

generative ai art ■ as knowledge controversy

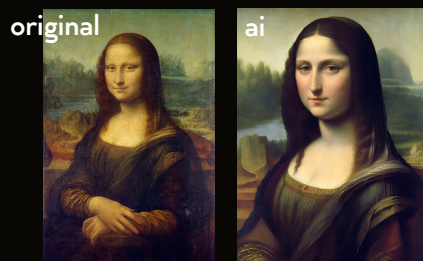
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the premises

- 1) new technologies aren't inherently 'better'. We need to question what 'better' means and for whom.
- 2) this means we need to study society first: who funds ai? who makes it, for whom? what might actors want from ai, and should we agree with those assessments?
- 3) gen-ai is both widely used and resisted in arts - a good case study to see the stakes & arguments being made.
- 4) i interviewed 5 young artists (ai and non-ai using) to understand their views.

good art

- 1) Contrasting ideas of good ai and good art:



a) 'ai as tool': good art is good ideas. ergo, a good prompt can make good (ai) art. this is good b/c more people get to make art -> self-actualisation.

b) 'ai as culture': on average, ai makes worse art because it's trained to reproduce popular aesthetics & stereotypes for commercial success, not for good art

- 2) engages w/debates about art value:

a) form/content debate: how much should we care about the 'message behind art'? (contrast: Sontag on interpretation and art for activism)
- can this message be independent from the process & form?

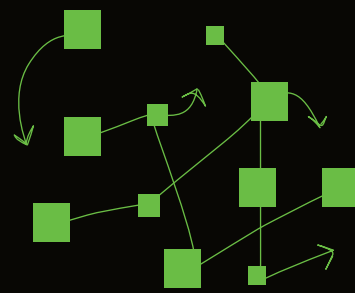
b) does commercialisation help or hurt art? (contrast: democratisation, culture industry, both?)

art & power

- 1) redistribution of power: is this democratisation or corporate encroachment and cost-cutting? (power as expertise, status, wealth?)

- 2) knowledge controversy as function of power: who is disrupted and who seems unaffected? -- does Silicon Valley feel challenged by art?

scan for
the paper



why knowledge controversy?

- 1) new players, technology, or factors happen that 'disrupt' business as usual.
- 2) authority is challenged; dormant debates reignite & new ones emerge
- 3) open-ended: all actors can change things, some have more power than others, but nothing is 'inevitable progress'
- 4) opportunity to rethink what exactly we want from the future: nothing is value-free

good work

- 1) what is artistic work? what work can you not do yourself and still call yourself an artist?

a) creativity: creative, 'human' work should be yours, rote work can be outsourced

b) essentiality: what exactly is creative? does it include thinking/drafting/making? how good is 'good enough'?
- H. Becker's 'personnel'

c) value: what kinds of work are valued & legitimised, what is not?

- 2) implications for gen-ai and art:

a) ai relies on human labour: existing art and data workers

b) 'nonessential' work is unpaid/poorly paid, devalued as 'less human'

c) those who have the power to decide the essentiality of work also decide the disposability of people