ENERGY
OF THE EARTH.
AMPLIFIED

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN

Stas Bartnikas
Aerial photographer
stasbart.com

Obvious
AI Art Collective
obvious-art.com

2021

Stas Bartnikas

Gauthier Vernier, Hugo Caselles-Dupré, Pierre Fautrel

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN

Stas Bartnikas is an aerial photographer, most known for his work capturing the energy-filled earth from scenic and beautiful Iceland, among other parts of the world. His shots were published in magazines across Russia and Europe such as Sunday Times Travel Magazine, Maxim, GEO, Vanity Fair, Bild, View, L'officiel Voyage and were featured in National Geographic's Photo Of The Day And Daily Dozen Rubrics a number of times. He also won multiple awards at prestigious contests, such as Natgeo Photo Travel, IPA, TIFA, MIFA, PX3, and Siena International Photo Awards.

Obvious is driven by a fascination for replicating creativity with the tools of artificial intelligence. Their work is transcendental to the art scene and its founders are not to shy away from monumental challenges. In 2018, the first piece of AI generated art to come to auction at Christie's sold for nearly 45 times its high estimate, going for $432,500. An Obvious creation, signed in mathematical formula, it made history and opened the way for their latest collaboration: Energy Of The Earth. Amplified.

ART CREATION
PROCESS

Artificial Intelligence is at the forefront of our engineering abilities, appearing to us at some point like a science-fiction, it has now become a present fact. Our lives are increasingly affected by AI and the engineers behind it. How much control they still have and will have over it is up for debate. Art has been an impactful part of human culture since the days we spent in caves. Art's evolution symbolizes our own - wherever we go, and whatever we learn, art follows the suit. In this collaboration between Stas Bartnikas and Obvious, art and AI have merged in fascinating new ways. Technology meets raw nature combined with human creativity and becomes a unique project. In their brand new series they test the algorithms on the subject of Iceland's tremendous landscape. Pictures taken by Stas from the air became the fuel for Obvious to use in its Generative Adversarial Networks to create the most thoughtful works of art produced by AI yet to draw the reader into amazement. In a striking parallel, we also bring to the forefront of our collective attention the impact of climate change on our most beautiful and scenic environments and those that surround us. In the end, 11 images were chosen to represent the landscape pictures taken by Stas to recreate the common atmosphere and energy out of 1000s of pictures originally hand-curated and lent to the project. Each original image was uniquely artistic and profound, and the results captured the intersection of math and art, present and future.

Iceland is known for its volcanic activity, which carries enormous amounts of natural energy and is a true gift of nature, providing magnificent landscapes, high reliefs, and thermal activity. As Stas's photos carry and convey the powerful energy of our earth, we assumed that after absorbing a huge array of images from Iceland AI might multiply and enforce those vibrations. Judging by the response of people susceptible to feeling these things AI definitely stood up to the challenge!
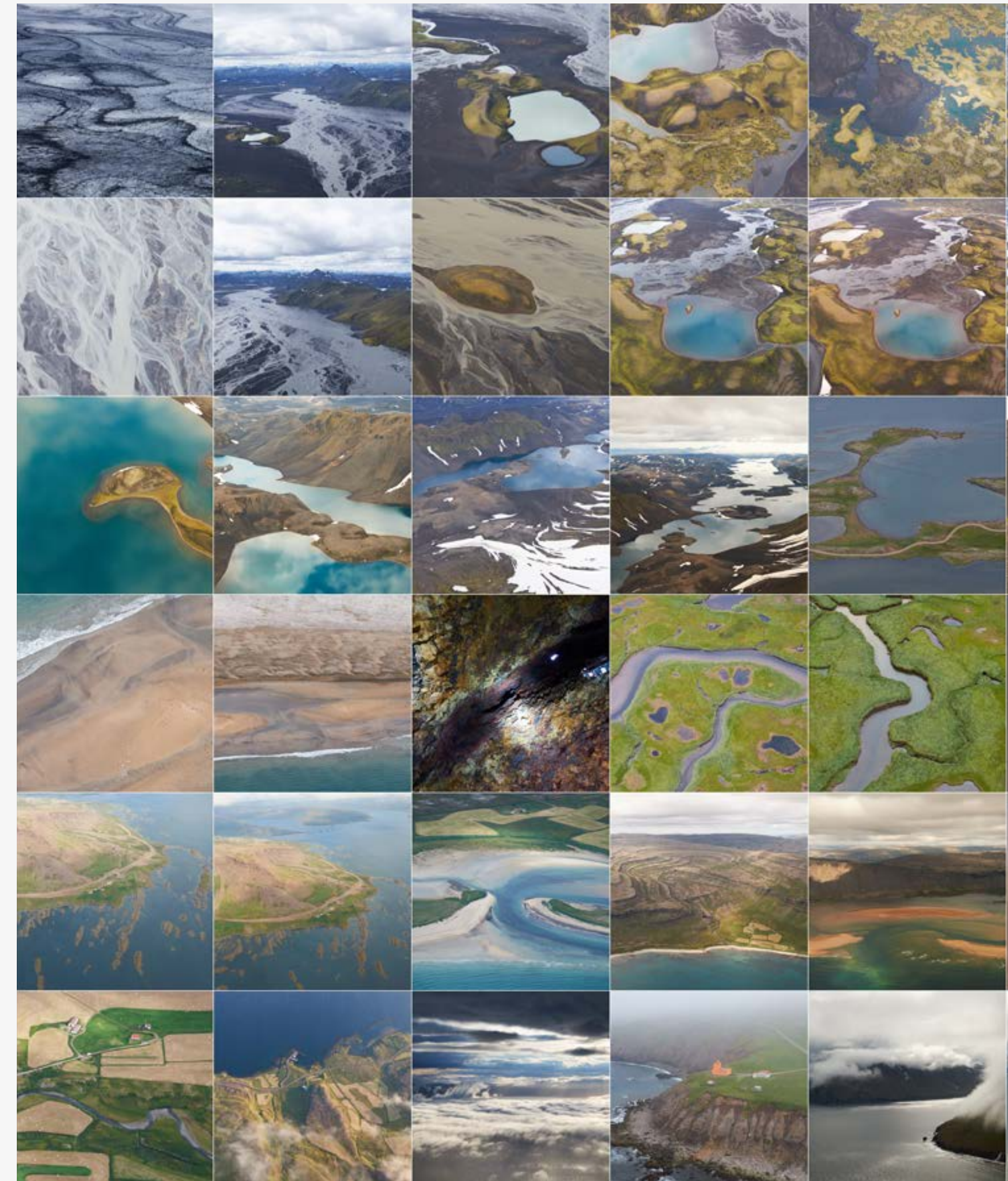
PROJECT INTENT

This series invites the viewer to travel into one of the most mysterious places on earth, one of the areas most dramatically impacted by climate change, and to unveil its secrets using the eye of artificial intelligence. In this way, we draw attention to the beauty of the natural environment while conveying the possibility of its destruction and our loss. Our goal is to illuminate the narrative that we are capable of influencing the planet around us, both through the sectors of technology and ecology. We have an impact on our planet, and it is our responsibility to see that this impact does not scar future generations.

Our series attracted the attention of the creators of the Doomsday clock and together we created another project. Doomsday clock with the backdrop that shows the images of our planet created by AI. Its goal is to raise awareness on the global issues of the misuse of technology and the developments that are not sustainable, which brings us closer to the extinction of the human race. One of the things Stas noticed over his years as a photographer is that our earth is constantly changing, and most of them are due to climate change. The images here highlight the natural wonder of our planet to draw attention to a more crucial issue: environmental impact.

In this series, we wanted to teach AI to "see" and "feel" our planet. We wondered whether AI is capable of understanding and comprehending the beauty of the earth while three thousand photos were fed to the algorithm. We wanted to see how accurate and careful it would be

in its work. The result is beautiful. Another goal was to get collective images of this unique and one-of-a-kind country - so that any person, at one glance at any of the artworks created by the AI, could feel the essence of Iceland. We ended up selecting 11 images created by the AI based on the photos of Iceland taken by Stas. Each of the images is the epitome of Iceland!

It turns out that AI is accurate enough in its interaction with such subtle and delicate matter as art. Images created by AI clearly awake a wide array of feelings and emotions. If AI can do these kinds of things, if it can "see" the beauty of our planet, then can we imagine it being capable of helping to save it? Due to its energy consumption required for computing machine learning models and its brevity in our lives, AI tends not to be identified as an environmentally friendly technology. Nevertheless, its potential for helping in the fight for a sustainable world is extremely high. In many sectors, AI can be a solution to palliate general issues such as climate change and overpopulating. In addition to helping in the computation of better projections, AI can help fight current issues on a small scale, such as optimizing agriculture techniques based on data gathered from the soil, allowing the integration of renewable energy sources through grid flexibilization, finding patterns for ecosystem modeling, and for better understanding our environment, and as a result, better preserving it. One way to bring those landscapes back to life is by using the inventiveness of algorithms. Models developed by AI have a way of helping us to better understand varying ecosystems and the impact we have on it as humans.

SUPPORT

Size: 100x100cm
Year: 2021
Medium: GANs algorithms trained
on Stas Bartnikas photography
Edition: 3

DETERMINATION

Size: 100x100cm
Year: 2021
Medium: GANs algorithms trained
on Stas Bartnikas photography
Edition: 3

KINDNESS

Size: 100x100cm
Year: 2021
Medium: GANs algorithms trained
on Stas Bartnikas photography
Edition: 3

SERENITY

Size: 100x100cm
Year: 2021
Medium: GANs algorithms trained
on Stas Bartnikas photography
Edition: 3

WEALTH

Size: 100x100cm
Year: 2021
Medium: GANs algorithms trained
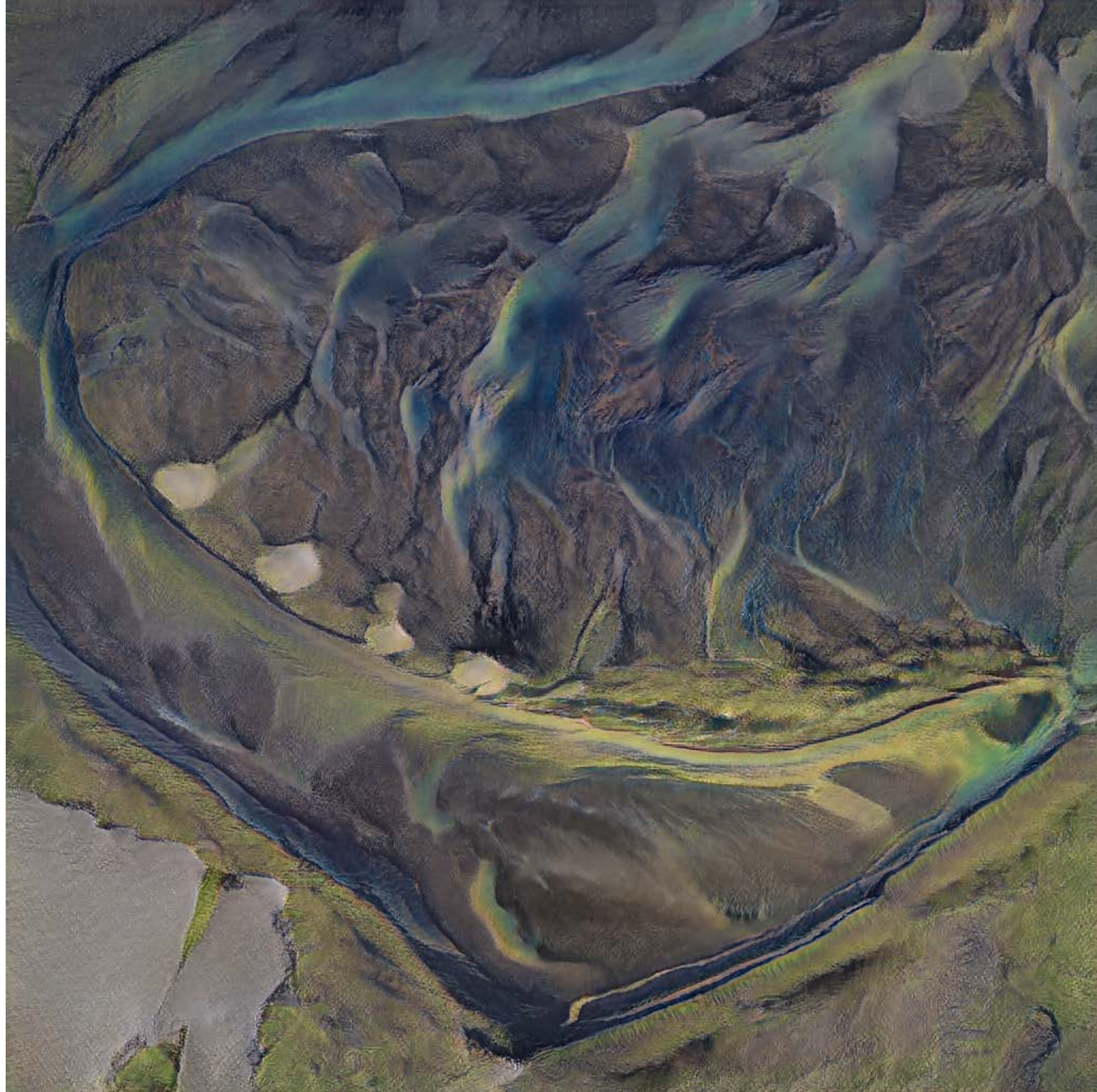on Stas Bartnikas photography
Edition: 3

SOURCE

Size: 100x100cm
Year: 2021
Medium: GANs algorithms trained
on Stas Bartnikas photography
Edition: 3

LOVE

Size: 100x100cm
Year: 2021
Medium: GANs algorithms trained
on Stas Bartnikas photography
Edition: 3

NEWNESS

Size: 100x100cm
Year: 2021
Medium: GANs algorithms trained
on Stas Bartnikas photography
Edition: 3

STRENGTH

Size: 100x100cm
Year: 2021
Medium: GANs algorithms trained
on Stas Bartnikas photography
Edition: 3

TREASURES

Size: 100x100cm
Year: 2021
Medium: GANs algorithms trained
on Stas Bartnikas photography
Edition: 3

SAFETY

Size: 100x100cm
Year: 2021
Medium: GANs algorithms trained
on Stas Bartnikas photography
Edition: 3

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