IAL Saatchi & Saatchi

Spotlight

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This Week's Focus:
AI Art Generators

Artificial Intelligence Empowering Imagination

Imagine there was a tool that could bring to life your most absurd and bizarre thoughts the mind can conjure. Real, tangible, visual representations of your most crazy imaginations in full colour. Sounds something out of a science fiction movie, right? A far-away in the future concept.

The recent influx and growth of machine learning and artificial intelligence has reframed the way in which we look at creativity.

AI generated art is slowly seeping into our lives and reshaping culture. Over the last few years, we have seen a rise in machine learning systems (ML) taking text prompts and producing images. There are only a couple of top-notch image-generating AI tools in existence that are increasingly seen to be churning out impressively accurate art.

These AI art generators, after being tinkered, tweaked and perfected in research labs, fed with millions of images and put through rigorous computational grunt are finally real-world ready, and have fallen straight into the hands of everyday users, where they are creating new visual languages of expression.

The output of these AI art generators is mostly treated as novelty; playing their part mostly in generating memes and whipping out image after image of imaginations.

Text-to-image AI Generators

Stable Diffusion   *DALL-E 2*   *Midjourney*

Stable Diffusion

This AI art generator was created in cooperation with DALL-E 2 from Open AI, Imagen by Google Brain and others. It has been tested by more than 10,000 beta testers, generating 1.7 million images per day.

When it comes to creating art, while it has quite a good understanding of modern artistic illustration, producing extremely detailed artworks, it still lacks the interpretation of complex original prompts.

What makes Stable Diffusion different is that it claims to be an open-source model to which everyone will have access – providing an opportunity to everyone to improve and build on it further as the code and all the dataset is already available to them. However, this unrestricted access and democratized usage has seen cases of misuse where people are exploiting this tool to create images of models, military conflicts and images of political or religious figures in incongruent situations.

DALL·E 2

DALL-E 2 (a combination of the Pixar character Wall-E and Salvador Dalí) has been making waves ever since it was revealed and, at that point, the world was in awe, where it was thought we had finally been bestowed with the most advanced AI art generator till date.

The premise is simple. You simply type in a descriptive prompt using up to 400 characters. For instance, "an astronaut riding a horse in an impressionist style," and AI will do its magic and create the image.

Not only creating art from scratch, DALL.E 2 can also be used to create edits or variations of existing art and even blend an AI-generated image into an existing original image, which is dubbed as "in-painting."

It doesn't actually 'know' what it's creating but it makes assumptions based on the massive database of 650 million image and caption combinations that it's already been fed.

ORIGINAL IMAGE

DALL·E 2 VARIATIONS

Midjourney

Midjourney is a recent entrant in the AI art community, and it has made quite an entry. This generator is so easy to use that anyone, even the most technologically challenged who feel a sense of foreboding whenever there's any kind of technology involved or those without a single artistic bone in them, can master this and easily become a Picasso, Van Gogh or Banksy.

In addition to its easy use, Midjourney is capable of producing wonderfully unique artworks with simple text prompts, which is one of the main reasons why we have droves of people flocking to Midjourney's Discord server to take a crack at this free AI art generator.

However, in comparison to Stable Diffusion and DALL.E 2, Midjourney's creations are slightly more darker and weirder – almost giving an apocalyptic feel, but it also gives the most natural results when it comes to artistic styles, particularly with textural details.

"It's staggering what AI can achieve given the right set of prompts and keywords. We're now able to create 24 layouts in the time it takes our Art Director to take their first sip of coffee."

Joylon White
Co-founder & Creative Director
10 Days

AI Art Replaces Stock Photo

From the first ever magazine cover by Cosmopolitan to a journalistic report, AI art generators are taking print medium by storm.

Author Charlie Warzel used a Midjourney-illustrated graphic depicting U.S. radio host Alex Jones in his newsletter for the well-known national U.S. media brand The Atlantic.

Since many media outlets covered Jones using a selection of a few stock photos from which Warzel would also have had to choose, the author wanted to differentiate himself visually in his newsletter, in which case, the AI-generated graphic, seemed like a suitable alternative to him.

This, however, infuriated artists and designers who hopped onto the on-demand outrage platform, Twitter, and made their disapproval clear by calling out The Atlantic publicly. The sentiment was clear, they felt if a well-known magazine like The Atlantic is using a free AI art generator instead of paying an artist for illustrations, this could further serve as a blueprint for other publications to follow suit and save up on design budget.

The Atlantic

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Where Does Alex Jones Go From Here?

Watching the Alex Jones trial with an ex-Infowars staffer.

By Charlie Warzel

AUGUST 09, 2022   SHARE ⌄

"Alex Jones inside an American Office under fluorescent lights" AI art by Midjourney

Will AI-generated Art Replace Human Art?

Midjourney, DALL.E 2 and other AI art generators may seem like a novel idea that helps unleash our creativity like never before but the question that a majority are asking right now is, "Are they going to be replaced by AI art?" A fear that is echoed throughout the graphics and design community. A lot of these people are the creators of images that have been circulating the Internet – the source from which images have been procured to feed these AI generators.

So there's a licensing claim that artists are making as their images/art could be proportionately included in any AI image that these generators create, essentially laundering human creativity.

The implications of this are huge, if not a short time away in the future but definitely a fear looming large in the design community. For them, this rise in on-demand art, simply produced through a combination of words, is like a proverbial punch to the gut.

But is it safe to say that AI art will devalue human art in the long run? It's still too early to say but the idea that AI art will, imminently, displace humans from creative jobs – almost in the way that people sometimes describe robots replacing factory workers – appears to be an oversimplification.

"Like others, I also have questions about the corpus used to train these art tools and the possibility that they are using a great deal of art from both big-name and lesser-known artists without any compensation or disclosure to those artists."

Charlie Warzel
Writer/Reporter
The Atlantic & Galaxy Brain

Artificial Serendipity

While there's doom and gloom in the creative community, some researchers are calling these AI-generators "Artificial Serendipity" as they have a potential to open up a range of creative possibilities and capabilities beyond the mainstream and classical methods.

Architects, for instance, are already experimenting with these various AI-generators to explore complex issues like urban planning and the possibilities of existing spaces. Others are combining architectural keywords with contemporary design cliches, pop-culture references and different art styles to design buildings or simply explore the nature of design trends and technology.

Recently, Apple launched Gaudi, a "neural architect" that takes this process a step further by creating 3D scenes from text prompts.

It's clear that in the fields of architecture and design, these AI tools can be understood as powerful to explore, optimize, and test creative designs rapidly.

"AI creativity has a huge future in store. Humans and AI are going to be working hand-in-hand - it's how we harness it that will be exciting. Soon the possibilities will be endless."

George White
Co-founder & CSO
10 Days

Takeaways

- The implications for the industry could be staggering. While the technology isn't quite ready to put out a finished, polished ad, the range of visual ideas created could be game-changing.

- The speed at which these artworks are created is something that will cause brands, who prefer pace over quality of the end result, to be more amenable to this technology.

- Agencies have a chance to look at storyboarding in a completely new way. Now a combination of words or a sentence will produce a perfect image in seconds that an illustrator would take longer to sketch.

- Instead of seeing AI-generated art as an end product, we need to reframe our thinking and use this tool to inspire us and spark new ideas during the creative process.

AI's take on Wimbledon's 2022 campaign – produced just under 60 seconds.

Thank You!