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AP Computer Science A

Ms. Sheikh

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Mondrian Art Questions

Art Title: Sunset at the Beach

I used the principle of recursion to create my image. Each new rectangle is created using the same ruleset as the previous, larger rectangle it came from. In other words, each new rectangle was a new instance of the rectangles before it, but on a smaller scale. I knew when to stop, and where my destination, which was how many times I wanted to split the rectangles. My recursive call was continuously splitting the rectangles into the final picture and coloring it afterwards.

I would write a program for this purpose by having it create all the vertical lines and then horizontal lines. The next step would be for the program to then repeat these actions, because as new rectangles are split, lines need to be drawn again for further detail. Once the desired image has been created, the program would color in each rectangle according to the intended design.

The copyright credit would undoubtedly go to the programmer/creator. The software may have physically created the art, and the CPU may have configured the memory to reach the website and save the picture file, but it did not create the idea. If the CPU had the copyright, then that standalone CPU would be the only unit in the world to own that piece of art, which is fundamentally ridiculous. The art is the programmer’s intellectual property, and thus belongs to him or her.

A computer does not have artificial life just because it creates a replica of art. That is a form of probability of recursive actions. There are a technically finite number of arrangements because the rectangles would become so small, it would not contribute to the bigger picture. A similar example would be a seemingly infinite series converging to a finite value. If a computer happens to stop at a piece of art identical to an artist’s, there is no sense of intelligence or thought involved in the process.

Given that computers are much faster and more thorough than a person, it is understandable that creating identical Mondrian art would diminish the person’s accomplishments. However, I feel that the process of realizing that art is where the beauty is. Abstract art has no literal meaning other than perceived or felt beauty. A program that creates Mondrian art just draws out of its ruleset, not with value or artistic focus.