STAIR AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH INTO THE ROLE OF AI IN THE DECONSTRUCTION OF ART VALUES

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ABSTRACT: Embedded within the art are a process, commodity, sentimental, and historical values that set one art apart. On the other hand, AI art enables artists and non-artists to quickly create artwork without requiring any technical skills or tools beyond the image generator; this diminishes many of the traditional values in art. Through literature study, interviews with graphic designers and artists who use AI and those who don't use AI and the 'world-making' and 'world viewing' approach in the Science, Technology, and Art in International Relations (STAIR) framework as well as phenomenology analysis, this study examines one critical question: (1) does AI art change the values of artwork? Our findings revealed that those who studied art saw using AI as an underhand and that the art community would ostracize those who used AI. On the other hand, those without an art background have no qualms about using AI and see it as an effective tool to speed up their work. Differing viewpoints of the world-making process in to use and not to use AI suggest AI puts artworks at risk of losing their value from an artistic and process-oriented production and turns it into a business model that focuses on conserving time and cost.

Keywords: AI Art, Creative Process, Art Value, STAIR, World Making.

Introduction

Creating an artwork requires a long process of creative brainstorming, drawing techniques, tools, and particular skills. Embedded within art is the value that consists of process, commodity, sentimental, and historical values (Kieran, 2005) that set one art apart from another. On the other hand, a prompt-based AI image generator, also known as AI art, enables artists and non-artists to create artwork without requiring any technical skills or tools beyond the image generator. AI technology thus benefited business processes by cutting down on the timely and costly process of creating artwork (Cowan, 2023).

As a critical response to the rise of AI art, this research examines what is important in the creative pursuit of art—the journey or the result—and if AI deconstructs the values of art to non-AI art. Using the Science, Technology, and Art in International Relations (STAIR) framework (Singh, Carr & Marlin-Bennet, 2019) and phenomenology analysis, this study examines one critical question; does AI art change the values of artwork?

This research interviewed four art professionals and revealed one of them, a movie editor, disdains and will ostracize AI art users. On the other hand, a digital art designer claimsto benefit from AI since it makes their work more efficient. The contrasting response corresponds to the utopian perspective that AI could enhance existing clinical skills, and vice versa the dystopian view that AI would lead to the replacement of work due to automation (Aquino, et al., 2023). Furthermore, the global competition in the advertising and entertainment industry has also pushed art workers to adopt the latest tools and technology to catch up with the new trends and developments.

Thus, this research summarizes that AI technology disrupts the overall process of art production; the technology then leads artists in the industry into a cost-effective business model that affects the value of artworks. The value in art with and without AI has shifted the artistic and emotional process into a cost-effective one that focuses on conserving time and cost (O'Dwyer, 2020) and

meeting quantitative targets.

Literature review

- **Evaluation of art**

Budd (1995) in Kieran (2005) recognize two main approaches to determine the value of art: intrinsic and instrumental. Intrinsic evaluation of art is to impart judgment on the overall outlook of art (i.e., beautiful, excellent, fine, mediocre), but also to focus on one or two features of the artwork (i.e., brushstrokes, colour palette, representational conveyance, art style). The focus of intrinsic evaluation lies in the "imaginative experience" that stems from the audience's mental engagement with a piece of art. Alternatively, instrumental approaches underline the means toward a certain end that a piece of art affords. Money is an example of the instrumental end of a work of art. An abstract painting sold for millions at an auction may be deemed more instrumentally valuable than an abstract drawing kept in a sketchbook. Inflicted feelings upon an artwork (i.e., sombre, haunting, hopeful) are another example of instrumental evaluation. Although intrinsic value is distinct from instrumental value, these two approaches do not exist in exclusion of one another; but some arts may be more instrumental than intrinsic, and vice versa (Kieran, 2005). The recognition of which approach applies to a piece of art relies on the extent to which the feature of the piece serves the biggest role in the realization of the piece's function (S Davies, 2005).

- **AI arts and value evaluation**

Generative AI (Gen AI) technology has expanded its function from the technical assistance of artists to a new art category of its own that has successfully entered the art market (Wang & Ma, 2019). For example, the AI artwork *The Portrait of Edmund Bellamy* by Christie was sold at a world-class auction for $432,500 in 2018 (Demmer et al., 2023) followed by the auctioning of *Memories of Passersby I* for $51,000 by Mario Kringman in March the following year (Rea, 2019). Controversies arose among artists and enthusiasts, sparking debates and bipolar separation of views toward AI arts: in favour of and in opposition.

Proponents of AI art generally draw on the novelty and boundless opportunities of AI as a familiar tool (Ploin et al., 2022); invention, utilizing adoption of technology, as an integral part of art progression (Boehman, 2023; Baxter, 2024); potentiality and avant-garde in unlocking skills or means to create beyond the human *known* capabilities (Ploennigs & Berger, 2023); and the accessibility to explore and experiment without anticipating for the conventional material affirmation at the traditionally costly endeavour (Grba, 2022).

Conversely, opponents of AI art underline the elements of 'reproducibility' that challenges the inherent scarcity element that often accompanies traditional art forms (Wang& Ma, 2019), the piracy and copyright of artists' intellectual property, hence legality and ethical dilemma of AI arts (Shaffi, 2023), artificiality of artworks marked by the removal of 'human' conception in the creative process and output (Leatham, 2022; Chiang, 2024), and most notably the prevalent impact of Gen AI in diminishing the market demands for creative workers and overshadowing small artists (Plunkett, 2022; Jiang et al., 2023; Heikkilä, 2022).

Nevertheless, regardless of the mainstream bipolarity of views, per the technicality of machine learning in Gen AI, the very basis of AI art is inextricably built upon traditional works of art that act as the input data or language (Brownlee, 2019; Wang & Ma, 2019). For the sole reason that AI art is *art* (as a new output or a convergence of arts), its core value attributes can be evaluated through the same approaches as Budd (1995) suggests–there is no justification to impart special treatment or different treatment to AI arts simply for being modern.

Theoretical Framework

- **Art values**

Recalling Budd (1995) in Kieran (2005) from the previous section, this research seeks to use intrinsic and instrumental values of art as the basis of evaluation of AI arts, but considerable modifications are placed, thus a clarification is necessary.

This research will adopt alternative terms for the relevant values in question. First, theintrinsic values of art will be modified as sentimental value. Alternative to Budd's (1995) understanding of intrinsic value, sentimental values in this context embody the synergy of human-computer interaction and collaborative creative process to produce an artwork. Art viewers often find it difficult to identify AI-generated artwork, and most people exhibit an implicit prejudice against AI art (Zhou & Kawabata, 2023). Meanwhile, in the view of Wang and Ma (2019), human contribution is indispensable in the creation of AI art, even if the generator of the final output is non-human. AI arts is nevertheless a human-computer collaborative work that involves both human creativity and artistry, but even the Gen AI tool itself has its creativity that may exceed human capabilities. It is precisely the synergy of human-computer creativities that determines the aesthetic value of AI artworks–not theexclusive human's.

Second, instrumental value is to be interchanged with commodity value. Although art epitomizes far more values than just economic proposition, there

is no denying that an artwork's ability to penetrate the art market and its market price determine a large component of its value and social affirmation. After all, controversies relating to AI art were catalysed partially by successful economic transactions that nearly matched the auction price of Picasso's work (Wang & Ma, 2019). The average audience and enjoyer of arts may care less about the commercial value of an artwork, but for an artist, this value may be the pre-determinant of his/her career and more. That said, in imparting instrumental evaluationon AI art, this research will concentrate principally on its commodity value.

- **STAIR's world-making and world-viewing**

World viewing and world making are two interlinking concepts that are derived from the Science, Technology, and Art in International Relations (STAIR) framework. STAIR viewsevery science, technology, and art product as an object that permeates international affairs inthe form of material elements and networks, technical instruments, systems of knowledge,and scientific practices. Yet, they also challenge existing conceptual approaches and promptus to step beyond IR canons to seek interdisciplinary collaborations. (Singh (Ed), 2019:23).

The world viewing is an approach to studying science, technology, and art by putting a distance from the world order to achieve a neutral knowledge of the artefact (Dagget, 2019). One of the approaches in world viewing is by comparing the ethical commitments surrounding the creation of art, science, and technology. By creating ethical prompts that could be seen from the thought process of the artefact's creator, researchers are challenged to find a sense of estrangement in the artefact, and lieu, in the creator. The objective is to produce a description that does not side with the mainstream narrative or in the STAIR language, this is known as creating estrangement.

On the other hand, world making is viewing science, technology, and art as acts of inspired creation (Dagget, 2019). The world-making process places greater emphasis on the assumption that there exists a hybrid agency that occurs when humans and non-humans are combined in the practices of creating an artefact, whether through science, technology, and/or art. Thus, instead of questioning the ethical aspect, the world-making process questions how acreator views the world, and how science, art, and technology have changed their behaviour.

Methodology

This research uses a qualitative method with a phenomenological approach. In Given's view (2018), phenomenology allows researchers to study a

phenomenon “pre-reflectively” instead of as a conceptualized and theorized event. In other words, phenomenology perceives phenomena as a lived experience of any individual in concern. Phenomenological research aims to describe and interpret the meaning derived from lived experiences contingent on the influence of consciousness, language, cognitive and non-cognitive perceptions, prior knowledge, and assumptions. Drieschova (2019:58) adds that phenomenological perspective also centres around the analysis of sensual perceptions resulting from physical occurrences to help understand the role of material culture (i.e., technology, art, and artefacts as the in-between technology and art) shapes the actions, thoughts, and emotions of embodiedbeings, which then affects societal outcomes. In this research, lived experiences are obtained through in-depth interviews with numerous actors in the art industry.

Table 1. Participants’ category.

Initial	Code	Occupation
M.H	Respondent 1 (R1)	Movie Editor
F.A	Respondent 2 (R2)	Graphic Designer
A.H	Respondent 3 (R3)	Movie Director
A.P	Respondent 4 (R4)	Movie Producer

This research begins by interviewing four different actors who actively work in the field of art. The main objective of this interview is to collect information and data that would help authors explore the respondent’s experience and thoughts in art, creative process, and AIart using the world-making and world-viewing theory. Then the result of the interview is analysed using a phenomenological approach to understand respondents’ emotional response to AI art, their perspective on the future of AI art and its impact on their work, and their suggestions for improvements within the art and AI art industries.

Table 2. Interview guideline questions.

Category	Description	Prompt questions
World Viewing	Artistic process, views and individual experiences	a. How do you define art and the artists? b. What is your art process? c. What are the tools involved in your artprocess? d. How do you value your art? e. What do you want people to think or feelabout your art?
World Making	AI Art and narratives aroundart community	a. What are your thoughts on non-AI art and AIart? b. Do you use AI in your artistic process? Willyou use AI for future artistic processes? c. What do your art community and globalcommunity think about AI art? d. Do you think AI has changed the artindustry?

Source: Questions are developed by authors (2024).

Discussion and Analysis

This research organizes the analysis into two sections. First, World Viewing, which examinesthe creative process, artistic values, and respondents' personal take on art and their work. The findings from the World Making section, summarized in Table 3, reveal a range of responses.

Table 3. Interview results with "World Viewing" guidelines

	Profession	World Viewing - Value in art		
		CreativeProcess	Value of art	Sentimentality in Art
R1	MovieEditor	Contemplative introspection, tells a story from within	Based on the labourand quality	Art as a way to convey his feelings and modes of escapism

R2	Graphic designer	Observe, imitate and modify	Depends on the level of difficulty, length of work and amount of revision.	Doesn't have any particular feelings abouthis work.
R3	Movie Director	Contemplative introspection; takes inspiration from different art mediums.	Based on the Intellectual Property(IP)	Art as something his viewer could reflect upon
R4	Movie Producer	Involve a collective process with the filming crew.	Depends on the sizeof the artist's portfolio	Depends on the work;advertising videos are mostly impersonal, whilefestival movies require more emotion involved.

Source: Result of Interview by author (2024)

In the 'creative process' segment, most respondents shared doing introspection is an important part of their artistic process; this activity includes looking inward into their experiences, knowledge, and social and economic background to explore what they want to convey and how to do it. This introspective element aligns with questions regarding the desired viewer impact, or 'sentimentality in art.' Most respondents aim for viewers to feel similar to what they felt. For example, R1, a film editor, and R3, a film director, expressed a desire for their socio-economic documentaries to evoke feelings of anger and despair reflective of the subjects they portray. In contrast, R2, a graphic designer, showed a more neutral response, stating that for him, art is merely part of his work and does not generate strong responses or emotions for him. As for the 'value of art', the respondents suggest art could be valued by labour, difficulty, time spent working on it, and reputation of the artists andartwork. This corresponds to Budd (1995) in Kieran's (2015) statement that one perspectiveto view the value is by seeing the instrumental purpose of art such as if it inflicted feelings or

garnered income.

The following section of the interview, as outlined in Table 4, investigated respondents' perspectives on AI art and the use of AI tools. Most respondents conveyed that AI signifies an inevitable development, likely requiring adaptation from professionals in the art industry. The interview outcomes revealed two opposing perspectives on AI art, respondents' stances formed a spectrum, with one positioned firmly at the 'against' end and the other three closer to a neutral-positive stance.

Table 4. Interview results with "World Making" guidelines

	Profession	World Making on AI Art			
		Thoughts onAI Art	AI Tools	Community Response on AI Art	Future of AIArt
R1	Movie Editor	Hates it and sees it as a threat to art and artists	Does not use AI and does not plan to.	AI art is a taboo.	Most do not care about AI, it will become apathetic and extracted from the arts.
R2	Graphic Designer	An effective tool; time-effective.	Use AI to generate images and will continue using it.	Thrives with the discussion and tutorials made by other AI artists.	AI will gain popularity for being an effective tool. Future artists will have to learn IT.
R3	Movie Director	AI is a highly potential	Uses ChatGPT to	Most are against AI art,	AI in the movie industry is

		technology, and AI should be treated as a tool and not the creator	amend scripts and plans to explore more AI tools in the future.	especially those with lower exposure to technology.	inevitable because it is cost-effective. However, artists will still be required to maintain the quality of work.
R4	Movie Producer	Very effective tool to improve cost and production	Uses AI for story-boarding and plans to use it more in the future.	Most are against it, but it's becoming a norm due to growing utilization in the commercial industry.	Regulatory measures to protect artists and creators from being copyrighted or plagiarized is necessary.

Source: Result of Interview by authors (2024)

R1 shows strong disdain towards AI art and solely humans should create its users, emphasizing that art as it serves as a medium to explore and express human emotion; using AI will remove the authenticity of that experience. This is especially because images generated by AI art always appear "funny" and "weird." R1 voiced concerns that AI art and AI tools endanger both the artist profession and public perception, suggesting that the increased frequency of AI arts circulating in public may lead to public indifference towardthe plights of traditional artists.

Meanwhile, respondents R2, R3, and R4 display a neutral-positive stance on AI, acknowledging the benefits of AI in cutting labour hours and costs. However,

they simultaneously recognize that human involvement remains essential for authenticity in the creation of art. They perceive AI as a *helper*, not a *creator*. Respondent R3 in particular is conflicted with finding the middle ground between technological advancement and defining the limits in the artistic process. Nevertheless, the stance of all three neutral-positive respondents aligns with the utopian perspective that AI could enhance existing clinical skills, as opposed to the dystopian view that AI would lead to the replacement of work due to automation (Aquino, et al., 2023).

Furthermore, it seems that the merit of utilizing AI as a tool to create art is not predetermined solely by the creators' desired outcome (valued intrinsically or instrumentally), but also based on the rigorous creative process. Cost of production and labour hours constitute major reasons to justify the use of AI. Notably, all respondents share a consensus that art generated by AI tends to be a bit "weird, funny, and missing basic anatomies," hence requiring a lot of human intervention to be presentable for commercial use. Meaning that in some cases, commodity value is prioritized, instead of sentimental values. Departing from this premise, an interesting observation is found. That is, respondents with managerial or financial roles in art production (R2, R3, and R4) appeared more open to adopting AI. In contrast, R1, whose role involves less financial responsibility, adhered more closely to traditional artistic ideals. This raises the question of whether budgetary and managerial duties influence openness toward AI.

In another light, respondent R4 describes how advertising agencies now use AI in artistic tasks like creating storyboards, copywriting, and videos. The agency she worked for even provided AI training to ensure a smooth transition from traditional art to automation. Her company collaborated with Dentsu, a major Japanese advertising agency that has integrated AI into its innovation since 2020 (Dentsu, 2024). Dentsu, the largest advertising agency in Japan and fifth largest globally (Statista, 2024), invested in Inworld AI in August 2023 to enhance its digital solutions and foster global innovation (Dentsu, 2023). This reflects the influence of Global North powers in shaping the future of art in advertising. Similarly, respondent R2 admitted to having adopted AI in his role as a graphic designer after being inspired by foreign designers and tutorials, mostly from Global North countries like the US and Europe, highlighting the concentration of AI knowledge in these regions.

Conclusion

The findings and discussion showed that AI technology disrupts the overall process of art production; the technology leads artists in the industry into a

cost-effective business model. The value in art with AI has shifted from an artistic and emotional process into a cost-effective one that focuses on conserving time and cost and meeting quantitative targets. Additionally, aside from economic reasons, the shift to AI tools and AI art is also promoted by Global North actors, such as international advertising agencies or popular graphic designers from the US and European countries. Another aspect that makes AI art and AI toolsproblematic is how these tools generate images by finding patterns and images that were acquired from a dataset. Oftentimes, these datasets were made off images that are availableon the Internet and being freely fed into machine learning. This process bypasses copyright and does not seek consent from the artists.

Why do we only focus on visual arts and not performing art?

There are two implied meanings: (1) why the author prefers one form of art over another, and (2) why the author has chosen to research only one art form rather than multiple forms at once. Authors' selection is not based on subjective preference, but rather on the interest to maintain a narrowed scope of discussion. By concentrating on a specific form of art, the author can provide deeper insights and nuanced analysis without the added complexity of tangential topics.

Moreover, if the authors were to consider multiple art forms, technical aspects of the research must be clarified. For example, does AI function as an assistive tool or as a creator? If taking performing arts as an example, the performance itself remains human-driven; AI would be more accurately depicted as an assistive tool that enhances other aspects of the creative process. Meanwhile, through literature review and expert discussion, the author has carefully observed that in the case of visual art, AI could serve both as an assistive tool and asa creator. As art comprises diverse forms, each with its characteristics and varying levels of human involvement, the role of AI technology plays will also differ. Consequently, theresearch approach must vary as well, leading the author to conclude that accommodatingmore than one form of art within this study may not be effective.

How art schools should interfere with this AI art trend.

The view that art schools and institutions *should* interfere in directing the public perception ofAI art may be problematic in the long run. This is because maintaining the gap between traditional art and AI art may mean limiting students from greater potential for artisticinventions, exploratory endeavours, and participation in digital transformation. These are all the rights of students

to have, and their unwillingness to participate or support should be organically theirs. Artists who are also teachers, and/or vice versa, should not possess the power to limit anyone, especially their students, to push the limits of arts–even if it means challenging the traditional norms of art production and creativity.

To be fair, teachers' ideologies and belief systems will likely be imparted incidentally in class through a selection of literature, class discussions, speeches, and more. Implying that students are already likely to be influenced by class and campus environments. This is so amongst this research's respondents; that alumni of art institutions have a greater tendency to show hostility towards AI arts than the alumnus of social science.

Instead, authors believe that art institutions should 'ride the wave' of AI art, not in a bandwagoning manner, but in an anticipatory manner and open-mindedness on the endless possible trajectories of the future. For example, if AI art is inevitable, there will be several possibilities to explore; the first is that as AI becomes more saturated in society, people will grow apathetic towards jobs that are replaced by AI; including traditional artists. The second is on how future artists may have to learn more about IT, coding, and data science to create a 'big data art'. The third is exploring how foreign actors and powers mainstream the use of AI tools in art.

Future research recommendations

This research's findings suggest two primary areas for further exploration: First, to explore further the quality of AI art and the editorial process in art-related companies, such as the advertising or movie industry, that allows the use of AI tools and AI art in their work. Second, to explore the commodification of AI arts compared to traditional arts. This necessitates a further dissection on the evaluation of art values, including an important index that determines the qualification to enter a primary and secondary art market–are there any differences between AI arts and traditional arts? Does 'intelligence' contribute as an index to weigh qualifications?

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