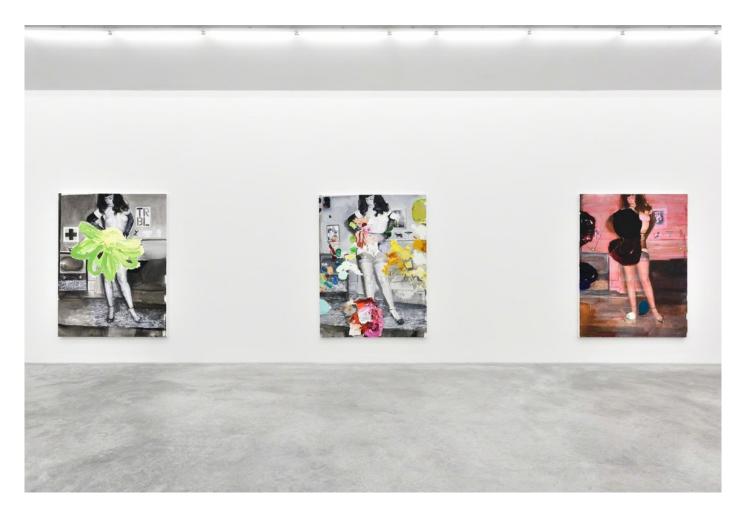Image courtesy of Almine Rech

"No need to go down to the market anymore and look for a suitable apple to paint," Ida Tursic and Wilfried Mille said in 2014. Instead, "type 'apple' in Google search and we'll get 2,310,000 results."

The duo's current show, now at Almine Rech Gallery in Paris, runs with this relatively recent cultural development to invoke the internet's abundance of Google-curated images but also the history of painterly experimentation, iteration, and imitation.

Ida Tursic & Wilfried Mille
River view, 2016
Almine Rech

In the foreground of Tursic & Mille's *River View* (2016), a nude woman reclines in a field, her legs provocatively parted, evoking Duchamp's *Étant Donnés.* The snowy gray river recalls Alfred Sisley's winter scenes, while bright daubs of paint obscure portions of the composition, including the woman's face, calling to mind murals defaced in waves of iconoclasm. Uniting these disparate concepts is Tursic and Mille's loose brushwork, which captures the chain reaction of allusions.
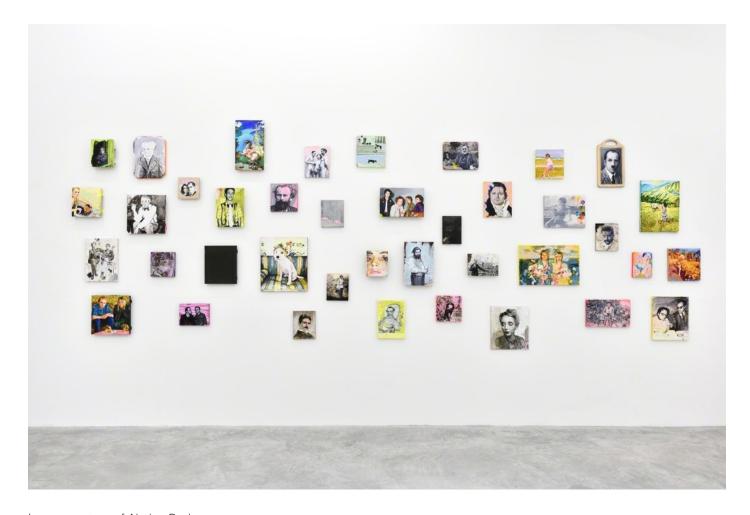
Image courtesy of Almine Rech.

Of course, in generations past, Manet and Courbet also twisted traditional artistic genres to comment on contemporary society. Unsurprisingly, then, their portraits turn up in an array of small paintings on one wall of the exhibition, along with figures ranging from Cézanne and Picasso to Iggy Pop and Ian Curtis. Though likened to search results for Google Images, the array seems more like a bibliography. Just as Cézanne and Picasso compressed multiple viewpoints and diverse source material, Tursic and Mille build their works upon layers of history and culture.

(One of the small paintings, helpfully titled *Elizabeth Taylor in a landscape, painting nature's beauty and the caress of the smirking sun over the mountains* [2016], gives the show its name.)

Image courtesy of Almine Rech.

The artists confront technology head-on in a painting of Walter Benjamin based on his passport photo. Benjamin, the famed German philosopher, discussed the decline of the "aura" of the singular artwork in the face of mechanically reproduced images.

Tursic and Mille's painting both rejects and accepts this notion of aura. After all, the source image has been transformed into pixels in the digital ether, then enshrined in paint by Tursic and Mille as a new, unique work. Against the gallery's white walls, the blue color recalls blueprint paper and the specter of industrial reproduction, which modern technology has only advanced and commodified.