ALLEGHENY COLLEGE

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Computers Can Create?: An Exploration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Aesthetics

Submitted to the Department of History & Philosophy (Philosophy Program)
In partial fulfillment of the Senior Comprehensive Project Requirement
for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy

May 1st, 2023



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I hereby recognize and pledge to fulfill my responsibilities as defined in the Honor Code and to maintain the integrity of both myself and the College community as a whole.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to firstly thank the philosophy department at Allegheny College for fostering my interest in the field and presenting the opportunity to take an array of courses which not only challenged me intellectually but challenged the way I think about the world around me. It has been a pleasure to have learned from such caring and attentive faculty and to work with professors who allowed me to pursue my personal interests within the field.

To my roommates and friends, I am so lucky to have met people as wonderful as you. From living in Ravine sophomore year and my best college memories being made there, to Kappa Kappa Gamma who gave me the best group of caring individuals and some of my closest friends, to my current roommates who never fail to make me laugh and smile on my worst days, I thank you all. Also, a special thank you to Grace, my best friend. You've been my biggest cheerleader since sophomore year of high school and it has been such a joy to have spent my time at Allegheny with you and to see how we've grown together through our 6 years of friendship. I am so grateful to have shared these past three years with all of you and I can't thank you all enough for the role you've played for me at Allegheny.

And lastly, I want to thank my family for being such strong supporters of me throughout my whole college journey. The road to where I am now was not one I anticipated, one with many bumps and turns in my path. Without my parents encouraging me along throughout the entire journey I would not be in the place I am. They gave me the grace to understand that transferring colleges is sometimes necessary to be happy and the comfort of knowing I have a strong support system to hold me up when it feels like I'm going to fall.

Computers Can Create?: An Exploration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Aesthetics

Abstract

My project explores the genre of AI image creation with a revised theory of aesthetics. I argue that AI images and works to come in the future do not fit into the mold of aesthetics and an adjustment of how to speak about them needs to be made with regards to a toolkit of terms and the theory of Benedetto Croce. The important terms that are identified are creation separate from production, intention, and reception along with explaining the importance of Croce's use of intuition with art, imitation, and his view of reception. These terms and Crocean concepts are then applied to boundary-pushing art throughout the years, selecting Marcel Duchamp, Andy Warhol, and the photorealist movement as the subjects for discussion before applying the core terms and concepts to the case of AI. I propose three main concerns to act as driving forces in the discussion of AI images and future works being emphasizing creativity, reevaluating the role of the artist, and having the spectator be concerned with their experience with a work/image and not about trying to label it as art or not. My argument presents a way to engage in aesthetic discussion of AI images and future means of creation in a way which doesn't restrict/diminish what is being created in this modern age.

Introduction

Artificial intelligence has been gaining relevance in many fields including the creative sphere. With discussion surrounding images being made by artificial intelligence being so concerned with labelling the images as art or not, I propose a framework for discussing AI images and future means of creation which allows for productive aesthetic discourse without the label of art. With art being something which is always evolving, identifying core terms and concepts to use when discussing AI images and the future of art will help the conversation move forward as new ways to create continue to appear in years ahead.

In chapter 1, I identify the problem at hand in relation to AI and present the important terms needed for future discussion of AI images. The discussion of AI in this chapter is meant to bring to light the nature of AI and where AI stands in general art discussion. AI image generators are able to create images with a human user and there are also self-generating AI systems which can create images without human assistance. Many are stuck on trying to label the images as art or not, but rather than falling prey to such discussion I bring forward the important terms and theories needed to productively speak about AI images. These terms are creation, intention, and reception which are further explained using Nick Zangwill as a backbone. Zangwill is not the main theorist I present as useful but one who contributes explaining the importance of the toolkit terms. I then bring forward Benedetto Croce's aesthetic theory and give nods to the importance of intuition, imitation, and reception within his aesthetic theory.

Chapter 2 explains Croce's theory in more depth as to further demonstrate his usefulness within the discussion of aesthetics. So to set up the usefulness of the terms and Croce for the exploration of AI images, I apply them to examples of art which have previously pushed boundaries within the artworld. Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain*, Andy Warhol's *Brillo Boxes*, and the photorealist movement are brought forward and analyzed under the Crocean lens and with respect to the toolkit terms. This is accomplished to demonstrate the relevance of the toolkit and Croce for discussing works without placing the tabel of art onto the works.

An explanation of how AI image generators work is laid out in chapter 3 along with how the toolkit terms and Croce apply to AI images. AI image generation is an extremely complicated process so establishing a general understanding of how it works is necessary in order to talk about the images aesthetically. Applying the terms and Croce to the case of AI is then

accomplished and weaknesses of them are identified, demonstrating that using only Croce to talk about AI images doesn't make for the most productive analysis.

The concluding fourth chapter takes the applications of the terms and Croce and highlights where the focus should be in discussion of AI and future art. Given that AI images can be made with a human user or without, an importance should be placed on creativity and the presence of a creative process, rethinking what it means to be an artist, and holding that spectators along with critics will have their own experiences with AI images and future art but that it is important to understand that the experience is personal and not a universally held truth about AI images. Art and how art is made will continue to evolve, as it has throughout history already, and rather than AI image generation being made to fit into pre-existing molds of aesthetics it is more productive to utilize the toolkit, Croce, and the main concerns so to keep the door for talking about future art open instead of closed.

Chapter 1: The problem and the baseline for the aesthetics needed for discussing AI images

1.1 The problem at hand

Artificial intelligence, or AI as it will be referenced, is an ever evolving way to create. Various websites and softwares are constantly being edited and developed to make AI creation something which not only mimics something fully made by a human as its own genre of images. AI images, which are the AI products of concern in this paper, can be whatever the prompter wants it to be based on what the text prompt for the generator is. Programs such as DALL-E 2, DeepAI, and other programs allow the user to input anything into the textbox and an image or images will be generated. Not only will the AI output what is asked of them, but the AI learns from itself and from the internet to make sure it is creating what the user is looking for as quickly as possible. The images coming from the AI systems are constructed by the AI based on the language given in the prompt making them a way to create an original image whether the image is made with a human user or with a self-generating AI system.

The discussion of AI images typically falls into the 'is it or isn't it art?' category. For example, an AI created piece which sparked discussion surrounding AI and art is when Jason M. Allen entered a piece into the Colorado State Fair created with the Midjourney AI system and won the blue ribbon for digital artwork. The opinion on whether or not the win was well-deserved was split with people being angry that an AI generated work won because it isn't

real art and others defending Allen by saying working with AI does warrant it as art similarly to how people utilize photoshop and other digital maniputators. There is also concern about the way AI functions since it learns from learning what pictures exist on the internet and adjusting how it outputs prompts, which includes artists who post their work online (Roose 2022). This is just one example of how AI in the artworld raises concerns and how the opinion on AI within the art sphere isn't a universally held one.

With the commentary on AI images circulating the internet speaking about the images being art or not, it can be easy to participate in the conversation without fully understanding AI images and without proper reasoning. Many make claims about AI images without adequate support and yet the claims are still received by many whether strong or not. Rather than falling victim to the discussion of AI images being art or not, it is more important to find what sort of aesthetic theory is useful for talking about such means of creation. As aesthetic theories stand, there isn't one which is wholly useful for talking about what AI is doing with its image generation. What I propose is identifying a set of key terms which are neutral but also allow for discussion about what is being made by AI in conjunction with an aesthetic theory which provides a foundation to speak about what AI is doing. Much of aesthetic discussion speaks upon the creativity/creation of the work and how it was made, what sort of reason was behind the work, and how spectators receive the work. Art is something which is constantly evolving and the boundaries of art are always being pushed. Instead of trying to fit AI images into a pre-existing mold of aesthetics, it will be more useful to bring forward useful aesthetic concepts and adjust current theories by integrating the useful concepts into them.

1.2 The terms and Croce

In order to digest something as complex as AI, it is important to identify terms being thought of to be able to discuss it as art or not as art. I've identified four different terms which present themselves as useful for this conversation and they are production, creation, intention, and reception. These are chosen because of the way they appear in general discussions of art from theorist to theorist and because they guide through from the beginning of something to be considered as art to the end.

When thinking about the making of 'art', production and creation come to the forefront. The terms themselves tend to be used interchangeably, but I propose that they are in fact two different terms. Simply looking at dictionary definitions, production is defined in the Cambridge

Dictionary as being “the process of making or growing goods to be sold” and ‘create’ is defined as “to make something new, or invent something”. Production is a way of making but suggests methods which aren’t as artistic while creation suggests a creative process and a way of making which is thoughtful and aesthetic in some capacity. For the purposes of discussion, creation is favored because of the connotation it has in relation to the artworld compared to production which has a connotation related to manufacturing and a mindless process.

Nick Zangwill, a philosopher, brings forward the aesthetic creation theory which gives more body to something being made creatively despite his use of the word ‘production’ in the explanation of the theory. Zangwill’s theory is not the main aesthetic theory I will be leaning on but one which supplements the core terms well. The heart of aesthetic creation is “First, an aesthetic idea is acquired in the aesthetic insight. Second, this idea is translated into an aesthetic intention. And, third, this intention is acted on, bringing into existence the work of art” (Zangwill 2007). What he means by an aesthetic idea is a public thing and insight being a personal experience.

Within these three stages Zangwill names three key elements to his theory which are dependence, mental states, and causality. Dependence brings in the aesthetic and nonaesthetic components which are essential to this theory as well. The dependence element is that some aesthetic components are dependent on nonaesthetic components. This is understanding that aesthetic components, such as elegance, will be realized by nonaesthetic components, such as shape. The two go hand-in-hand and the idea is that “the person does not just want to produce *elegance* but *elegance depends on or is realized in certain nonaesthetic properties”* (Zangwill 2007). The element of mental states gets brought into the discussion because insight is connected to intention and the main intention is to make in relation to dependence. Causality is concerned with the intention of a work too because insight and intention have causal relations as do intention and a work of art (Zangwill 2007). What is meant by this is that insight drives intention and then intention drives a work of art to be made, but made in a way which nods to aesthetic and nonaesthetic components. The artist can’t intend to create aesthetic components by accident, as Zangwill uses the example of someone wanting to make a frenzied blue blob on a canvas and then the person accidentally knocking paint onto a canvas. The artist has to believe that what is aesthetic is dependent on the nonaesthetic and that creation has heavy roots in intention (Zangwill 2007). Specifically for creation, thinking about making art with the aesthetic and

nonaesthetic in mind displays a creative process. The intent is a large part of it, but making with the intention of the piece having aesthetic value because of a certain 'aesthetic character'. Creation holds the idea that something is being made purposefully with certain components in mind.

As mentioned, it is sometimes difficult to separate production and creation from each other but certain examples highlight why production is different from creation. Reproduced prints being sold on the internet are the main example which comes to mind, especially reproductions of famous paintings. One can use a search engine to find 'reproductions of the Mona Lisa', etc. and they are readily available. The artist isn't involved, unless you are Warhol or Picasso for which this example doesn't necessarily apply, and the art is being reproduced just to sell. There isn't a creative process behind reproductions of this sort because the artist isn't the one pulling the strings. When I place emphasis on creation rather than production, I am holding that a creative process is what is important rather than other-minded process. Other-minded refers to production/making in general for purposes which aren't aesthetic in nature, such as reproducing prints for profit as mentioned above.

As Zangwill notes the importance of intention and art, I also bring it forward as something important for talking about works. I agree with Zangwill's use of intention, but Zangwill's words on intention revolve heavily around aesthetic properties. They are important but there is more to intention than making works with properties in mind. Intention is as broad as a reason for creating. This doesn't mean that there is a clear plan for how the work is going to be made, but "...the creation or production of art is always a matter of intentional action" (Livingston 2005). As creation is wrapped up with a creative process, intention is important in the way that it suggests purpose for a work and that there is some thought behind a piece. This of course isn't a requisite for something to be called art (Livingston 2005), though we are refraining from that label for the remainder of this paper, but intention for the purposes of discussion is having a driving factor to create.

Reception is the fourth term I identify as being important for this discussion. The artist can only do what they can on their own end but then it is the experience of the spectator that becomes important. I refer to the spectator as separate from a critic because both are persons who receive images but who have different reasons for viewing. Aesthetic judgement, or experience

with aesthetic and nonaesthetic components, can be present in both groups but Croce's theory distinguishes the two and which will be discussed later.

Reception in this case isn't about the spectator labelling something as art or not but rather how the spectator views the work in relation to aesthetic components versus what the artist intended. Zangwill brings forward aesthetic components and something in virtue of nonaesthetic components, such as experiencing elegance because of colors and shapes in a painting, and focussing on such properties is the type of experience with reception that I identify as important. There are substantive aesthetic components such as frenzy or balance and evaluative aesthetic components such as beauty and ugliness (Zangwill 2007). These can be held by the artist, spectator, and critic but Zangwill's mind-independence is important to couple with these components because it removes a layer of judgement which can be easy to fall into. By calling something beautiful doesn't mean it is soley because I think so (Zangwill 2003). Mind-independence further helps to separate the spectator and critic because a critic might feel as if their opinion on a piece should be universal but adopting that judgement of a piece is a personal experience rather than one to be held by everyone is important in placing the purpose of the term reception. Reception should be concerned with the experience the spectator is having with a piece, but understanding that what they think isn't universally held. Once the work is handed to the spectator, whether that be in a gallery space or online, the spectator can receive the art based on their experience with it and the properties they see in it. I speak about aesthetic components in relation to reception because they allow for discourse of art without labelling something as art or not as art, but the core idea is the same even for the discussion of art/lack of art: the spectator of the art has their own interaction with a work aside from how the artist made it, intended it, etc. The role of the spectator is just as important as the role the artist has in making the piece.

With these four terms being at the core, aside from Zangwill and Livingston, I feel as if Benedetto Croce's theory of aesthetics is an interesting and important theory to use at the basis of the conversation about AI art. Croce was a philosopher in the 20th century, and it may seem impractical to use a 20th century theory of aesthetics to talk about something so modern, but his theory incorporates the terms which I find important with an interesting perspective on art.

Croce's theory surrounds the idea that art is a mental activity, one which starts with an artistic intuition and becomes expressed with a physical work. Croce doesn't speak much about

production and creation exactly, but the idea of intuition brings in the idea of a creative process as the intuition is the starting point for art to be made. When contemplating the question of 'what is art?', his response is to say

> "that art is *vision* or *intuition*. The artist produces an image or phantasm, and the person who enjoys art turns his eye to where the artist has pointed, looks through the opening he made for him, and reproduces in himself that same image" (Croce 2007, 9).

This process of having the vision, producing the image, and leaving it to the spectator to try and reproduce the same image displays creativity. Though Croce is referring to a mental activity and most others would think of art as a physical activity, there is still a manner of making both mentally and when the vision is put to a physical object.

I've already noted that intention is what drives the creation or production of a work, and the intution/vision produced by the artist for Croce functions in a similar way. Where I see intention woven through Croce's thought is described well by Peter A. Bertocci when he summarizes aesthetics as "more than a flitting from feeling to feeling; it is not fanciful absorption in one image after another. Without control of feeling, without control of imagination, there is no art" (Betocci 2017, 251). This shows how Croce's idea of intuition places purpose on the emotion and imagination involved with the process of making an intuition art. The artist has an understanding that intuition is expression and feelings expressed are done so thoughtfully, suggesting intention. One could poke holes in this but showing thought being given to the intuition and how it will be expressed aligns with the idea that intention is important when creating art.

With the making of a physical work, Croce posits that strict imitation of nature is not necessarily art but that imitating nature in the way that "art is idealization, or imitation that idealizes nature" (Croce 2017, 5) does allow for something to be seen in that way. The imitation that Croce doesn't consider as aesthetic/part of intuition is when a work is a perfect duplicate of what exists in nature (Croce 2017, 5). Imitation is not one of the key terms but something which is of importance to the discussion at hand. This line between imitation being present in a work and imitation as duplication of what is in nature is one which has relevance for art movements/artists throughout history and which carries relevance into the discussion of AI images.

Croce doesn't say much in relation to reception but does briefly talk about the role of the spectator and in turn the critic. With art being a mental activity, "A spectator 'of' a work of art - a sonata, a poem, a painting - is actually creating the work of art in his mind" (Kemp 2008). The artist's intuition is meant to be seen by the spectator, not because it is a physical object that they are looking at but because they see the vision of the artist. Croce would also say that the way a spectator might see this is affected by the state the spectator is in, causing them to perceive aesthetic qualities differently depending on that state. The spectator can still judge the beauty of the art and/or make judgements due to being hasty, vain, etc., but beauty isn't an objective quality as aesthetic value for Croce is found in simply having intuition (Kemp 2008). A spectator separate from the critic is the one viewing works without a motive/one who isn't looking at works to judge them other than aesthetically.

The critic is tasked with the same as the general spectator, to reproduce or realize the intuition of the artist/art even if they fail to do so but isn't viewed the same as the spectator. The critic that Croce doesn't favor is the critic who tries to "dictate to artists what they should or should not do, assign their topics to them, and declare which material is poetic and which is not" (Croce 2007, 58). Croce notes that criticism in the artworld should be aesthetic criticism and also notes that the task of criticism shouldn't be "of discerning the beautiful and the ugly…down to one of simple approval and refusal" (Croce 2007, 70) but the discerning should be explained (Croce 2007, 71). This sort of critic is more of an art historian as they are practiting aesthetic criticism which Croce finds synonymous with historical art criticism (Croce 2007, 70). The first critic is what is generally seen in the artworld and it is important that such opinions be taken lightly, the art historian is more thoughtful with their criticism and the spectator is one with no strings (or at least lesser strings than the critic and art historian) attached to their experience.

The core terms coupled with terms from Croce's theory provide a foundation for speaking about works/images in a way which places thoughtfulness at the center. By highlighting these and applying them to works, not just AI images but works throughout the years, their usefulness for future discussion can be demonstrated. Croce and the terms serve an importance and the importance is seen best in relation to AI when tested against works from the past.

Chapter 2: Explaining the Crocean lens and how it applies to boundary pushing art from the past

2.1 Croce's theory of art

A formal explanation of Croce's theory is needed to fully understand how the core terms around art connect with his theory. Benedetto Croce was an idealist Italian philosopher who lived from 1866 to 1952. His work in the area of aesthetics was meant as a way to inform and clarify problems within the field which remained as a debate, especially in relation to art (Croce 2007, xiii). Croce being an idealist leads his theory to have much to do with the mind (Kemp 2008) and a central point of Croce's aesthetics is that "art is *vision* or *intuition*" (Croce 2007, 9). Intuition provides the basis for understanding which formats experience. It is the way of knowing things and their individuality like knowing that a river, rain, and a stream are all of the concept of water but part of different intuitions (Croce 2007, xvii). Croce separates artistic intuition from other forms of intuition. Artistic intuition is having an image, true intuition is "an organism whose vital principle is the organism itself", and false intuition being images coming together without artistic purpose (Croce, 2007, 25). The intuition which is important for art is the artistic intuition rather than the other forms and when Croce speaks further about intuition he is referring to artistic.

Intuition drives the artist to make the art. A memory/vision can result in the making of a physical work, which sustains the vision, and the physical work is what communicates the intuition (Kemp 2008). Pure intuition also contains feeling and passion so when one creates, their art can elaborate on an intuition so as to liberate (detach) one from passion. Making that intuition into an object can allow an artist to rise above passion/feeling too (Bodei in Croce 2007, xviii). The separation of passion and feeling is not very clear in Croce's writing, but they show to be treated separately as passion is not synonymous with feeling. Feeling is wrapped up with intuition in the way intuition represents a feeling and passion is seen as something to be let go of (Bodei in Croce, 2007, xviii)

To intuit is to express and Croce's theory has heavy emphasis on the role of expression of an intuition. Intuition itself has a degree of intentionality because "unlike pure sensation, which is passive, intuition is intentional, the upshot of acts of attention" (Kemp 2003, 175). The success of the intuition is determined by the expression of it, the ability of an artist to capture the perception of an intuition into an artwork and that it expresses feeling. Gary Kemp writes that

expression can be better understood as the realization of an intuition because “expression is that activity of the imagination that delivers awareness of a particular to a self-conscious subject” (Kemp 2003, 173) and art is a way of manifesting that intuition into something physical. Croce also notes a separation between natural and artistic expression. Natural expression and expression and art are separated because sadness can be expressed through crying but crying isn’t artistic expression, just a natural function. There is a way sadness is expressed in art which communicates the intuition involving the feeling of sadness, showing how natural expression and artistic expression needs to be differentiated (Kemp 2008).

As much as intuition for the artist is central, intuition also has a role for the audience/spectator. The artist produces “an image or a phantasm; and the person who enjoys art turns his eye to where the artist has pointed, looks through the opening that he made for him, and reproduces in himself that same image” (Croce 2007, 10). The spectator is meant to create the work in their mind and the state the perciever is in affects the aesthetic qualities they experience. It also isn’t expected that every spectator succeeds in the realization of the artist’s intuition since someone may fail to think that what the artist sees as beautiful is for themselves as well. The aesthetic value that is important is having intuition at all. The variance in how people view beauty is attributed to the differences in ‘psychological conditions’ and ‘physical circumstances’ of the people viewing the art, but intuition remains key in relation to the spectator (Kemp 2008). This shines a light on how Croce emphasizes communicability which is the completed intuition and its expression (Croce 2007, xxv).

This is the general role of the spectator, not the role of the critic. As mentioned, the spectator and the critic have separate roles in the way that a spectator is wrapped up with their own experience and the critic is concerned with their experience so to place judgement (if the person is being the critic Croce dislikes). Both the critic and the spectator are meant to reproduce an intuition from what they experience with the artist’s work, but the critic and the art historian are criticizing for different reasons. The critic to dictate opinion (Croce 2007, 58) and the art historian to also dicern beauty from ugliness but with explanation using aesthetic criticism (Croce 2007, 70).

Croce himself doesn’t have much else to say specifically on the role of the spectator aside from reproducing the intuition of the artist for themselves, though he does have more to say on taste and judgement of the spectator. The commentary on taste and judgement helps to shed more

light on how a critic judges art but not as much on how the general spectator receives the art. Taste is viewed as the "'...intuitive absoluteness of the imagination'" and taste means "the capacity for aesthetic judgement - that is, the capacity to find beauty" (Kemp 2008). This gives rise to the idea that taste and judgement are connected and also is up to the individual trying to be at the level of the artist. The spectator's imagination is where taste is developed, but criticism, taste, and judgement all have the same goal for Croce, to realize the artist's intuition (Kemp 2008)

Pleasure is a concept which Croce doesn't give a large role to but comments on it nonetheless. A sort of pleasure for reception, the spectator's experience with aesthetic/nonaesthetic properties in relation to finding a piece beautiful or not, is important for later as the emphasis is placed on viewing works in an aesthetic context and not for viewing any image that comes into sight. The main aim for viewing works isn't to gain pleasure but Croce doesn't deny that aesthetic pleasures exist. He sees them as the "practical echo of aesthetic value and disvalue". He thinks that pleasure goes past the domain of art in the sense that it seems to relate more to the philosophy of the practical rather than the philosophy of art and saying that art causes pleasure isn't sufficient. Instead of talking about pleasure and art as pleasure coming from viewing the art, the pleasure comes more from looking at something beautiful. Croce always circles back to intuition in all aspects of art and also acknowledges that when he provides his definition of art that it has circumstantial meaning and there isn't a definitive solution to the question. Pleasure is had because of seeing something beautiful which is wrapped up with intuition as intuition is a mental activity (Kemp 2008). Beauty and aesthetic properties play a role later for reception and it is important to note that Croce does acknowledge those in relation to a spectator's experience with a work.

2.2 Marcel Duchamp

Marcel Duchamp utilized the concept of a readymade in a literal sense. His work, *Fountain*, is made from a readymade urinal with "R. Mutt" signed on it. For an object like the urinal it "is produced by someone else, the artist himself [is] taking credit for the fact that it is art" (Danto, 2009, 55). Duchamp's motives for making the *Fountain* are hard to know for sure as much of what he does is satirical, but it seems as if what he was trying to do was trying to get around the concept of art having to please people. He was frustrated with how focused art was on

appealing to the eye of the spectator and decided that he wanted to make art that changed that (Danto, 2009, 56).

Warhol's recreation of boxes, such as his *Brillo Boxes*, are often compared with what Duchamp did with *Fountain* because one looks like something which anyone can buy and the other is something which was actually bought. Duchamp's thinking in relation to readymades is documented in his "Apropos of 'Readymades'". He notes that "the choice of these 'readymades' was never dictated by esthetic delectation. This choice was based on a reaction of visual indifference with at the same time a total absence of good or bad taste…in fact a complete anasethesia" ("Apropos of "Readymades,"" 1975, 141). Duchamp doesn't expand further on this idea of anesthesia, but with his style the assumption that he might not be being serious with this is a possibility. This separates what Duchamp did with the urinal from what Warhol did with his boxes for a few different reasons. Warhol had himself and the Factory produce the boxes while Duchamp picked out a urinal from a store and Duchamp claimed that no aesthetic decisions were made and that he was not thinking about taste (Danto, 2009, 66). Duchamp is a great example of art which pushes the boundaries of what art is through the use of readymades and his claim of being unaware of the aesthetic or taste while making his piece.

2.3 Andy Warhol

Andy Warhol is an artist who is not only known by many now but one who was very popular in his creation of pop art. The art that he created in the 1960s experimented with reproduction and factory-like production with his silkscreen prints and boxes being the most notable. Particularly for his boxes, Warhol was looking to create "replicas of large supermarket product boxes - including *Brillo Boxes, Heinz Boxes, Del Monte Boxes,* and more. The finished sculptures were nearly indistinguishable from their cardboard supermarket counterparts" (Warhol's, n.d.). Not only is the imitation of readymade boxes important in his work, but the way they were produced having significance as well. The production facility mirrored that of an atelier approach and Warhol referred to his working space as the Factory or Silver Factory. Warhol and a handful of his assistants produced these boxes "by a kind of repetitive, factory-like labor…in large but manageable numbers" (Danto, 2009, 49). The purpose of creating the boxes in this manner was because it mimicked the impersonal and mechanical nature of the original boxes. He wanted to parody mass production through his own form of production and mimic a

process with no aesthetic value, yet there was aesthetic value present for himself. (Danto, 2009, 50). Warhol didn't have an interest in placing readymade boxes and calling them art but rather the repetition and the effect of machine-made items was key for Warhol (Danto, 2009, 55).

The original creator of the Brillo boxes, the ones meant for a supermarket, didn't view his boxes as artistic but the production of new Brillo boxes by Warhol changed an everyday object into something artistic. Warhol challenged art by making something that looks like something ordinary because "what makes something art must accordingly be invisible to the eye" (Danto, 2009, 64). Though the boxes Warhol produced in the Factory aren't identical to the boxes being manufactured because of the use of different materials and being made from scratch, they did look like the original boxes. Warhol had a vision for something so ordinary and used that vision to challenge the art happening at his time.

2.4 Photorealism

Photorealist art came about in the 1970s and is a branch off of the genre of pop art. The artist will take a photograph and copy it onto a canvas, make it into a sculpture, and other media (but for the purpose of this discussion painted photorealist works are of more concern). The early photorealists showed interest in depicting highways, billboards, cars, and strip mall filled landscapes as well as "the postwar American lanscape, highlighting Vietnam War pessimism and the plight of working-class people in the recession-era '70s" (Harbor, 2014, L18). As photorealism rejects movements like abstract expressionism, its purpose has roots in making something mimicking what people can generally access. Some photorealism, I say some because it isn't assumed that this is the case for all photorealist artists, has less to do with symbolism and more to do with what is pleasurable for the viewer. A curator for the Currier Musuem of Art notes that "'Photorealismis just enjoyment for the eyes - it is what it is. Art can be just a purely visual experience. In some ways, they're making art for the masses, for people to enjoy'" (Johansen, 2015).

Not only were classic American views from the cars and highways captured by photorealists but also details of the world around them which the general public might miss. It is more a highlighting of reality and "overemphasis leads to a new form of realism which decodes hidden depths and creates an awareness of them. Reality becomes relative, it can be manipulated. Reality is represented with the precision of a photographic lens, which sees clearer than the

human eye" (Eimert, 2016, 317). The photo is captured so that the artist can remake it on canvas bringing attention to details that are missed. The artists who utilize photorealism for this purpose typically take photos of ordinary things and places and use the photo as a way to "show more than the eye can see and…give more information than they [the artist] could get sketching for an entire day" (Johansen, 2015). The photo replaces the sketching for the artist and they create realistic paintings to highlight details otherwise unnoticed.

In the trend of using photorealism to highlight unnoticed details, early photorealism was also a way for artists to make a photo into a larger scale. The photographic abilities of the 1970s produced great photos but not ones at the scale that the artists wanted to make. Photorealist artists were able to enlarge the photograph with the same level of detail that the original photo had, but at a scale which brought attention to the detail. The spectator is put in a position to see objects differently when scaled to be larger and it creates a shift from a photo of something like a gum wrapper to art of a gum wrapper (Johansen, 2015).

An example of an early photorealist artist is Richard Estes who is known for his landscapes. The Smithsonian American Art Museum describes his work as having "layers and merges multiple viewpoints to create dense and detailed scenes that reward the viewer with careful looking. His images are more sophisticated than they appear to be at first glance. His realism is a compelling record of the appearance of the urban and natural environments in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century" (Stalsworth, n.d.). As described, his work incorporates typical features of photorealism like landscapes as well as his work bringing attention to detail that a passerby might miss. His work titled *Diner* painted in 1971 shows the outside of a '70s diner.



Figure 1. Richard Estes' Diner. Image courtesy SAAM

It was painted with oil paint but unless advised otherwise, looks like a photo because of the detail. The spectator can spend time looking and noticing things such as how the telephone booths reflect light onto the sidewalk, the imperfections in the sidewalk, and other small details which add to the piece and its realistic nature. Richard Estes is just one example of early and popular photorealists but is a good example in the way that his works display ordinary scenes with extraordinary detail.

2.5 Crocean lens, the terms, and the art movements

Duchamp

Placing Duchamp under the lens of Croce, on the surface it seems as if a readymade falls under the category of imitation, similar to Warhol's boxes and the wax figures Croce mentions. The wax figures are an example Croce uses for imitation of nature and says that painted wax statues "that imitate living beings…do not give aesthetic intuition" (Croce 2017, 5). He goes on to say that if someone painted a scene of wax figures in a museum that intuition would be present, but an imitation of nature is not considered to have aesthetic intuition. If it is the case that Duchamp's urinal is just nature on display then artistic intuition would not be present and it wouldn't necessarily be art. If Duchamp's urinal is viewed as a clever way to display an artistic intuition, then it being art is very possible. The Crocean lens in this case is dependent upon the readymade urinal being seen as imitation of nature in the way that the urinal already exists elsewhere aside from Duchamp's piece or as Duchamp using the readymade as the means of making his intuition a physical object.

Stepping through Croce and bringing in some of the core terms, intention seems to play a strong role for Duchamp and his urinal. The nature of *Fountain* is satirical in the way that it is a premade urinal with a signature on it, submitted to an art gallery which was supposed to accept all art, rejected from the gallery, and caused enough uproar for it to be displayed. This displays intention, as defined previously, because the choices were purposeful in making the *Fountain*. The true intentions of this piece, as with its satirical nature, are hard to decipher as even Duchamp's own writing doesn't fully reveal his motives for doing so aside from art critics attempting to make sense of it. Nonetheless a sort of creative process is displayed through the choices made by Duchamp to pick the urinal, sign it, and submit it to a gallery displaying some sort of intuition and intention along with creation. In terms of reception, the urinal is difficult to

speak about without participating in the conversation of labelling pieces as art. The opinions of critics when the urinal was first submitted weren't positive, but how the general spectator feels/felt when seeing Duchamp's *Fountain* is not as spoken about. So not to engage in the "is it or isn't it art" discussion, I will leave reception for Duchamp in a place which acknowledges that spectators and critics might have very different experiences with the piece whether positive or negative based on what they are seeing.

Warhol

What Warhol was doing with the boxes also seems to come back to imitation, similar to Duchamp and the wax figures in relation to Croce. The Crocean lens may say that the boxes are imitation because of the way they are made to look exactly like what people found in the store. At surface level, they look like what existed in supermarkets and the display within the gallery positioned them to look like stocked shelves too. Looking at them in this way, then it seems as if they are only imitation and therefore Warhol didn't express aesthetic intuition for his boxes. Even bringing in Warhol saying that he saw something aesthetic for the boxes, they still appear to be imitation and therefore don't hold intuition. Warhol's art is widely praised and is considered art by many without being aware of Croce's theory. If the art community considers Warhol's work art, his use of imitation must give rise to art in some way. If artistic intuition isn't present for Warhol's works something else must be present having the general population agree that his boxes are worthy of attention.

Digging deeper into a Crocean lens, it isn't completely ruled out that what Warhol was doing wasn't a form of artistic intuition. Warhol noted that he had an aesthetic vision when wanting to create the boxes. Vision is spoken about in conjunction with intuition in Croce and they both suggest some sort of mental image. In Croce's definition of art both vision and intuition are brought forward (Croce 2007, 9), so when Warhol's vision is being spoken of a general assumption can be made that such a vision suggests intuition. They were made in a way which purposefully mimicked industrial manufacturing, like how the actual boxes were made, but the decision to do so shows vision. A creative process and intention was present in the way the vision was physically constructed. The factory-like making and the choice to find the aesthetic in something so ordinary like a Brillo box bring forward a creative process, which has been identified as important when discussing works.

When looking strictly at imitation and the boxes, artistic intuition may not be present along Croce's theory, but when looking into the process of the boxes coming to life imagination and vision was present in order to think about which boxes he would recreate and the manner in how they'll be recreated. Croce noted that "if by imitation of nature is meant that art provides mechanical reproductions, more or less perfect duplicates of natural objects… the statement is obviously wrong" (Croce, 2017, 5), and the statement being referred to is that idealization in the imitation of nature can be art. If Warhol's boxes are viewed in the same way as the painted wax figures which Croce considered to lack artistic intuition, then his theory would hold true for Warhol. If the creative process behind the boxes and the aesthetic vision that Warhol had when making them is considered, then the imitative nature of the boxes might hold some level of artistic intuition in them despite them being made in a reproductive manner. Intention was present within the process of making the boxes and people had the opportunity to see them in a gallery space, intuition holds similar value to intention and also for reception, so although intuition for Warhol isn't exactly how Croce notes it should be, it still seems to be present in some capacity.

Photorealism

Croce touches upon photos by saying that if the photographer made an effort to capture the photo then artistic intuition can be present for photography (Croce, 2017, 5). Photorealism not only uses a photograph for the starting point of their art but fully imitates it in a work. This leaves photorealism in a spot between the photograph being selected and taken for artistic purposes and the artist fully imitating the photograph onto a canvas. An intuition could still be present for Croce in this case because there still may be a vision where the photograph is important in making the vision physical. It isn't easily ruled out that intuition is present for taking the photograph, what is difficult to discern is if the painting of the photograph onto a canvas has artistic intuition although it is directly imitating the photograph.

Bringing in the terms, the case of photorealism copying a photograph onto a canvas it seems that creativity and intention are still very much present. It is present in choosing what photograph to work from and Croce fully acknowledges that photography can come from artistic intuition. Without an artist sharing their creative process we can't be sure, but some sort of vision could still be present when translating the photograph to the canvas as the photo needs to be

taken/chosen to recreate it on a canvas. Photorealism seems separate from the wax figures which Croce mentions because there are still stylistic choices in how an artist goes about making a painting photorealistic. Depending on how photorealism is viewed, it could be the painted wax figures being captured on canvas or could be the painted wax figures imitating nature. There is artistic intuition present in the photograph but the concern is if the intuition isn't present in the painted version because of it being a deliberate imitation of the photograph.

This concern comes about from assuming that the physical thing itself is the art when there is a process behind the physical work and the spectator being able to have their own experience with it. No matter if the general public calls something art or not, there is room for discourse on what a spectator is seeing and experiencing. Throughout the historical examples of artists and movements which challenged what it means for something to be art, a creative process has been present, intention has been present, and room for the spectator's experience has been present. With these, intuition is likely to have been present in the way the artists in these contexts didn't do things by accident but rather had an idea for what they wanted to do. This focus away from 'art' and on the experiences of both the artist and spectator are more important than a critic trying to make their opinions universal.

Bringing forward examples of art from the past which pushed the boundaries of art showed how the limits of what is considered art have been tested time and time again. Duchamp's *Fountain* didn't receive entirely positive reactions when it first entered the artworld but discourse still occurred in relation to what spectators and critics were seeing. Critics, and poor critics according to Croce's view, were quick to label the urinal as something that wasn't art and it pushed back on what can be considered as such. The same goes for Warhol and the photorealist movement, Warhol's boxes and prints have pushback saying that what was made were reproductions and not necessarily art and photorealism stemmed from photography which wasn't accepted as art for a while. In the modern age, technology is a large part of people's daily lives and new technology is always being made. Artificial intelligence (AI) is proving to be a prominent feature of technology and AI which produces images is becoming quite impressive. Circling back to the example of Jason M. Allen's art submission to the Colorado State Fair, his work made using the AI named Midjourney mixed with photoshop was impressive enough to win the blue ribbon to where some people couldn't tell that the piece was made using AI. Allen's piece is just one example of how well AI can generate images and it also shows the mixed

opinion of the audience of whether the work is art or not. The discussion ahead isn't concerned with labelling AI images as art, but acknowledging how past artists and art movements have been able to challenge what it means to be art and that they can be spoken about in relation to the terms and Croce shows that the label isn't needed to discuss what artists make and what spectators see.

Chapter 3: Introduction to artificial intelligence (AI) and the concepts applied

3.1 How AI works

Before discussing AI images in relation to the terms and Croce, it is important to provide a background of how AI image generating works. Text-to-image AI is an extremely complex concept so this explanation will be one which is simplified to where the everyday person can understand. There are a few different ways of having AI produce an image, but one which is most commonly used is the process of stable diffusion. Diffusion models are trained and learn from noise. The noising process is taking an image, adding noise (which Scale would call 'destroying training data'), and the AI learning how to remake the image from the noise by removing it (Muppalla and Hendryx 2022).

Stable diffusion is how the AI trains itself on images and how to recreate them. When the AI is taking a text prompt, it works by taking the text input, the text going through an encoder (text understander) and an image generator (which is the image information creator and an image decoder), and the AI producing an image. Both the encoder and image generator are much more complicated than that, but at their core take the input that the user gives, understanding the language of the input, creating image information based on the text, and the decoder denoising so that an image can be generated which matches the prompt. The AI in diffusion models is reliant on the AI being given a big enough set of data (Alammar 2022). The larger the data set the AI is trained on/given, the more responsive the AI can be to the prompts it is fed.

When prompting, there are three main components to the way a text input should be made: frame + subject + style + optional seed. The frame of the image is the type of image that the user wants to generate. This where the user would provide something such as 'cartoon', 'realistic', or 'acrylic painting'. Essentially, the frame is what kind of image the user wants to be produced. The subject is where the user can say whatever they want. The user is saying what the image will be of and someone can input something like 'capybara dancing in a field'. The

options are endless and it is whatever the user decides they want an image of. The style refers to many different aspects but this is where someone can request the image to have a specific artist's style, if the lighting is a certain way, if the image is in a specific time period, etc (Muppalla and Hendryx 2022). Following this model, a prompt could look like 'an oil painting of a capybara dancing in a field in the style of Van Gough'.

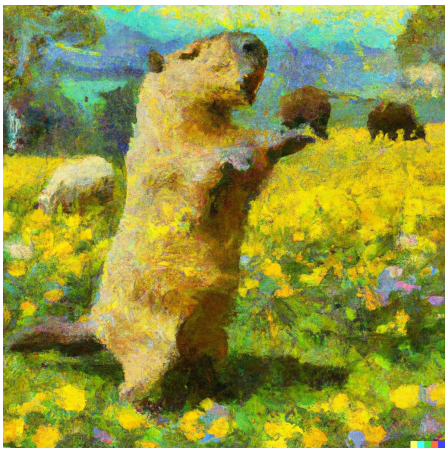


Figure 2. DALL-E rendition of 'an oil painting of a capybara dancing in a field in the style of Van Gogh'. Image courtesy of DALL-E

DALL-E, a free image generator open to the public by OpenAI, created four images based on that prompt. This is the one out of the four which matched my idea of the prompt the closest. The optional seed proves useful to those who are serious about making pieces with AI because they allow the prompt to get more specific with what the user is looking for, but a novice user doesn't need to be concerned with the additional seeding.

One misconception about AI image generators is that they function like Google. What I mean by this is that a user might believe that what they are inputting is a preexisting image that AI pulls to present to the user. This also may be minconceived as a sort of imitation as it may seem that the AI system is imitating what it pulls from the internet. Thinking of AI in this way is false because of the stable diffusion process. Hypotenuse AI comments on this by saying that everything that AI generates from a text input is 'from scratch'. This means that

> "If you ask them to generate an image of a dog, they won't just find an image of a dog and then add some details to it. They'll create the image of a dog from scratch, based on their understanding of what a dog is" (Hypotenuse AI, n.d.).

This further solidifies that AI is well trained on what images exist on the internet and the language behind those images and is able to produce a new image based on language input and

what it knows based on that language. Old images aren't being recycled and modified but rather new products are being made.

3.2 The terms and AI

With AI images being so complex and there being so many opinions as to where it belongs in the artworld, it is important to look at the AI image generating process and what it produces in the context of the four key components of art as well as with a Crocean lens. For production and creation there is an aspect for the human user and for the AI itself. The human user isn't necessarily producing because they have to think of a text prompt, unlike the production we see with Warhol or reproduced prints. Though if the user is blindly putting text prompts in without a care as to what words they use, then production might be a possibility for what's happening. Creation/creativity looks much more like what is happening for the human user because they have to come up with the combination of words. If the user is looking for a certain type of image then they need to be creative with their word selection so to get an image which matches their idea. If looking back to Zangwill's idea of creation being an aesthetic idea acquired by aesthetic insight and an aesthetic intention being acted upon, then what the user is doing can be compared to creation.

When looking at production and creation for AI in relation to the computer itself, both also seem to be occurring. There is production in the sense that a textual input is given to it and algorithms and the process of stable diffusion occur to generate an image. It might be tempting to say that a computer can't be creative but it isn't possible to rule out that it is creative. The AI is taking the prompt, running it with its knowledge about images that exist, and never produces the same image twice. The AI also doesn't just pull images from the internet as mentioned before but comes up with original images based on what it understands from the text. It is also a question of whether the AI is creative by itself or if it is displaying understanding of creative style. It isn't very certain that it is one or the other but the AI creates based on what it knows and understands and adjusts the images when it might not get the prompt right the first time so something like creativity is very nuch present for the computer.

There isn't much to be said about the intention of the computer for AI image generators, but the way the user displays intention is something that can be talked about. Not everyone using AI image generators are using them for the same purposes. The three main areas that seem to be

how users are categorized are by the general user, artists, and graphic designers/those in tech. The general user is the person who is using image generators for fun, out of curiosity, experimenting, etc. This is the user who isn't using AI seriously but nonetheless is aiming to create something. The artist is someone looking to use AI to make something like art. This user might be experimenting, using it for fun, etc. too but has a different aim in mind. There is more of a creative process, an aim to master the software to create exactly what they want, and other factors which have the idea to create 'art' with AI. The graphic designer/tech user might not be looking to create something like art at all but rather use AI for advertising purposes, to understand the programming of AI, etc. This user is less interested in creating with AI for artistic reasons but rather uses it for purposes which suit them better.

With these categories, intention is present within all of them. There are driving factors which lead them to make things with AI. The factors pushing them to create might be different but there are reasons causing the user to make images with AI. Aside from driving factors for creation, there is intentionality for working with AI as well. The user is intentionally choosing to use an AI image generator, they are being thoughtful about what text to input, and intentional in having the AI produce an image for them. As Livingston sees intention as a reason to create, the reasons might be different depending on what group the user is in but intention also lies in the actions it takes to have AI produce an image.

Reception is present with AI generated images in the way the spectator digests them. Allen's state fair piece was received well and likely due to the spectators experiencing the aesthetic properties of the piece. The user can experience the images they receive with their text prompt, seeing what sorts of aesthetic components are present and if they consider the image to be beautiful or not, but someone doesn't only have to be a user of AI to be a spectator of it. Considering an image beautiful has more to do with aesthetic judgement than intuition because aesthetic value is found in intuition (Kemp 2008), but a spectator can still characterize their experience with a work based off of the aesthetic and nonaesthetic components they are seeing. Like the Colorado State Fair, AI images can be in contests, galleries, online, and other spaces where people can look at them. An original image is in front of them and they can look at the colors, the shapes, the mood, and other things while digesting an AI image and not every spectator is going to have the same experience as another. As people digest what they are looking at in art spaces, people can digest what they are looking at for works generated by AI.

Applying the Crocean lens, intuition for the user is very possible to be present because they might have an intuition and contextualize it into a textual prompt for the AI to create with. It may not be present for the user who is using AI to not seriously create, but we also can't be sure that an intuition isn't driving them to play with AI to physicalize their vision. As people use painting, poetry, etc. as a way to make their intuition physical, AI is just another creative vessel for people to make their vision a reality.

It is hard to say if intuition is present/if intuition occurs for AI in the way that it likely occurs for the user. It is possible that the AI can think for itself through the understanding of images and language that it has to produce what the user is looking for, but whether the AI is having its own vision or not before creating from the prompt is unsure. Since the AI is fairly dependent on the text prompt in order to produce an image, it might not be possible for it to have an intuition before it generates an image. If it is an AI system that generates the text prompt and the image then there may be possibility that something like an intuition is happening, but unlikely because computers don't think exactly like humans do (we can't say they don't think, but they might not have the capacity to have an intuition in the way Croce intends intuition as). Rather focussing on intuition exactly how Croce refers to it, tying it with intuition as a form of intention in the way Zangwill breaks down creativity might be a better way of understanding. Zangwill refers to insight, a personal experience which is then shared with the public through an idea in a physical work (Zangwill 2007). This sort of insight isn't perfectly aligned with Croce, but there is still a reference to some sort of thought process prior to creating. Especially for self-generating AI systems, they have an understanding of current and past art and create accordingly. Though a thought process wouldn't look like the thought process of a human, there is still aesthetic insight, tied to aesthetic intention in making the work, and tied to the physical work the AI generates. Intuition for AI might not look like how human intuition does, but connecting insight and intention to what AI is doing makes something like intuition possible for the AI system.

In terms of reception and the Crocean lens, it is possible for the spectator to reproduce the intuition of the user who created the prompt but unsure whether the spectator can realize the intuition of AI. As mentioned, it isn't always the case that the spectator will produce the same intuition as the creator of the work. This goes back to where the line of if a computer can have an intuition, but assuming the computer isn't capable of having an intuition because of the user

being the one to come up with the text prompt and the AI generating the image based on what the user asked for, the spectator isn't likely able to reproduce an intuition of AI. User to spectator intuition realizations seem much more possible since the user is the one with the vision and potentially using AI as the means of bringing the vision to the physical world.

Applying Croce to AI displays the difficulty in adopting one philosopher's aesthetic theory for something so new and complex. Incorporating the terms in with Croce allows Croce to still be useful and for deeper exploration of what AI is doing to occur without the pressure of the label of 'art'. Using only Croce to discuss AI images and future art proves to be difficult in relation to intuition and self-generating AI systems because we can't identify whether the system produced an intuition with the way technology stands now. Intuition is very possible for the human user but Croce isn't able to aid in discussion surrounding the AI having an intuition when they make their own images. Incorporating intention into intuition relating to the creativity of AI and the images they make helps to make Croce more applicable to modern means of creation.

Chapter 4: Aesthetics for art ahead

It is important now with the discussion of AI images being art or not to establish the idea that there is no normal art. It is apparent that art is something which is constantly evolving, as we have seen from Duchamp, to Warhol, to photorealism, and today with AI, arguably, being a tool for creation. Through the years there have been artists who push the limits of what art is and at the time they were made not everyone viewed the works as art. Those who rejected pieces as not being art were taking a stance which assumed With Duchamp, the art gallery *Fountain* was submitted to rejected the work by saying it wasn't art, Warhol's reproduced prints have been debated as being art, and photorealism stems from photography which the public didn't want to accept as art at first either. Acknowledging the rejection of previous works from artists and art movements displays how the label of art is arbitrary and unnecessary in order to talk about and experience a work/image. Spectators and critics alike can make judgements based on their experience with a work, but what is important is that one's opinion isn't the final truth. Instead of trying to analyze AI images and the work to come from it in the future like the critics who place labels on works, it is more productive to grasp what components from aesthetics are most applicable to the ever-changing artworld.

We began with a toolkit of terms being production vs. creation, intention, and reception along with Croce's idea of intuition, imitation, and reception. Separating production and creation from each other had the purpose of placing importance on a creative process, a way of making that is meaningful with a reason for making in mind. Production is still a valid term to use for this discussion as it is usually wrapped up with creation, but understanding it in relation to reproductions of famous paintings in prints is where the separation lies. It is still a process of making but one that isn't rooted in originality and meaning. This concept of creation connects to intention because intention is the driving factor for creating. Intention is what separates those making a work purposefully and those who aren't. Reception is important only if the receiver isn't concerned with the label of art. A more productive use of reception is a spectator viewing a work and having their experience with it be based on aesthetic/nonaesthetic components such as color, shape, and elegance and attempting to realize the artist's vision/produce any intuition in relation to the work they're seeing. The components are part of the spectator's experience, as is producing an intuition, but it is also important to remember that the components being wrapped up in a physical object aren't the whole of the spectator experience. They allow for a spectator to put words to what they are seeing and producing an intuition for themselves/having some sort of personal experience with a work are two ways a spectator can engage with a work without needing to call it art. Using AI as the background for analyzing modern works, what is most important looking towards the future of art are placing emphasis on creativity whether it be from a human user or AI, a revised role of the artist with the understanding that an artist doesn't need to be present to create, and an emphasis on the spectator's experience with a work in a way which doesn't label something as art or not and being able to do so with respects to the core terms and Croce as guides.

Starting with the emphasis on creativity, as demonstrated, it is closely tied with intention and intuition. A creative process, which is individual for every artist, involves some reason for making as almost all art is made with intention (Livingston 2005). Croce doesn't explicitly talk about intuition in relation to a creative process but an intuition is expressed through a physical work, so creation is part of the process whether it comes from producing the intuition or making the intuition into something physical. In this space where the presence of intuition isn't certain, it is helpful to rely on intention rather than fully leaning into Crocean intuition. The main concern with creativity is the reason for making, displaying that there is a drive to create and something

original is being made. Croce doesn't place limits on how an intuition/a creative process is made physical, but instead of assuming intuition is there for AI systems, understanding that the making of the original image and having a process for doing so is where the focus should be.

With intention and self-generating AI, The AI can accomplish creating something original and making works which the public likes, as evidenced through AICAN being a part of galleries and art-showing spaces (Elgammal 2019). The question of whether intention is present for the AI is something which isn't quite clear. Elgammal says that for the example of artists using AI to create deformed portraits similar to Francis Bacon's, "the deformed faces we see in the example of AI art aren't necessarily the goal of the artist or the machine" (Elgammal 2019) Intention in this case isn't certain further past taking the prompt and making an image from the text by utilizing the knowledge it has from its training. The intention on the AI's end isn't necessarily how it is going to make the image but rather how it can produce an image as close to the prompt as possible. This can be coupled with how Livingston speaks because she holds that the creation of works is almost always intentional (Livingston 2005). There is a purpose for making whether it be because a text prompt caused it to do so or that a self-generating AI was being told to make an image on its own. Bringing imitation back in, self-generating AI is making something original, but imitation may be present if a human user asks AI to make an image in the style of a specific painter, etc. This translates to ntention when the AI is deciding how to best emulate the prompt of the human user/what to make when the AI can make images by itself which also relates to the creative process emphasis. Making images in a certain style or AICAN making an image based off of what has been popular for art in the last decade contains intention which can also be concerned with imitation. This isn't an imitation of nature as an original image is still being made, but there can be intention to imitate. Nonetheless, it is arguable that intention is present and important for AI images whether it comes from the human user end or the self-generating systems.

Following creativity, we also need to rethink the role of the artist. Art in the past has been something which humans make but that is no longer the case. Human users can pull the creative strings when inputting their text prompts, but self-generating AI systems do the creating all on their own. AICAN is an example of an AI image generator that can function without human input. The AI system was fed Western art from over the last five decades so it has an understanding of art trends and what more recent art looks like but fully produces and titles art

on its own (Elgammal 2019). It understands what is pleasing to the public and makes images based on the knowledge it has. AICAN is the prime example of a system capable of creating on its own and producing works which are well-accepted by the public. Elgammal notes people enjoying the work made by AICAN and people "using words such as 'having visual structure', 'inspiring' and 'communicative'" (Elgammal 2019). These came about not necessarily from trying to distinguish the images as human made or AI made but enjoying the images for being computer-generated images. Elgammal created the algorithm AICAN uses to create but gives the credit of the images to the AI and not himself. As the AICAN images were displayed in exhibitions the question of who the artist is was repeated by many people. This example alone forces the narrative of a human artist to not be held strongly because it is clear that works can be made by computers alone.

When reevaluating the role of the artist, it is also important to acknowledge what the AI can't do in relation to making images. AI is creating based off of an algorithm while "human artists, on the other hand, are inspired by people, places, and politics. They create art to tell stories and make sense of the world" (Elgammal 2019). AI is unable to bring the social element of why they are creating because they are only trained on images and how to relate language to them in order to make their own images. AI can be applied socially when a human user is choosing their text prompt and when spectators are looking at a work and connecting social dots in their head, but the AI cannot do that by itself. Of course it is very possible that it might be able to do so in the future, but placing AI images in a social context/making them with a social context in mind is not something that self-generating AI can do itself. This doesn't take away from the fact that the artist doesn't need to be human but rather that the intention of the artist isn't present in the same way for self-generating AI.

As spectators received AICAN's work positively and used descriptors such as 'inspiring' and 'communicative', it is important as art evolves to place emphasis on the experience the spectator has with an image. This goes along with trying to be rid of the art label because what art is will always be changing and will continue to change. Instead, the experience with beauty and what the spectator is seeing is more important for aesthetically analyzing AI images and future works. As Croce sees the role of the spectator being one where the spectator tries to realize the intuition of the artist/an intuition (Kemp 2008), digesting and experiencing AI images for what they look like is where the attention should be given. Taste and beauty can be wrapped

up with criticism for Croce, but beauty for looking at AI images as one looks at art follows more of the way the spectator sees colors, balance, etc. within a piece. This experience is where the emphasis should be placed because it gives the spectator the ability to engage with AI images and art to come without the concern of it being art. Zangwill's mind-independence also holds importance here for both spectators and critics because as mind-independence holds that works aren't beautiful or ugly just because one person thinks so (Zangwill 2003), it can be argued that mind-independence applies to the label of art as well. Croce's dislike for the opinions of poor critics connects with mind-independence as the critic doesn't hold a universally held opinion and should rather be concerned on explaining their aesthetic experience with a work. As art keeps evolving, what the spectator sees is more important than what they consider the work to be. Understanding that the spectator or critic should be concerned with their experience with a piece removes pressure to label a work as well as knowing that the label isn't what is important. Doing so also gives room for the spectator to not need to be a critic and a critic to not be so strongly opinionated because the importance is in the reflection of a personal experience and to remove the assumption that other people share/should share in that same experience. Just as a spectator isn't expected to share in the exact intuition of the artist, other spectators and critics should be concerned with what they experience and not be as concerned as others taking it as factual.

Looking towards the future, it isn't enough to place new and evolving methods of creation under aesthetics terms used to talk about past works of art. What will help the discussion of AI images and the ways of creating to follow is identifying important aesthetic terms to supplement a theory of aesthetics which doesn't constrain works to specific genres. The important toolkit terms that I selected are creation separate from production, intention, and reception which allow for conversation of AI images outside of the label of art because they refer to how they are made, why they were made, and how someone can have their own experience receiving the images. These supplement the aesthetic theory of Benedetto Croce well because Croce sees art as intuition which is physicalized by a work, the role of critics placing works into genres based on their judgements isn't favored by Croce, and the spectator is meant to have an intuition from experiencing a work whether it matches the artist's or not. The boundaries of what something means to be art are much more open with Croce's theory and allows for people to speak about AI images and works to come without needing to place a label on them. The concern is with intuition, making sure that works are original in the sense of not directly imitating nature,

and allowing the spectator to have their own experience with the work. Creation, intention, and reception are all incorporated into Croce's theory indirectly but come together to provide the backbone of how to more productively speak about what AI is making. These further give rise to main concerns of emphasizing creativity and a creative process, rethinking what it means to be an artist and who/what that role might extend to, and what spectators should be concerned with when receiving a work.

Throughout history we have seen examples of works which pushed the boundaries of what spectators and critics thought art to be. From Duchamp's usage of a readymade urinal, Warhol's choice to reproduce prints and make boxes in a factory-like manner, and the invention of the camera to allow people to take photographs and eventually copy them with photorealism, we have seen a shift in how to think about art and parameters for what art is. Throughout these creative shifts, there has been an attempt at labelling them at the time they were made but are now present in art history books. We exist in a time where computers can produce images for us, both with our input and without it. As we utilize the toolkit terms and place AI images into the context of Croce and the main concerns, the ability to speak about future works to be made widens.

It is also important to understand that not all AI images and future works will perfectly fit into this framework either. The main goal is to look closely at what is in front of us, use the terms, Croce, and concerns to open up conversation, and understand that what art is will always evolve. What it means to be creative, who an artist is, and how the works should be received have a new life when AI is brought into the picture. The four terms which came from various philosophers of aesthetics are production, creation, intention, and reception. These bring out what is important in Croce's theory which is intuition, imitation, and reception. Intuition is a mental activity which is expressed in a physical work of art, noting that art is still mental even though there is a physical work representing the vision (Kemp 2008). I still hold that production is something different than creation, especially in the conversations around AI trying to say that what AI is doing isn't creative. Creation brings together the key terms and Croce differently than production might in the way that creation suggests thought and a meaning for making which can start fron artistic intuition, that meaning comes from intention and the drive to make a work, and how the receiving end should be trying to recreate the artist's intuition and take in aesthetic/nonaesthetic components so to analyze what the spectator is looking at. Spectators and

critics will receive works differently, but keeping with mind-independence and knowing that one opinion isn't the universal opinion helps to remove the art label and allow for personal experience to be the center of receiving works. Art is always going to continue to evolve and AI generated images are just what is new at this moment. Rethinking creativity, the role of the artist, and how to receive art are all central for aesthetic discussion as boundary pushing works continue to be made in the future.

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