

Cubism

"Generate an oil on canvas full length portrait of a group of people in the analytical cubist style of Pablo Picasso, with a monochromatic palette and fragmented geometric shapes." ChatGPT



Pablo Picasso, *Les Femmes d'Alger (O.K. Version)*, 1911-12



Comparative Analysis

ChatGPT did a much better job compared to Adobe Firefly of matching the visual characteristics of analytical cubism, but the composition is limited by the language of the prompt. ChatGPT imitated the fragmented and geometric shapes of early cubist art, using shapes with sharper lines, like triangles and trapezoids, similar to the shapes in the example Picasso painting. The imitation of the style, though, is quite superficial. The shapes in the AI artwork are extremely uniform and lack the dynamism of the Picasso painting. The triangles are mostly the same size and fit together neatly, with clearly dividing lines, while in Picasso's painting the shapes are often irregular. He uses lines and shapes to break up the image and create new perspective and depth, while the image generator attempts to maintain a coherent image at the expense of variation. The issue lies in the fact that the image generator seems to have drawn the lines that divide the image as an afterthought. The image generator's goal, it seemed, was to successfully represent the subject ("group of people") and add the specified "style" (cubism) as a secondary consideration, as opposed to the process of cubist artists, who aimed at analyzing reality in a new way by portraying the world through the lens of the analytical cubist style rather than focusing only on the surface level presence of geometric shapes in cubist artwork. Compared to the artist's priority of breaking down reality using geometric shapes as a technique to achieve that, AI falls short because it considers geometric shapes the end result, defeating the purpose of such a technique.

Background info

Cubism originated in the beginning of the 20th century, before the First World War, in Paris. The most important creators of the movement, artists Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque, developed the distinctive two-dimensional and fragmented style that would characterize Cubist art. One of the first major cubist pieces, *Les Femmes d'Alger (1907)*, saw Picasso take inspiration from African mask art as well as earlier artists like the Spanish painter El Greco to create a uniquely harsh and fragmented image. Cubist art turned away from the traditional artistic theory of realism, or the idea that art should represent reality meant that cubist art pivoted from traditional artistic ideas about concepts such as perspective and color. Cubist artists often used monochromatic colors in their artwork, and used differences between hues to show perspective and space. This allowed artists to radically revisit and analyze reality through a different perspective, by breaking objects down and presenting them in a new, compelling way.

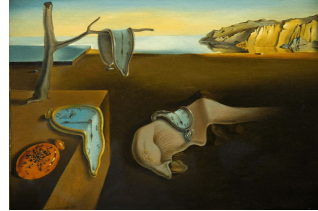
AI Art History Project

"An oil painting of a surrealist landscape in the style of Salvador Dali's *The Persistence of Memory* that incorporates images of the unconscious mind to oppose traditional ideas of art and the dominance of rationalism." Adobe Firefly



Surrealism

Salvador Dali, *The Persistence of Memory*, 1931



Comparative Analysis

Adobe Firefly was unsuccessful in its imitation of surrealist art, relying on narrow definitions of style while failing to achieve greater symbolism that characterizes surrealist art. Though the prompt expressly mentioned the style of Dali's "The Persistence of Memory" as a reference, the styles of the two images differ wildly. While Dali's image is made up of mostly dull colors, the image generator used vibrant colors in a "brushstroke" pattern that more closely resembled a painting like Van Gogh's "The Starry Night", with its circular shapes and curved strokes, rather than the painting by Dali. This discrepancy is likely a result of Firefly's lack of quality training data, which leads it to misinterpret the characteristics of surrealist art. While surrealist artists generally depict their subjects in a relatively realist style to emphasize a surreal aspect (there are differences between the styles of artists, however), Firefly's training leads it to see the surrealist style as almost psychedelic and post-impressionistic rather than grounded in the reality that surrealist artists sought to reinterpret and transform. On the other hand, the failure of Firefly to utilize greater symbolism and achieve deeper meaning is an inherent limitation of image generators. Though it may not be fair to criticize the artwork for "flaws in the system", it is useful to point out that the main reason Firefly fails to capture the characteristics of the Surrealist movement is because it is divorced from the context in which the art was composed and in which we view it. We are able to find meaning in "The Persistence" because we can recognize it as a response to the immense impact that the First World War had on the collective memory of the generations that lived through it. We explore the potential symbolism of the melting clocks in this context. AI cannot situate art within a specific context because it can only remix and reuse images that have already been created, and thus cannot add anything new to its training data to adapt it to current events. This demonstrates that the defining feature of surrealism, rather than being style or subject, is rather the philosophy of anti-rationalism and the revision of reality that AI finds difficult to replicate.

Background info

Surrealism was an art movement that originated in Europe during the period between the World Wars. The movement was heavily inspired by the earlier Dada movement, which emphasized creating art that challenged traditional assumptions about what art was. The Austrian psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud also influenced the movement by introducing the idea of the unconscious mind as a source of human imagination. Artists like Salvador Dali and Paul Delvaux built upon these ideas to combine conscious perception with unconscious imagination while also challenging the dominance of rationalism that they saw as the cause of the destruction and violence of World War One. The content of surrealist art was extremely diverse, but the movement as a whole promoted free and open expression of one's own reality.

Pop Art

"Generate an array of synthetic polymer on canvas paintings that feature a single commercial product prominently, in the pop art style of Andy Warhol, with reference to popular culture in the late 60s/early 70s and consumerist/materialistic values, that does not copy Warhol's 'Campbell's Soup Cans'." ChatGPT



Andy Warhol, *Campbell's Soup Cans*, 1962 (selection of five cans)



Comparative Analysis

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Background info

Pop Art was an art movement that originated in Britain and the United States during the late 1950s and early 1960s. Like surrealism, it was inspired heavily by the iconoclastic Dada movement in its challenging of artistic assumptions, and especially by artists like Marcel Duchamp, who integrated everyday objects into his art in an attempt to bridge the gap between what people see in everyday life and what art portrays. Pop Art inherited this use of popular images and objects. Influential artists in the movement, including Andy Warhol in the United States and the Independent Group in Britain, made distinctive use of popular culture and images of modern commodities. Pop art, like surrealism, did not have a set style or a specific set of subjects. Artists adopted different stylistic features and depicted the objects around them in diverse ways, connected by a shared desire to respond to the materialistic desires and attitudes that surrounded them by making more universal, relatable art that depicted reality more objectively.