

Robot art

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In the long course of art history, the 20th century was a decisive moment to established the context in which we operate today. Mainly due to two important disruptions: the advent of abstraction and immediately after the invention of the ready-made procedure.

Abstraction was decisive to liberate art from trivial representation, understood as a mediated way to describe an object. Abstract art doesn't need to represent nothing outside the limits of the art work. Actually, an abstract art work only represents itself. This important step changed radically what art making was about. Art has become the subject of art.

The ready-made, i.e. the deviation of a common object, liberated the need for manufacturing. The artist doesn't need to do anything with its own hands and may just change the context of an already produced object.

Abstract art and the ready-made procedure widened substantial the field of art practice. To the point that today anything can be art.

Such a premise is seen by some as a kind of end of art, since if everything can be art then nothing is really art. Though art has become increasingly puzzling and often foolish its evolution didn't stop. By the end of last century, the advent of the digital realm changed once again the rules of the game. Instead of making art objects or displacing objects, artists invested in elaborating processes to create artworks. At the begin these processes were controlled by determinist algorithms delivering always the same output. As artificial intelligence evolved to non-determinism and machines became embodied in mobile robots it was possible to lose control and let machines generate novelty.

Art can now be made by machines since provided with some degree of autonomy and creative intelligence. For autonomy I mean the machine ability to perform tasks without direct intervention of a human and for creative intelligence the capacity of a machine to perceive an environment and change it in a way that cannot be predicted.

My work stems from this possibility and consequently it is also its demonstration. Since the begin of the century I have created several artbots, operating single or as a swarm, that can generate unique drawings and paintings based on emergent processes, positive and negative feedbacks and/or stigmergy principles.

My robot art is for the moment symbiotic in nature but aims at a growing autonomy of the machine to a point that one day it will be possible to totally remove the human from the loop. In this sense robot art expands the territory of art to the field of the nonhuman.