

## A study into and thread on AI use by @/maiaheon, by @/greenapplesyrup

Y'all had me go dig through existing ai and specifically Midjourney (an ai art gen program) prompts because i was not about to get a new subscription just to prove this lmao

### 1. Opening statement

To clarify, any use of AI in the art process is AI art to me and therefore not to be respected. With this specific artist, they are still drawing the art on Procreate, however the art is based off of an ai-generated reference and this artist is defending it saying there is no ai involved. If there had to be a written difference every time, then it would downplay the use of AI and create an argument that artists that just use it to generate references are actually valid, which they aren't.

### 2. Midjourney comparison

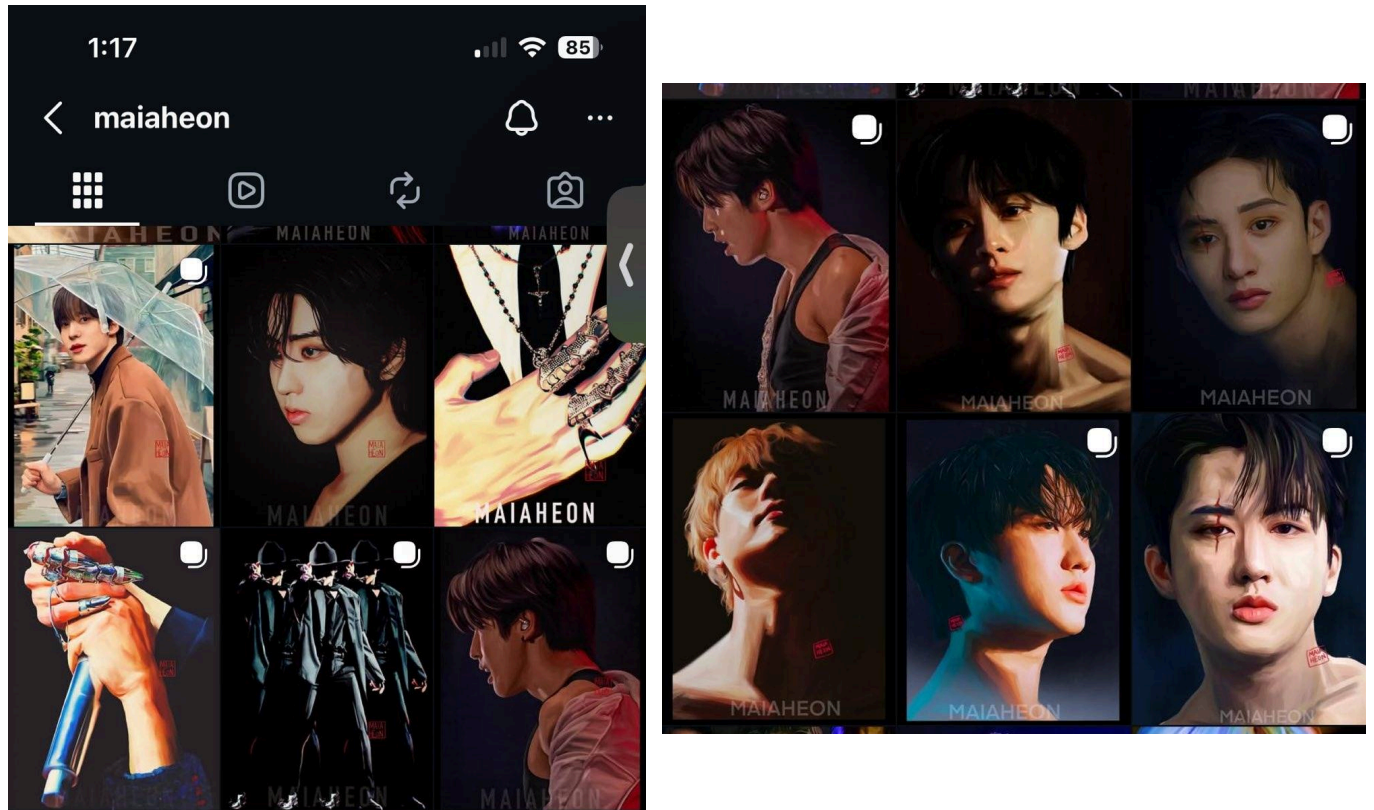
I have attached the two below: one is her art, one is a set of four ai-generated images. Let's take a look at the similarities here:

- Harsh, dramatic lighting to hide the low quality generation of the face, very often used in ai-generation
- Backgrounds that are just kinda brushstrokes without reason, no proper reaction to lighting used on subject, just everywhere
- Wing placement that doesn't make sense, but also the lighting is off compared to the lighting on Yunho's face and body (less rendered in her art on purpose so harder to tell)
- Ambiguous lighting with no real source



To clarify: this is an AI-generated reference that has been painted, not an ai-generated piece of artwork that has just been posted. But also again, as long as AI is involved, its AI art. Also, if you blur the two slightly they look part of the same collection. Not stating that this is direct evidence, but just interesting to note.

### 3. A look into their old art



“But they’ve been posting for years!” Since the rise of AI, many artists have gotten bold or lazy. They now use AI to generate instead of photobashing their own references together. This is no exception. Let’s be real, speaking as a mostly realism artist myself, realism has a very low potential cap. This means that once you have mastered realism, there isn’t really anywhere higher to go with it, the only next step would be to start developing your own style. Why this is important: let’s take a look at her old art from years ago.

These pieces of fanart from a couple years ago are realistic; it’s clear she had/has already mastered realism to a certain degree. Her timelapses wips and update posts also prove this; she has long been able to take a reference and draw it in a realistic style for years now. However, the difference is that each and every one of these pieces of art from years ago can be traceable back to some kind of *irl existing reference*. The Yunho with the umbrella is a real pic he posted a while back, the coachella ones were pictures taken by fansites, the portraits are also from fansite-taken photos in various concert settings and are also closeup portraits without complicated anatomy involved. I can confidently say that no foul play or AI was used here. I’m

not about to go dig up the original existing photos, but I do have to say that if you have genuinely never seen these og photos, especially the coachella ones, idk what to tell you. Now, let's compare it to recent art. A large spike in references of Ateez members that simply do not exist; a large part of them being half naked poses with wings and elements that again, simply have never been taken of Ateez. The same kind of dramatic lighting every time, ambiguous backgrounds that don't have any purpose or interaction with the lighting scheme that she has "chosen". Refer back to section one in my comparison with midjourney art, then form your own opinion. References like these are very commonly generated out of AI art engines and machines. A sudden and steep spike of references that very clearly have not been posted by or taken of Ateez is certainly interesting.

#### 4. A look into their "proof" and response

All "proof" they claim to have is of them actually drawing the art. As I have said, I don't really care about this part and don't intend to fight them on this. The timelapses and wips look fine, but this is NOT proof that the reference was not ai generated. In fact, the reluctance to reveal the inspiration pictures is further proof that this is AI. Also, I have taken a look at the meager photos they do claim to have been inspired by. Firstly, these photos can also be plugged into AI to combine a finished result of idol and inspiration. In fact, this is exactly what many modern AI art engines are for. Secondly, this can further be proved because upon closer examination, the lighting and fabric textures actually do not match up with the original reference picture at all. A real realism artist would be following these kinds of details from the reference as closely as possible.

As such, let's take a look at their response and break it down.



Same speed painting style since 2022: didn't ask, already said you draw your stuff but you ai generate the reference itself

383,848 WIPS in Instagram stories, speed paintings, I've studied art since 2015: see above

I've done commissions: NOT even REMOTELY an argument for why your stuff isn't AI

You can see my evolution in my instagram profile: See above x2

## 5. A look into anatomy, lighting, and backgrounds

Let's use their Yunho angel piece as an example here. I'll also be comparing it to the spiderman Yunho piece in a later bit. As I have already described in the first section, the lighting is off and doesn't really match or stay consistent. This will require a little bit more artistic experience to truly understand, so I understand if you'll want to disregard this! But as someone with a lot of experience in art and has been backed up by other artists, the lighting is definitely wonky. Moving on to anatomy: this person has been doing portraits for a long time so they out of everyone should know that Yunho's head is much too small for this body in the angel piece, and also at an awkward angle. As a realism artist who has done nothing but proportionally accurate pieces, it seems like a strange switchup. This aside, ribs don't really flare out of the sternum like this especially if the person is this muscular. But I'll even put that aside. He is also bent at an awkward angle. Let's also take a look at the fabric here. Firstly the skin and fabric are the same texture and someone with years of experience like so claimed should be able to understand that real fabric doesn't really behave this way. It is oddly smudged and some of the folds and shadows simply don't really make sense.



But let's not just look at this one piece, we can look at Spiderman Yunho as well. This one makes EVEN LESS sense. Why is the fabric that is so detailed in angel Yunho suddenly so un-rendered here if this person has a good understanding of lighting and fabrics? Why are there random bursts of lighting in the background that don't match up with the lighting scheme on Yunho himself, and why do these bursts of lighting never really happen in their old art? The same dramatic lighting can be observed here, dark patches way too dark, head in odd position according to rest of body, etc.

For shits and giggles I'll even throw in this Yeosang piece. See how the fabric rendering style stays consistent here to angel Yunho compared to spiderman Yunho (same body prompts out of ai-gen machine). The fabric in Yeosang's piece is even more obviously AI because real fabric isn't made out of these soft round squareish corners, but is rather



more triangular in shadow and fold shape. This kind of thing can also be due to ai compression. Also, there seems to be some sort of rendering hierarchy here where the fabric is SUPER rendered and then the body a little less so and then the face is somewhat in between and then the wings are oddly just not rendered fully at all. This hierarchy changes within pieces (see spiderman Yunho's fabric). I'm actually kinda surprised because even with today's midjourney ai generation AI is able to do the fabric pretty well which makes me suspect a real image was inputted into the ai and ai fucked up the corners of the fabric instead of prompt-based usage, or some weird mix of both. However this part is speculation. Note similar and harsh lightning again.

Why this is different to real artist mistakes: real artists often make a lot of anatomy and lighting mistakes too! (I'm also a victim to this lol) However consistent-looking lighting in REALISM that is actually wrong is actually a dead giveaway as to why this is AI-generated, because AI is really good at making something seem realistic when it actually isn't. Also as a realism artist I have always been able to confidently tell people what the ref photo I used was and they are able to see the matchup. Similarly, the variance in quality can be explained away by AI's poor ability at consistent quality generation when it comes to background elements that are not specifically prompted in the original generation prompt, because it fills in the gaps where the information is not directly inputted.

Followup example comparison of signature facial lighting in AI (wandering eyes, not proper lighting in hair, sharp highlight cutoff for where features and lighting should blend, random divot in hair shadow where there isn't real actual hair to match)



## 6. Closing thoughts

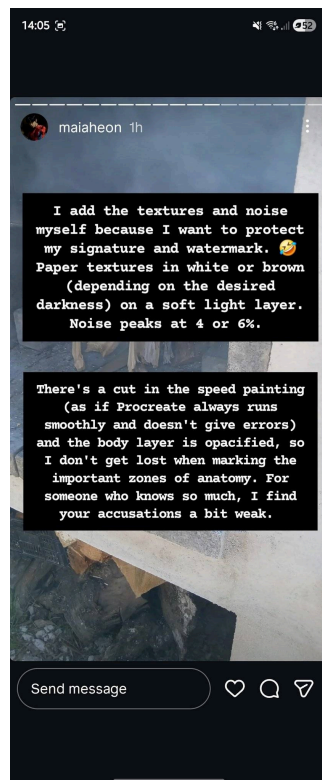
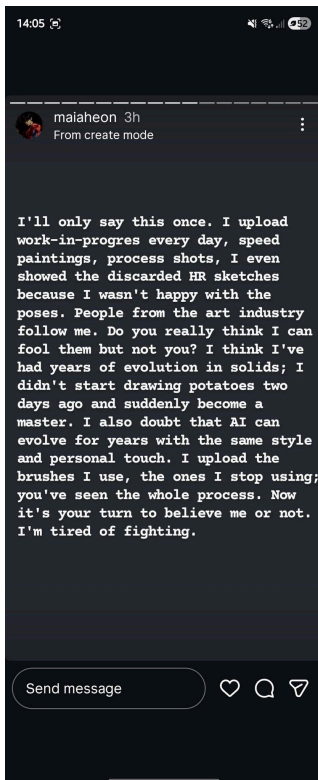
It's always sad to see someone with real talent in the arts using AI as a shortcut or as a way to boost their art. I have been studying and keeping up with AI art gen programs for years now because I wanted to, in every way, be able to spot AI in "art" (and also just because it is good to stay informed). In fact, a lot of modern artists have actually already incorporated AI into their artistic process. However, this doesn't make it right. AI is highly unethical and steals from real

artists who spend hours of their real time into work, all for it to get stolen and trained into AI. I know a lot of people have been following this person and may have developed some sort of defensive attachment but it is very important to call them out when they make this kind of mistake, ESPECIALLY because they have already been adamantly denying any AI usage already. If they had not been, then I definitely would have taken it up privately first. However, as an artist myself and as someone with so so many talented art friends who have had hard times trying to build a following and get attention on their art, it genuinely makes me sad to see their real hard work be so easily overshadowed by AI. I am not looking for clout and I'm not some kind of villain trying to call people out lmao I simply want my fellow real artists to get the appreciation they deserve. I have always been harsh about AI, those that have followed me for a long time know this and know I went head to head with the blatant AI use on the KQ ATEEZ 2024 world tour poster as well, where I was also initially bashed for saying it was AI. If EVEN after this entire thing you think it's not AI I really cannot help you there lol all I can say is feel free to dm me with clarifying questions and all that. I am not and have never been one to make accusations lightly.

TLDR: the piece itself is DRAWN. The ORIGINAL REFERENCE however, is AI-generated and knowingly done so because there is consistency across the entire angel ATEEZ series, as well as other pieces (like Spiderman Yunho). This renders the timelapse proof useless because that was never the issue. The use of AI makes it AI art. This is bad because AI is bad. Ok thanks for reading <333333333

**Addendum: (doing this in real time while viewers are here lol)**

Here is her response and I'm going to prove why all of this is useless information



First slide:

- Wips being posted: already refuted this earlier in section 4
- "People from the art industry follow me" NOT an argument against you using AI, many people from the art industry use AI in their workflow also art industry is a very vague term and can refer to any working artists also why are you using the "i have \_\_\_\_ friends so im not \_\_\_\_" that has never worked for anything in the history of ever
- "Do you really think i can fool them but not u" yup
- "I've been drawing for years + released brushes": doesn't matter, see section 4, not accusing you of ai generating the entire art piece im accusing you of ai generating the reference and then painting it with the skills you do have

Second slide:

- "Added the textures myself" never said anything about textured grain being applied idk why you're calling yourself out here, also don't care about the opacity of the noise layer that doesn't prove anything
- Cut in speedpainting: I have used procreate probably since early 2020 and have never once had an issue in cut in speedpaint in the way you described. Proof: go look at my twitter or tiktok i have speedpaints for everything and can provide for ones i didn't post, also again, never claimed you had any issues in the speedpaint i actually said they were valid so once again calling yourself out here
- Find accusations weak: don't care, cope + ratio

Third slide:

- "Oops": claim i'm petty but why r u being petty instead of responding to proof
- References: u don't get to just pull up random historical artworks of naked people that aren't in the poses that you specifically drew for the ATEEZ members and then say that they're proof holy cow T-T this is not how realism artists work and it has never been how you have worked including in the past where all of your past work has been straight from real references
- Please like for the love of everything good and happy and stuff go compare these "references" to your own art the fabric and stuff is not even remotely close and honestly neither is the lighting once again you can't just say your proof is random pictures and paintings of naked people that are NOT IN THE POSES THAT YOU DREW
- Bottom comment that got cutoff ("now you're saying it's not AI etc.) never said it was not AI, also never said the whole thing was AI art, I said and clarified multiple times that your reference is AI generated and you painted the AI generated reference which is just as bad if not WORSE than generating something and posting it because you are actively trying to hide the fact that you used this AI

Ok I'm done :D

Qualifications and stuff in case y'all are wondering why tf u should be listening to some random

