

DEEPHORIZON

Digital Oil Painting Manifesto

May 6, 2010

OIL PAINTING: THE SUPREME DISCIPLINE OF ART. THE OIL SLICK, THE SIZE OF PUERTO RICO, IS BEGINNING TO PAINT COASTLINES

The supreme discipline of art - oil painting - is back. It has been 13 days since a BP oil and gas exploration well blew out, setting fire to the drilling rig, which sank, killing 11 people. Ever since, crude oil has been leaking into the Gulf of Mexico, raising the prospects of a historic environmental disaster. Winds from the southeast have nudged the slick northward, where it floated Saturday near the coasts of Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi and has begun to paint the coastlines.

Finally oil painting has evolved into generative bio-art, a dynamic process the world audience can watch live via mass media. Never before has this art form been as revelant and visible as today - only 9-11 was nearly as perfect, but in the genre of performance art. An oil painting on a 80.000 square miles ocean canvas with 32 million liters of oil - a unique piece of art.

We exclusively use aerial images from the oil spill. The files are ready-mades but we waived our right to use them "as is" and decided to use a special digital technique to produce a statement about the disconnection of form and color and about contemporary and futuristic imaging procedures. We use a compressor (sorenso codec) and consumer video editing-software and manually loop 2 frames, the image becomes liquid, transforms and deforms.

These visualisations represent the "Verkuenstlichung" of nature and the "Vernatuerlichung" of art. Unedited oil-paintings of the event can be found via search-engines, on boston.com or on the NASA Earth Observatory website.

UBERMORGEN.COM are well known for similar projects. What they wanted to achieve with these alienating and retro-visual "web-paintings", as they call it, is not clear. "Since we work for digital penetration of the art market " declared Hans Bernhard "we should get used to radical changes of our networked point of view and in particular about new forms of digital painting".

"I saw the NASA earth observatory images and I was blown away", lizvlx stated "Finally traditional painting made its comeback as a high-tech innovative art form and not as the

starving grandparent of photography, video, digital art and performance. As a former painter I am thrilled and as a digital artist I want to work this material until it bleeds".

"We're breaking new ground here. It's hard to formulate a defense for an artwork exploiting a human caused disaster that has no precedent, which is what this is," Curator Felix Vogel said, defending the artist duo UBERMORGEN.COM against not writing a response for "what is just a shift of perspective what you couldn't anticipate, but possibly with big impact on the art business."

After the images and the video circulated online the feedback hit hard on UBERMORGEN.COM: "It is perverted and sick to compare a mass media spectacle and natural disaster with the century old tradition of fine

art painting" comments a curator who chose to remain anonymous "it is obvious that this comes from the ice-breaking european techno-art avant-garde. They step onto our fine tradition without the slightest idea of the consequences - and i am not talking about the butterfly effect"!

UBERMORGEN.COM have a record of experimental projects and radical positions. In 2001 they broadcast a live-webpainting "Attack on Democrazy" during the first 8 hours of the 9-11 attacks. They intuitively understood that the attack was a mass media intrusion, a "Media Hack". They are infamous for their *Vote-Auction Media Hack*, featuring the buying and selling of individual votes during the presidential election Al Gore vs. G.W. Bush in the year 2000.

Since 2001 they work on different series of web-paintings, by definition non-functional websites serving as images rather than interactive document-structures.

Digital Oil Paintings:

<http://UBERMORGEN.COM/DEEPHORIZON>

*DEEPHORIZON is part of
UBERMORGEN.COMs KRAFT SERIES*