

# Script

## Part 1 - Introduction

[Slide 1]

Since I am an artist and often share my work with others, I'm recently faced with many people asking my opinions on AI-generated art. When I'm faced with someone trying to convince me to like it, the ethical facts of these products always come into the conversation first, and how they have improved on this front. Despite hearing all these arguments, I still knew where my opinions were. However, I realised to form a balanced and fair opinion, I should be doing my own research and verifying any claims that people have about these AI programs. And so to have a centre point in my research I started with a question that I believed was at the root of my negative opinions towards AI art: Can AI technology replace human artistry?

## Part 2 - ethics and stats

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Beginning my research I, however, started with a slightly adapted perspective on the question and whether AI art *should* replace human artists. One of the main arguments against AI art, and the first that I looked into, is that it is infringing on the rights of artists that have posted their work online since the AI scans the internet for images and learns from everything it finds. Thus it is argued that this makes it unethical to use.

It seems to be a grey area as to whether this is really the case and it largely depends on where the images or artwork are posted to. Most social media websites, in their terms and conditions that most people accept without much thought, claim that any images posted to the platform become public domain and so can fall under fair use laws. This includes the terms and conditions for Instagram. This means, in terms of traditional art, that they can be used as references and inspiration for other artists.

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UK law also mentions data mining under its fair use laws, and so using these works of art to train a program to create something original, or an amalgamation of aspects of others' work which could be argued as parody, is completely legal. Because of this, it can be rightfully argued that these AI programs using images from the public domain to learn are no different than human artists learning how to create their own work.

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Besides looking into this topic from a legal standpoint, another of my first exposures to the opposing opinion of AI art that gave me a very in-depth argument was from a YouTuber that I actually watch regularly called Shadiversity. It was completely unexpected, as his content doesn't usually dive into such controversial topics, however, I found it very useful throughout my research and it gave me a different perspective that is also coming from another creative person, though an author and video content creator instead of an artist. Many of the points I go on to mention I have taken inspiration from his video, including this next point.

A point that's often brought up as a counterargument to my opinion is that AI is simply a tool, and if anything about it could be unethical, it is the person using it for immoral means.

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In the video I watched on YouTube by Shadversity, he compares AI art composition to the historic rise of photography. It is true that in the past when cameras were first being commercialised, photography had to fight a long battle to be considered an art form like it is today. In fact, there is some irony in how similar attitudes at the time were to how AI art is being treated now, shown in this quote from Henrietta Clopath who was a fairly well known painter of the time said an interview for an artists magazine, Pencil and Brush, in 1901:

“The fear has sometimes been expressed that photography would in time entirely supersede the art of painting. Some people seem to think that when the process of taking photographs in colours has been perfected and made common enough, the painter will have nothing more to do.”

By comparing these opinions expressed today with AI art to photography, it could be argued that AI art is simply in its adolescence and that with time it will become more refined with boundaries and categories established similar to the different types of photography now.

### Part 3 - real opinions

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At the end of this initial research even though I spent hours and hours looking through articles and watching videos with other's opinions, something still felt wrong. The idea of AI art still didn't sit right with me and this is when I realised that all this research in the end is meaningless to me personally and does not truly answer my question.

Artists have always been the people that speak without words; they immortalise a time in history through visuals or simply spill their emotions onto canvas in hopes that the viewer of their art will feel something too.

This is what art is to me and many other like-minded artists, but that feels so far removed from what we see today especially since I've heard too many claims that AI-generated art is an art movement. I don't personally believe it could be considered as such.

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To better illustrate my opinion, I'd like to look at an art movement that is happening currently. It's currently being called “#CoreCore” and is mostly on TikTok. Instead of being traditional art, however, it's utilising a far more modern format we're used to on social media. These short edits take seemingly random videos often related to the experience of living in our current modern-day and edit them together in an aesthetically pleasing way to elicit an emotional response and create a narrative of a perspective on the world.

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At the beginning of this movement, before it even had a name, these videos usually had political messages to convey. Anti-capitalism, environmentalism, feminism and many more subjects were explored. The purpose of these videos was to get you to think. And it seemed to work, as most comments under these videos were people claiming they found an interest in a political movement through the video like a call to action.

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However, as people outside of more philosophical and political spheres started to find these videos and make their own, their meanings started falling flat. These newer edits often seemed to lean towards fan-created edits of movies and shows with the most depressing scenes, making the creations feel more like angry depressed rants than meaningful artistic videos.

The progression of this movement into something more like a trend is what I would compare AI art to when trying to get others to understand my viewpoint.

Original traditional art, which these programs often mimic in style, was usually part of a movement which we can now look back on and see historically what life may have been like at the time of the art piece's creation without the need for words. Like the original #CoreCore videos, art that is considered to be involved in a movement is an artist trying to provoke the viewer to feel something or share their view on the world.

AI art does not have the same intentions and people behind it trying to elicit change or convey a message. Like this most recent version of #CoreCore, it is something created as a parody instead of capturing the essence of any time, emotion or event. These newer #CoreCore videos can be emotional still, yet they're not meant to make you think. They're apathetic and depressing, making people sedentary instead of mobilising them to change and think about how we react to the world and how we live our lives. Similarly to AI art, it takes random loosely related images and combines them together for a result of a generalised theme.

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And so to finally begin answering my initial question that got me here, I do not think AI could ever fully mimic or replace human artistry.

However, I think this led me to a more important question to ponder. What is the future of artistic movements in the modern age? With the surge of ever-improving technology and social media, everything becomes available in an instant without the need to simply sit and think. So is all art doomed to be swallowed by anti-intellectualism?

## Part 4 - compromise

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After that rather depressing thought, I decided a compromise could be made on my opinions with AI art. After all, while making this presentation, I finally started to experiment with AI art generators, and I can now better understand the appeal as at least an artistic tool or source of inspiration. However I do not believe AI can ever truly replace humans for anything, and I don't believe AI art is art- at least by the definition of fine art.

Fine art can be defined in two ways, however, I believe true fine art is a combination of both definitions.

These definitions are:

- A piece of creative and visual art that is appreciated for its imaginative, aesthetic, or intellectual content.

- And a creation that requires “great skill or accomplishment.”

The imaginative or intellectual aspects of this definition applied to AI art I believe are debatable at best. The human input into the AI may require some thought within either kind of thinking, however, the process and results are somewhat random and so I don't believe it is intellectual like human art can be. But since AI art can be aesthetically pleasing to look at I believe it can be considered some form of art.

However going onto the second definition, for a majority of people using this program, AI art requires no previous skills or accomplishments in any kind of art. There are exceptions, as some artists take the AI art piece then paint over it and refine it, however a majority of the process of creating this art is done for the person involved. Because of this, I don't believe AI art could be considered *fine art*. But I can appreciate the aesthetics that these programs are able to create, and I believe the technology created could be a useful tool in many fields not just for artists.

And so while my opinion on these programs remains unchanged, and I still got the answer I expected to my question in regards to my own opinions, I believe I can have more in-depth discussions on the topic now and find common ground with those that take an interest in this trend and tool of AI art.

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