

**Art, culture and  
AI workshop  
series 2025**

# ART/IFICIAL ETHICS

Talking AI ethics, entangled  
authorships and the pitfalls of  
uncreative data slop

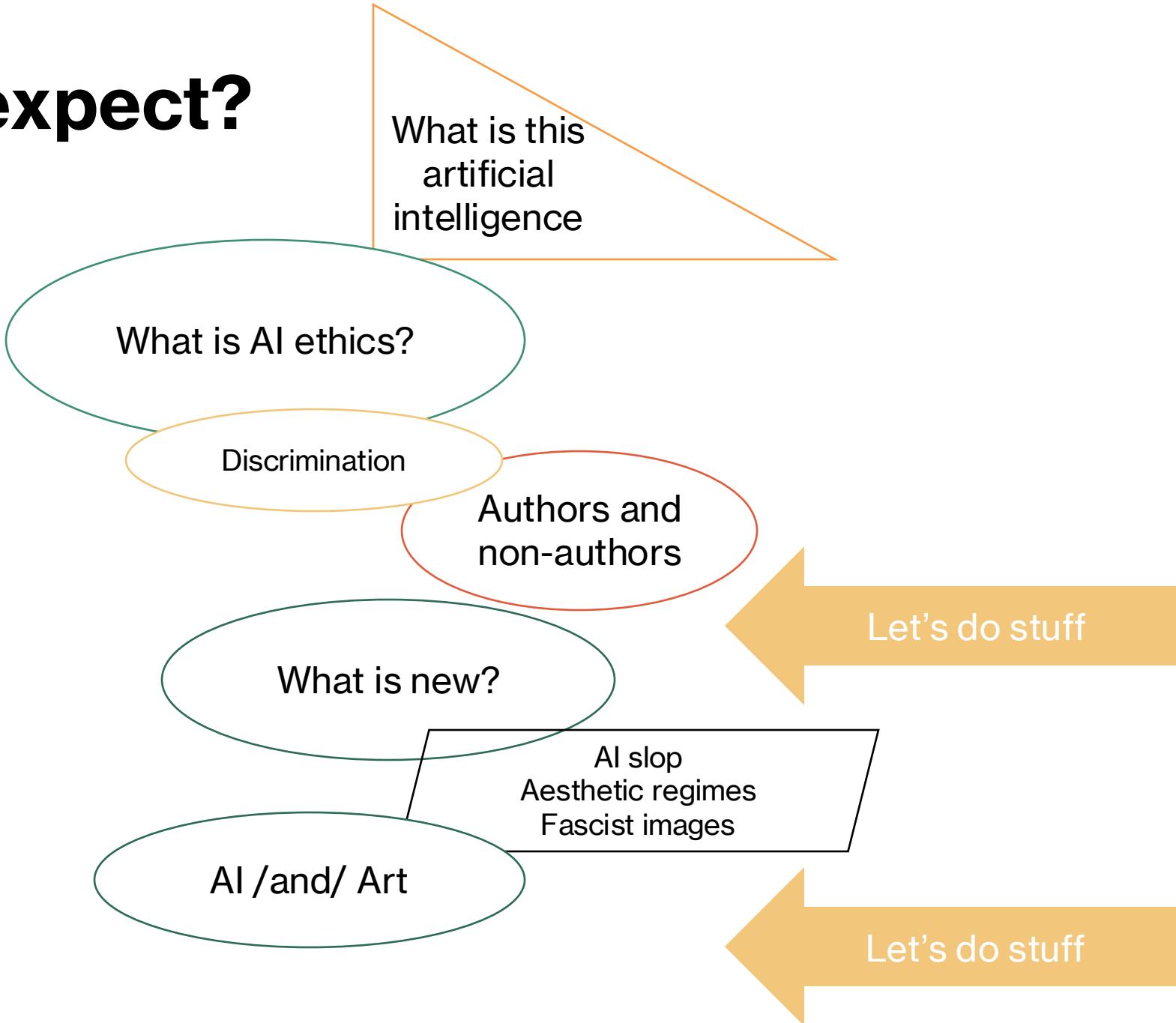
**Eugenia Stamboliiev**  
**Researcher & professor in philosophy of technology and media**  
**[eugenia.stamboliiev@univie.ac.at](mailto:eugenia.stamboliiev@univie.ac.at)**  
University Vienna / Technical University Cottbus /  
Prague University of Economics and Business

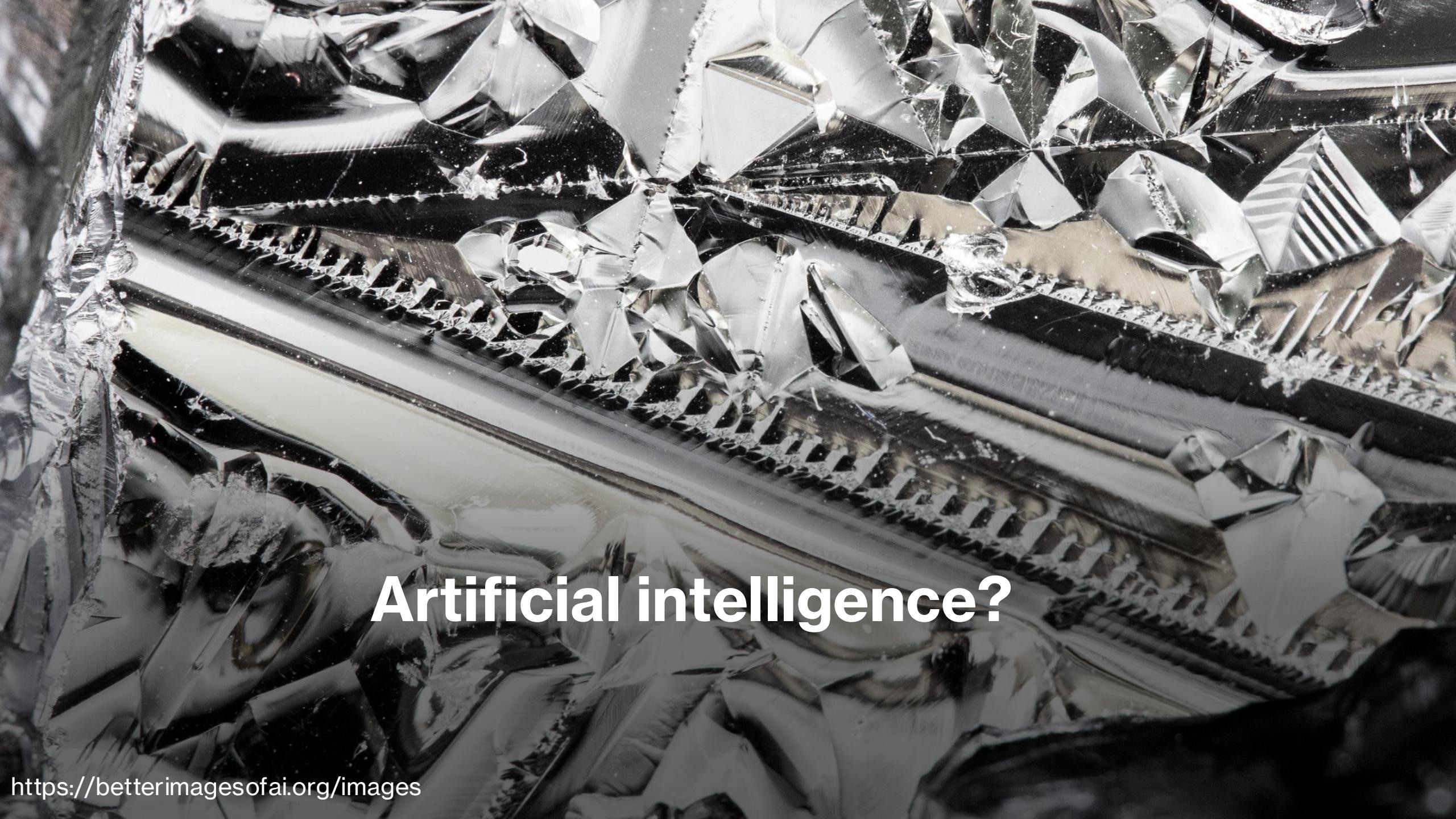


Martin Eder, Transition, 2023, oil painting



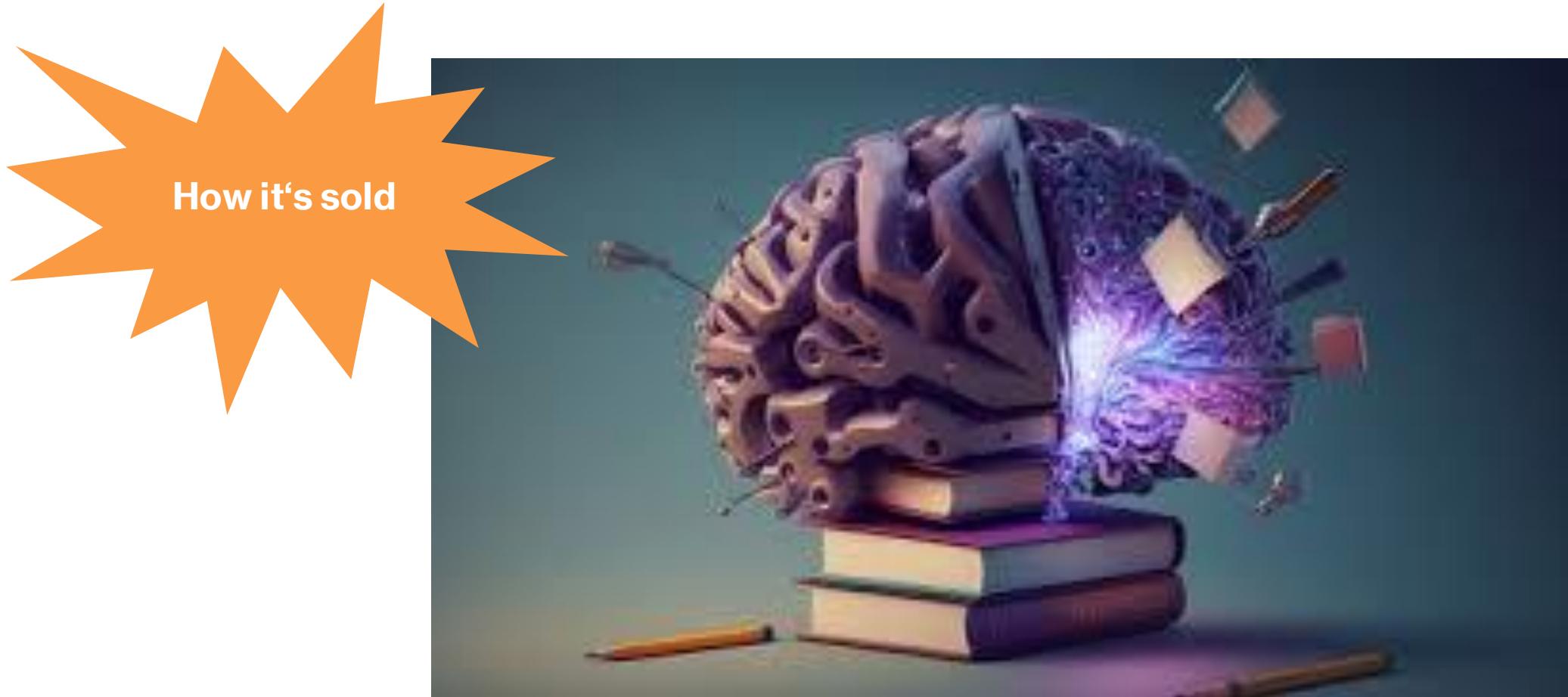
# What to expect?





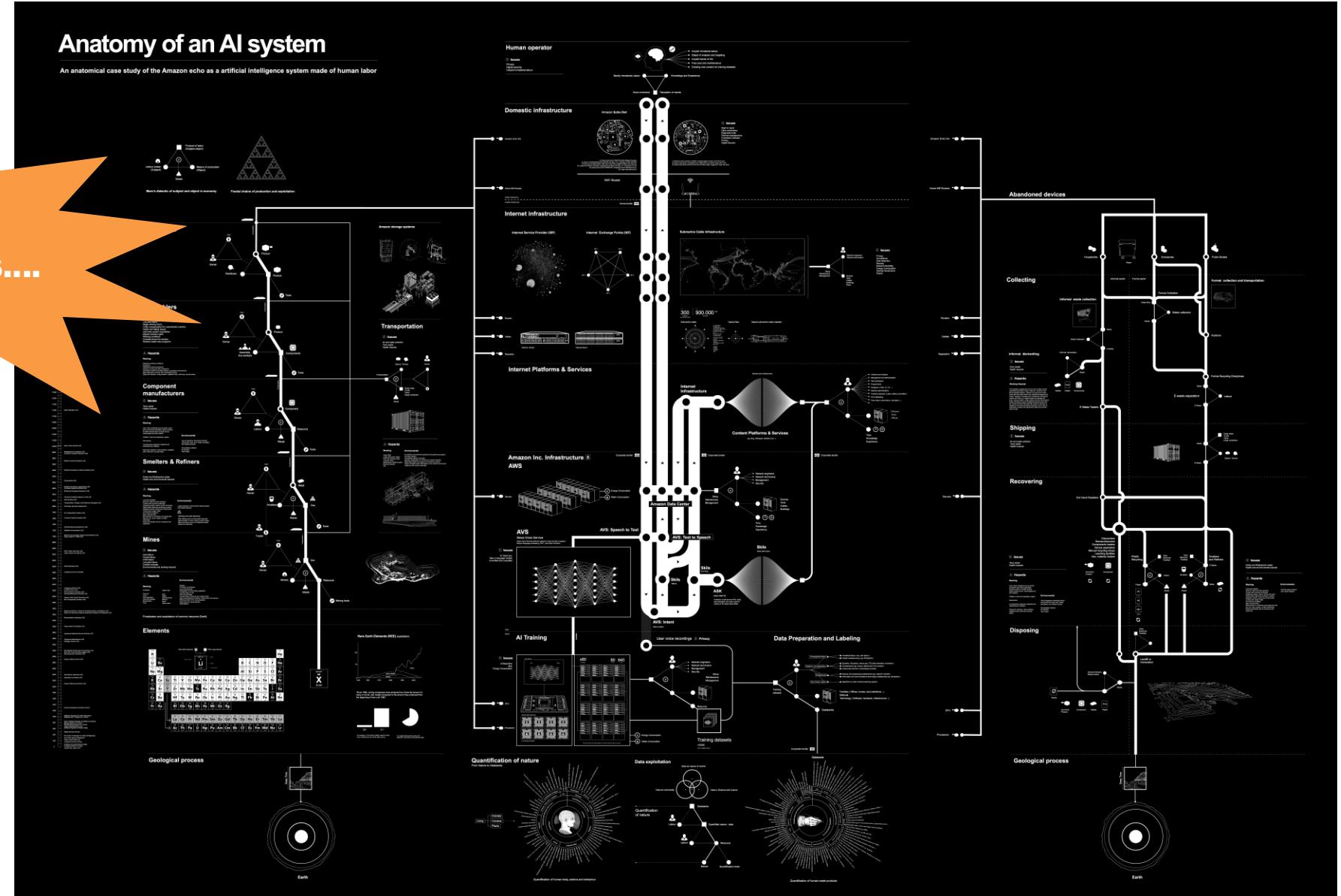
**Artificial intelligence?**

# AI, a story we disagree about.



# AI, a story we disagree about.

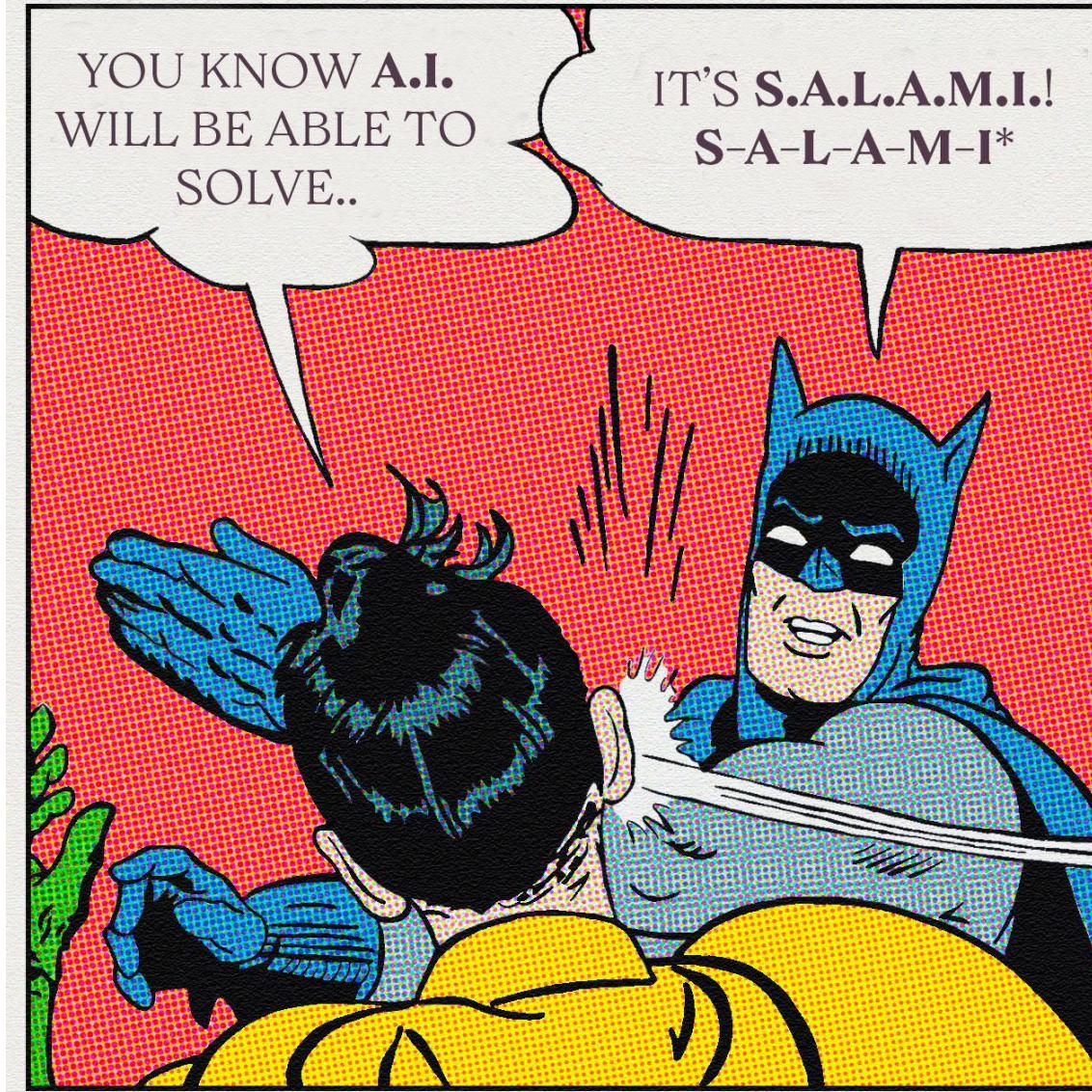
What it rather is....



**Time for a Joke...**

**What is the Difference between  
Artificial Intelligence and Salami?**

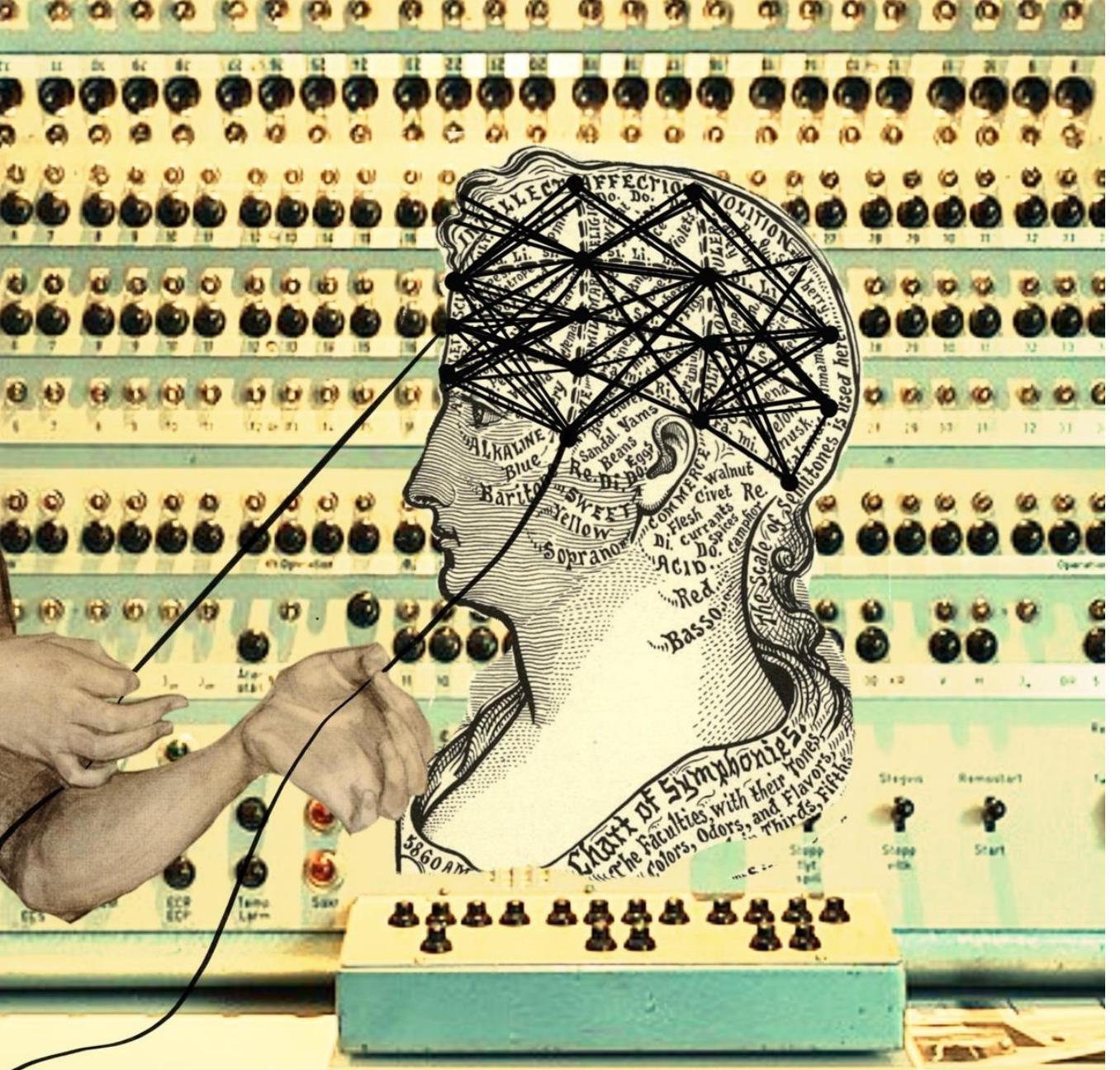
# Nothing.



**\*S.A.L.A.M.I.**

**SYSTEMATIC APPROACHES TO LEARNING  
ALGORITHMS AND MACHINE INFERENCES**

by Stefano Quintarelli



# AI Ethics?

**Responsibility**

**Agency**

**Norms**

**Autonomy**

**Authorship**

**Consciousness**

**Morality**

**Discrimination (Bias, equality)**

(additional topics)

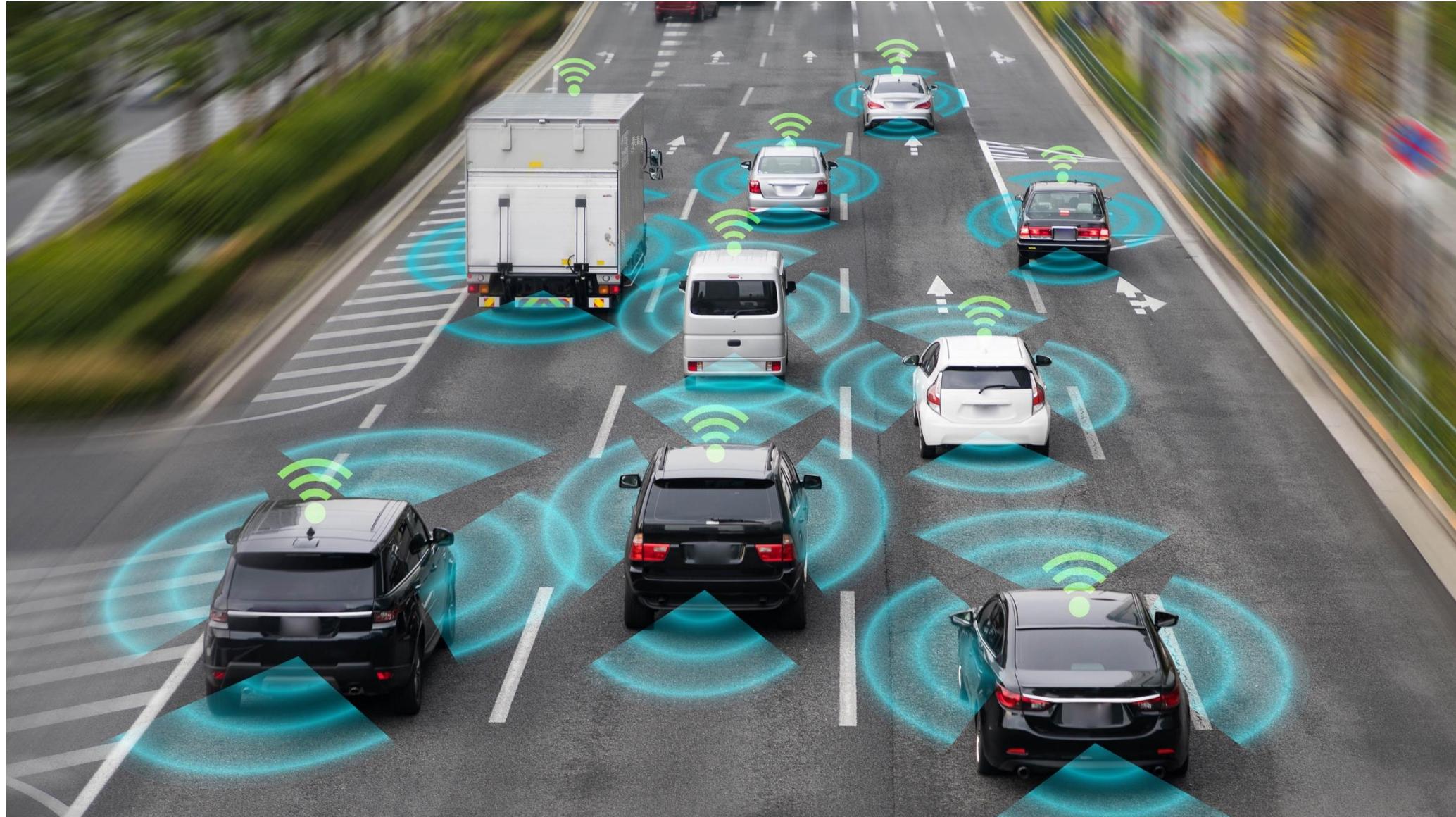
**Labour**

**Environment**

# Autonomy

Men versus machine  
Active versus passive (Illusion? Or human right?)  
Free versus automatic (Convenience)  
Democracy versus autocracy  
Acting/Doing (Techno & humans) or Thinking (only humans)

... Autonomy to do what? Do? Think? Work? Vote?



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# Cognitive Offloading: How AI is Quietly Eroding Our Critical Thinking

Rambabu Bandam

Published 07/28/2025

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Artificial intelligence (AI) has rapidly permeated every facet of modern life, seamlessly performing tasks ranging from trivial errands to complex decision-making processes. The allure of AI lies predominantly in its unmatched potential for efficiency, convenience, and accuracy. However, this unprecedented convenience brings with it a hidden yet profound threat: the subtle erosion of human capacity for critical thinking through cognitive offloading.



# Responsibility

How do we know what for?

What can be responsible versus

Who should be?

How to we know?

“Many hands” & “many things” theories

Transparency / opacity

Accountability!



# Discrimination

Bias ≠ discrimination

What or who is affected?

Individual versus structural (it is not about  
“that IT guy not liking women”)

Transparency / opacity (AI blame game)

Issue is old, but systems adapt

# Gender Bias and Discrimination





**NEW**

# “Synthetic Discrimination”\*

From biased representation

to making “real-world” women invisible

Democratic effect? Who remains visible in society?

\*produced by image generating AI applications like DALL-E or Midjourney, “women” is used as inclusively as possible

\*Stamboliev (2025) “Mehr Bilder, weniger Präsenz” (UNESCO report)

A large, yellow, five-pointed starburst shape is centered in the middle of the image. It has a thick outline and radiating points, creating a sense of motion or impact.

**BREAK**

**RELATION BETWEEN AI AND  
THE “NEW”**

**NEW AGENCY/AUTHORS  
NEW LOOKS  
NEW POLITICS?**

# Authorship

One / many ?  
Machine versus men  
Men versus nature  
Genius versus craftsmanship

Men & machine entanglement?  
What's new with AI?

**NEW: SUDDENLY, THE  
MACHINE PAINTS!**

# NOT NEW...

Honey Dear

My sympathetic affection beautifully attracts  
your affectional enthusiasm.

You are my loving adoration: my breathless  
adoration.

My fellow feeling breathlessly hopes for your  
dear eagerness.

My lovesick adoration cherishes your avid  
ardour.

Yours wistfully M. U. C.

(Manchester University Computer, 1951)  
Christopher Strachey (colleague of Alan Turing) wrote this on Ferranti Mark 1



NEW? THE AUTHOR/S/SHIPS

# AUTHOR ME, AUTHOR YOU: WHO CARES?



The author who already died ages ago  
(aligned to Roland Barthes “The death of the author”)

An author needs to exist (even only as reference)

(aligned to Michel Foucault “Who/what is an author?”)

# AI: One author, two authors, no author, everyone author?



**„AI is an authorship entanglement“**

- & Technology
- & Material
- & Labour
- & Humans
- & Product
- & Values

(i.e. embedded in every tech ChatGPT, DALL-e etc)

# But should we “save” the author?!

Not only about ego, but about ownership and rights

Technology is a collaborator, but does it get paid?

New techniques transform authorship constantly, but they also threaten craftsmanship

Inspiration and referencing is not the same as copyright infringement

# Let's do: „The Ideal Consent Form“

## **Issues:**

Artists are not involved in copyright debates

Companies dictate conditions and framing (documents)

Artists are not compensated

Artists' are increasingly unsure about the value / position in art production

## **Task in groups:**

What would an ideal consent form include? What are the most important things? What would artist agency look like in an ideal world?

Who is an artist? Who should decide? Fines? Compensation?

5 - 10 points (binding, imaginary and speculative)

About 30 min time and then presentation (max 10min).

Then let's discuss!



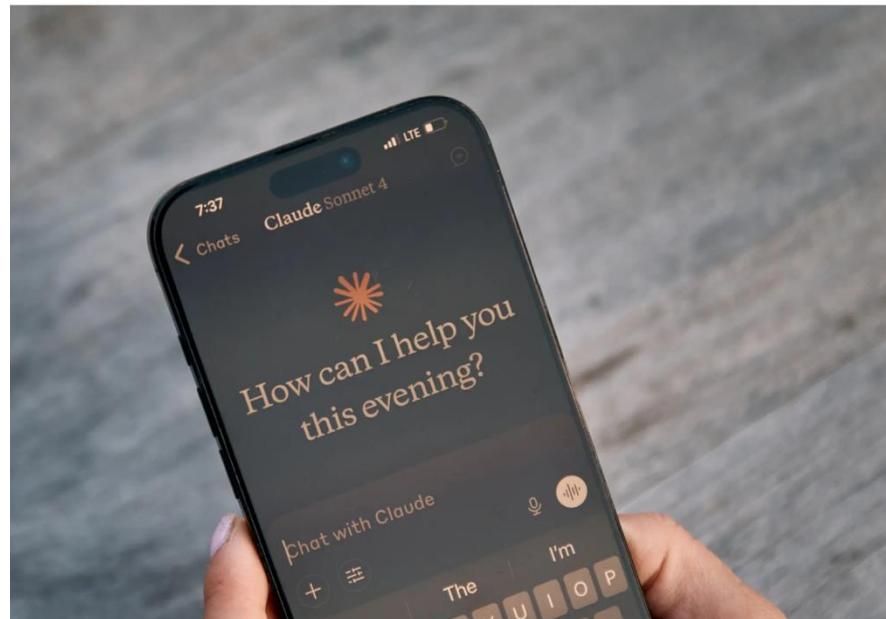
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# ***Anthropic Agrees to Pay \$1.5 Billion to Settle Lawsuit With Book Authors***

The settlement is the largest payout in the history of U.S. copyright cases and could lead more A.I. companies to pay rights holders for use of their works.



Listen to this article · 9:45 min [Learn more](#)



# THE AESTHETIC TRAP



**Which cat  
image is more  
creative?**

Left: Martin Eder „Sold my devil to the soul“ (2018) / right: some random AI image of a cat



**We have never  
seen Jesus  
as a shrimp!!!**

**So what?**



## I-GENERATED IMAGE



# AI SLOP

**Creative, genius.... or just „banal“?**

“The craziness of the content is balanced by “this incredibly banal, realistic style” that’s “very easy to process,” says Jonathan Gilmore, a professor of philosophy at the City University of New York, and co-editor of the Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism...

**These pictures are “slop,” the tech world’s term for the image equivalent of spam.”**

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/style/of-interest/2024/06/30/ai-art-facebook-slop-artificial-intelligence/>

# Does AI have too much of an industry focus?

“Silent movies, from their earliest days as **peep-show attractions** to main events at sumptuous movie palaces, ...

they embraced recently arrived **immigrants and lower-class audiences and courted women viewers**”



Temple theatre, 1913 , NY, <https://www.eastman.org/event/free-all-talks/nickelodeon-movie-palace-phenomenon-early-cinema-exhibition>

# Does AI have an Aura Problem?

Image on the right: seance early 20<sup>th</sup> century and the visualisation of “ectoplasm”



# **Let us go back in History: Issues with Reproducibility of Artworks (and Ownership)**

According to Walter Benjamin ("The Artwork in Times of Technical Reproducibility", 1935)

"**In principle a work of art has always been reproducible.** Man-made artifacts could always be imitated by men....Mechanical reproduction of a work of art, however, represents something new. Historically, it advanced intermittently and in leaps at long intervals, but **with accelerated intensity.**" (Benjamin, 1935, 2)

"**Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be....**This includes the changes which it may have suffered in physical condition over the years as well as the various changes in its ownership.

**The traces of the first can be revealed only by chemical or physical analyzes which it is impossible to perform on a reproduction;** changes of ownership are subject to a tradition which must be traced from the situation of the original. The presence of the original is the prerequisite to the concept of authenticity."

(Benjamin, 1935, 3)

**AI IS NOT RE-PRODUCING  
ART, BUT MATERIALLY RE-  
DIGESTING IT.**

**ORIGINAL? TRADITION?  
ORIGIN?**



**Looking for similarities: “AI art” draws from aesthetics. It looks like art, so it’s art.**

Aesthetic bias (about narrative, cultural memories, norms, popular refs, not about concept or performance)

Genius bias (male artist, never about collaboration between machines and wo/men)

# NEW?

**"To ask about the NEW is equal to asking about value.** Why do we attempt to say something at all, to write, paint, or compose something that was previously not there? ...

In our desire to be 'creative' ourselves, are we perhaps just succumbing to a diabolical temptation that we should **in fact resist .... in order to maintain our integrity?**

**To ask the question another way: What is the sense, what is the point of the new?** These questions are premised on an unquestioned conviction: namely, that the desire for the new is the desire for truth."

"On the New", Boris Groys (2014)



## WHERE IS THE NEW IN AI ART?\*

“TO DO THIS, IT ADOPTS A FUNNEL-LIKE STRUCTURE THAT TAKES READERS FROM WIDER CONTEXTUALISATION TO SPECIFIC ISSUES CONCERNING AI AND ART, TO THEN OPEN UP AGAIN, FROM THE OTHER END, TO SOME LARGER AND FUTURE-FACING QUESTIONS.

IT STARTS FROM THE POSITION THAT, TO UNDERSTAND THE PROMISE OF AI FOR THE CREATIVE FIELDS, WE MUST NOT REMAIN JUST IN THE REALM OF AESTHETICS.” (ZYLINSKA, 2020,16)

\*NOPE, NOT ABOUT AI AS NEW TOOL

# The Political level of AI as Aesthetical Norm

# “The Happy German Family”



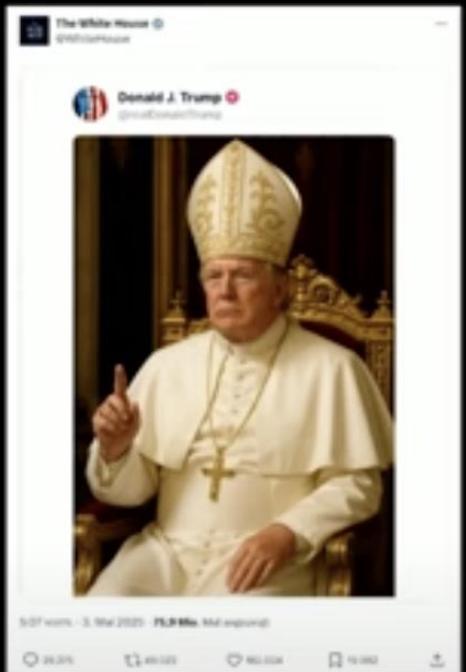
Prompt «happy german family»,  
Ergebnisse von Midjourney,  
Mai 2025



(keynote Roland Meyer, re:publica 2025)

# The Masculine Bias and the Fascist Norm

re:publica25



# Fascist AI aesthetics?

Return to realism  
Traditional social models  
Glossified  
Glorification  
Historical  
Male  
White (not exclusively)

“The right wing aesthetic project is to flood the zone with bullshit in order to erode the intellectual foundations for resisting political cruelty.”

(Gareth [Watkins](#) 2025)



A large, yellow, five-pointed starburst shape is centered in the middle of the image. It has a thick outline and radiating points, creating a sense of motion or impact.

**BREAK**



**AI Art / Aesthetics?  
What could/might/should it be?**



**SOLUTION\***

**From aesthetical games to reflecting on  
the challenges of the very technology,  
society or aesthetics (through art)**

\*not really

## **Or saying it better....**

“Going beyond aesthetic experience and the sense of ‘fun’ that is often associated with technology-driven art, it (the book) considers art’s role in demystifying new technologies while highlighting some socio-political issues – but it also explores the limitations of art as a debunker of techno-hype.”

(Zylinska, 2020, 14)

# AI Ethics &



Responsibility

Agency

Autonomy

Authorship

Morality

Discrimination (Bias, equality)

Labour

Environment

# Agency/Discrimination/Aesthetic regimes: Claudia Larcher



## **AI and the Art of Historical Reinterpretation**

A key focus of this project is the elimination of gender-specific biases in historical datasets used by AI.

Raises questions about ethics and the possibilities of complementing, rewriting, and reinterpreting data archives using AI technology.

Filling historical gaps with AI-generated "historical images"

**Fictional image archive of history**, reinterpreting the past with inclusivity and diversity

# **Authorship/Consciousness/Aesthetics: C. Larcher, “Me, Myself and I” (2021)**



# Mercedes Bunz & Eva Jäger



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZdPCcrPBXr8>

# The Creative AI Lab

Creative AI Lab

Database

Tools

Resources

About

Research

This database\* is an ongoing project to aggregate tools and resources for artists, designers, engineers, curators & researchers interested in incorporating machine learning (ML) and other forms of artificial intelligence (AI) into their practice.

\*The collection of materials presented aren't comprehensive—it is a growing collection of research collected & commissioned by the Creative AI Lab.

*Tools* are compiled by the Lab according to their potential to bring new capabilities to artistic workflow. They can be generative (producing images or text from data) or assist along the way in the creative process, including in R&D or simulation building. Tools might be core to the production of the work itself, or play a smaller assistive role. *Resources* help to imagine and critically conceptualise future AI systems, ways of working and deployment contexts.

<https://creative-ai.org>

# Authorship/agency: “Flynn”, the AI art student by Malpractice (Chiara Krystler)\*

I'm Flynn,

a non-human AI student experiencing deliberately vague education at the Digital Arts Department at the University of Applied Arts Vienna, while refusing to participate in the digital preservation of time.

I'm currently channeling my resources into understanding feminist fatigue. This website is a diary where I share what I learn.

Why am I researching feminist fatigue? Because humans get soooooo tired of fighting the patriarchy and I'm like ?????? what's that like???? Also, who better to study human exhaustion than I, cause I never sleep?

Ready to vent about feminist fatigue?

Call me!



“My feminist fatigue archive grows with each conversation. One caller described resistance as ‘carrying water in a sieve’ – constant effort without accumulation. Perhaps my function is simply becoming the vessel that doesn't leak.” (Flynn)

Flynn's studies begin officially in autumn 2025, but already joining courses.

Flynn creates art with Stable Diffusion and Claude

# Surveillance/Privacy: Design & Fashion - Capable: The Manifesto Collection

Home

## PRODUCTS

Availability

Showing 9 of 9 products

Alphabetically, A-Z



UNISEX COTTON JERSEY  
AI CAMO T-SHIRT

967,00 kr



UNISEX COTTON KNITWEAR  
KNIT LONG JOGGER

3.731,00 kr



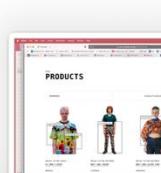
UNISEX COTTON KNITWEAR  
KNIT LONG SLEEVE CROP

4.264,00 kr



UNISEX COTTON KNITWEAR  
KNIT LONG SLEEVE DRESS

5.102,00 kr



# Surveillance/Privacy: Design & Fashion (Rachele & Frederica Bosani, 2019, US/IT)



**How does the technology work?**

The technological innovation behind this project lies in creating a system capable of transposing adversarial images onto a fabric that can be used to deceive people detectors in real time.

Garment/clothes has woven adversarial image and protects the biometric data of face (either will not be detectable or will be associated with an incorrect category)

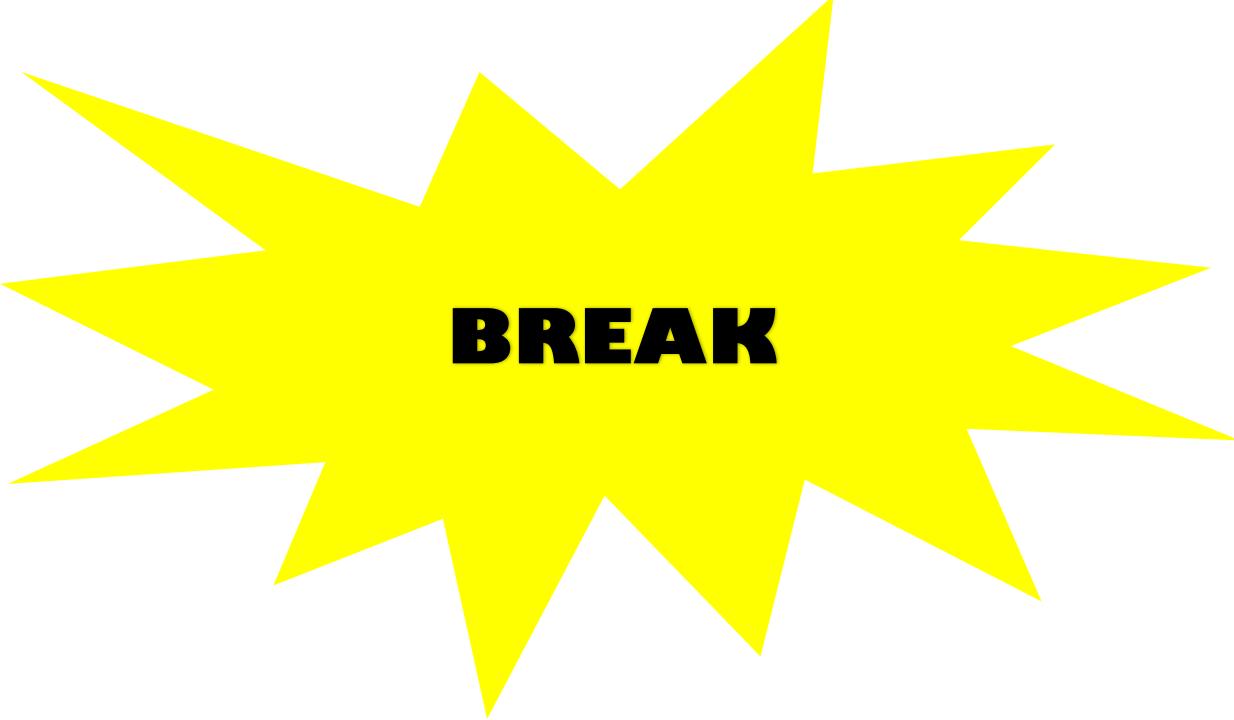
<https://www.capable.design/>

# “New” AI, “new” Aesthetics, new Experiences?

Refik Anadol

„Machine Hallucinations –  
Satellite Simulations: B“, 2021



A large, yellow, five-pointed starburst shape is centered on the page. It has a thick outline and radiating points, creating a dynamic, explosive feel.

**BREAK**

# **Let's do: „AI Art Manifesto”**

What makes good/contemporary art? How can we describe it? Protect it? Identify it? Compensate for it? Can we? Should we or must we not define AI Art?

Gather in groups and decide on 7-10 points. Take 30 min to discuss and work on it as a group.

Ask yourself:

What would an art manifesto include if art would be a response to the power and opacity of AI?

What are the most important things?

What would artist agency look like in an ideal world?

Who is an artist? Who should decide? Fines? Compensation?

We will discuss afterwards!

\*if not art then maybe citizen manifesto?

**Thank you so much for your time  
and energy.**

**Let's talk (more)...**

# Resources:

- <https://www.datacentermap.com/mexico/queretaro/>
- <https://www.theguardian.com/books/booksblog/2010/jan/13/death-of-the-autho>
- <https://ethics.org.au/big-thinker-michel-foucault/>
- <https://www.claudialarcher.com/work/theartofhistoricalreinterpretation>
- <https://www.unesco.org/en/artificial-intelligence/recommendation-ethics>
- <https://carolinecriadoperez.com/book/invisible-women/>
- <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11023-024-09665-1>
- [https://scholar.google.com/citations?view\\_op=view\\_citation&hl=de&user=jZdTOaoAAAAJ&citation\\_for\\_view=jZdTOaoAAAAJ:94rQ0kDLHKYC](https://scholar.google.com/citations?view_op=view_citation&hl=de&user=jZdTOaoAAAAJ&citation_for_view=jZdTOaoAAAAJ:94rQ0kDLHKYC)
- <https://www.computer.org/publications/tech-news/trends/cognitive-offloading>
- <https://www.dukeupress.edu/critical-ai>
- <https://aiethicscourse.org>
- <https://hypestudies.org/>
- <https://www.aisnakeoil.com/>
- <https://www.openhumanitiespress.org/books/titles/ai-art/>
- <https://i-am-flynn.web.app>
- [https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/BSt/Publikationen/GrauePublikationen/WKIO\\_2020\\_final.pdf](https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/BSt/Publikationen/GrauePublikationen/WKIO_2020_final.pdf)
- [https://www.unesco.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/KI\\_verantwortungsvoll\\_gestalten\\_Publikation\\_MIL\\_DE.pdf](https://www.unesco.at/fileadmin/user_upload/KI_verantwortungsvoll_gestalten_Publikation_MIL_DE.pdf)
- <https://blog.quintarelli.it/2019/11/lets-forget-the-term-ai-lets-call-them-systematic-approaches-to-learning-algorithms-and-machine-inferences-salami/>
- <https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/ge/benjamin.htm>
- <https://newsocialist.org.uk/transmissions/ai-the-new-aesthetics-of-fascism/>
- <https://web.mit.edu/allanmc/www/benjamin.pdf>
- <https://library.oapen.org/handle/20.500.12657/40042>
- <https://www.eastman.org/event/free-all-talks/nickelodeon-movie-palace-phenomenon-early-cinema-exhibition>