



CALL FOR PAPERS. International Conference:

ARTIFICIAL CREATIVITY. Looking at the future of Digital Culture

Milan, 28-29th June 2024

The increasing logics and practices of contamination between technologies and arts - narrative, visual, auditory, audiovisual, etc. - have prompted many scholars to revisit the notion of what can be considered creative, artistic, and consequently an expression of our culture. Since the time of Benjamin (1963), the reproducibility of technique has already led to questioning how and if it was appropriate to speak of the aura of the work of art and what consequences its seriality would introduce in relation to the logics of consumption, increasingly associated with culture.

Indeed, the field of Creative Practice Research is constantly shaped and reshaped by the emergence of new technologies. While we are still grappling with the implications of how digital technologies have revolutionized methods of production, distribution, and exhibition, a more profound technological shift looms on the horizon: the advent of "intelligent" technologies, such as AI and machine learning.

The question of how technology moulds physical and social environments, collective and individual identities, and cultural and artistic production serves as a driving force for practitioners across various disciplines. The impact of technology on social systems, economic power, moral judgments, notions of reality, and the integrity of human identity encompasses two competing ideas: the concept of inherent progressive intent in modern technological advancement versus the unintended consequences and repercussions of technological influence, which, once set in motion, cannot be undone.

Thus, digital evolutions - up to the ultimate incorporations of artificial intelligence - have determined two opposing movements: on one hand, reflections, questions, and concerns about the future of culture and knowledge, regarding the processes of construction, sharing, and acquisition; on the other hand, new aesthetics and new potentialities for artistic and cultural expression.





The ease with which virtual production and computer-generated imagery can construct an entire world challenges our traditional understanding of truth in visual media and not only. The terms of the role AI can play in the creative process, and in artistic production arise skepticism about what can be considered an artwork or a cultural product.

Several interrogatives stimulate the debate: what will be the future of the creative industry? Which role could human beings have and with which effort? Can AI be considered and machine learning simply a new tech, tool or media or are we facing a change of paradigm in our culture?

Again, it is not simply a cultural issue: it intercepts the same concept of reality and authenticity: "intelligent" software can manipulate audio, video, and images to produce highly realistic but fabricated content. Even if we know that the social reality is a cultural construction, what is changing is the elements by which our imaginary is made of.

There is also a flip side of the coin. AI in combination with human creativity opens up to new scenarios in terms of outcomes, artistic frontiers and cultural production. Creative practice based research could be the right perspective to collect, show and assist the reconstruction of the state of art.

In this highly polarized framework, characterized by controversial and opposing positions, the proposal for a joint SAE-UTP (Pegaso Digital University) event represents an opportunity for International scholars to engage in a dialogue, with the aim of bringing together the debate offered by the different perspectives surrounding visual, auditory, audiovisual, and textual creative productions.

From several disciplines and matching academic research with creative artistic production output, the two-days conference aims at collecting papers and artistic outputs that show how, if, what and with which consequences for the audience it is possible to combine AI with human creativity.

Through the convergence of varied viewpoints and experiences, this conference seeks to encourage interdisciplinary discussions and ignite fresh avenues for research in the field of creative practice research.

We invite scholars, technologists, artists, and industry professionals to send a **300 word abstract (English or Italian)** with the presentation of their own research, theoretical reflections or literary review on the impact of AI in artistic and, more generally, creative production. Artistic installation or AI-combined creative products are welcomed for the exhibition panel, during the second day of the conference, in which artists can describe and show their production.

It will be possible to submit a poster-presentation. In this specific case, it is necessary to send a short abstract with title and the main core of the poster (max 200 words).

Please, send your proposal by the following form: <https://forms.gle/XEWNim83mLKZDQXF7>

The selected authors are invited to send the first draft of the paper (no more than 8000 words bibliography included) two weeks before the conference.





Proceedings will be published in an open access book by a publishing house indexed by Scopus for by the end of the 2024.

Keynote speakers:

Bruce Sterling – European Graduate School, Turin Share Festival

Jasmina Tesanovic - Feminist, writer, journalist, musician, and film director.

Giusy Caruso - University of Ghent

Francesco D’Isa – Digital Artist, writer, and journalist

Giorgio Vallortigara – Trento University

The conference is organized in 5 panels:

Panel I. Creative Narrative: Text, Hypertext and Digital Plots [Gilda Policastro, Alessandra Micalizzi]

Panel II. Artificial Imaginary: Narratives, Culture and Counterculture about AI [Teresa Savoia – Giuliano Cenati]

Panel III. Machine and Language: Models, Interaction Issues and Learning [Anna Rinaldin, Mirko Tavosanis]

Panel IV. Artificial Music: Limits, Opportunities and Perceptions [Alessandra Micalizzi, Massimiliano Zanon]

Panel V: New Gaze Era: Digital Images, Visual Effects and Audiovisual Products [Corrado Santoro, Lenonardo Galtieri]

The conference will take place over two days in late June at SAE Institute Campus in Milan, close to the *Città Studi* block and near the University of Milan in Lambrate.

- Deadline for submission: March 15, 2024:
- Selections announced: March 31, 2024.
- first draft of the paper: June 15, 2024.
- Conference date: June 28-29, 2024.

Affiliation: [SAE Institute](#) SAE Institute, the largest Creative Media College, is an academy in the creative industries founded in Australia in 1976, and counts more than 54 campuses. The Italian structure, inaugurated in 1996, today offers courses in the creative production: Audio, Film and Television, 2D/3D animation, gaming and music business.

[Pegaso University](#) is the first digital university in Italy, based in Naples but with two more operative campuses in Milan and Rome. It hosts a center of research on Digital Humanities with a vocation to study the impact of AI on creative processes.





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Panel I. Creative Narrative: Text, Hypertext and Digital Plots [Gilda Policastro, Alessandra Micalizzi]

Thanks to impressive acceleration in the last four or five years, so-called ‘smart technologies’ have rapidly moved from the hyper-sectoral dimension of information technology (or dystopia) to everyday use, which is now widespread and transgenerational. The potential and risks of the progressive ‘substitution’ of human beings by machines, even in creative practices and attitudes, are the subject of heated debate, with strong and enthusiastic supporters of the new technologies on the one hand, and more cautious but also catastrophic opponents on the other, who are very concerned about the ethical implications (well pointed out, for example, by the philosopher Luciano Floridi) and, last but not least, about the impact on certain professions (one of them being that of translator or editor). What is most important to us here is to study and monitor how the new capabilities of machines are being transferred to all areas of creativity, from literature to cinema to video art to video games. More specifically, we want to explore the most surprising and unforeseen aspects of the behavior of neural networks (from GPT3 on), whose outputs are related to statistical relationships rather than actual possibilities of ‘thinking’ or ‘creating’. In any case, if for now AI depends on how we use it and how we instruct it, the process of evolution towards greater ‘autonomy’ seems unstoppable. If GPT-3 was unable to produce creative texts just above the threshold of elementary schooling (especially in the case of poetic texts), GPT-4 has learned to do it a little better, thanks to more focused training. Recently, the physicist Nello Cristianini, in *La scorciatoia (il Mulino)*, spoke of the need to be as informed as possible about the workings of machines, which in a few years will ‘learn to learn’ in an increasingly fast and complex way, without being ‘aware’ of it.





The panel aims at intercepting trends, risks and more generically the evolution of the practice of writing and narrating thanks to the contribution of AI. In fact, it is possible to foreseen new plots, landscapes, environments, and new way of narrating them mixing and interweaving new technologies, AI and human creativity.

We encourage contributions that can touch or analyze the following (and not only) aspects:

- **Poems, creativity, and AI:** several experiments show how artificial intelligence can process poetry's dataset and write new cultural products. Which are the consequences for the readers? And for the cultural industries? Which kind of track are left for the future?
- **Creative written narratives:** starting from the same principles, AI is involved in developing, writing, or simply helping the construction of new texts and narratives such as books, comics and other contents text based. Some recent episodes have highlighted the controversial relation between creators (of the Past) and new application of AI in the creative production.
- **Multimedia narratives and AI:** finally, more than showed and described by media discourses, AI has been involving in the creative practices for several years and at different stage. It deals with multimedia products that used narratives to be developed such as cinematic, games, films and so on.

We invite to send papers that are focused on the process of the creation or on the analysis of the reading aspects, prejudices or other aspects linked with the cultural industry.

Panel II. Artificial Imaginary: Narratives, Culture and Counterculture about AI [Teresa Savoia, Giuliano Cenati]

The relationship with artificial intelligence has long existed in the history of human imagery. In Western cultures, it probably dates back to Ancient Greece, when the mythological figure of Talos may be considered as the first artificial creature invented with a purpose, and has been followed by an almost uninterrupted tradition of similar creations in human narratives, long before the name Robot was invented by Čapek in the XX century.

Artificial intelligences have been represented in all different kinds of narratives: from cinema to literature to visual arts and in museums, and in all sociocultural environments. Recent research shows how these narratives have a profound influence on the real world, on the creation of an ecosystem of concepts and images and even in addressing the choices of scientific studies (Cave et al., 2019). Also, they tend to reproduce and reinforce gender and race stereotypes and prejudices we are imbued with (Cave et al., 2020).





At the same time, AI is not only the focus of a narration, it is the device that can produce it. Structural and functional studies are at the basis of the debate that widespread over the last century on the use of strategies and devices to create stories, that anticipate contemporary chat bot productions (Columbia University, 2022).

The aim of this panel is to focus on the manifold aspects that presents literary AI and on the intersections that may arise from these reflections, both in Italian and International contexts.

Abstracts may refer, among other aspects, to:

- **Artificial intelligence in museum exhibitions:** AI is now integrated into the creation of numerous museum exhibitions; it opens up the possibility of creating virtual narratives and even different narrative paths in the exhibition spaces, which thus become plastic, moldable by visitors themselves. This flexibility, and the possibility of integrating individual creativity into a previously predefined space, lead to a new way of enjoying the museum visit and, probably, even to reviewing the very concept of exhibition.
- **Artificial intelligence in the history of literature:** it is possible to reconstruct imaginaries, paths, narratives, through thematic, diachronic, monographic, formal and structural points of view, considering different declinations of literary experience, from science fiction genre literature to institutional literature, from modernist-derived experimentalism to avant-garde and research elaboration.
- **Artificial intelligence as a tool:** tools to guide the creation of literary products have been widespread for over a century. These increasingly sophisticated tools raise important questions about the concepts of authorship, art, individual creation and the creative process. Reflections can be developed through technical, ethical and artistic perspectives.
- **Pedagogy of artificial intelligence:** with the increasingly pervasive diffusion of AI in the world of education, pedagogy reflects on its own epistemic foundation, on the role of AI in mediating the relationship between learning and teaching, on the new vision of reality that they transmit and which cannot be ignored in the educational process.

Panel III. Machine and Language: Models, Interaction Issues and Learning [Anna Rinaldin, Mirko Tavosanis]

The linguistic potential of artificial intelligence tools has been improving more and more over the last few years (see Tavosanis 2018). Language models (LM), based on statistical and



probabilistic techniques of algorithms, have led machines to acquire the ability to understand and generate language based on the different inputs received (one of the best-known language models is Open AI's ChatGPT).

These systems can be exploited for different applications, including the creation of posts, comments, news, the structuring of a dialogue and, more generally, in areas that cover almost any sector of knowledge, such as law, literature, marketing, finance (that is the natural language processing, or NLP; see Jurafsky-Martin 2009²; Russell-Norvig 2010³).

Linguistic models such as Chat GPT are able to produce texts based on the linguistic varieties, which - in summary - are language variations in relation to 1. history, 2. geographical space (i.e. dialects and regional varieties), 3. the medium, i.e. orality, writing, typed Italian, etc., 4. the biographical condition of the speaker or writer, 5. the register and purpose of the message. Alongside the varieties, we will focus on the types of text, and on the distinction between standard Italian and neo standard Italian (for Italian - which is our case study - see at least Sabatini 1985; Berruto 1987 e 2012; Serianni-Antonelli 2011; Antonelli 2016).

In reference to these premises, the panel intends to consider a series of study possibilities:

- the characteristics of the Italian produced by the systems;
- the quality in the reproduction of linguistic varieties, which reflect the rich linguistic - and therefore cultural and geographical - Italian diversity with many facets;
- the quality of metalinguistic skills and grammatical evaluations in a broad sense;
- the advantages and limitations of the systems, such as applications to learning contexts;
- linguistic applications of AI in professional and non-professional contexts.

Panel IV. Artificial Music: Limits, Opportunities and Perceptions [Alessandra Micalizzi, Massimiliano Zanoni]

The history of music production is strictly interwoven with the technological evolution. This contamination leads to the birth of new styles (of production), genres, new instruments and above all new ways of conceiving creation and outputs.

However, even in the Sound Studies we can find controversial positions about the dialog among techniques, technologies, and artistic processes. With the advent of AI, we assist to





the split and the separated evolutions of practices, consciously contaminated by techs, and the reflective debate on authorship in which the first point is to define correctly what an AI production is. This question is linked to the several opportunities of collaboration between human creativity process and the deep machine: AI could be simply a tool to perfectionate an artefact produced by the artist, or it could substitute completely his human partner.

The panel aims at collecting studies, art-based research, theoretical reflexions that can contribute to articulate the debate around and about the role of AI in music production.

The flipside of the production is the consumption of music. Papers about the perceptions of both lay or professional listeners are extremely welcomed in order to construct, thanks to contributors, a complete scenario.

We encourage to junior and senior scholars, PhD students, fellows as well as artists to present their proposal, calling for papers from a multidisciplinary background.

Possible topics, but not exclusive ones, are:

- **Ontological issues of Creativity in Artificial Music.** The concept of creativity is often linked with the idea of uniqueness and talent. Artificial music is the result of an electronic process based on algorithms that are in some cases not explorable, not understandable in their logics. Which are the implications in redefining the concept of creativity? How does it impact on the definition of the new form of creativity?
- **Authorship and Artificial Music.** We can highlight the same considerations in the case of the concept of authorship: these new creative processes what can be considered “art” and whom it could be attributed to?
- **New practices and new products.** Practices and experiments by artists, producers, and scientists confirm that is going to be defined a new music scenario of cultural products, environment, and processes. What are the new standards achievable? Which figures and skills are requested? With which consequences on the outputs?
- **Experiencing Artificial Music.** If we consider the process from the other side, we intercept users’ practices and perceptions. The main questions in this case are: are they conscious of this transformation in the music industry? With which implications? And what are their opinion/perceptions? Which are the consequences, for example, in exploring new genres, construct personal tastes, recognize the “economic” value of music productions? Are they worries and why?



Panel V. New Gaze Era: Digital Images, Visual Effects and Audiovisual Products [Lenonardo Galtieri, Corrado Santoro]

Over the time, different Gaze Era have succeeded (Cipolla, 2013), within which different Gaze Cultures have taken shape (Boccia Artieri, 2018). For several decades, images have dominated the production of bottom-up contents, privileging synthetic communication over analytical one, that is typical of written cultures. Visual studies have repeatedly highlighted the controversial nature of images, especially photographs and those captured by cameras: on the one hand, some authors consider them a form of witness, while on the other hand, some scholars stress their way of being representations of reality. This is the background of many studies that focus the attention on creative productions that use visual language as an expressive form, considering the latest contaminations with techniques, practices, and procedures that also involve artificial intelligence. These artifact are surely forms of art expressions; but, at the same time, they "creep" into everyday life, contributing to the circulation of deep fakes. At the same time, drawing from our cultural imagination, they constitute an interesting analytical example, providing representations, highlighting biases, and offering a snapshot of our visual culture and of our Gaze Era.

Students, doctoral candidates, experts, artists, and scholars are invited to submit studies and research that fit within this framework of meaning. The focus is particularly on:

- The relationship between artificial images and creativity.
- The evolution of visual language with the contribution of AI.
- The effects of artificial visual production on user imaginaries.
- Present and future scenarios that emerge in the realm of creative media, thanks to the integration of images (static or in motion) produced by AI into productive and discursive practices.
- A critical reflection on available Visual AI and short-term and long-term developments.

The Event is supported by:

