

## *From the Editor*

# The Influence of Artificial Intelligence on Art in the Contemporary Era

## I

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) technology into the realm of art creation has elicited significant discourse regarding its possibilities and capabilities. Positively, AI assists artists in various aspects of their work, expediting once time-consuming processes. Some scholars posit that AI is not merely an assistant but also initiates a paradigmatic shift in creativity. They argue that AI has redefined creativity, revolutionising previously less innovative methods and techniques in art. AI has unveiled unique and diverse possibilities, leading to its extensive use by contemporary artists.

However, the pervasive influence of AI technology in art creation raises some critical issues. Among the issues are related to sources of creativity and intellectual property. The rapid advancement of AI technology also challenges traditional notions of authorship, introducing ambiguity and confusion regarding its meaning in contemporary artistic practice. Looking at the importance and seriousness of this issue, stakeholders and authorities should urgently grapple with the legal questions surrounding authorship and intellectual property rights in this new landscape.

AI technology has also blurred the traditional concept of the artist as a central, unique, distinctive, and often regarded as a “genius” with a mystical ability to produce novel and original works. The emergence of AI has altered this perception, raising questions about the source of ideas and inspiration. The role of intuition, emotions, and the human subconscious in art creation becomes convoluted when these aspects are mediated by AI technology.

In this AI-driven art era, the concept, purpose, role, and identity of the artist have evolved. Traditional and modern paradigms of the artist are increasingly viewed as less relevant and significant. Contemporary artists may now be seen as collaborators, manipulators, managers, or curators rather than the sole nuclei of creativity and originality. This shift critically impacts the artist’s role, goals, and responsibilities. The blurred boundaries between the originality of an artist’s inspiration and AI-generated aesthetics indicate a transformation in the definition of the artist and the purpose of art itself.

These technological challenges faced by artists today evoke historical parallels, such as the mid-19th-century Arts and Crafts Movement and the Aesthetic Movement in the United Kingdom. These movements opposed the Industrial Revolution’s technologically driven art and design tendencies, criticising machine-produced art as lacking the human touch and soul. However, figures like William Morris (1834–1896), initially a strong opponent of machine use, eventually utilised machines to produce elegant and sophisticated art and design products efficiently and in large quantities.

A similar scenario unfolds today within a different paradigm. The nature, methods, and roles of art are being questioned in the context of AI technology. What constitutes art, artists, creativity, originality, and authorship in the AI era? As significant shifts impact the art world, the pertinent question is to what extent the art community is prepared to adapt and embrace this transformation. The need for adaptability in the face of these changes is crucial for the future of art in the AI era.

## II

Similar to previous issue, the articles and reviews in *Wacana Seni Journal of Arts Discourse* Volume 23, 2024 encompass a diversity of focus, perspectives, and approaches. Sarena Abdullah’s article, “National Policies and Their Reverberations on the Art Making and Art Scenes in Malaysia under Mahathir Mohamed’s Premiership,” critically examines the art landscape during Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamed’s tenure from 1981 to 2003. On the other hand, the article by Setyo Budi, Tiwi Bina Affanti and Sayid Mataram, titled “Ornamental Patterns of Contemporary Indonesian Batik: Clothing for Strengthening the Articulation of Appearance Characteristics,” provides an analysis of the ornamentation within contemporary Indonesian batik forms.

Xiaoling Zhan and Norfarizah Mohd Bakhr, in their article “The Female Body and the Body Politic in Sex Scenes of Lou Ye’s Film: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis of *Summer Palace*,” conduct a discourse analysis focusing on the representation of the body within Lou Ye’s film *Summer Palace* (2006).

Asril, Rustim and Dede Pramayoza, through their article “The Performance Concepts of *Adu-Tandiang* in Pariaman Society: Fighting, Competing, and Fighting/Competing as Main Characteristics,” explore the performance aspects of *adu-tandiang*, particularly emphasising the characteristics of fighting and competing within Pariaman society in West Sumatra.

Amirul Fahmi Razali, Addy Putra Md Zulkifli and Sharih Ahmad Mohamad present quite an innovative educational approach in their article “Design Project Classroom: Fostering Industry-Ready Industrial Designers through Academic-Industry Collaboration.” The article discusses a project-based education model designed to prepare designers for industry demands through collaboration with industry players.

Chellitda Farhana Gunaish, Mohd Firdaus Abdullah and Wan Hasmah Wan Teh examine historical dimensions in their article “Propaganda Sektor Perkhidmatan Awam di Persekutuan Tanah Melayu melalui Malayan Film Unit (MFU), 1957–1963,” focusing on the use of the Malay Film Unit as a propaganda tool in the early post-independence period.

Additionally, the current issue of *Wacana Seni Journal of Arts Discourse* features three reviews and a report. Shahnaz Mohd Baldev Shah and Khairul Anuar Samsuddin review the performance “Rhythms of Kinabalu 2022 ‘Coming Back Stronger’: A Review” while Sheau-Shi Ngo offers a perspective of Tan Chui Mui’s film *Barbarian Invasion* (2021) in the review titled “An Empathetic Odyssey: A Film Review of *Barbarian Invasion* (2021) by Tan Chui Mui.” Muhammad Uzair Ismail provides an analysis of an Islamic art exhibition in “*A Journey Through Islamic Art* Exhibition: Purification of Form, Ineradicable in Content.” Finally, Ali Alasri and Simon Soon report on “Arts Community Resilience in Malaysia during the Time of COVID-19: Five Arts Centre’s Open House Initiative,” which investigates the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the art community.

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