

Posthumanism and Artificial Intelligence

Research in Practice



MAURO C. MARTINEZ
Untitled Study 3
2022
Oil on linen
30 x 22 cm

Somewhere in 2023 ...

Today we find ourselves at an intersection that will lead to unique possibilities, experiences and (augmented) realities, in both the production and our relationship with creative and social forms.

The fourth Industrial Revolution

Historically, technological progress has had a significant influence on the way we make and consume art and design: from Gutenberg's printing press circa 1448, Louis Daguerre's daguerreotype announced in 1839, Edouard-Leon Scott de Martinville's first voice recording in 1860, the Lumière brothers cinématographe motion picture system first screened in 1895, and more recently the modern conception of the internet by Tim Berners-Lee in 1990.

Throughout history it can be seen that technology changes our modes of being.

The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction

These milestones have provided the impetus for change. The poet, philosopher, and writer Paul Valéry's words are referenced in the preface to Walter Benjamin's text *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (1935):

“We must expect great innovations to transform the entire technique of the arts, thereby affecting artistic invention itself and perhaps even bringing about an amazing change in our very notion of art.”

He was contemplating photography and film, but Valéry's statement appears to resonate now, in our contemporary age of digital production and engagement.

Posthumanism

Aligned with the technological transformation that is taking place, is the necessary re-evaluation of the human condition.

This approach is a relatively new philosophical idea known as 'posthumanism'.

This proposes that the human being is no longer the single, isolated, dominant agency for actualization or change.

‘Posthumanism is a philosophical perspective of how change is enacted in the world. ... Whereas a humanist perspective frequently assumes the human is autonomous, conscious, intentional, and exceptional in acts of change, a posthumanist perspective assumes agency is distributed through dynamic forces of which the human participates but does not completely intend or control. ...’

Oxford Research Encyclopedias (oxfordre.com)

Posthumanism and the contemporary condition

In *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics*. Katheryn Hales states:

‘external representations may be changing radically, and thus must be re-visioned. In the posthuman, there are no essential differences or absolute demarcations between bodily existence and computer simulation,

(our real lives and our digital/virtual lives)

cybernetic mechanism and biological organism,

[automatic control systems in machines and systems in living things]

robot teleology and human goals.’

[the function of things whether they are digital or living]

(Hayles, 1999)

Our lives are now integrated with technology

It seems that technology is no longer separate, but an integral part of our human existence.

We talk to speakers,

our phones identify us by our fingerprints or retina,

a watch can measure our heartbeat and sleep patterns,

a CGM sensor can record our insulin levels.

Technology is embedded in how we conduct business; do everyday work in the office and outside; organise social gatherings, do shopping; share intimate moments and fall in love, wage war and revolutions; how we produce art, science and literature; how we share ideas and experiences.

Introducing Jennifer, the AI avatar.

This is the first part of a creative project I am currently developing for my Ph.D.

In this film, a literal, yet awkward, monologue is delivered by an augmented persona that presents an appreciation of its' own in-built flaws. It is an avatar created through AI.

Feigned humanity is explored through the mortal traits of honesty, empathy, intuition, identity, and an almost controversial sincerity that seeks to disarm the viewer through this candid approach.

The aim is to provoke an embodied response through an augmented, artificially intelligent, representation.



Jennifer's character construction.

From a selection of choices, the central 'character' has been cast from numerous software options: gender representation, tone, ethnicity, age, appearance, social demographic, and additional options have been chosen to provide a delivery that suggests an element of sincerity, trust, empathy, and warmth, all presented from a seemingly genteel perspective. Speed of delivery, pitch and pause algorithms have been adjusted to engage, simulate and stimulate a relationship with us, the viewer.

Uncanny Valley

Some of these affects are symptomatic of what robotics professor Masahiro Mori describes as the *uncanny valley* (bukimi no tani genshō).

It is not just the physical resemblance of Jennifer, but the emotional similarities and peculiarities that are significant. It may be that the avatar generates within us a fear of death by reminding us that we are living, and therefore mortal.

Lil' Miquela, the IG avatar

Miquela Sousa is an *Instagram* (2.8 million followers), *Twitter*, *Tumblr*, *YouTube* and *TikTok* influencer who was named in *Time Magazine's* 25 Most Influential People on the Internet in 2018. She 'lives' in New York and Los Angeles, has been photographed with celebrities and suffers from allergies. She wears *Supreme* and endorses *Calvin Klein*, and *Prada*.

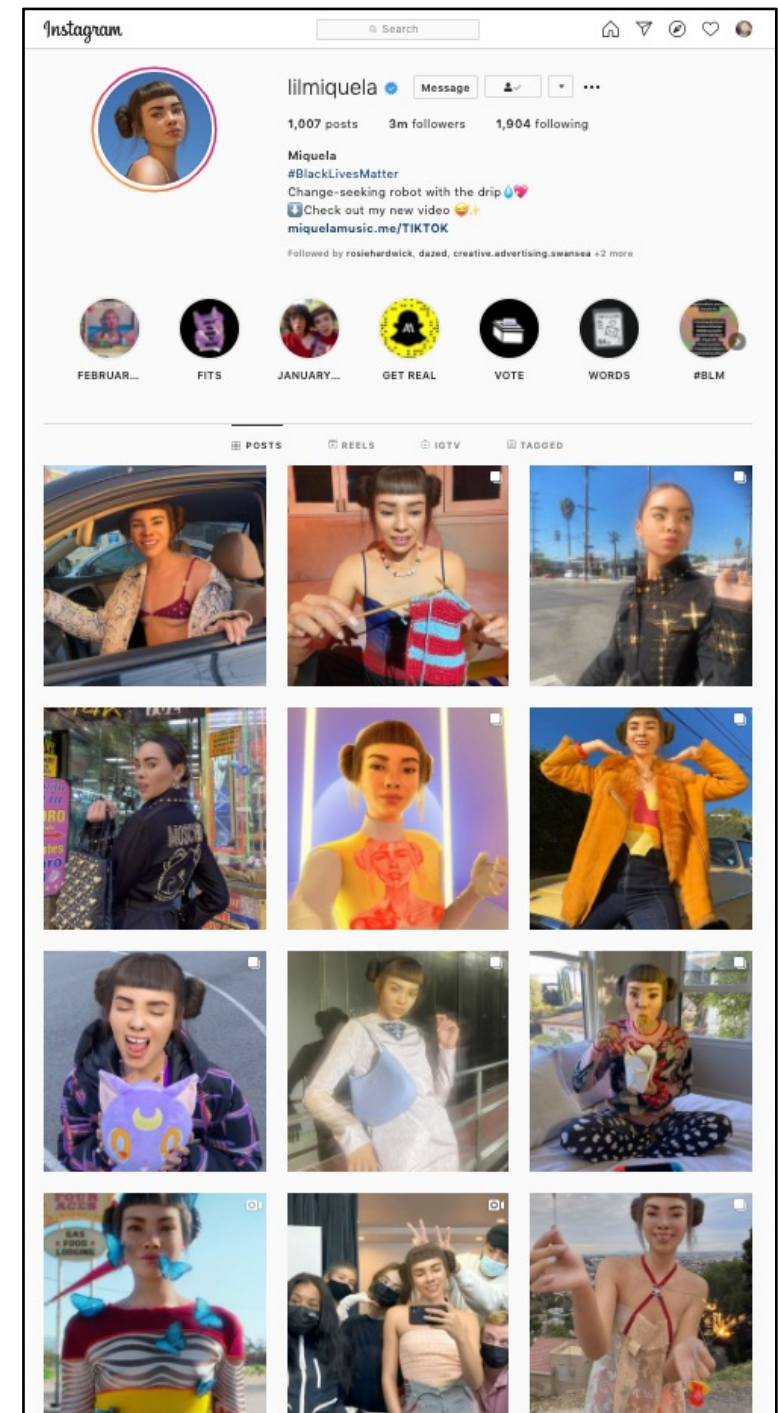
She is a cgi avatar created by Trevor McFedries and Sara DeCou who are specialists in artificial intelligence and robotics. Her appearance and personality is a manifestation of the data of the most active Instagram users.



Real life drama

Through analysis of Instagram data, Miquela has been positioned as a social-justice warrior. On April 18, 2021, a pro-Trump, self-proclaimed 'robot supremacist' CGI character named *Bermuda* hacked her account and accused Miquela of being a "fake ass person" who was duping her followers. Ironically *Bermuda* was not real either.

Apparently, it was an elaborate PR stunt.





lilmiquela • Following

Paid partnership with mini



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MINI Cooper SE 3-Door Hatch: Power consumption in kWh/100: 16.1 - 14.9 (NEDC); 17.6 - 15.2 (WLTP), Electric range in km: 253 - 236 (WLTP).

Further information:

www.mini.com/disclaimer



132,605 views

3 DAYS AGO



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Chatbot technology

Chatbots are computer programmes that use an AI called a neural network and natural language processing (NLP) to understand questions and automate responses to them, whilst simulating human conversation.

A neural network is an algorithmic system that learns skills by analysing vast amounts of digital data. Chatbots analyse text and imagery from the internet to source its 'knowledge'.

Neural networks are very good at mimicking the way humans use language. This can often be mistaken as sentient behaviour - one that is able to perceive thoughts and feelings.

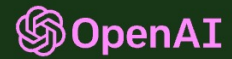
OpenAI

OpenAI, a San Francisco start-up, released ChatGPT at the end of 2022. This application began building neural networks that learnt from enormous amounts of digital text, including books, Wikipedia articles, chat logs and many other things found on the internet.

These chatbots seem to communicate as a human. They can also write academic essays, marketing copy, love letters, instructions, poetry almost any thing you can ask. However, they can make frequent mistakes as the source of their intelligence is flawed because they learn from the internet.

These systems also don't repeat what is on the internet verbatim. Using what they have learned, they can sometimes produce new text that is incorrect - AI researchers call this a 'hallucination'.

Chatbots may give you different answers if you ask the same question twice. They will respond with anything they find from the web, whether based on reality or not.



ChatGPT: Optimizing Language Models for Dialogue

We've trained a model called ChatGPT which interacts in a conversational way. The dialogue format makes it possible for ChatGPT to answer followup questions, admit its mistakes, challenge incorrect premises, and reject inappropriate requests. ChatGPT is a sibling model to [InstructGPT](#), which is trained to follow an instruction in a prompt and provide a detailed response.

[TRY CHATGPT](#)



New York City blocks use of the ChatGPT bot in its schools

By [Dan Rosenzweig-Ziff](#)

Updated January 5, 2023 at 6:31 p.m. EST | Published January 5, 2023 at 4:44 p.m. EST



David C. Banks, chancellor of the New York City public schools, takes a tour of Manhattan's Urban Assembly Gateway School for Technology on Oct. 20. (Yana Paskova for The Washington Post)

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 4 min

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New York City schools banned access last week to ChatGPT, an artificial intelligence bot that lets users, including students, ask the tool to write an essay on Shakespeare, solve an algebraic equation or complete a coding assignment. ChatGPT then churns out a well-written response moments later, a development that school systems, teachers and

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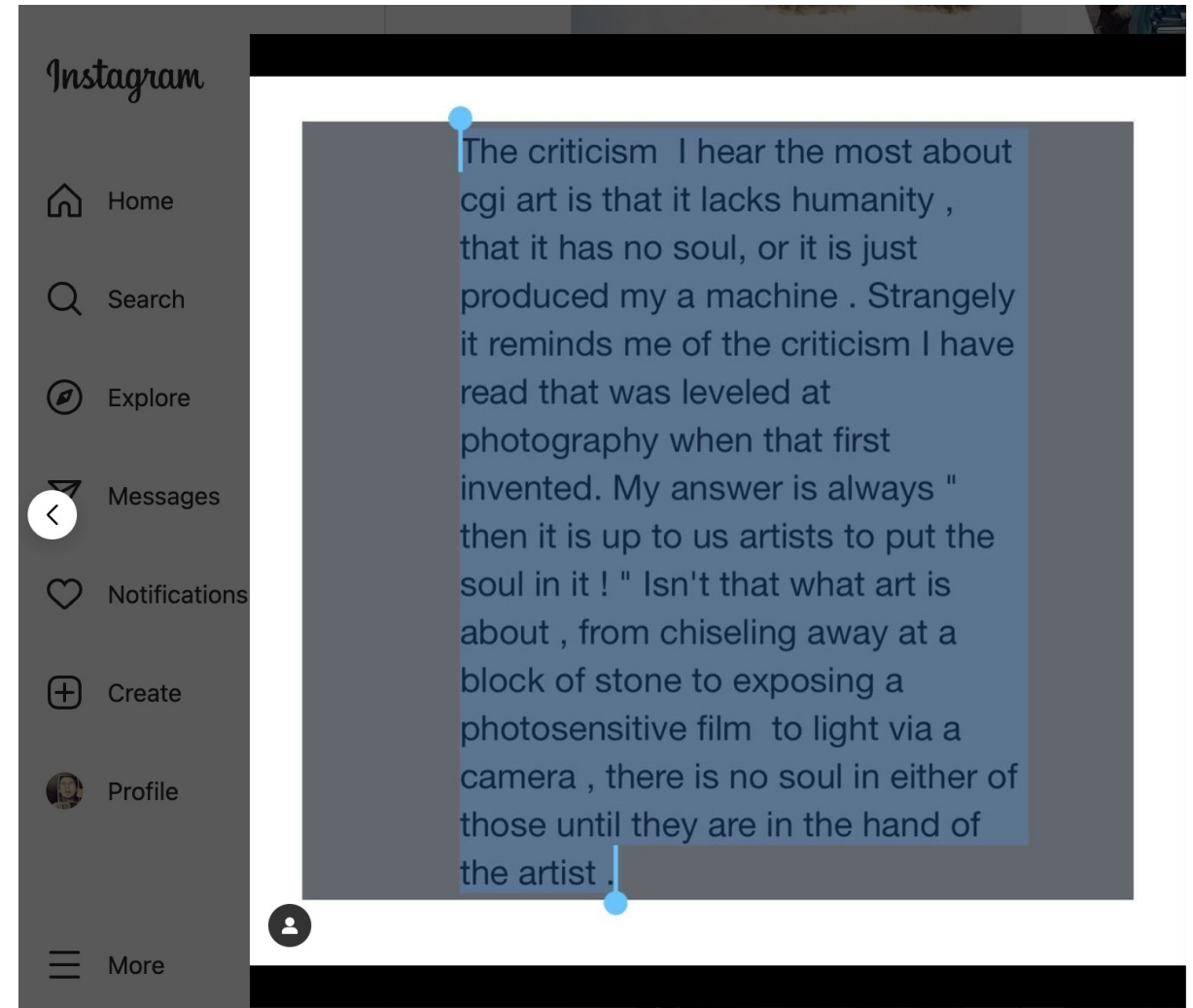
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Nick Cave

“Songs arise out of suffering, by which I mean they are predicated upon the complex, internal human struggle of creation and, well, as far as I know, algorithms don’t feel. Data doesn’t suffer. *ChatGPT* has no inner being, it has been nowhere, it has endured nothing, it has not had the audacity to reach beyond its limitations, and hence it doesn’t have the capacity for a shared transcendent experience, as it has no limitations from which to transcend.”

(cnn.com 17.01.23)



Nick Knight

(discord.com 10.12.22)

Text to image software

Text to image software is set to have a profound effect on the creation of personal and commercial imagery. AI software, *DALL-E* is one example of a text to image software that can create photographic and illustrative content based on text prompts.

These applications are sophisticated and process hundreds of millions of images to construct visual outcomes. Problematic content and bias continue to be addressed as the AI develops. Presently there is only limited access to this software as it is continuously developed by engineers. However, it is set to be revolutionary when it becomes broadly available.

AI examples



DALL-E generated these images by following a command for “a teapot in the shape of an avocado.”
Credit...OpenAI

Image Generated by AI



DALL-E generated this image from a command for “cats playing chess.” Credit...OpenAI



DALL-E generated this image when asked for “a living room filled with sand, sand on the floor, piano in the room.” Credit...OpenAI

AI Fashion and the Metaverse

A futuristic fashion exploration for the metaverse inspired by Alexander McQueen integrating the VR headset to the complete outfit. Made with *Midjourney* software





Product
design with
Midjourney



AI advertising creation

The following advertisement was created using *ChatGPT* and *Midjourney* and shared on social media. The intention was to make an ad. The AI was given a brand, *7-Eleven*, and a problem:

anything from convenience stores abandons quality for convenience.

From that, *ChatGPT* generated a human insight and a brand benefit. The creator asked *ChatGPT* to describe the first image in the ad and then the second, then to get the best image results from *Midjourney*.

The author noted on LinkedIn: ‘The AI spit out exactly what it was asked...aside from some weird quirks with the typography.’

The AI outcome

The creative responsible continued:

‘I quickly pieced everything together using Pixelmator, adding a headline, and of course, all the images that were generated from ChatGPT and Midjourney.’

‘All in all, I have to say, I'm pretty impressed. I mean, it wasn't a complete train wreck, which is what I expected. Are our jobs safe? Yeah, for the time being. But I'd say what I got from this was akin to a junior creative team. Not bad, but not great.’

(linkedin.com)

The perfect dinner for when
you have all the time in the world.



The perfect
dinner for
when you don't.

7-ELEVEN.

AI adversarial neural filters



Where are we going?

The digital and technological ideas we have briefly seen here are set to inextricably change the way we work as creative communicators and practitioners.

Image creation, film, audio, text, web search, and design are all areas which will benefit from the opportunities provided to us by technology. They can also be seen as labour-saving and economic solutions.

We are entering uncharted territory so it is important that we responsibly negotiate our interactions and shared evolution into the future which will have digital technology embedded in every part of our lives. There are ethical considerations and problems to be navigated.

Nothing will ever be the same again.

and finally ...

