The Shroud Algorithm & Fontainebleau

Back in 1988 before Photoshop, IBM computer scientist Clifford Pickover published a paper titled "From Noise comes Beauty" in which he described algorithms by which to use noise as a way to reveal details in photographs. Another mathematical model he developed highlighted visual details of the enigmatic and controversial imprinted image of a bearded man in the Shroud of Turin. The Shroud has attracted many scientists to study the authenticity of the cloth and the image on it.

In this series of photographs of forest scenes from Fontainebleau 60 miles outside of Paris, which I took in the fall of 2017, these algorithms were applied to enhance texture and details in the images. As described in Wikipedia, the painters of the Barbizon School found the Fontainebleau forest a convenient location for their unadorned, realist depictions of nature. Visited by Theodore Rousseau, Jean-François Millet, Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot, and later by younger artists Monet, Renoir, Sisley and others, French landscape became a major theme of the Barbizon painters and led to the plein air paintings of the Impressionists.

The images in this series are processed by custom software that enhances low contrast boundaries using a modulated sinewave, resulting in striking patterns and colors.

George Legrady Studio, September 2018



















