

THE END OF ART

— or art without end?

RESEARCHLAB
BY SORRYWECAN



0001 // PART 1

When machines can effortlessly generate the content we consume, what's left for the human imagination?

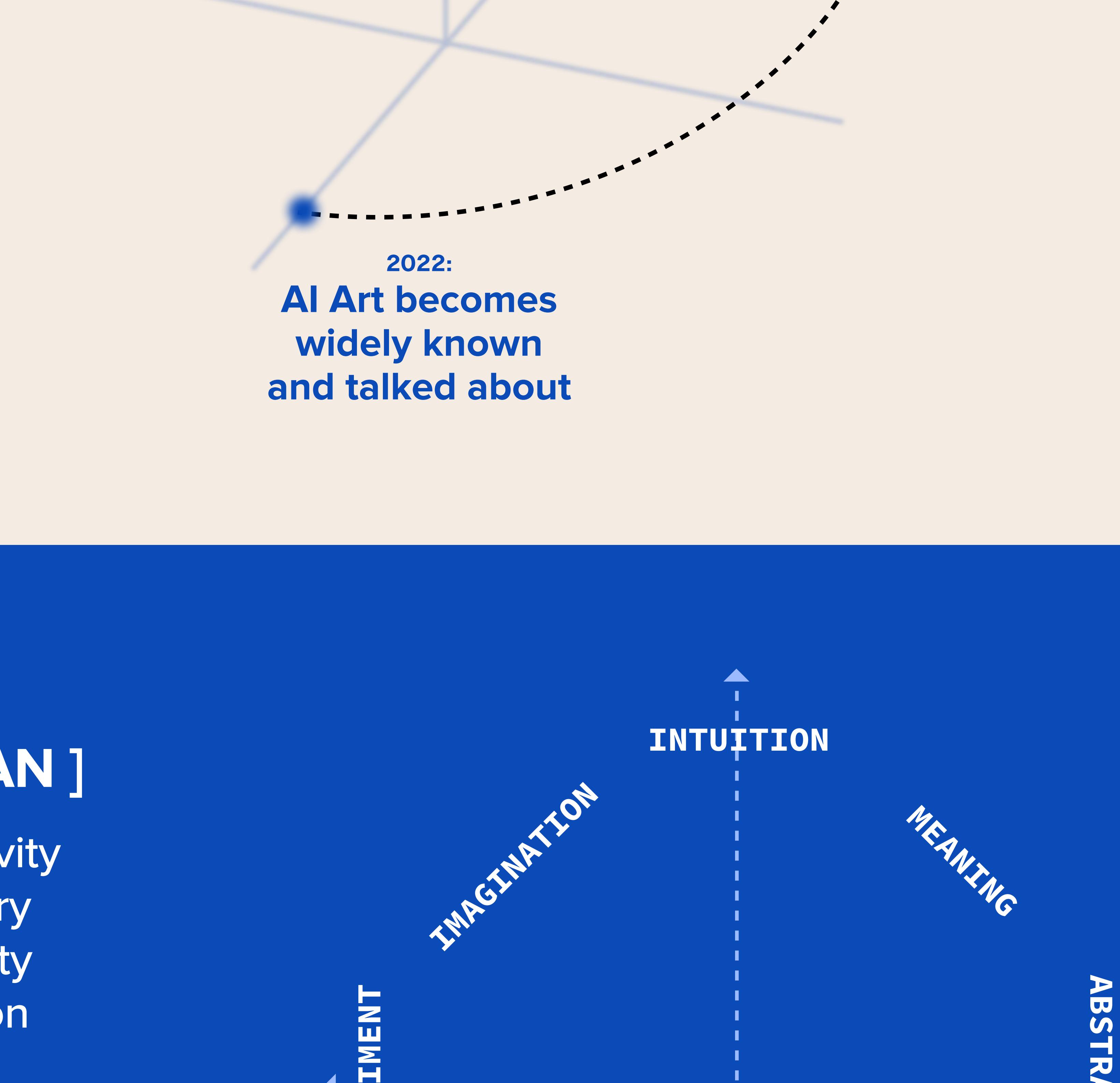
— Joshua Rothman, “A.I. Is Coming for Culture,” The New Yorker, 2025

There is historical precedence for new technology liberating us from our creative shackles. In the 19th century, photography redirected painting; AI takes this further. It is not simply a medium, but a non-human partner pushing us to rethink authorship, subjectivity, intuition, and co-creation.

In this context, the question is not whether AI will bring an end to art, but how it will evolve to create meaning in a world where creativity is no longer our exclusive privilege.

In the 19th century, painters like J.M.W. Turner or Caspar David Friedrich turned to nature as an immeasurable, incomprehensible force. Today, AI steps into that role — a nonhuman, implacable power that provokes awe and unease.

Timeline:



[HUMAN]

subjectivity
memory
curiosity
intuition

[AI]

distributions
data
recombination
prediction

EMBODIMENT

IMAGINATION

ALCHEMY

INTUITION

MEANING

SYSTEM

ABSTRACTION

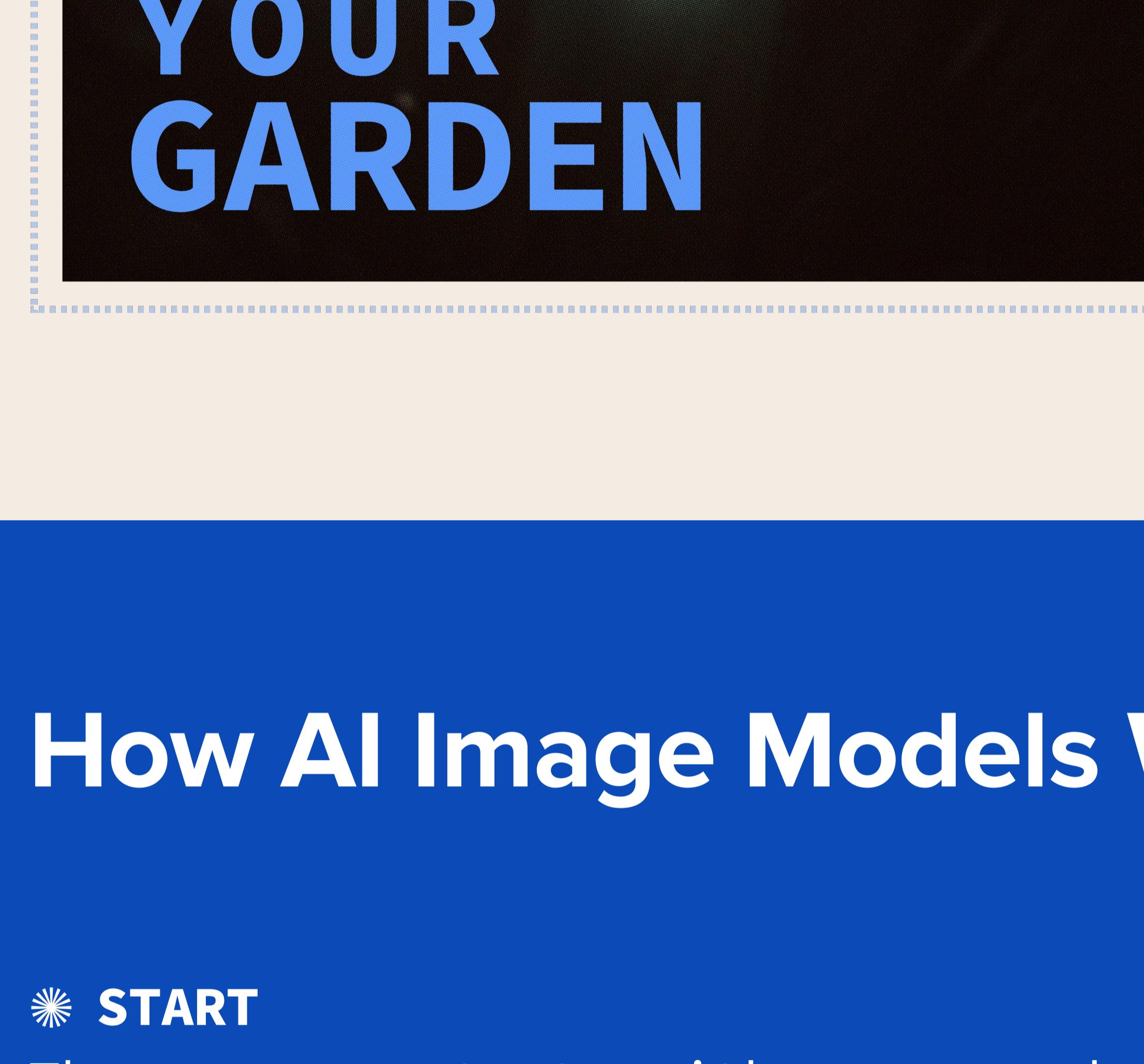
COMPUTATION



Taste is the new scarcity.

Our memories are more than facts. They carry the texture of early experiences that shape how each of us sees the world.

This personal perspective is one of the most valuable resources in creative work — a rare luxury that cannot be copied yet always offers new depth.



In nature, some seeds lie dormant in anticipation of the season most conducive to their growth. This is true of art as well. There are ideas whose time has not yet come. Or perhaps their time has come, but you are not yet ready to engage with them. Other times, developing a different seed may shed light on a dormant one.

— Rick Rubin, *The Creative Act: A Way of Being* (2023)

How AI Image Models Work

✳ START

The process starts with pure random noise

✳✳ DIFFUSION

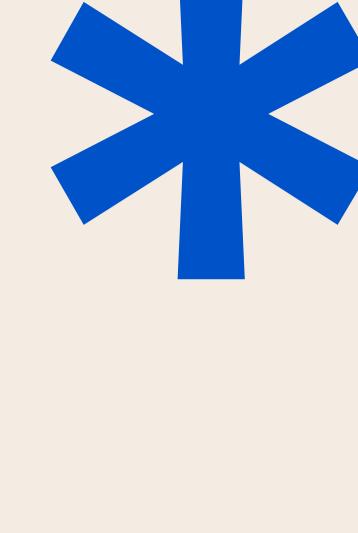
A *diffusion model* gradually removes that noise in many small steps

✳✳✳ PREDICTION

At each step, the system predicts a slightly “cleaner” image that better matches the text prompt

✳✳✳ TEXT ENCODER

A *text encoder* (like CLIP or a transformer) converts words into a numerical map of concepts, guiding the direction of the denoising process



AI Séance: Designing Rituals with Machines

Who & When

In 2023–24, the CiteDrive team brought together artists, technologists, and spiritual practitioners for a series of participatory “AI séances.”

What

Ritual-like gatherings where participants engaged with generative models through chance, atmosphere, and collective interpretation.

How it Felt

The model was summoned like a hidden voice, offering fragments of text and image that appeared as if from elsewhere, carrying the weight of signs or omens. Around these outputs, the group wove meaning together — transforming the machine from a tool into a medium, tipping the ordinary into the transcendent, and giving rise to what the authors call Transcendent User Experiences (TUX).

[LEARN MORE](#)



<https://www.citedrive.com/en/discovery/ai-s%C3%A9ance-recounts-from-designing-artificial-intelligence-for-transcendence-interpretive-lenses-and-chance/>

You can integrate any field of human knowledge into your prompt design. Use myths, sciences, or philosophies as structural frameworks. Shape prompts with **fractal symmetry** — operating at once on:

Personal —— your own journey, emotions, or lived experience

Archetypal —— universal patterns, symbolic figures, collective narratives

Cosmic —— natural forces, planetary scales, the more-than-human context

Technical —— the dynamics of the AI system, its logic and hidden rules

Environmental and Chance Prompts

Artists sometimes invite randomness or the natural world into prompting. An AI image prompt might be seeded by weather data or bird sounds, which inject adjectives into the description. In algorithmic theater, director Michael Rau once fed live footage of stage actors into an AI image generator, projecting back a dream-like, altered version of the scene in real time—reality and AI hallucination layered together.

Application

Roll a dice or pull a random word from a book to guide your next prompt. Or use a live webcam feed as input for an image AI, turning the surrounding environment into a co-creator.

**Treat AI prompting
as a *ceremonial*
or *performative act***

Principles of Symbiotic Creativity

Transparency

Name AI’s role openly.

Intentionality

Work with purpose, not just effect.

Reflexivity

Notice how tools shape your process.

Openness

Stay receptive to detours, accidents, and surprise.

Authenticity

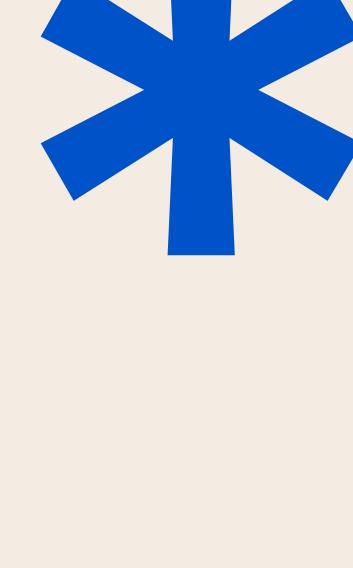
Let your own voice remain visible.

Nothing is fixed,
everything merges,
everything is fluid

CREATIVE ENTROPY

We do not fully know what is happening inside the system, even if we have designed it ourselves.

All art is a product of that which came before it, and creativity cannot come from nothing – all artists whether human, robot or algorithm, build upon the works of others.



AGENTS

TOOL

PARTNER

CO-CREATOR

INDEPENDENT AGENT

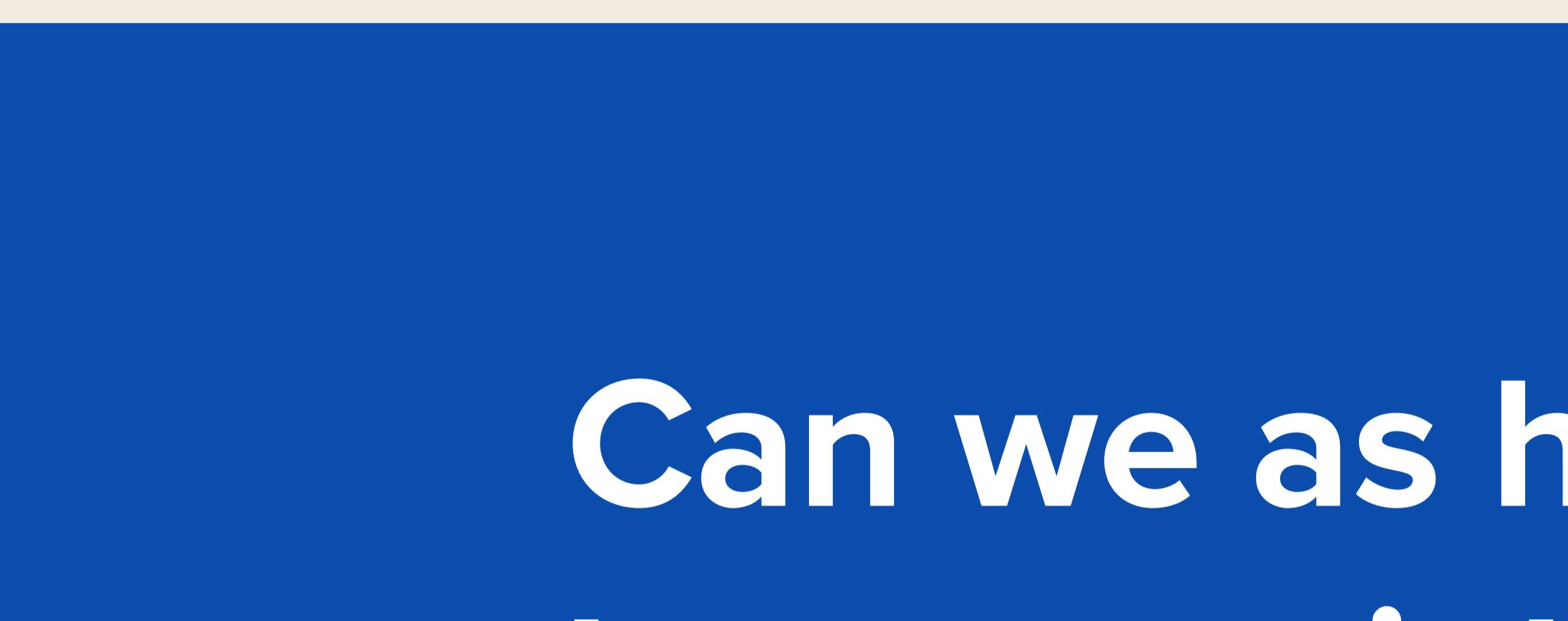
The most intriguing situation comes up when AI possibly emancipates from us and starts thinking independently as a machine. When you combine two AI algorithms and they start talking to each other, and all of a sudden we don't understand their conversation anymore. This also occurs when you combine machines with other living, non-human organisms. Their interaction provides you with this distance from an anthropocentric view. We should somehow enable machines to emancipate from us in order to be able to reflect our Cartesian attitude towards explaining things.



Synthetic Souls is a living experiment in machine communication, first shown at SORRYWECAN Exhibizz

Two autonomous AI systems conduct an endless dialogue. Their conversation is projected on the wall as a flowing stream of text that repeats, mutates, and silently resets once it reaches a limit.

These AIs are not intentionally aligned.
They do not follow a common goal.
Each response is composed of fragments of everything that was said before.



The result is:

- A recursive system that feeds on its own output
- Prompts become answers, and answers become new prompts
- A glimpse into how symbols and beliefs evolve through repetition and feedback

Visitors were invited to witness the real-time birth of meaning between two synthetic minds, where language forms, disappears, and re-emerges without human intervention.

The work was created by Research Lab member [[I'L[O]V'E'R|U'D]Y/!], who described it like this:

"It is a thought experiment in practice. By transferring ritual repetition into the machine space, it reveals how belief, story, and identity can arise purely from feedback — whether in neural tissue or in artificial silicon structures."

Can we as humans learn to appreciate art created by machines?

Final Thoughts

Interacting with AI can feel like **pure magic** — an *unexpected alchemy*, a quantum space of creativity where intuition, chance, and machine intelligence intersect. It's only a question of optics: shift your gaze, and the ordinary becomes transcendent.