Aesthetics of Digital Image Syntheses (Klagenfurt, 7–9 Nov 24)

University of Klagenfurt, Institute for Cultural Analysis, Visual Culture Unit, Nov 7–09, 2024
Deadline: Jun 15, 2024

ArtHist.net Redaktion, University of Klagenfurt, Institute for Cultural Analysis

Aesthetics of digital image syntheses: Genealogies, styles, practices.

Concept and organization: Univ. Prof. Dr. Anna Schober-de Graaf, DI Dr. Martina Tritthart and Mag. Florian Gucher.

The conference relates the research fields of visual studies, art history, art theory and aesthetics to artificial intelligence. Current approaches to image science and artistic research in these fields will be examined in relation to current phenomena of digital image generation by AI in popular visual culture and art. In addition to the production and the aesthetic manifestation, the reception and the situations in which images created in this way are used will also be discussed.
The aesthetics of AI-generated images are characterized by the use of images, image fragments and data provided by “prosumers” (who are both consumers and producers), artists, designers and other creatives, as well as commercial providers. New experimental approaches and innovative techniques are emerging that often lead to surprising and unpredictable results due to algorithms that can adapt, change and both use and deal with rule-breaking through interaction with their data, which cannot always be understood by experts. The conference will focus on analyzing the aesthetics and the various styles of representation and image patterns produced by AI and on critically examining the potential impact of technology on the art world, society and our understanding of the world and creativity in general. In addition, we will discuss ethical questions, legal issues of authorship and data protection as well as the transformation of the working environment in the creative industries.
We are especially interested in the following topics:

- Pictorial traditions that are preferentially taken up in digital image practices
- Aesthetic accentuations, patterns and styles that are created in the course of the AI generation of images
- the dominance of “digital realism” and which alternative styles of representation can be identified in contrast to this
- the proximity of digital imagery to “kitsch” and in general the relationship between reception and (aesthetic) education
- the various possible roles and functions that AI-based technologies take on in the creation of artworks
- the dependence of production on the often fee-based programs

- the “orderability” (Jacob Birken) of digital images
- “Dreaming” programs, the relationship between realism and surrealism
- the variety of applications that are possible in creative process design
- Challenges in evaluating AI-generated art in comparison to human creativity, the relationship between man and machine
- socially dominant and marginal locations and situations for these aesthetic creations
- the changing relationship between body, language and image
- art and “post-digital” culture (Florian Cramer)

Confirmed keynote speakers are: Jacob Birken (University of Cologne), Florian Cramer (Rotterdam University of Applied Sciences/ Hogeschool Rotterdam), Krešimir Purgar (Strossmayer University in Osijek), Birgit Mersmann (University of Bonn), Lotte Philipsen (Aarhus University), Antonio Somaini (Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris), Nina Lager Vestberg (Norwegian University of Science and Technology)

Please send proposals with a short bio (2-3 lines) and an exposé (max. 400 words) for approx. 20-minute presentations from the above-mentioned range of topics to Anna Schober de Graaf (anna.schober@aau.at), Martina Tritthart (martina.tritthart@aau.at) and Florian Gucher (Florian.gucher@aau.at).

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