

Lesson 4 The Future Ahead of Us

AI: Opportunity or Threat?

Recently, an artist used an artificial intelligence (AI) system to create the image above for an art contest.

The image won first place in the digital arts category. This led to a controversy in the art community. Some people complained that the artist simply provided the system with basic instructions and let it do all the work. They felt this wasn't fair to the rest of the artists in the contest. However, there were also people who were excited by the potential of AI. Today, there are numerous AI programs that can create various forms of art including images, songs, and novels.

Example 1 Making Digital Images with AI

AI image generators create images based on our text requests. They do this by copying other images that were created by humans. The generators have the ability to analyze millions of images and their corresponding descriptions. This allows them to create works of art in a short time based on the provided instructions.

Moreover, AI programs can mix the styles of existing images upon request. For example, you can blend a photograph of a cat with Johannes Vermeer's *Girl with a Pearl Earring*. These two images have a few differences. However, the overall design, the eyes, and the scarf around the head are clearly based on Vermeer's painting. A simple request was enough to create this complex and detailed image.

Example 2 Making Music with AI

AI programs may lead to changes not only in the art world but also in the music industry. These programs are already able to compose songs, and they give you many options. For example, you can choose the style and key*, such as C major or A minor. You can also set how long the song will be. Once you've entered the information, the program will produce a song that you can edit or use as it is. Furthermore, computer-generated imagery (commonly known as CGI) has opened up new possibilities in the music industry. Virtual influencers with extremely realistic faces, bodies, and voices have already released several songs. Some of them have many followers on social media, just like human singers. These types of virtual musicians are able to speak and move realistically with the help of their human creators.

The Debate on Using AI

Many AI programs are open to the public, which means they are free and convenient to use. However, these programs have sparked a debate over their impact on humans. Since AI has the potential to learn skills and perform them better than humans, some people view it as a threat. They worry that AI will replace humans in more and more areas. There are also concerns that AI may imitate the styles of human artists without their consent. On the other hand, others think that AI cannot exceed human imagination and that it is still dependent on human assistance. This is because the data that AI uses can have flaws or limitations. A dependence on imperfect data with little diversity eventually limits the output of AI programs. Human imagination, on the other hand, has no limits or boundaries.

What kind of future do you think lies ahead of us?

Will more people use AI programs to boost their creativity and productivity? Or will people grow tired of the limitations of AI tools? AI provides many benefits and new opportunities. What we need to do is figure out how to use AI tools ethically and think about how humans and AI can collaborate.