



AESTHETICS OF AI IMAGES (AIIM)

NEWSLETTER #2



WELCOME AND SIGN UP

Welcome to the second newsletter for the Centre for Aesthetics of AI Images (AIIM). A lot of exciting things have happened since our last newsletter, and we are looking forward to sharing them with you in this one!

Please forward this newsletter to those of your contacts, who may be interested, and remind them to sign up for the AIIM newsletter on our website: <https://cc.au.dk/en/aiim/newsletter>.

FUNDING

AIIM has generously received 100.000 DKK in seed funding from SHAPE – Shaping Digital Citizenship (<https://shape.au.dk/en/>). This enables us to conduct the project 'Digital Citizenship and AI Image Practices', which

consists of three different elements: Workshops in collaboration with external partners on AI image practices in different domains (private business, artistic creation, exhibition practice, welfare technology); a follow-up seminar; and a follow-up writing workshop.

THEORY LABS

In 2023, AIIM will be hosting a series of Theory Labs. These labs will approach the topic of the aesthetics of AI images in a more theoretical manner, which will include reading texts, reviewing cases, and engaging in group discussions.

The aim with these labs is to strengthen our analytical abilities and to familiarise ourselves further with the literature. The frequency of meetings will be roughly once a month. The labs are primarily aimed at members of the centre, but everyone is welcome to participate!

JOB ADVERTISEMENT

AIIM will be looking to fill out two Postdoc positions for its research project NEW VISIONS: Image cultures in the era of AI. The call is already online and you may take a look here:

<https://international.au.dk/about/profile/vacant-positions/job/two-postdocs-in-visual-cultures-of-artificial-intelligence>.

The deadline for applications is January 27.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

THEORY LAB: "ICONOLOGY" IN LIGHT OF AI

Wednesday February 8, 14-16pm, room 1580-249
Langelandsgade 139, 8000 Aarhus C

W.J.T. Mitchell's book *Iconology – Image, Text, Ideology* is seminal in field of image theory. Even though it was published in 1986, decades before deep learning, and does not address modern image technology as such, the book's thorough and precise analysis of the relations between image, text, and ideology seem extremely relevant when trying to grasp the image theoretical mechanisms at work in contemporary AI image practices. In this theory lab we revisit Mitchell's book to dig out potential theoretical and analytical gems from the past. Participants could (on a voluntary basis) be responsible for initiating discussions of a selected chapter.

Please sign up by accepting the Outlook invitation or by mail to lottephilipsen@cc.au.dk.

THEORY LAB: ABSTRACTION AND STYLE

Thursday March 16, 14-16pm, room 1580-249
Langelandsgade 139, 8000 Aarhus C

In this Theory Lab we will take a closer look at the concepts of 'abstraction' and 'style', utilised to describe specific painterly qualities within art history. Naja Grundtmann will initiate the discussion by presenting the role of 'style' in convolutional neural networks, and by demonstrating how the concept of abstraction reveals the inability to separate content and style, thus countering the idea of Style Transfer in convolutional neural networks. This may lead to discussions on how systems such as Stable Diffusion and DALL·E 2 mobilise the art historical notion of style in a manner that radically challenges our most established and conventional definitions of the term. Textual point of departure is Chapter 2 from Naja Grundtmann's PhD-dissertation (distributed upon signing up).

Please sign up by accepting the Outlook invitation or by mail to lottephilipsen@cc.au.dk.

WORKSHOP: AI IMAGES AS DEMOCRATISATION OF ART

Wednesday May 4, 11am-15pm, Bikubenfonden
Lygten 39, 2400 København NV

The workshop is organised in collaboration with Art Hub Copenhagen and explores the establishment of new AI communities, in which art amateurs define themselves as contributors to an overarching art movement. We will discuss whether these communities are a sign of an impending democratisation of the art institution.

Sign up details will follow.

IN THE PLANNING

WORKSHOP: AI IMAGES AND WELFARE SOCIETY

Spring 2023 (date will follow)
Hack Kampmanns Plads 2, 8000 Aarhus C

The workshop is organized in collaboration with DokkX and focuses on the use of AI images as a welfare technology. In collaboration with the broader public, the workshop explores the role of ascribing human authenticity to the advanced tools used in contemporary welfare society.

WORKSHOP: EXHIBITION PLATFORMS OF AI IMAGES

Summer 2023 (date will follow)
Kunsthall Aarhus

The workshop is organized in collaboration with Kunsthall Aarhus. It concerns the new exhibition platforms of AI images and explores online as well as physical platforms for exhibiting AI images. During the workshop, we will experiment with creating a temporary exhibition controlled by exhibition visitors.

WORKSHOP: AI IMAGES AS COMMERCIAL TOOLS

Autumn 2023 (date will follow)

KPMG Aarhus

The workshop is organized in collaboration with KPMG NewTech and explores how regular businesses implement AI images in their interactions with customers. Particularly, we will focus on how the images affect user experience via a set of exercises that will include AI image-generating chat bots on the social media platform *Discord*.

SEMINAR: DIGITAL CITIZENSHIP AND AI IMAGE PRACTICES

November 2023 (date will follow)

Aarhus University

Reflections and lessons learned from the collaborative workshops; identification of potentials and challenges of AI image practices in relation to citizenship; identification of research lacunae; and possible future collaborations.

COLLABORATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP

December 2023 (date and venue will follow)

Initial drafting of article on 'Digital Citizenship and AI Image Practices', and sketching outline for a larger project description.

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