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ISN'T AI JUST THE LATEST TOOL FOR (SPACE) ARTISTS?

Abstract

The rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has transformed various aspects of our daily life, influencing automation, data analysis, and even artistic processes. This paper investigates the author's firsthand experience incorporating AI tools into artistic and design workflows, exemplified by space-related conference posters and computer graphics illustrations. The approach is viewed through the lenses of first and second order cybernetics, constructivism, and design theory, sense-giving and sense-making circularity, and emphasizing the evolution of tacit knowledge into communicable forms of expression. The workflow, applicable to both art and design, has recently integrated AI tools. The author reflects on the benefits and challenges of this augmentation, considering potential impacts on artists, ethical dilemmas, and new opportunities. Artistic movements can be codified and used by anybody from street artists, art students learning foundational skills, and even computers using AI. Artwork, regardless of its origin or style, must resonate with human observers. Purely AI-generated works may offer either variations of existing codified styles while contributing nothing new, or introduce something novel that requires human interpretation and conversations to assign meaning. The author asserts that AI is just one of the tools in the artist's toolkit, not a replacement. Like photography didn't replace painting, AI serves as a collaborative tool, providing options, stimulating ideas, and assisting with research. It may inspire artists to incorporate some of the ideas into their own artwork, or reject AI to explore novel directions beyond it, akin to the evolution of painting styles over the centuries in search of new ways of expressions and perspectives. Thus, the future of AI-assisted and post-AI art is anticipated with excitement. While not exhaustive, this paper aims to spark a broader conversation within artistic, design, and creative communities, including space artists, about the integration of AI tools and their potential impacts on the artistic process.