

Art and Cake March 20, 2017

Masood Kamandy at Luis de Jesus, February 18 - March 25, 2017

By Jody Zellen



*Oblique* is an app created by Masoon Kamandy for the the iPhone camera that launched in January 2017. The app allows users to apply filters to their images transforming pictures into colorful abstractions. Kamandy created a suite of interactive algorithms that creatively stretch, mirror and shear the original. The brightness, hue, saturation, tint and temperature of the color can also be changed and once a user is satisfied with their creation they can save the manipulated image to their camera roll. For his exhibition *The Effect of Lightning on a Rainbow* Kamandy exhibits photographs he made with the app.

The intersection of photography and software fascinated Kamandy and in previous bodies of work like *Superpositional* and *MOop* he explored ways to modify and combine multiple images creating enigmatic works that hovered between abstraction and representation. The digital photographs in *The Effect of Lightning on a Rainbow* continue these investigations with the intention of making strange—seeing the familiar in unfamiliar ways. As Kamandy remarks, “My goal with photography has always been to continually refresh my perception and to use the medium as a way of getting closer to the world around me. Sometimes in order to truly see one has to close the eyes and open up to see anew.”

Pure abstractions and images that distort the natural world are on view in *The Effect of Lightning on a Rainbow*. Each image begins as a photograph captured by the lens of the iPhone. As soon as the image appears on the screen Kamandy applies his magic. And in many ways it is magic as users are not privy to the mathematical computations used in creating the changes to the image, they can only witness the effects. As its creator, Kamandy has more control over his tool than the lay user and this facility is evident in the nuanced images he has created. The four photographs entitled *Night Flower* (all works 2017) are surreal. Their heightened color alludes to the palette in Andy Warhol's flowers, yet Kamandy's colors are derived from a combination of pixels not the mixing of paint. The delicate texture of the petals of the roses are presented in contrast to the modulated and contrasting colors of the background. The images that suggest nature are the most successful. While *Cyan Rose* is awe inspiring for its jarring color, the more subtle *Botanical (Sodium Vapor)* and *Botanical (Green)* are indicative of the complexities possible within the app and Kamandy's ability to control the striation and layering of the imagery.

Kamandy states that "photographs are a wondrous combination of serendipity and intention." In these new works he is accepting an element of chance while simultaneously directing the parameters of the algorithm. He invites users to download his tool and make their own images suggesting that by relinquishing creative control to software on a hand held device, there are limitless options to seeing the world anew.

Oblique: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/oblique-a-new-way-to-photograph/id1193711320?mt=8>

<https://artandcakela.com/2017/03/19/masood-kamandy-at-luis-de-jesus-los-angeles>