

MEMORIES OF THE CREATIVITY: A VISUAL CRITICISM OF THE EVOLUTION OF CREATIVITY IN THE ERA OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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Abstract

Alit Kumala Dewi's "Memories of the Creativity" poster is a powerful visual response to the shifting meaning of creativity in the posthuman era, where artificial intelligence (AI) technology is beginning to redefine creative processes that were previously closely tied to human experience. By combining the image of an old man with closed eyes, a collage of manual art activities, and the symbolism of AI invasion in a contrasting visual composition, the poster highlights the existential tension between the memory of traditional creativity and the new, increasingly digitalized reality. This work is not only an aesthetic statement, but also a philosophical reflection on the changing role of humans in artistic creation. This article analyzes the poster using a theoretical approach based on the concepts of posthumanity, simulacra, creative nostalgia, and a critique of cultural automation. Through an in-depth reading, it is revealed how the poster functions as a social critique and a contemplative invitation to the position of humans in the creative landscape of the future.

Keywords: Creativity, Posthuman, Visual Arts, Artificial Intelligence, Nostalgia, Cultural Criticism.

INTRODUCTION

The cultural landscape of the 21st century is increasingly shaped by rapid technological advancements. Among the most striking developments is the growing integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into domains traditionally considered uniquely human, such as art and creativity. For centuries, artistic expression has embodied the most intimate dimensions of human experience emerging from struggle, contemplation, and the search for meaning. However, the emergence of machines capable of generating paintings, music, literature, and other creative works invites critical reflection: what becomes of creativity when the process is automated? How do we interpret authorship, authenticity, and emotion in works produced by algorithmic intelligence?

This phenomenon forms part of a broader shift often described as posthumanism a condition in which the boundaries between humans and machines are becoming increasingly porous. Posthumanism, as (Braidotti, 2013) suggests, is not limited to the technological presence of cybernetic bodies but signifies a more profound transformation in human self-

perception, particularly regarding creativity, emotion, and agency. Within this context, creativity is no longer the exclusive domain of biological beings, but instead exists within a larger ecosystem of information production that includes AI systems (Cheng, 2022; Ivcevic & Grandinetti, 2024). These developments raise not only philosophical but also visual and cultural questions about the evolving nature of artistic expression (Terziyan et al., 2018).

Within this reality, the poster *Memories of the Creativity* emerges as a compelling medium for reflective visual criticism. Employing a melancholic black-and-white aesthetic, the poster juxtaposes a nostalgic vision of traditional craftsmanship with the looming presence of digital technologies. At its center is the figure of an elderly man with closed eyes, evoking the role of a memory keeper who symbolizes an era in which art was deeply personal, tactile, and soul-driven. In stark contrast, a torn corner of the composition reveals a glowing AI symbol, signaling the disruptive entry of machine-generated art and suggesting an irreversible shift in the meaning of creative work.

This poster communicates through a visual language imbued with nostalgia, loss, and ambiguity about the future. By depicting traditional artistic practices such as painting, carving, and handwriting, it invites viewers to reconsider the emotional and labor-intensive nature of creativity qualities increasingly absent in the algorithm-driven artistic processes of today. While machines now generate visual and textual works in seconds, the poster serves as a critical reminder of the human depth once required in such acts of creation.

This study seeks to analyze *Memories of the Creativity* using the theoretical frameworks of posthumanism, simulacra, and creative nostalgia. However, these theories will be elaborated in greater detail in the literature review section. For now, the introduction presents them as conceptual anchors for understanding the cultural tensions reflected in the work. Methodologically, this analysis draws on visual studies and visual semiotics as interpretive tools, following the tradition of reading images as complex texts that communicate sociocultural meanings (John Thomas Mitchell, 2006; Rose, 2016).

This analysis is particularly urgent today, as the proliferation of AI image generators such as DALL·E, MidJourney, and Stable Diffusion reshapes the landscape of visual art. Understanding how works like *Memories of the Creativity* reflect and critique this transformation is essential to our grasp of the human position in a creative world increasingly co-authored by machines.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative methodology grounded in visual analysis combined with relevant theoretical frameworks, including semiotics, symbolic interpretation, and the conceptual approaches of Posthumanism, Creative Nostalgia, and Hyperreality. The primary data source for this research is the digital poster "*Memories of the Creativity*", which is analyzed as a single-case visual artifact. This poster was selected due to its symbolic richness and relevance in the contemporary discourse of AI-driven visual art. The poster gained public attention through online circulation and was noted for its critical engagement with the rise of AI image generators such as MidJourney and DALL·E. Its composition juxtaposing manual artistic expressions with AI symbolism offers a compelling ground for investigating cultural transitions in creative authorship as figure 1.

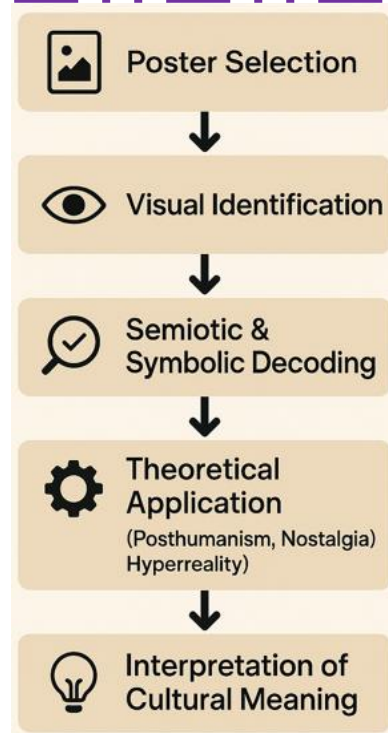


Figure 1. Diagram of Visual Methodology

The methodological framework consists of three stages:

1. Visual Identification

The first step involves a close reading of the poster's visual elements: image composition, color palette, iconography, and symbolic cues. These elements are treated as visual signs that carry layered meanings.

2. Semiotic and Symbolic Decoding

Drawing from semiotic theory, signs in the poster are categorized into:

- Iconic signs: elements visually resembling their referents (e.g., the old man as a metaphor for manual creativity).
- Indexical signs: signs indicating a causal or physical relationship (e.g., the torn paper effect signifying historical rupture).
- Symbolic signs: culturally constructed meanings (e.g., black-and-white color tone signifying nostalgia or melancholy).

This decoding process is complemented by symbolic analysis, focusing on how visual elements represent ideologies, emotional responses, or cultural anxieties (Hasyim & Arafah, 2023).

3. Theoretical Contextualization

- Posthumanism (Braidotti, 2013; Putra & Hambali, 2023) is used to interpret how the poster articulates the changing identity of humans in relation to intelligent machines and technological mediation in artistic creation.
- Creative Nostalgia (Bolin, 2016; Shi et al., 2021) helps explain the emotional power of the poster in evoking longing for traditional art practices as a response to digital transformation.
- Hyperreality (Homayounfar et al., 2022) is employed to critique how the representation of reality in the poster may be more compelling or emotionally persuasive than the actual condition it depicts.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This discussion draws upon several key concepts to interpret the meaning of the poster "Memories of the Creativity", especially as it relates to the evolving role of human creativity in the era of artificial intelligence (AI) and posthuman culture. The poster visually captures a moment of cultural anxiety and artistic transition, as the boundaries between human expression and machine-generated output become increasingly porous.

Posthumans and the Evolution of Creative Identity

The concept of posthuman is one of the main frameworks in understanding the shift in human roles in the high-tech era. According to Braidotti, (2013), posthuman is not only about the adoption of technology in the human body, but also about a radical change in human perception of themselves and the world around them. Human identity is no longer exclusive; it is interwoven into biological, technological, informational, and ecological networks (Penner, 2022).

In this context, human creativity is being redefined. In the past, creativity was understood as the highest manifestation of human subjectivity resulting from experience, emotion, imagination, and skill. Now, artificial intelligence-based machines are able to replicate these creative patterns, blurring the boundaries between human and machine creations. The existence of AI in the world of art and design shows that "creation" is no longer a human monopoly, but rather a process that can be model and automated.

Through a posthuman approach, the poster "Memories of the Creativity" reflects this dilemma. The face of an old man with closed eyes becomes a metaphor for a generation of humans who must face the fact that their role in the creative world is now being questioned, and may even be displaced.

Creative Nostalgia and Cultural Melancholia

Nostalgia in the context of creative culture is not just a longing for the past, but also a form of resistance to changes that are felt to threaten fundamental values. According to Boym, nostalgia can be divided into two types: restorative and reflective. Restorative nostalgia seeks to restore the past in its entirety, while reflective nostalgia contemplates loss with the awareness that the past cannot be fully restored (Bolin, 2016).

The poster "Memories of the Creativity" utilizes the form of reflective nostalgia. Through a collage of manual artistic activities, this work invites the viewer to remember a time when manual skills, perseverance, and personal feelings were the main foundations of art creation. With the use of black and white gradation, this poster reinforces the melancholic nuance an acknowledgment of the loss of something valuable along with the dominance of technology.

Manual creativity that was once full of meaning has now become a 'memory', something that lives in memory, but is increasingly rare in practice. This is what makes this work not just romanticizing the past, but asking critical questions about the future direction of creativity itself.

Simulacra, Hyperreality, and Artificial Creativity

Jean Baudrillard introduced the concepts of simulacra and hyperreality to explain how representations can replace reality itself in contemporary culture. In a world filled with simulacra, reality becomes something that is replaced by its representation; the "real" loses its place, replaced by images that seem more real than reality itself (Mattessich, 2003).

AI in art is the latest form of simulacra. Machines do not simply imitate human artwork; they create simulations of creativity itself. Using algorithms and big data, AI is able to produce images, songs, or poems that, in many cases, are indistinguishable from human creations. This

creates a hyperreality in which the boundaries between human creation and machine creation become blurred.

The poster for "Memories of the Creativity" illustrates this moment of transition. The tear in the upper right corner of the poster, revealing a visual of AI technology, symbolizes the penetration of the simulated world into traditional creative reality. It is no longer a question of how machines can imitate humans, but rather how machines actively shape new creative realities that may be more acceptable than human works themselves.

Ethical and Aesthetic Dimensions of AI in Art

Beyond technical capabilities, AI-generated art raises ethical and aesthetic questions. Heath, (2010) warns that creative automation risks flattening the emotional depth of artistic expression, while (Terziyan et al., 2018) critiques the cognitive shallowness induced by digital culture. Moreover, controversies over authorship, originality, and exploitation of human-made datasets (e.g., copyrighted artworks used to train AI models) further complicate the ethical terrain.

From an aesthetic perspective, AI art often lacks intentionality a key quality in traditional art that reflects the artist's worldview, struggle, or emotion. Gunkel, (2022) points out that while AI can produce aesthetically pleasing works, it remains questionable whether these works carry the same aesthetic experience, given their lack of lived context. In this light, "Memories of the Creativity" becomes a powerful visual commentary on the erosion of intentional aesthetics, reminding us of the irreplaceable value of the slow, emotive, and imperfect nature of human creation.

Visual and Symbolic Description



Figure 2. Poster Memories of The Creativity
by Alit Kumala Dewi (2024)

The poster "Memories of the Creativity" as seen in figure 2, is a poster that participated in the International Poster Exhibition Posthuman III: Toxicity organized by the Telkom Purwokerto Institute of Technology in early 2024. This poster by Alit Kumala Dewi cleverly arranges its composition to create visual tension between two poles: traditional creativity and technology-based creativity. Broadly speaking, this composition is divided into two areas:

- Left: Dominance of manual elements (hands drawing, writing, carving) in black and white.
- Right: Clean empty space with digital elements (AI symbols) peeking out from the tear, in futuristic neon blue.

This separation is not only aesthetic, but also symbolic depicting the shift from the material and emotional world to the virtual and artificial world. The contrast between the crowd on the left and the calm on the right emphasizes the narrative of the loss of the old world to a new world dominated by technology. The face of an old man drawn with rough strokes and a monochromatic style becomes the visual center of attention. The expression on his face is calm, yet full of meaning, his eyes are closed, his eyebrows are slightly furrowed, indicating a process of deep contemplation.

This visual interpretation leads the viewer to understand the figure as a collective representation of past manual creators. The closure of his eyes signifies two things:

- Contemplation: Thinking back to the golden age of manual creativity.
- Rejection or Sadness: Unwillingness or inability to fully accept the new reality.

The rough graphic technique used emphasizes the nuance of connection with the past that is 'rough', 'raw', and full of human texture, in contrast to the sterile smoothness of digital production. This figure seems to hold memories of a time when works of art were still made manually and full of emotional involvement. This visual reflects creative nostalgia, namely the longing for an organic and humane creation process (Barrett & Bolt, 2007).

On the left side of the face, a collage of images shows various manual creative activities such as drawing sketches by hand, writing with a pen, carving wood, shaping clay. All of these activities require fine skills, time, and intense emotional involvement. This depiction emphasizes the value of human uniqueness that lies in the personal touch and beautiful imperfection. Visually, this collage uses rough textures and black and white colors, reinforcing the nuances of documentary and memories. Each piece of the image appears to come together organically, as if forming a collective memory network of true creativity.

In the upper right corner of the poster there is a visual tear that shows a network of electronic circuits and the purple neon "AI" logo. This is an important symbol where, the tear, signifies the penetration of the digital world into the real world. The world of technology does not enter smoothly, it tears, changing the structure of the traditional world. The network of circuits shows the complexity and speed of machine operations that exceed human capacity. The neon color, bringing a futuristic, cold, and slightly foreign impression, contrasts sharply with the warmth of the organic nuances on the left side of the poster.

This symbol clarifies the main theme: the presence of AI can no longer be avoided or marginalized. It has, and will continue to, change the order of human creativity, the image of AI appears to tear apart reality and replace old methods with something faster and more automatic. This reflects the symptom of simulacra, reality is replaced by its imitation, a concept explained by Jean Baudrillard (1994) in the framework of hyperreality. AI in art is no longer just a tool, but a creator of creativity imitations. This composition presents a visual narrative of the tension between the past and the present in defining what creativity means today. The combination of the two styles, nostalgic versus futuristic, visually articulates the uncertainty and excitement of artistic evolution in the digital age. The title "Memories of The Creativity" uses a thin and neat serif font, highlighting a formal and melancholic impression. This font choice avoids excessive decoration, emphasizing a reflective and serious impression. The placement of the text in the empty white area on the right provides breathing space for a strong emotional message. The use of all capital letters shows that this is an important call, not just an ordinary title, but a philosophical statement about the shifting times.

Philosophical Interpretation

Posthuman and the Redefinition of Creativity

In the posthuman perspective, humans are no longer the center of the universe. Alit Kumala Dewi's work through this poster shows how creativity, once considered the pinnacle of human subjectivity, has now become a shared domain between humans and machines.



Creativity is no longer merely an expression of the mind, but rather the result of collaboration, and sometimes even domination, by algorithm-based machines.

The old man's closed face symbolizes a generation that has witnessed the "death" of human creativity in the form they once knew. He realizes that creativity has mutated; not extinct, but transformed into something that is no longer fully human. In the posthuman paradigm, the boundaries between creator and creation become blurred, and this poster offers a provocative visual depiction of that change.

Nostalgia as a Form of Cultural Resistance

Through the choice of the theme of "memory" and the use of black and white visual elements, this poster expresses nostalgia as a form of subtle resistance to the era of automation. Nostalgia in this work does not function to restore the past, but to affirm the values that may be lost in this transition: the value of struggle, time, and emotional connection in the creative process. In this context, the poster becomes a reflective space that questions: If machines can create works with higher technical precision, but without emotion or experience, can the results still be called "art"? Alit Kumala Dewi positions nostalgia not as an empty longing, but as a warning against the possibility of dehumanizing creativity.

Existentialism and the Search for Meaning in the Digital Age

The big question this poster raises is closely related to the theme of existentialism: What does it mean to be creative in a world where machines can do the work? According to existentialist thought such as Jean-Paul Sartre (1943), the meaning of life must be created by the individual through conscious action and choice. If the creative act is taken over by an automated system, can humans still construct their own meaning?

In this poster, an old man with closed eyes seems to be searching for new meaning amidst loss. He does not give up, but he also does not allow himself to be carried away by the false euphoria of innovation. It is a statement that true creativity is not just about the final product, but about the existential process of creation itself—about presence, struggle, and full engagement with the world.

Critique of Technology as the New Authority

This poster can also be read as a critique of the development of technology as a new form of authority in determining aesthetic and creative standards. When algorithms and data determine what is "beautiful" or "innovative," human creative freedom faces a serious threat. Alit Kumala Dewi, through her work, questions, subtly but powerfully, whether we want to live in a world where creativity is curated, calculated, and mass-produced by a soulless system. By showing how AI "rips apart" the old reality, this poster offers a visualization of this threat, a world where creativity without emotion is considered sufficient, and personal uniqueness is considered no longer efficient or relevant.

CONCLUSION

Memories of the Creativity poster by Alit Kumala Dewi is a powerful and moving visual reflection on the fundamental changes in the meaning of creativity in the posthuman era. Through a combination of visual symbolism, emotional nuances, and philosophical critique, this work raises a highly relevant theme: the loss of authentic human involvement in the creative process due to the dominance of artificial intelligence and automation.

The figure of an old man with his eyes closed in the poster is not only a representation of nostalgia for the past, but also a symbol of existential anxiety about the future. This poster invites the audience to reflect on:

- Is creativity still meaningful without human emotional involvement?



- To what extent are we ready to sacrifice authenticity for efficiency and speed?
- How can we maintain human values in a world increasingly dictated by algorithms?

The participation of this poster in the International Exhibition Posthuman III: Toxicity strengthens the position of this work as part of a global dialogue on the crisis of identity and human values amidst technological advances. Through a subtle yet critical aesthetic, Alit Kumala Dewi reminds us that in an increasingly automated world, the task of humans is not only to create, but also to maintain the meaning of creation itself.

Ultimately, Memories of the Creativity is more than just a poster; it is a call to remember, reflect, and act to keep creativity at the heart of the human experience, not just an empty mechanical process.

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