

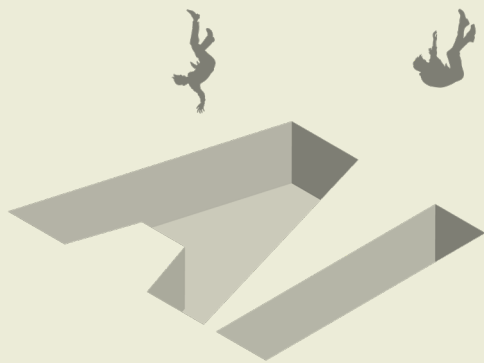
ME, MYSELF AND AI.

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When we create something, it's a good habit to remind ourselves that what is happening is the manifestation of thousands of little – seemingly insignificant – moments, when through suffering and joy we learned something new. These hard-earned stepping stones make us and everything we create unique. Our fulfilment came from the paint on the tip of our fingers that allowed us to express the way we see the world. The painting itself is only a by-product. Before I forget, this will be an opinion piece about using AI for art creation.

No point to talk about how the technology works, or what we can achieve with it or what the future holds, because by the time you're reading this, it's probably even more advanced than now as I'm writing these sentences. It is available to everyone and does not require any knowledge to use it, just some curiosity, so we are feeding it with our own creativity 24/7. It's that gamble on our future that we need to talk about. Feels like we flipped the coin but we are so mesmerized by looking at it, that we don't even remember or worse, we don't even care if we bet on heads or tails. AI is the new candy everyone is hooked up on, we are so scared to be left out, left behind we have to try it for ourselves. Modern day Catch-22: We keep our eyes on the prize but we would only win if we could look away.



Using photoshop to draw a perfect circle might feel like letting creation out of our hands, but as long as we know the reason why we are doing it, we are still in control. Sort of. AI can help us drawn a perfect circle, but we should never let AI decide whether it's a circle or square. The issue is not if AI can create the way humans can, because even if they can't, we can only say that they can't at the moment. The question should be: once they can, should they? Should we get rid of those stepping stones just because learning is hard and time consuming and not always profitable? Cheaper and faster is a business priority. It's got nothing to do with us, humans. Teach me how to fish, but give me endless number of fish and I'd just get sick. Sorry, I'm paraphrasing an old book.

We're well aware that whatever this AI we have right now is, it is not artificial intelligence, it's more like an advanced technology, a large language model that can mimic certain human reactions. I have no doubt that one day we're going to get artificial intelligence that will be hard to distinguish from a human intelligence. We all know people who fake emotions or lie about their past, so it's a pretty low bar for AI to pass. The problem we have right now is that AI showed up in our homes as a genie, offering us help. And we are dead tired. People born in the eighties were the last teenagers without the dominance of the internet. Their kids were the first teenagers who had it in their pocket. With them. All the time. Mix endless knowledge with cluelessness, add some corporate greed and we get to today. Obviously, it's not all doom and gloom, this advanced technology, internet and AI helped science and our society a lot, but it's also deforming us. The last invention that had similar effect on mankind was religion. But what is happening now won't need thousands of years to divide us. This time the promise is bigger. To reach heaven before death. Get followers, create anything that for a second looks like something. Be captivating, use whatever trick you can, share now so that people notice you are alive. We can't even comprehend the devastating long-term effects of this short-term hassle.

The main selling point of AI creation is that it's fast and cheap. Now, please look around where you are now and let me know if you can find something that was done cheap and fast and has real value. Rich people will use AI to make more money faster. Poor people will use it to feel valuable faster. Artists have to learn to navigate these seas without being seduced by fame or money. Same old story, but the stakes are higher. This time it's not only the artists are at risk but the compass of the audience.

Let me use my instant soup analogy here. So, there is an old episode of Kitchen Nightmares where two chefs in a horrible restaurant are serving instant soup and they say people don't care, we've been doing it for years and they love it and we love the taste too. So, Gordon makes them two soups, one with the powder and one with fresh ingredients and he asks them to tell which one is which. They both picked the same one and said, this is the real one, you're right, fresh ingredients are way better, the other tastes bland and unhealthy. You are both wrong, Gordon said, you both picked the instant soup. Over the years you ruined your tastebuds and now you lost your guidance. You don't even know what's right or wrong anymore.

That is how AI creations feel these days, like instant soup. If you keep consume artificial stuff you likely cause some damage to your intestine in the next few years. But who can plan that far ahead these days, right? Just eat, digest later. So, you heard that every prompt is damaging the environment? Yeah, but everything does, so don't take away my candy. My digital fast food. Stream me all the fat, sugar and salt and I'll be fine. No need for therapy, just give me another season with at least ten episodes, fast.

AI dominance in creation will only be the new standard if we accept that is inevitable. An AI writer only has to be as good as the worst writer who can still get hired. I could've said editor or a musician instead of writer. We all know this industry is more business than show, so giant corporations will always move towards the most profitable decision. We already have an endless amount of sugar-coated content that are perfectly adjusted to our needs. Soon we won't be able to tell whether the soup is real or not, but worse that it won't even matter. We can have some faith in the following generations, they might be going to laugh about our AI obsessed world. We just have to make sure that we don't get too hooked up, so they'd still have a choice to opt out.



Since it is so fast and effortless and seemingly cheap to create with AI, we care less about quality. Almost good is the new good. Even the most accurate prompt leaves some freedom to the machine, but it can only come up with shadows of our ideas. If we source out creation and let AI do the work, it will get better and better, but we won't. The best idea right now is to use AI only as an assistant, to make you think and spark ideas in you. That feels like the best approach we can have and yet we still cannot forget it is not a human assistant. Behind this technology are companies who want you to keep engaged all the time. If you need me, I'm here to help, but right now AI needs us more. Who knows for how long? I'm not visioning a Terminator kind of apocalyptic scenario, only saying there is a future where we will not be able to come up with a fresh idea without the help of AI.

Using AI to bring back, dead actors, directors, editors, writers to create films feel a little bit like the Make America Great Again slogan or the Give me back my country one. It's all about nostalgia and the loss of youth. You had good memories with someone or something from when you were younger and now you want them to come back. In Martin Scorsese's *The Irishman*, instead of letting a younger actor bringing his own craft to the game, to add something unexpected to the film, they used a CGI version of Robert De Niro, because of how amazing it is to see him young again. Imagine if this technology exists back in 73, would we have seen Robert De Niro playing young Vito Corleone or a CGI version of Marlon Brando?

Bergman said when film is not a document, it is a dream. AI can't document our world as it can only create a mesh from all the data that is tagged in the same category. And they might dream of electric sheep one day, but that won't be our dream. When we see these vague pictures, tunes, creatures or ideas the reason why they get uncanny is that we feel the lack of struggle and joy that precedes creation. There is a good chance that if AI is used more and more for creation in arts, then a new type of audience will emerge who will not only struggle watching old movies but will have a hard time coping with real life. Arts build from real life and life imitates arts. And AI "art" has nothing to do with real life.

Allow me to finish this rant with two quotes:

"There is a secret bond between slowness and memory, between speed and forgetting." Slowness, 1995. Milan Kundera

"And what does the money machine eat to shit it out? It eats youth, spontaneity, life, beauty and above all it eats creativity. It eats quality and shits out quantity. There was a time when the machine ate in moderation from a plentiful larder and what it ate was replaced. Now the machine is eating faster much faster than what it eats can be replaced. That is why by its nature money is worth always less. People want money to buy what the machine eats to shit money out. The more the machine eats the less remains. So, your money buys always less. This process is now escalating geometrically. If the West does not start a nuclear war first their monetary system will fall apart through the inexorable consumption by the machine of life art flavour beauty to make more and more shit which buys less and less life art flavour beauty because there is less and less to buy. The machine is eating it all." Minutes To Go, 1959. William S. Burroughs