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COLLECTOR'S VAULT

Exclusive: Cozomo de' Medici Shares 12 Most Iconic Artworks of 2023

BY **COZOMO DE' MEDICI** • **FEBRUARY 01, 2024**

*Since arriving on the scene, **Cozomo de' Medici** has assembled one of the most important collections of crypto art, while also becoming one of the popular and prominent names in the community.*

*The Medici Collection has been noted for including many of the major works of the movement, as well as kicking off 2023 by gifting **22 digital artworks** to the permanent collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.*

*For this special debut edition of **Collector's Vault**, our series on the leading collectors who shape the digital art space, nft now is excited to exclusively present Cozomo's list of 12 iconic works from 2023, in no particular order. Here are the pieces in his own words.*

"The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil" by Yatreda

Quite often, I'm asked how I find artists I collect.

And over time, I've come to learn my answer is the same as most others...

I look at which artists are loved by ones I already collect.

So it's no surprise **Yatreda** has a spot on this list, an artist widely admired as a photographer and an all-around brilliant storyteller.

With their collection "Adam and Hewan," they revisit stories as old as time and retell them in a contemporary manner while challenging Western imagery associated with many of these stories.

I love the work as it challenges us to reimagine stories and how we see the people in them, much like the work of contemporary art titan Kehinde Wiley.

Work owned by **AP**.

CREDIT: SAM SPRATT

"The Monument Game" by Sam Spratt

2023 was the year of **Sam Spratt**.

Now, Sam had great momentum coming into 2023...

In 2022, he was curated into the MAPS sale at Christie's, for which he created "VII. Wormfood," which I was delighted to acquire.

CREDIT: SAM SPRATT

And in that sale, “VII. Wormfood” tied a Beeple 1/1 as the top lot. Big moment for an artist who at the time was relatively new to the space.

LOT 1

SAM SPRATT (B. 1988)

VII. Wormfood

Estimate

USD 80,000 - 120,000

Price realised

USD 252,000

Closed

LOT 2

BEEPLE (B. 1981)

PILGRIMAGE

Estimate

USD 150,000 - 250,000

Price realised

USD 252,000

Closed

Coming into 2023, I feel Sam leveled up in a key way –

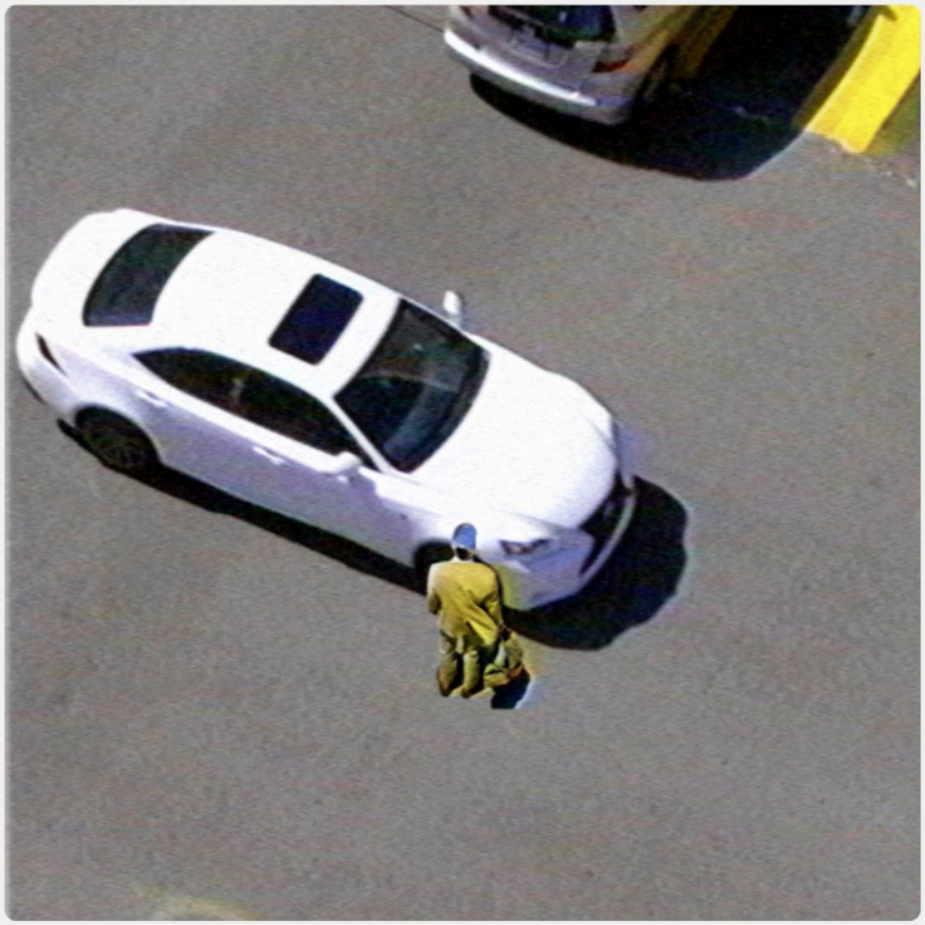
I’ve mentioned before how many of the important artists of our time are designing the canvas, not just the painting.

And how art of the future will be a communal experience.

Sam's work is a fine example of that.

Instead of him alone creating the art, "The Monument Game" created a dialogue between the viewer and the artwork in a meaningful way. By allowing the community to put the "final varnish" via observations, I feel Sam has created an entirely new category of works in digital.

Work owned by **1OF1.**



"Everything is Temporary |." by Joe Pease

To say people love the art of **Joe Pease** would be an understatement.

When Joe posted this work to Twitter, it shook up the timeline and had the community captivated for days on end.

Few works have the quality of triggering introspection among crypto art natives... with this work, Joe invites viewers to think about where you are in life, where you want to be, and where we are all headed in the end.

We have assembled this list for two years, and each year, Joe has created a work that cemented his place among other great artists that year.

One thing is sure, 2024 will be no different.

Work owned by **VVD.**

CREDIT: ACK

"The Broken Keys" by ACK

In 2023, the muse returned to melt our minds.

If we describe the year **ACK** had in one word, it would be... *unforgettable.*

While a collection from ACK was much anticipated, very few expected him to deliver work of this level.

With the release of "The Broken Keys" collection, ACK produced what feels like his masterpiece, all the while maintaining a commanding presence throughout the year with a sale at Christie's, drop with Avant Arte, and many other notable moments.

Work owned by all who participated in the release.

CREDIT: LACMA

"Remembrance of Things Future Volume #1" by LACMA

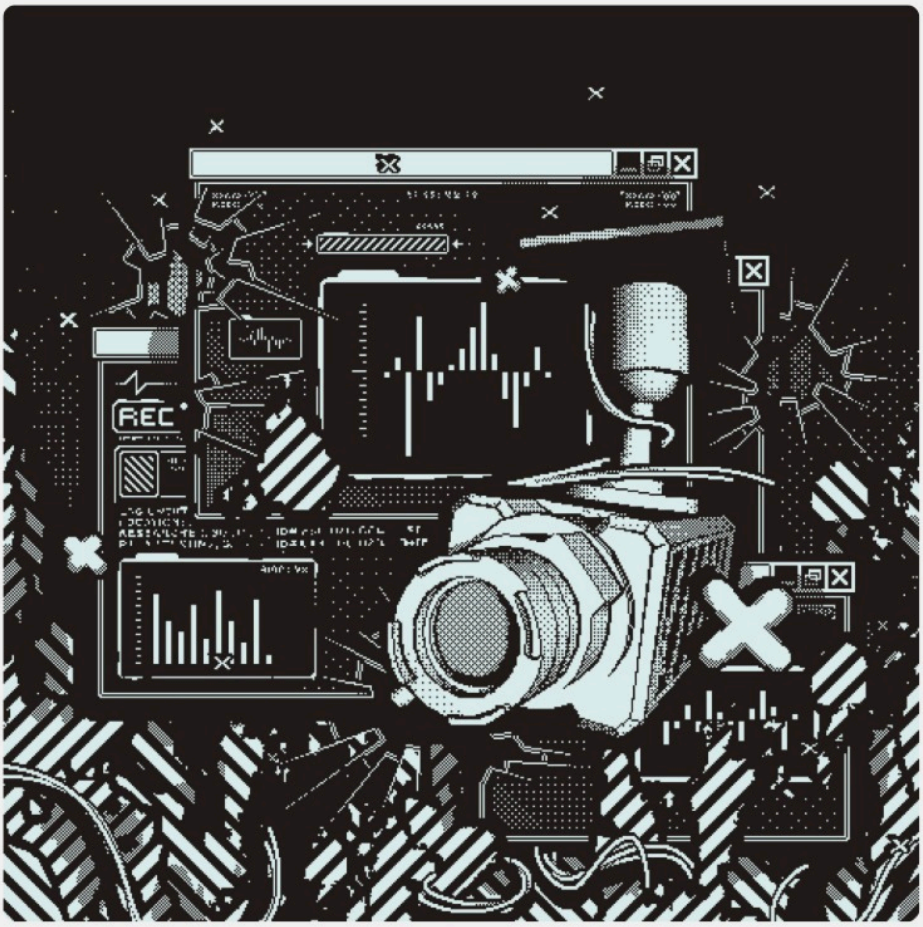
The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) made a big splash in 2023.

In February, LACMA accepted 22 works from The Cozomo de' Medici Collection into their permanent collection.

Later in the year, they extended their engagement in crypto art by partnering with Cactoid Labs to invite seven artists to create new works, all inspired by LACMA's encyclopedic collection of art.

One of the most notable contemporary art institutions in the world commissioning crypto artists to create new works, I felt was truly telling of where we are headed.

And I loved the artists chosen – Monica Rizzolli, Ix Shells, Jen Stark, Emily Xie, and Sarah Zucker – as I felt they were all best in class.



"Public // Private" by Ripcache

While many works on this list are here because it was loved by the community for the way it looked, some works carved a spot on the list by bringing up important and interesting questions.

With his first mint in the "Public // Private" series, **Ripcache** asks collectors to make a choice –

While collectors initially purchase the physical, they cannot unlock the NFT companion unless they scratch off and destroy the physical.

Through "scratch," Ripcache brings up two important questions –

Would you rather have the physical or digital?

And how does the relationship with the digital change, once the physical has been scratched off?

Work owned by anon collector.

“NO RIOTERS” by Patrick Amadon

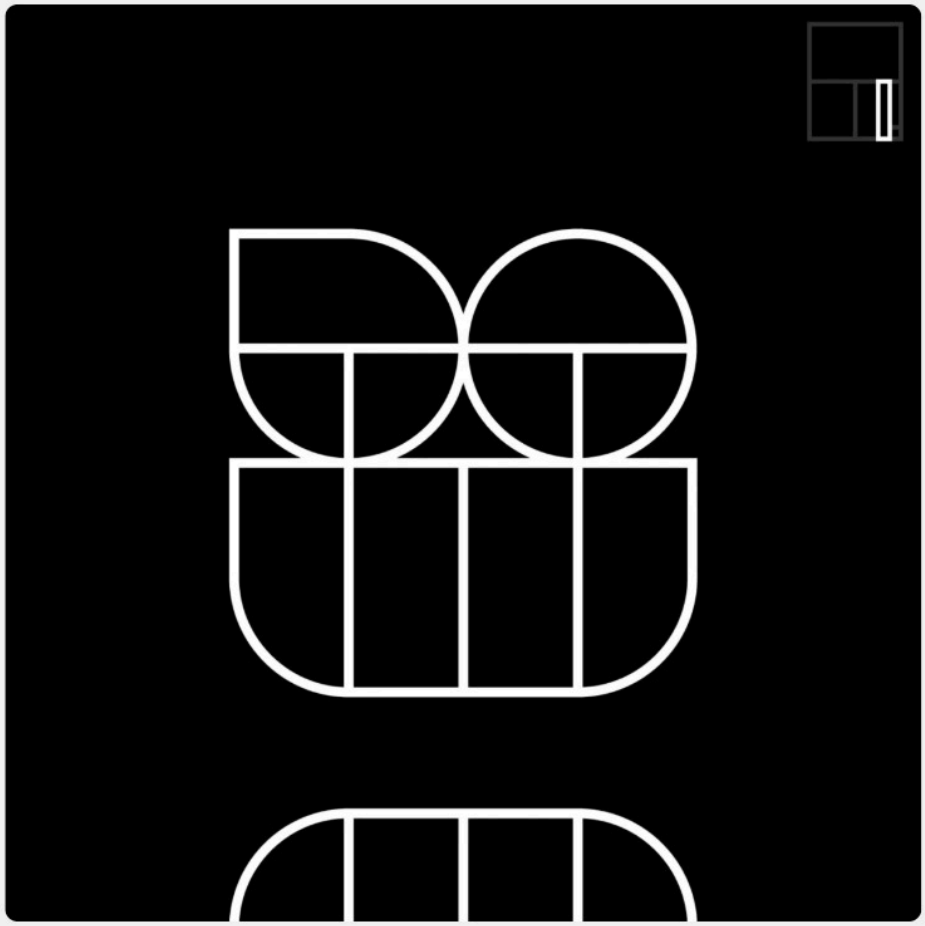
Speaking of works that made us ask important questions, “NO RIOTERS” by **Patrick Amadon** is perhaps on top of that list.

In this work, Amadon takes a stand for protestors jailed for their pro-democracy views and exhibited it prominently in Hong Kong.

Beyond the art and the controversy it caused, it was one of few moments of 2023 where art from our bubble burst out into the world.

Not only did it create the breakout moment for Patrick, it also showed us the power of digital art as a tool to fight for what we believe in.

Work owned by **ely_trader.**



CREDIT: JACK BUTCHER

“Opepen” by Jack Butcher

I have been a long-time admirer of **Jack**, who takes complex ideas and simplifies them through his art. Jack had a breakout year in 2023, with both “Checks” and “Opepen.”

“Opepen” started as a 60-minute **timed edition** and then went on to dominate much of the conversation in 2023. I feel Jack has mastered the art of converting your audience – people who may or may not be paying attention to what you’re doing – into an active community – people who are not only listening but also responding to your work.

Work owned by all who participated in the mint.

CREDIT: ROOPE RAINISTO

“Life In West America” by Roope Rainisto

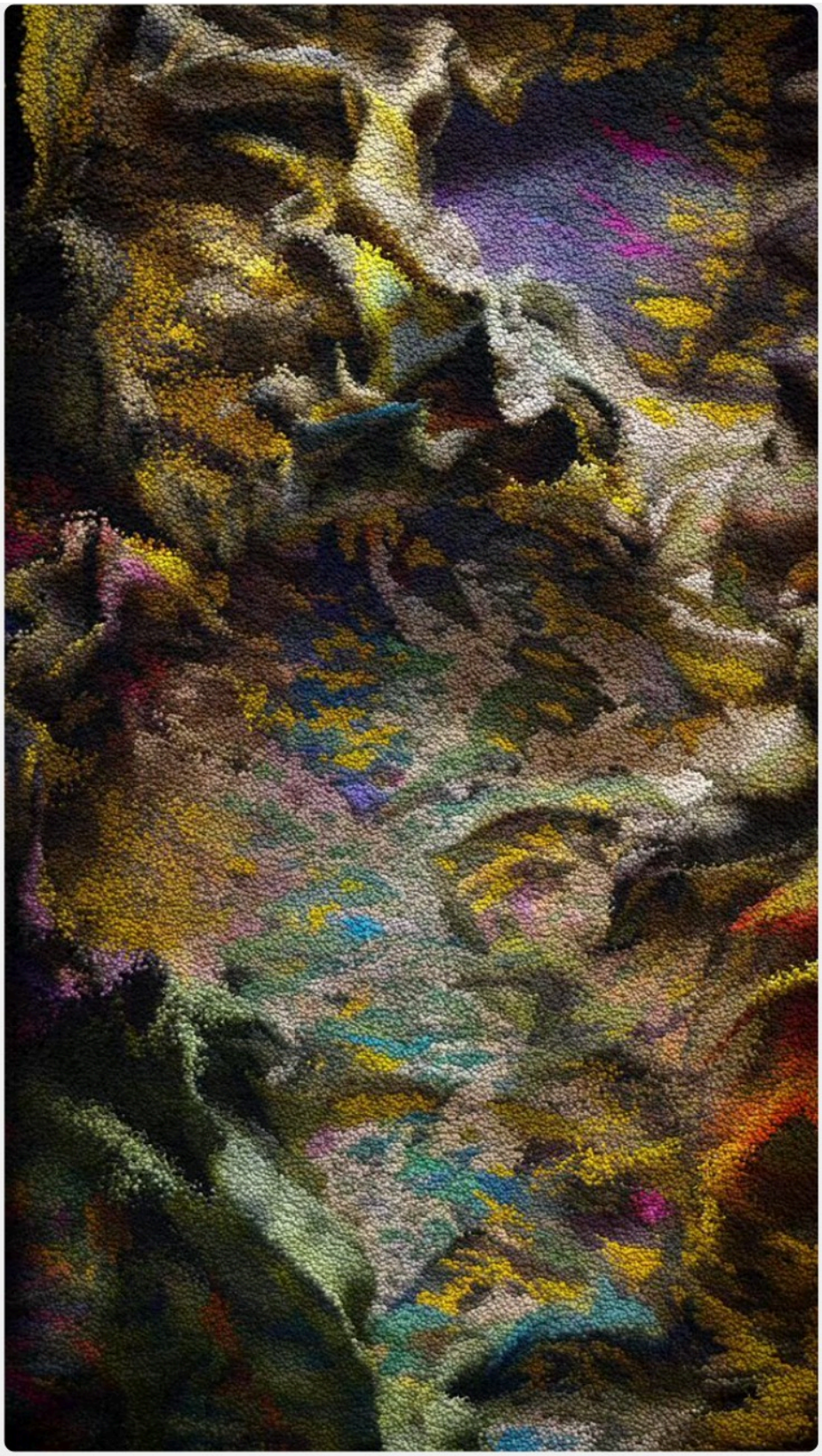
Roope is another artist who came into 2023 with much momentum.

In November 2022, **Roope** won first place in Claire Silver’s AI art contest.

Then, in February 2023 came his now iconic collection, “Life In West America,” which dazzled artists and patrons alike with its range, subjects, and quality of outputs.

Beyond the art, the collection is also a time capsule, as it captures what is possible at this time with generative AI.

Work owned by all who participate in the release.



"Winds of Yawanawá" by Yawanawá and Refik Anadol

Few artists had a 2023 quite like **Refik**.

MoMA acquired **"Unsupervised"** into its permanent collection, courtesy of Ryan Zurrer & the RFC Collection.

For long-time admirers of Refik, "Winds of Yawanawá" became a more accessible entry point into his body of work and has armed him with an army of passionate evangelists for his art.

And for the Yawanawá community, a historic collaboration that brought attention to their culture and the broader conversation of sustainability in the Amazon rainforest.

Since the collection was unveiled at Scorpios Mykonos, it has carved out mind share from artists and collectors alike to become one of the most notable collections of 2023.

Work owned by all who participate in the release.

“Human Unreadable” by Operator

No artist has dominated conversations in collector circles like **Operator** has.

While many agree it’s the generative collection of the year, what impressed me is the thought and creativity behind bringing choreography on-chain in a meaningful way.

I also have to point out that Operator didn’t stop once the works were sold.

“Human Unreadable” instead is a collection that unfolds over many acts, keeping the collectors engaged with their art practice like few others have managed to do.

The incredible art, combined with the presentation of the works at IRL exhibitions, has cemented “Human Unreadable” as a fan-favorite collection of 2023.

Work owned by all who participate in the release.

"FTX BOARD MEETING" by Beeple

In a black swan event not even the most pessimistic of us could have predicted, SBF went from crypto darling to degen in a matter of days.

And while endless art was created to capture the moments that unfolded – from the initial