Image Style Transfer using VGG Neural Network

Abstract

Image style transfer is a deep learning technique for blending the content of one image with the style of another. The output is a new image with the same content as the original content image, but with the style of the style image. This can be achieved by using neural networks to separate and recombine the content and style features of the images.

Image style transfer is an important research content related to image processing in computer vision. Compared with traditional artificial computing methods, deep learning-based convolutional neural networks have powerful advantages. This new method has high computational efficiency and a good style transfer effect. Pre-trained VGG-19 (Visual Geometry Group) neural network models are used to achieve image style transfer.

The main applications of this project are:

1. **Artistic expression**: creating unique and visually appealing images by combining the content of one image with the style of a painting or a famous artist's work.

2. **Graphic design:** using style transfer to generate various design variations and logos.

3. **Photography:** editing photos to give them a desired aesthetic or mood.

4. **Film and video production:** transferring style from reference images to create a consistent visual style for a film or video project.

5. **Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality:** adding artistic styles to VR and AR experiences to enhance their visual appeal.

6. **Printing and publishing:** using style transfer to automatically generate visually appealing layouts and designs for books, magazines, and other printed materials.

The main features of this project are:

1. Use of VGG-19 as a pre-trained convolutional neural network
2. Transfer of style from a reference image to a content image
3. Use of a loss function to optimize image generation
4. Combination of content and style losses for overall transfer
5. Generation of a unique, stylized image that preserves content features.

Observation on research papers

There are mainly three popular approaches for image style transfer they are:

- Image Style Transfer via VGG-19/VGG-16
- Image Style Transfer via GAN
- Image Style Transfer via CAST Framework

Observations	Image Style Transfer via VGG-16	Image Style Transfer via GAN	Image Style Transfer via CAST Framework
Definition	Image Style Transfer via VGG-16 is a deep learning approach for performing style transfer between two images. It uses a pre-trained VGG-16 convolutional neural network (CNN) as the basis for performing the style transfer.	Image Style Transfer via GAN (Generative Adversarial Network) is a deep learning approach for performing style transfer between two images. It uses a GAN, which consists of two neural networks, a generator and a discriminator, to perform the style transfer.	Image Style Transfer via CAST (Contrastive Arbitrary Style Transfer) Framework is a deep learning approach for transferring the style of one image to another image. It is a multi-stage framework that uses contrastive learning to perform style transfer.
Model Used	VGG-16 (Visual Geometry Group) neural network	GAN (Generative Adversarial Network)	Various models including NST, AdaIN, LST, SANet, ArtFlow, MCCNet, AdaAttN and IEST
Dataset Used and implementation	ImageNet Dataset is called as parameter for VGG-16 during training phase.	LIVE Dataset is used for training the discriminator but for near to optimum result experiments where conducted using D-Hazy,O-Haze,RESIDE and FRIDA2 Dataset.	WikiArt of 10000 Artistic images and Places365 of 20000 realistic images in 256x256 resolution is used to train different neural networks in CAST framework.
Strength	Simple and straightforward approach. The model is well-established and widely used in computer vision. Good at preserving the content of the image while transferring the style.	Can generate diverse and creative style transfer results. Good at preserving the content of the image while transferring the style.	Improved control over the style transfer process. Ability to handle a wide range of styles and domains. Improved ability to preserve fine details in the image. Improved ability to handle diverse styles simultaneously. Improved ability to maintain semantic consistency in the transferred image.

*Note: The concept of the VGG19 model (also VGGNet-19) is the same as the VGG16 except that it supports 19 layers. The "16" and "19" stand for the number of weight layers in the model (convolutional layers). This means that **VGG19 has three more convolutional layers than VGG16.***

Observations	Image Style Transfer via VGG-16	Image Style Transfer via GAN	Image Style Transfer via CAST Framework
Weakness	Results in a style transfer that is not as diverse or as flexible as other methods. Quality of the transferred image may be limited by the quality of the original image and style image.	Training GANs can be computationally expensive and time-consuming. Quality of the transferred image may be limited by the quality of the training dataset.	Computationally expensive compared to some other approaches. The success of the transfer process is heavily dependent on the quality of the initial image and the style image.
Reference Papers	Improved Image Style Transfer Based on VGG-16 Convolutional Neural Network Model	Style Transfer with Generative Adversarial Networks	Domain Enhanced Arbitrary Image Style Transfer via Contrastive Learning
	Published in: The 2nd International Conference On Algorithms, Network And Computer Technology (Icanct2023)	**Published in:** Seconda Sessione di Laurea Anno Accademico 2017 – 2018	**Published in:** SIGGRAPH '22 Conference Proceedings, August 7–11, 2022, Vancouver, BC, Canada
	Author: Chenhao Shu and Xichuan Hu	**Author:** Prof. Davide Maltoni, Gabriele Graffieti	**Author:** Yuxin Zhang, Fan Tang, Weiming Dong, Haibin Huang, Chongyang Ma, Tong-Yee Lee, Changsheng Xu

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17