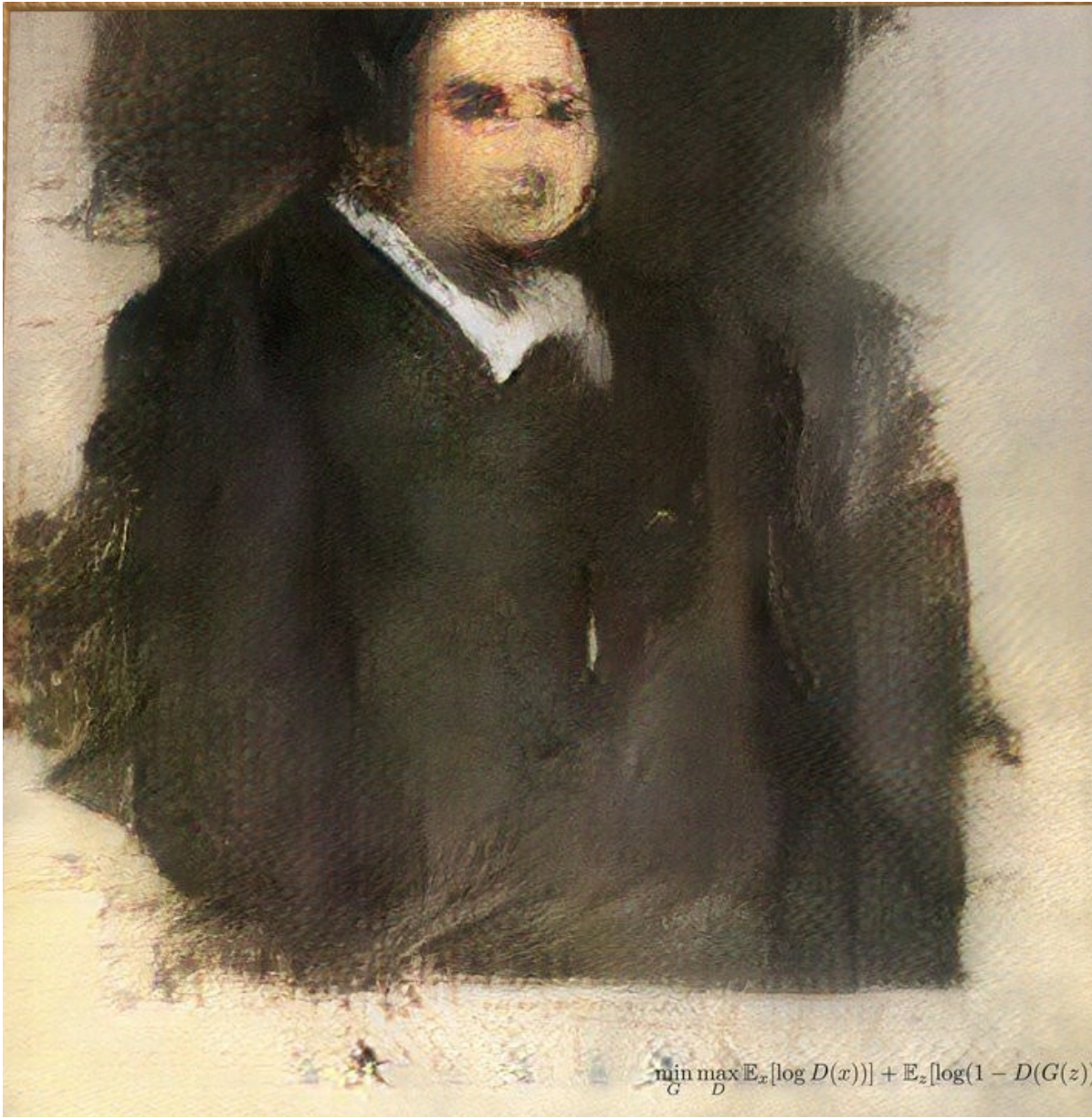
Obvious



Obvious



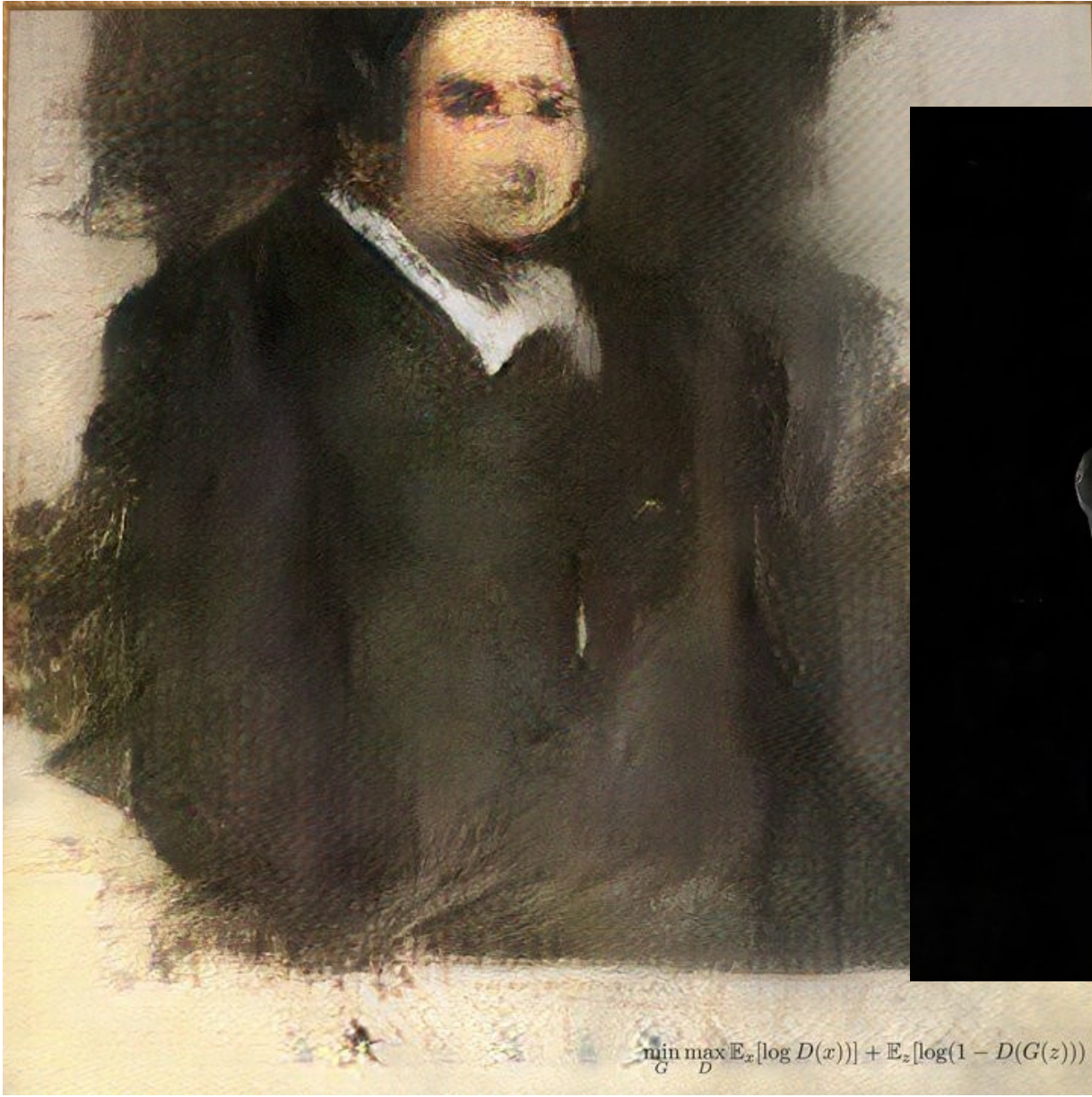
**Mario
Klingemann**



$$\min_G \max_D \mathbb{E}_x [\log D(x)] + \mathbb{E}_z [\log(1 - D(G(z)))]$$







$$\min_G \max_D \mathbb{E}_x [\log D(x)] + \mathbb{E}_z [\log(1 - D(G(z)))]$$





Christie's 

@ChristiesInc

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#AuctionUpdate The first AI artwork to be sold in a major auction achieves \$432,500 after a bidding battle on the phones and via ChristiesLive bit.ly/2PVN2ly



Reactions

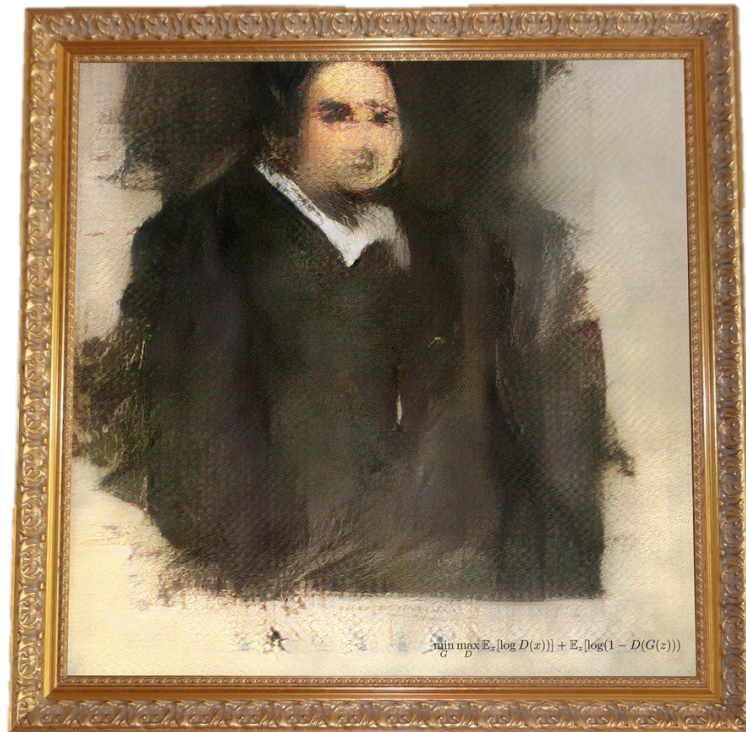




Obvious



**Mario
Klingemann**



Obvious



Mario
Klingemann



\$432,500

Obvious



Gold Award

The Butcher's Son
Mario Klingemann
Germany

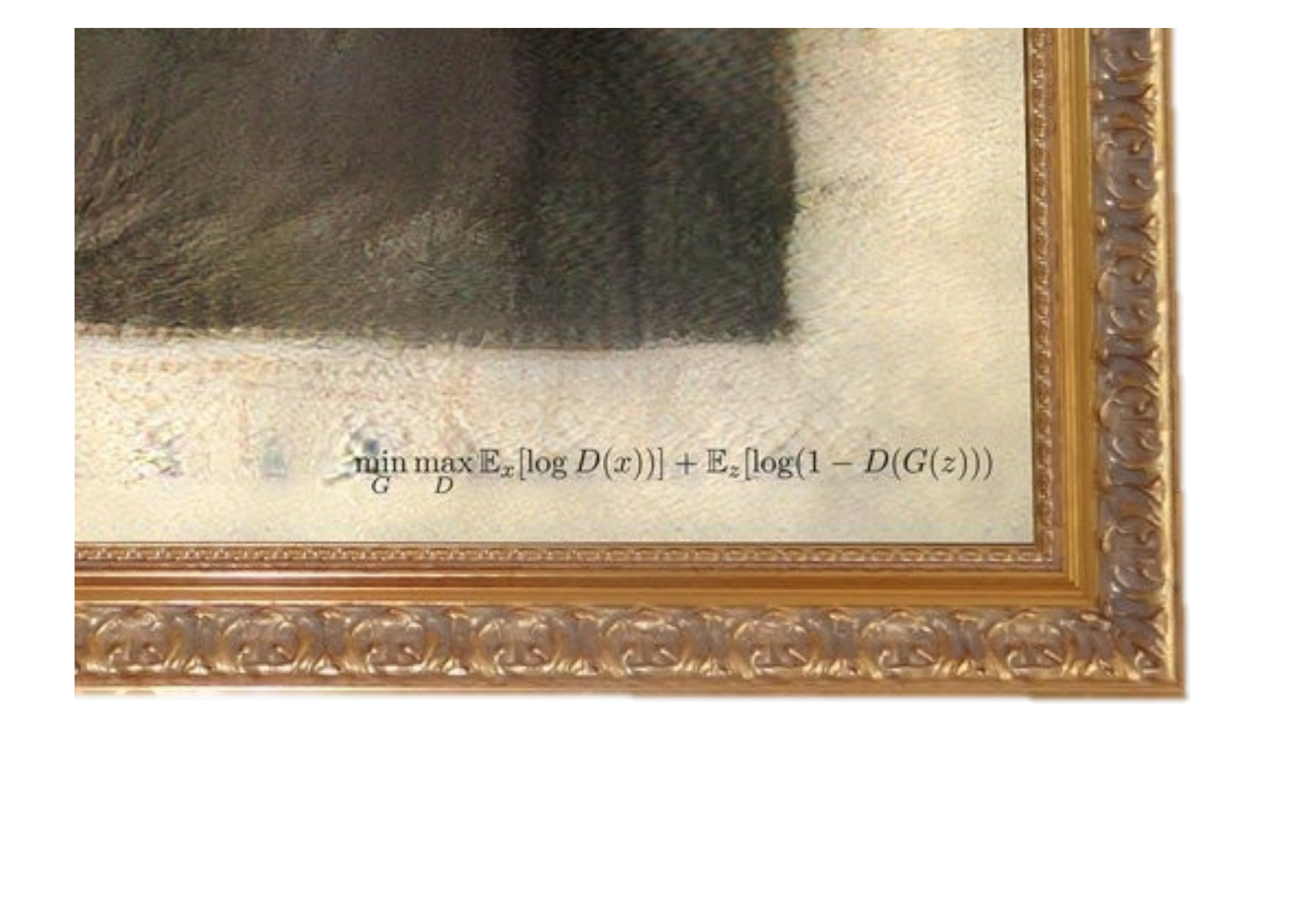
Mario Klingemann

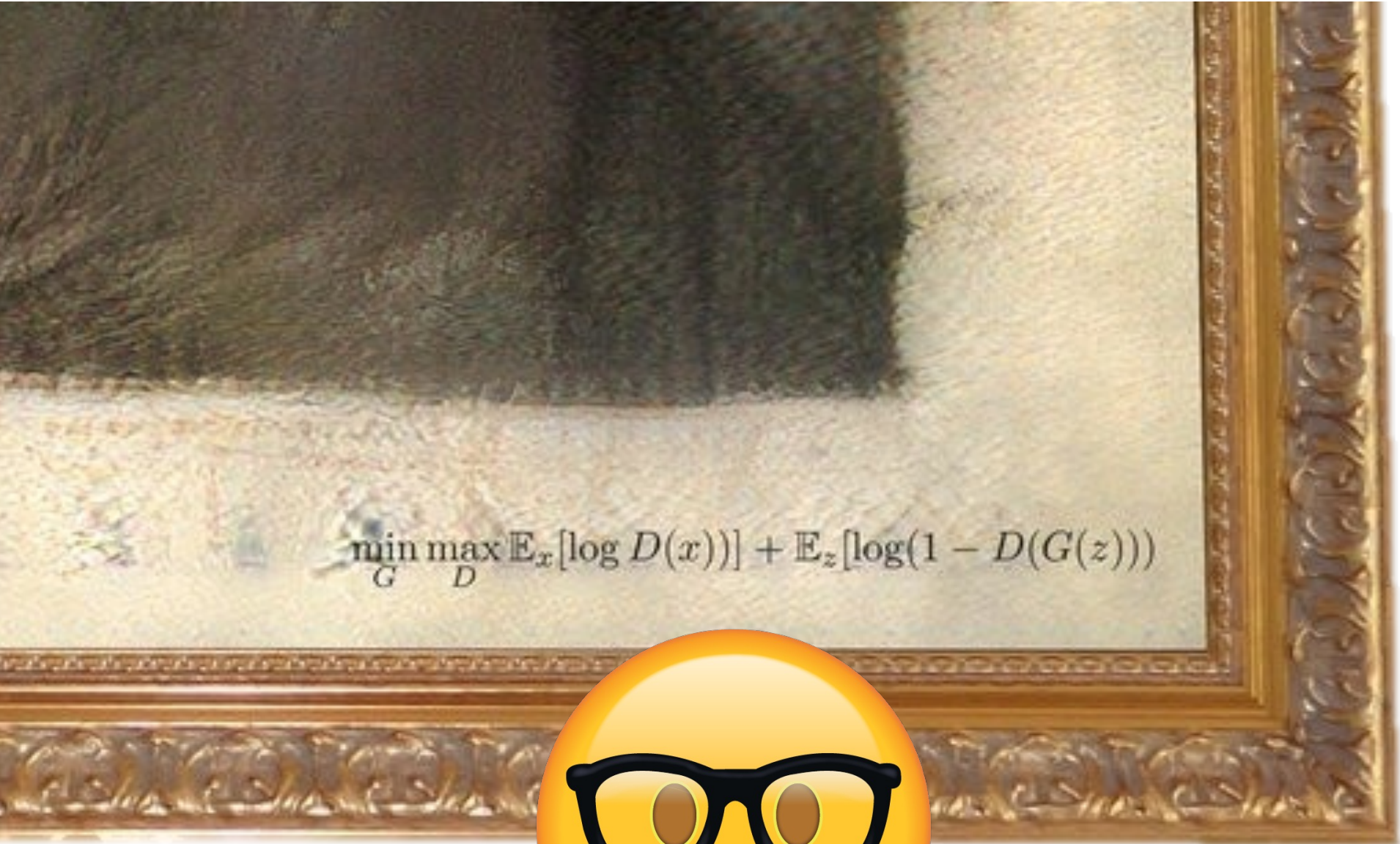
Mario Klingemann's process

This image has been generated entirely by a machine using a chain of GANs (generative adversarial neural networks). In this chain a randomly generated stick-figure is used as an input to the first GAN, which produces a painterly-looking low-resolution proto-image. In several steps, the low resolution image is 'transhanced' and upscaled by another GAN increasing the resolution and adding details and textures. I control this process indirectly by training the model on selected data sets, the model's hyperparameters and eventually by making a curatorial choice, by picking among the thousands of variations produced by the models the one that speaks to me most.



$$\min_D \max_{G(z)} \mathbb{E}_x [\log D(x)] + \mathbb{E}_z [\log(1 - D(G(z)))]$$


$$\min_G \max_D \mathbb{E}_x[\log D(x)] + \mathbb{E}_z[\log(1 - D(G(z)))]$$


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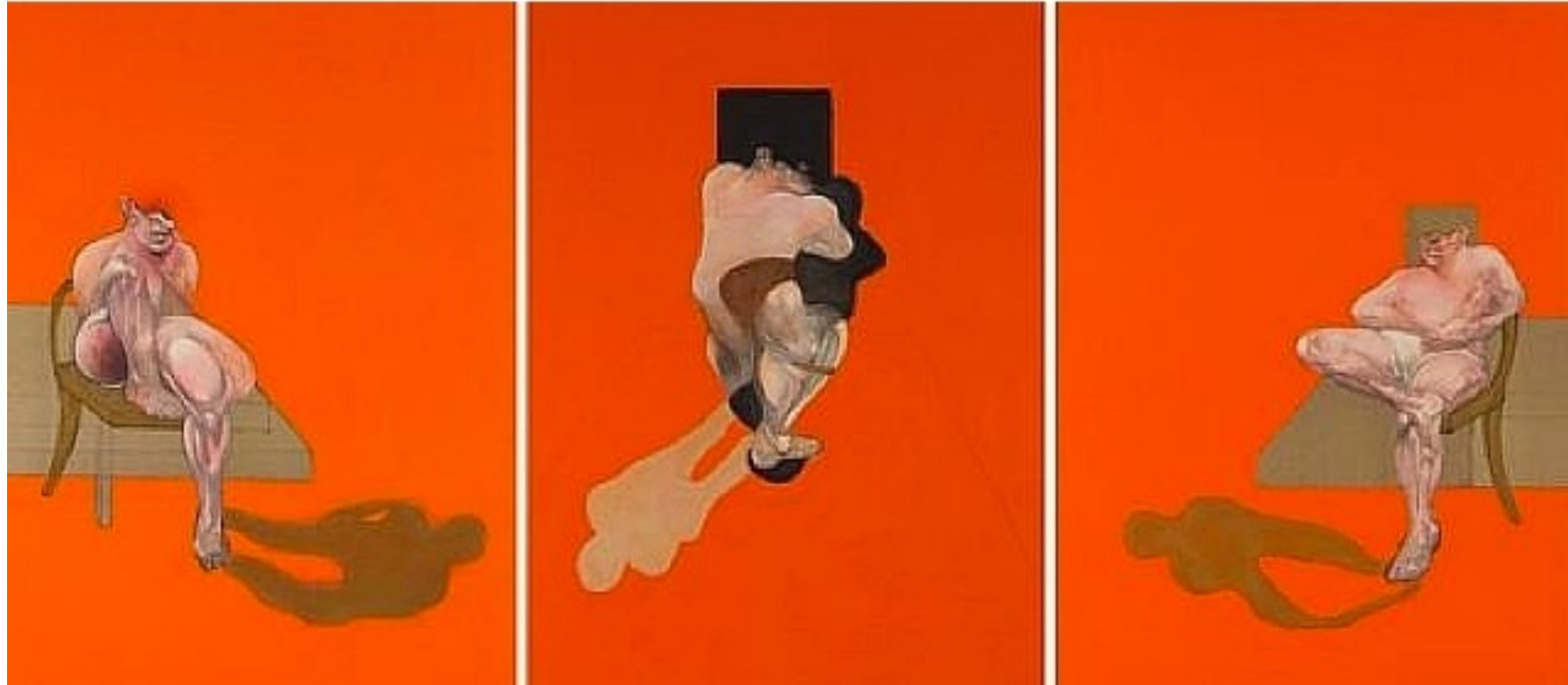




$$\min_G \max_D \mathbb{E}_x [\log D(x)] + \mathbb{E}_z [\log(1 - D(G(z)))]$$





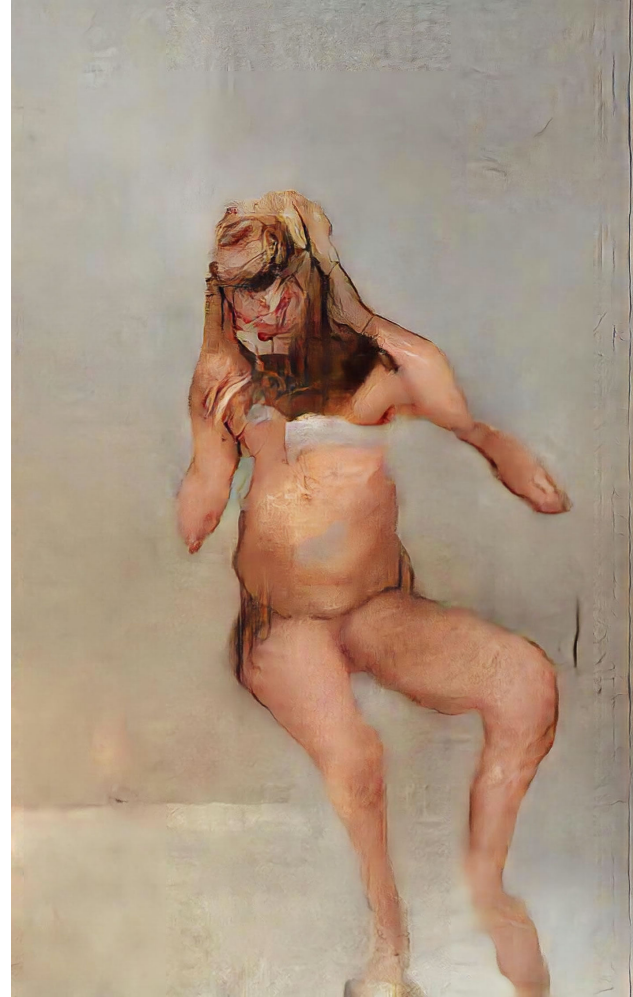


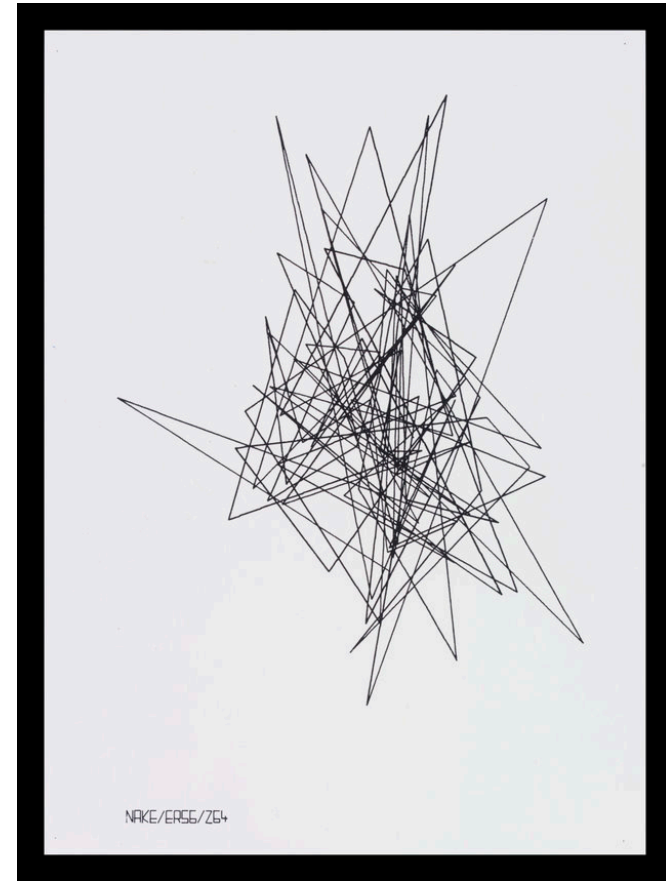
Francis Bacon, "Triptych", 1983

Francis Bacon (1909-1992)

- Bacon was shy as a child and enjoyed dressing up. This, coupled with his effeminate manner, upset his father. A story emerged in 1992 of his father having had Francis horsewhipped by their grooms.
- At a fancy-dress party at home, Francis dressed as a flapper with an Eton crop, beaded dress, lipstick, high heels, and a long cigarette holder.
- In 1926, Francis was thrown out of the family home following an incident in which his father found him admiring himself in front of a large mirror draped in his mother's underwear.
- Bacon found himself drifting through London's homosexual underworld, aware that he was able to attract a certain type of rich man, something he was quick to take advantage of, having developed a taste for good food and wine.

This image has been generated entirely by a machine using a chain of GANs (generative adversarial neural networks). In this chain a randomly generated stick-figure is used as an input to the first GAN, which produces a painterly-looking low-resolution proto-image. In several steps, the low resolution image is 'transhanced' and upscaled by another GAN increasing the resolution and adding details and textures. I control this process indirectly by training the model on selected data sets, the model's hyperparameters and eventually by making a curatorial choice, by picking among the thousands of variations produced by the models the one that speaks to me most.



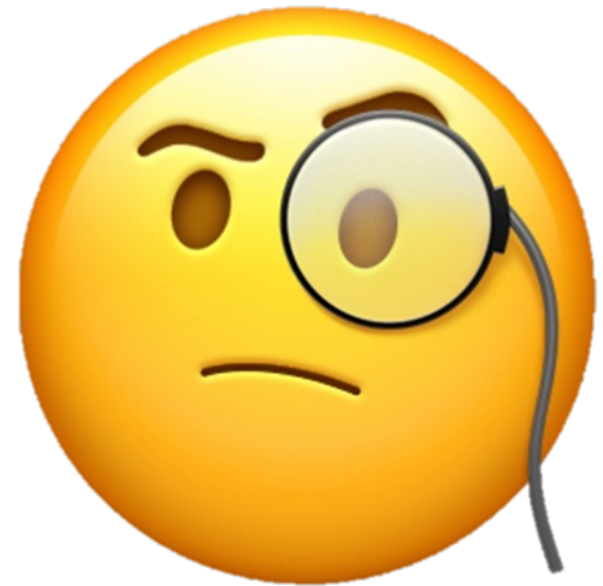


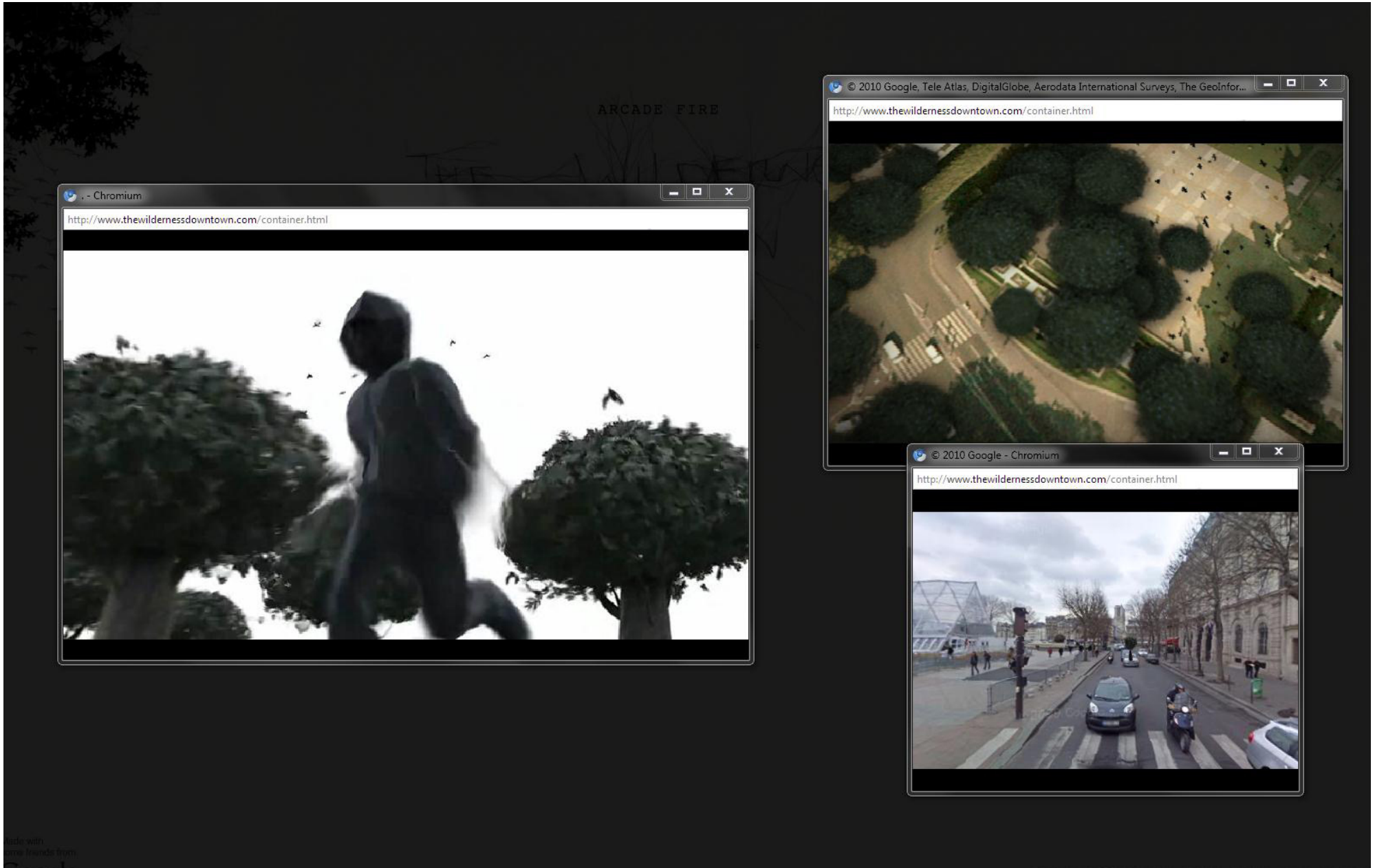
Frieder Nake
“Random Polygons”
1965

NAKE/ER56/264



NAKE: human algorist
ER56: electronic computer
Z64: plotter





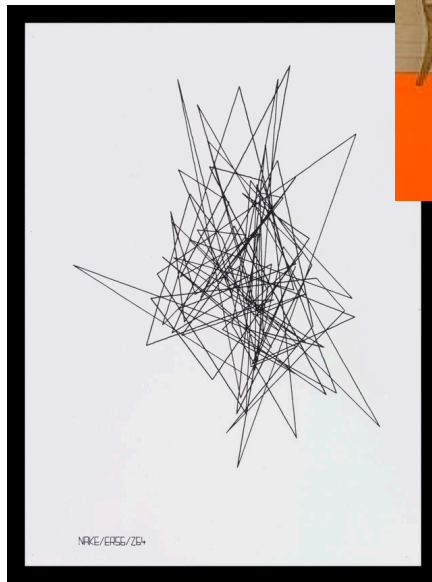
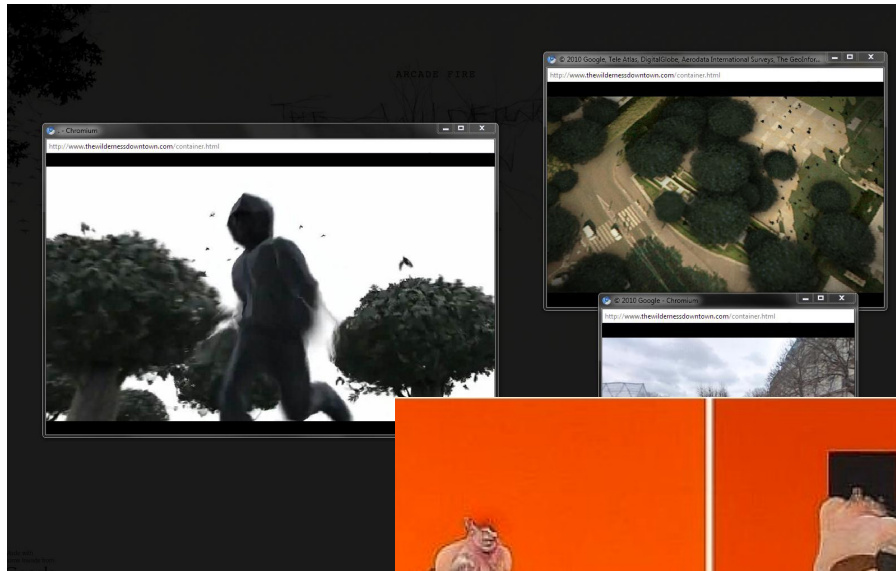
Chris Milk, "The Wilderness Downtown", 2010

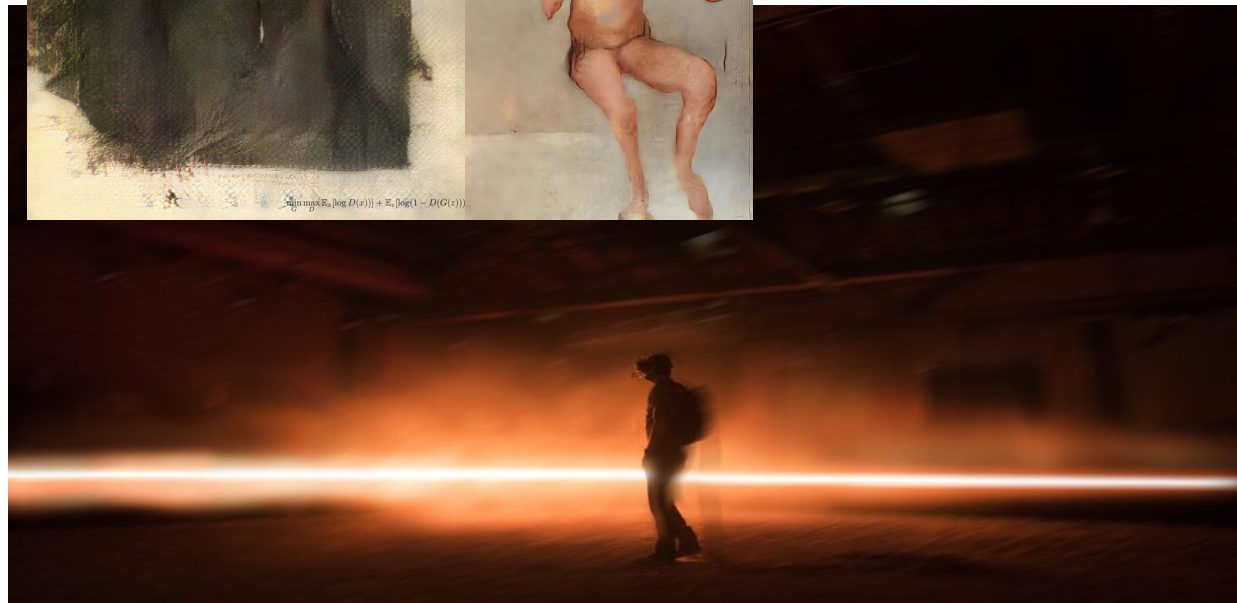
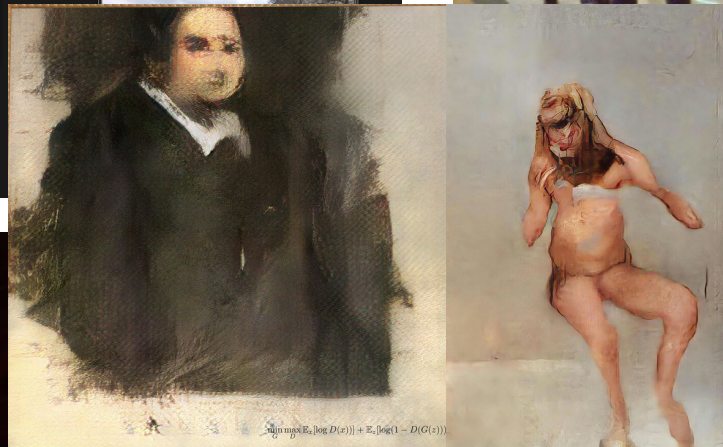
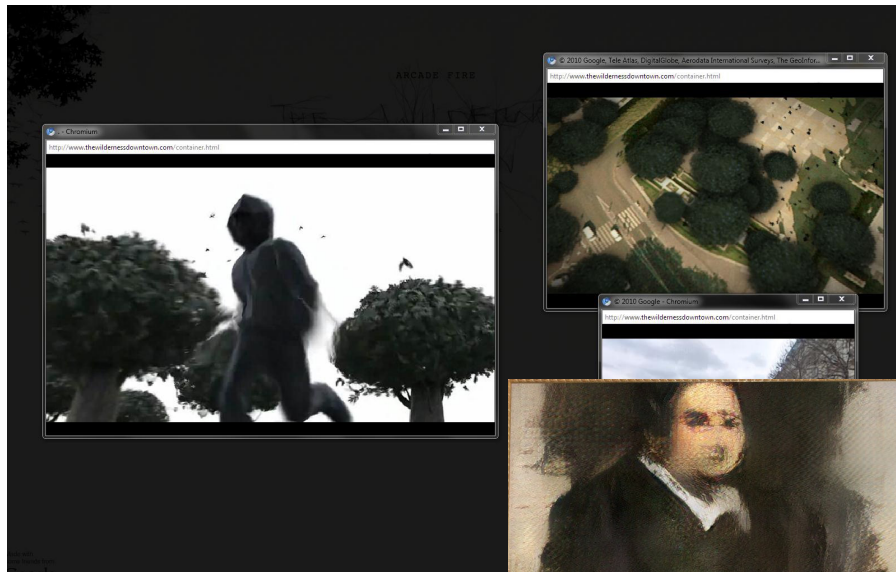


Scott Snibbe, "Boundary Functions", 1998



Alejandro González Iñárritu, "Carne y Arena", 2017





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