Daniel Ambrosi. AI and the Landscapes of Capability Brown

6 October – 15 December 2023
Preview: 5 October, 6-9pm
Artist in-conversation event: 12 October, 6.30pm
38 Dover Street, London W1S 4NL

Image: *Blenheim*, 2023 (detail)

Robilant+Voena is pleased to announce an exhibition of new works by digital artist **Daniel Ambrosi** relating to the **landscapes of Capability Brown**. Each piece offers a groundbreaking visionary interpretation of these quintessentially English, eighteenth-century vistas. This is Ambrosi's first solo exhibition in London, and marks the **first time** these **historic landscapes** have been the subject of an artworks series incorporating **artificial intelligence**.

Ambrosi has been practising digital art for over 40 years and is recognised as one of the **founding members of the AI art movement**. Since 2016, he has pioneered a technique of combining photography with artificial intelligence in the ongoing series *Dreamscapes* — large-scale landscape pieces that seek to translate the immersive experience of being in a particular place into art. The artist explains: *'Powerful landscape experiences are not only visual (seen) and visceral (felt), they are also cognitive; they make you think — about the nature of seeing, about the very essence of reality.'*

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This revelation is palpable in the resulting works — images that possess an astonishing level of detail and complexity to evoke the awe and sensory abundance felt in the presence of extraordinary landscapes. Realised for his exhibition at R+V as light boxes and front-lit prints, the experience they offer viewers defies categorisation: what look from afar to be vast photographic panoramas, on closer encounter reveal themselves to be composed of myriads of brushstroke-like marks that recall the works of Impressionism, while simultaneously creating a hyperreal vision.

Image: *Blenheim*, 2023 (487.6 x 203.2 cm)

For his exhibition at R+V, Ambrosi has turned his attention to perhaps the apogee of pastoral design — the magnificent eighteenth-century landscapes shaped by Capability Brown and his contemporaries in which an unforgettable 'sense of place' has been painstakingly created by man. Using photographic source material gathered from visits to ten properties across England — including **Chatsworth, Blenheim Palace, Petworth** and **Stowe** — Ambrosi has created **twelve new works** specifically for this exhibition, showing these timeless vistas portrayed through his contemporary visual language. The works are presented as aesthetic pairs, exhibiting the full visual repertoire of Ambrosi's *Dreamscape* series, with varying layers of digital crafting. The pieces vary in size, from 1.2m square-format works, to a monumental self-illuminating light box measuring almost 5 metres wide and over 2 metres high.

'The work of Capability Brown represents the power of ideas and artistic vision; his work demonstrates the ability of ideas to shape reality. I love how his visions were influenced by popular landscape paintings of his time, which Brown transmuted into real world landscapes that have been enjoyed by people to this very day. It's especially poetic to me how the collective vision of Brown and his artistic predecessors continues to reverberate centuries later when I undertook this project to capture these places photographically and turn them back into landscape paintings.'

— Daniel Ambrosi, 2023

R+V is pleased to be representing Daniel Ambrosi as our **first natively digital artist**, whose practice has a deep affinity with the gallery's dedication to the Old Masters. Our partnership with Ambrosi reflects

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our commitment to promoting contemporary artists who engage with the great traditions of art history, reimagining timeless themes and subjects for the twenty-first century.

As **Carla Rapoport, founder of Lumen Art Projects**, has noted, *'Daniel Ambrosi's deep-dive into the genre of landscape painting is both groundbreaking and mesmerising. He uses AI tools as old masters once used their paint brushes... his work inspires art lovers as well as other AI artists around the world'*.

Image: *Sheffield Park*, 2023 (182.9 x 182.9 cm)

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<u>Daniel Ambrosi (born 1958)</u> is a California-based visual artist specialising in digital and AI-augmented art. He studied at Cornell University, where he received a Bachelor of Architecture and a Masters in 3D Graphics. During the 40 years since graduating, he has practised digital art, and starting in 2015, with engineering assistance from Joseph Smarr (Google) and Chris Lamb (NVIDIA), developed an enhanced version of Google's 'DeepDream' technology, that has allowed him to create his large-scale immersive *Dreamscape* series.

Ambrosi's practice is deeply informed by the history of landscape painting, finding particular inspiration in the works of the grand format landscape artists of eighteenth- and nineteenth- century Europe and the later nineteenth-century Hudson River School artists. His works have been shown in exhibitions and art fairs across the United States and in Europe; his work has recently been acquired by the Museum of Contemporary Digital Art (MoCDA), and in 2019 he was a finalist of the Lumen Prize for Art and Technology. More information about Ambrosi's *Dreamscapes* can be found on his website: http://dreamscapes.ai.

'Daniel Ambrosi. AI and the Landscapes of Capability Brown' is accompanied by a digital catalogue featuring a conversation with the artist and original new essays by Sunil Manghani, Professor of Theory, Practice & Critique at Southampton University, and Capability Brown expert Steffie Shields MBE.

Daniel Ambrosi will be in conversation with Steffie Shields and Arthur I. Miller, author of *The Artist in the Machine: The World of AI-Powered Creativity*, at R+V, London on 12 October at 6.30pm. To book your place, please contact maria@robilantvoena.com

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Notes to editors

Robilant+Voena is a partnership of art dealers Edmondo di Robilant and Marco Voena. They launched R+V in London in 2004. Further gallery spaces were opened in Milan in 2009, and Paris and New York in 2020. R+V has distinguished itself as one of the leading international art dealers in Old Master paintings, as well as 20th-century Italian art.

The gallery has sold paintings and works of art to many important private and royal collectors and museums including the Brooklyn Museum of Art, the Frick Collection, the Gallerie dell'Accademia Venice, the Louvre Abu Dhabi, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the National Gallery London, the National Gallery of Stockholm, the Museum of Western Art Tokyo, and the Pinacoteca di Brera Milan.

Robilant+Voena is represented at the most prestigious fine art fairs in the world, and is committed to its active exhibitions program and the publication of books and scholarly catalogues.

Current and upcoming exhibitions

R+V, Milan: *Cesar Santos. InFormal*, 22 September - 27 October 2023
R+V, New York: *Sunneva Ása Weisshappel: Odd Girl Out*, 15 September – 14 October 2023
Arte + Collezionismo, Palazzo Brancaccio, Rome, 28 September - 2 October 2023
R+V, New York: *Harumi Klossowska de Rola: Hayawan*, 20 October – 22 November 2023

Additional comments

'Daniel Ambrosi works with DeepDream in a unique way, using the technology to bring out intricate textures and colours of landscapes, enhancing the atmosphere of the scene. His work serves as an excellent example of how artists can collaborate with AI systems to develop their own distinct aesthetic. It is a joy to see historic English stately homes through Ambrosi's technological lens.'

— Luba Elliott, creative AI curator, writer, producer

'It has really surprised me, how our technical assistance helped empower an artistic voice to explore and express the collaboration between man and machine in such a beautiful and profound way.'

— Joseph Smarr, chief technology officer at Triller and former principal engineer at Google

'I found this project really interesting to work on because it exemplified what I'm trying to achieve in my professional life, which is getting incredibly transformational computational tools in the hands of people who can use them in unexpected ways.'

— Chris Lamb, vice president Computing Platforms at NVIDIA Corporation

'Daniel Ambrosi uses photography and computer graphics along with artificial intelligence to reveal a stunning new dimension of landscapes and English gardens, a 21st century take.'

— Arthur I. Miller, author of *The Artist in the Machine: The World of AI-Powered Creativity*