Playing Data: A Creative Exploration of Machine Learning Datasets

Playing Data is a collection of algorithmically generated graphic scores designed to be chaotic, absurd, and to encompass the computerized yet human quest for meaning. These works, encapsulated as NFTs on OpenSea, are accessible for performance by any individual or ensemble who owns the NFT corresponding to the specific piece, with each priced around $15 USD at the time of minting. Student discounts are provided, and the pricing structure will be revisited should Ethereum costs change significantly. The images within these scores are derived from machine learning datasets, encouraging observers to seek out meaning amidst the algorithmically generated chaos.

In the realm of creative coding, it is a frequent practice to draw upon stock images or expansive datasets like those from machine learning repositories. The sheer volume of data, coupled with the fragmented and often anonymous contribution of countless creators, renders it an almost impossible task to appropriately credit all individuals whose work contributes to such projects. Whether it's artists, patients, or the designers behind Google Maps, their impossible-to-trace contributions become the foundation of pieces like those within Playing Data. The transformation of these elements into a coherent art form remains a profound, albeit ethically complex, endeavor.

To address these complexities, my proposal calls for a reimagining of copyright authorship, breaking it into a percentage allocation system. In the case of Playing Data, this means considering an equitable distribution of ownership among all contributing entities, whether human or non-human. I propose taking 40% ownership of the work for my own creative and curational efforts, while the remaining 60% is divided among the individuals whose images and data have informed the art—artists, patients, and Google Maps designers, among others. This structure acknowledges the diverse contributions present in the creation of such work and fosters a sense of shared ownership in the evolving landscape of digital art.