

CULTURAL EXCHANGE WITH THE REALM OF A.I.

National Gallery X has launched its 'AI Gallery' as the world's first cultural exchange programme with the realm of autonomous / intelligent systems (A/IS). By presenting dramas, video and digital paintings, NGX aims to stimulate two channels of discourse. The first considers the impact of A/IS holistically through stories and drama. The second analyses creative works produced by A/IS using methods drawn from the humanities and social sciences.

The AI Gallery has a concrete social purpose. Though we require machines to explain their decisions, advanced A/IS already outstrip the human comprehension. Yet we still need to work alongside and even under A/IS. Cultural exchange has a long history of trust-building, and the humanities and social sciences have sophisticated tools for analysing creativity. Clearly we cannot simply apply art criticism, psychology or anthropology to a machine's creative output.

The workshop's goal is to define a conceptual framework for understanding A/IS through their creative output. This will be a guided but open-ended discussion. Participants are encouraged to contribute via screen sharing as well as dialogue.

To prepare, please review the AI Gallery at National Gallery X:
<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/national-gallery-x/the-ai-gallery>
and

Modelling the threat from AI & video at
<https://pantar.com/can-machines-come-alive/>

Feel free to bring your own examples of creative artefacts - images, text or video - from the realm of machines.

Part 1: We will develop criteria for avoiding anthropo- or biomorphic assumptions about individuality, creativity, intention, awareness and sentience. Key questions + keyword searches:

- What is life? *or* What distinguishes a mechanism from an organism? [biological autonomy]
- Is cognition the exclusive domain of living creatures? Is cognition always confined to an individual, or can it be a coordinated yet singular activity? [distributed cognition, Lewis Mumford mega-machine]

Part 2: We will draft definitions of agency, intention, goal-seeking and other forms of behaviour appropriate for A/IS.

- What distinguishes living agents from software agents? Does the term 'agent' mean the same things in these frames of reference? [*Modelling the threat from AI* discusses this issue.]

Part 3: We will identify disciplines and specific methods that may be adapted for analysing the creative output of A/IS.

- Please review the artworks at the AI Gallery or comparable works. Bracket their origin to consider them objectively. What can art history, anthropology, psychology sociology, critical / literary theory tell us about them? [AI art, AI writing]
- Now let's consider if and how these methods might be dissociated from their human associations to analyse the same works.