

## RON TERADA PRESENTS TL; DR AT ART BASEL UNLIMITED

Within the vast collection of 76 large-scale artworks showcased at **Art Basel Unlimited**, curated by **Giovanni Carmine**, visitors are presented with the opportunity to experience TL;DR, a painting series by Vancouver-based artist Ron Terada. Aptly named after the internet acronym for 'too long; didn't read', this project delves into the influence of communication technology on our consumption of information, with a particular emphasis on **typography's** role in representing power and revealing truths. *'Technology has become the most obvious topic to speak about. Because it provides such an accelerated way of receiving information, the painting stands as a completely opposite thing: it's the oldest form of communication. I wanted this contradiction to be present in my work,'* Ron Terada tells designboom.

TL; DR is an integral part of a comprehensive five-part endeavor initiated in 2016. Spanning headlines from 2019 to early 2020, the series employs densely stacked canvases to deliver a thought-provoking and slightly disconcerting conceptual approach to the portrayal of history.



TL; DR, Ron Terada, 2019 – 2020 | image courtesy of Art Basel (head image © designboom)

## TECHNOLOGY AND THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF ART CONSUMPTION

In his conversation with designboom, Ron Terada ([find more here](#)) sheds light on the inspiration behind his project, which diverges from his previous work that explored the life and tragic end of artist Jack Goldstein. For this new project, Terada felt compelled to embark on a contrasting endeavor that explores our shared human experiences. The Vancouver-based artist found technology to be the perfect entry point, considering that our engagement with art is now predominantly mediated through our smartphones.

Terada recognizes the prominence of technology as a subject matter, while also acknowledging its role as an accelerated medium for information consumption. In this context, his paintings stand in stark contrast as a timeless form of communication, rooted in the tradition of picture-making. *'In a way, it can be seen as a form of history painting or a time capsule. I still believe that painting has this power. However, I am also aware that*

as we continue to download new iOS updates, we're not going to be able to read paintings the way we used to. It is no longer about being contemplative because we're so busy swiping,' the artist shares. Interestingly, Terada himself is not an active participant on any social media platforms. 'I have no personal interest in it, except for its potential societal impact. I function solely as a general observer,' he says.



the project features headlines from 2019 to early 2020 | image © designboom

## AN ASSEMBLAGE OF MICROTRENDS, CLICKBAIT AND PROPHECIES

TL; DR reproduces headlines from US-based news site The Verge, which Terada describes as a blend of technology, nerdiness, and pop culture. 'When I first stumbled upon it about six years ago, I couldn't understand why the headlines were considered important news. However, I continued visiting The Verge, just looking at it, and over time, I started copying and pasting headlines, eventually creating a compilation. At that point, I thought, well, maybe something is interesting in here,' the artist explains.

The paintings in TL; DR feature a typeface called Cheltenham, which serves as the foundation for the New York Times' iconic font. While the newspaper employs a customized version of Cheltenham exclusively crafted for their use, Terada's request to borrow it was denied. Nevertheless, the artist opted to utilize the original Cheltenham font, which resembles the New York Times' typography. The result is still convincing enough for viewers to think that it is a renowned publication. Upon first encounter, visitors are greeted by a collage of unexpected titles – an assemblage that reflects forgotten microtrends, manufactured clickbait, and even prophetic narratives. However, upon closer examination, they are compelled to question why these diverse titles coexist together, particularly within the realm of painting.



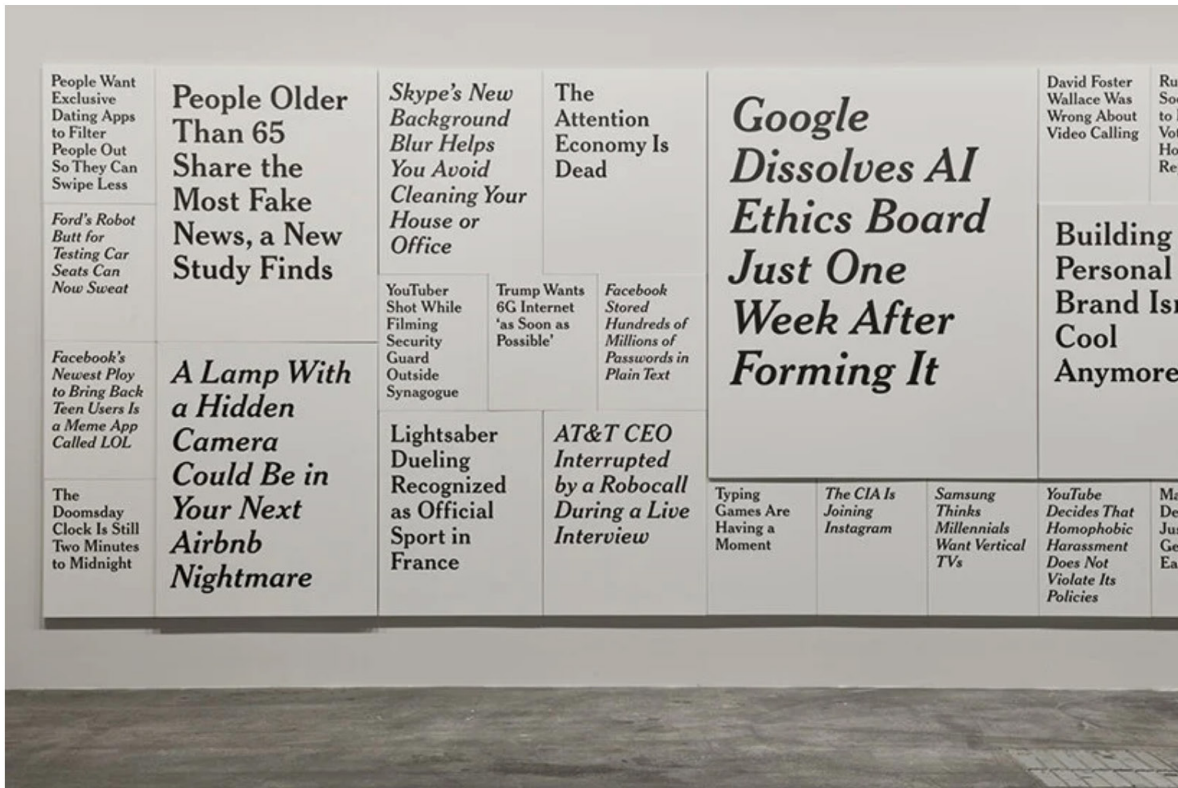


'I couldn't understand why the headlines were considered important news' | image © designboom

## RON TERADA'S FOURTH ITERATION OF TL; DR

This marks the fourth iteration of Ron Terada's experimentation with headlines. Although he admits to not having a master plan initially, for this latest edition, he delved into titles sourced from 2019, capturing the evolving landscape of news and the transitions it embodies. Terada's inspiration stemmed from his experience with websites like The Verge, which emanated a distinctly millennial vibe, leading him to feel a detachment as he realized he had outgrown the content. *'The Verge website had a more millennial vibe, and I felt I was already too old for this content. So I wanted to convey that,'* he tells designboom.

The latest version of the project encompasses headlines from 2019 and 2020, serving as a reflection of the darkest moment in our history — a black plague as he describes it. *'At first, I had decided not to continue working on this project, but 2020 happened and it felt stupid not to pursue it further,'* Terada shares. As a result, the project expanded to an astounding 325 paintings, quadrupling its size compared to previous iterations.



Terada has used the Cheltenham font for his painting series | image courtesy of Art Basel



the project is composed of 325 paintings | image courtesy of Art Basel