

Glitchwork
2015

Artist Statement

Digital images are, at the most basic level, simply a string of binary code. Through what is known as data-bending, or the process of making random and/or somewhat experimental alterations to this binary code, *Glitchwork* presents a visual exploration into the fragility of the digital image. Images such as JPEGs can be opened with any text-editor – blocks of this code (text) can be manipulated and rearranged. This manipulation results in images that become increasingly digitally corrupted. As the encoding is changed, so does each file's visual appearance.

Images subjected to this process have been inter-dispersed within the frames of my GIF-like, repeating animations. This alters the surface of the image – not by the manipulation of pixels, but by changing each image's binary data. This interference represents alteration in its most basic form – like touching a mirror reflection on the surface of the water. One touch sends ripples though the image, thereby breaking the illusion of realism.

This digital *glitch* (a sudden, but often-temporary malfunction) has a long and storied past. Astronaut John Glenn is credited with having introduced the term in 1962, describing it as "literally...a spike or change in voltage in an electric current." Early examples of reference to the glitch in art can be traced back to *A Colour Box* (1935) by Len Lye and *MagnetTV* (1965) by Nam June Paik.

I'm interested in how digital imagery, through even the slightest change is so inherently vulnerable to becoming something else; how this code, in the most simple form, can be so easily be manipulated. It's an alchemy much simpler than repositioning atoms to make lead into gold.