

AI News Digest

03/23/2026 - 03/29/2026

WEEKLY DIGEST: ARTS, MEDIA & PERFORMANCE

AI's Cultural Impact on Creativity and Representation

This week, discussions around the intersection of AI and the arts highlight both innovative applications and troubling trends. Researchers are exploring how neural cellular automata can create dynamic music visuals, while the film industry grapples with the portrayal of AI in narratives. Concerns over AI-generated media perpetuating racial stereotypes are underscored by investigations into social media practices. Additionally, a study reveals that human creativity remains distinct from AI capabilities, emphasizing the ongoing debate about authenticity in creative fields.

KEY FINDINGS

- ✓ MIT's Mariano Salcedo is using neural cellular automata for music-driven visuals.
- ✓ A study indicates that current AI models lack true creative abilities.
- ✓ AI-generated media is being used to depict Black women in problematic ways.

IMPLICATIONS

- The film and television industry may need to reassess AI narratives to avoid cultural misrepresentation.
- There is a growing need for governance frameworks addressing authenticity in AI-generated content.
- The ongoing debate about AI's role in creativity could influence future artistic practices and technologies.

Key Metrics: Over 100 social media accounts analyzed for AI-generated depictions.; Study conducted by an international team published in Advanced Science.

1. Seeing sounds

Category: Research

Departments: Music, Computer Science, Art, Engineering Education & Leadership

Topics: Generative AI, Neural Cellular Automata, Music-Driven Visuals, Self-Organized Systems

Impact Score: 26.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 5

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 5

Practical Impact: 4

Interdisciplinary Potential: 5

Ethical / Policy Implications: 3

Mariano Salcedo, a graduate student in MIT's new Music Technology and Computation Graduate Program, is researching the use of neural cellular automata (NCA) to create music-driven visuals that can regenerate in response to audio stimuli. His work allows users to manipulate the relationship between music energy and the NCA system through a web interface, enabling the generation of unique visual performances. Salcedo's research aims to enhance the listening experience by integrating self-organized systems with music, reflecting a multidisciplinary approach to music technology. He has been recognized for his contributions and will deliver the student address at the 2026 Advanced Degree Ceremony for the School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences.

<https://news.mit.edu/2026/seeing-sounds-mariano-salcedo-0326>

2. Beyond Apocalypse: "New AI" in Film and Television

Category: Applications

Departments: Communication, Philosophy, Political Science & Public Administration

Topics: AI Ethics & Safety, Cultural Narratives, Consciousness Representation, Narrative Templates, Identity in AI

Impact Score: 25.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 4

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 5

Practical Impact: 3

Interdisciplinary Potential: 5

Ethical / Policy Implications: 4

In "Representing the New AI in Film and Television," Graham Allen addresses the divide between the technical aspects of artificial intelligence and the cultural narratives surrounding it, proposing that films and television serve as complex thought experiments on themes such as consciousness and personhood. He introduces a taxonomy of seven narrative templates that extend beyond traditional dystopian and utopian frameworks, identifying Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein" as a foundational text for modern AI narratives, which he interprets through a Levinasian lens as a tragedy of "failed hospitality." Allen applies this analytical framework to contemporary films, illustrating how narratives of romance and identity in works like "Ex Machina" and "Her" reflect and reshape societal understandings of AI. His analysis emphasizes that the portrayal of AI is not merely a reflection of technological concerns but is deeply intertwined with ethical and social considerations.

<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s00146-026-02893-2>

3. Call For Papers: Special Issue on AI Governance, Authenticity, and Provenance for Visual Media

Category: Research

Departments: Computer Science, Political Science & Public Administration, Communication, Engineering Education & Leadership

Topics: AI Governance, Authenticity Verification, Provenance Tracking, Digital Forensics, Interactive Visualization

Impact Score: 25.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 4

Educational Value: 3

Innovation / Novelty: 4

Practical Impact: 4

Interdisciplinary Potential: 5

Ethical / Policy Implications: 5

This special issue invites submissions addressing the challenges of authenticity, provenance, and accountability in visual media, particularly in the context of AI governance and deep learning advancements. It seeks technical contributions from various fields, including computer graphics, visualization, and human-computer interaction, focusing on methods for tracking and verifying the creation and transformation of visual content. Topics of interest include algorithmic approaches to watermarking, digital forensics, interactive provenance visualization, and tools for compliance and accountability in media workflows. The deadline for submissions is September 30, 2026, with publication scheduled for March 2027.

<https://wpcms.computer.org/digital-library/magazines/cg/cfp-ai-governance-authenticity-provenance>

4. DHNow Newsletter, March 25, 2026

Category: Policy & Ethics

Departments: Political Science & Public Administration, Communication, Educational Leadership, Sociology & Anthropology

Topics: AI Ethics, Digital Blackface, AI Representation, Cultural Sensitivity, Image Processing Tools

Impact Score: 25.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 4

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 3

Practical Impact: 4

Interdisciplinary Potential: 5

Ethical / Policy Implications: 5

This issue, curated by Colleen Nugent McLean, highlights the implications of AI in the context of digital blackface, particularly focusing on social media accounts that utilize AI-generated characters resembling Black women. Additionally, it includes resources and reports, notably a tool designed to eliminate bleed-through in scans of medieval manuscripts. The content aims to address both the ethical considerations of AI representation and practical advancements in digital humanities.

<https://digitalhumanitiesnow.org/2026/03/dhnow-newsletter-march-25-2026/>

5. Editors' Choice: AI Blackface: Profiting on racist depictions at scale

Category: Policy & Ethics

Departments: Political Science & Public Administration, Sociology & Anthropology, Communication

Topics: AI Ethics, Racist Depictions Mitigation, Social Media AI Exploitation, Marginalized Group Protection

Impact Score: 25.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 4

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 3

Practical Impact: 5

Interdisciplinary Potential: 4

Ethical / Policy Implications: 5

The investigation examined over 100 social media accounts across 34 countries that utilized AI-generated media to depict Black women in sexualized contexts. The findings highlight a concerning trend of explicit, internalized anti-Blackness perpetuated through these accounts. The author emphasizes the urgent need for solutions to address this issue, as advancements in AI media could exacerbate the exploitation of marginalized groups if left unaddressed.

<https://digitalhumanitiesnow.org/2026/03/editors-choice-ai-blackface-profiting-on-racist-depictions-at-scale/>

6. Human creativity still resists automation: Artists rank highest, with unguided AI coming in last

Category: Research

Departments: Art, Computer Science, Philosophy

Topics: Generative AI, AI Creativity Limitations, Imaginative Process Analysis, Misconceptions in AI

Impact Score: 24.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 5

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 4

Practical Impact: 3

Interdisciplinary Potential: 3

Ethical / Policy Implications: 5

A recent study published in Advanced Science challenges the notion of genuine creativity in artificial intelligence (AI), asserting that current generative AI models do not possess true creative abilities. The research, conducted by an international team from the University of Barcelona and associated institutions, analyzes the imaginative processes of these AI systems and concludes that their outputs are not the result of authentic creativity. This work aims to clarify misconceptions about AI's creative capabilities and emphasizes the limitations of current generative models.

<https://techxplare.com/news/2026-03-human-creativity-resists-automation-artists.html>

7. Lyria 3 Pro: Create longer tracks in more

Category: Applications

Departments: Music, Computer Science, Creative Writing

Topics: Generative AI, High-Fidelity Audio Generation, Collaborative Music Creation, Custom Soundtrack Development

Impact Score: 22.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 3

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 4

Practical Impact: 5

Interdisciplinary Potential: 4

Ethical / Policy Implications: 2

Lyria 3 Pro has been launched in public preview on Vertex AI, enabling businesses to generate high-fidelity audio at scale for various applications, including gaming and creative tools. The integration of Lyria 3 into Google AI Studio and the Gemini app enhances musical awareness and structural coherence, allowing developers and users to create customized soundtracks and longer tracks for diverse media projects. Additionally, ProducerAI, a collaborative music creation tool, leverages Lyria 3 Pro to assist artists and producers in the iterative songwriting process. These tools are now accessible to both free and paid subscribers, expanding the capabilities for music generation across platforms.

<https://deepmind.google/blog/lyria-3-pro-create-longer-tracks-in-more/>

8. Resource: Translucens

Category: Applications

Departments: Computer Science, Art

Topics: Computer Vision, Ink Bleed-Through Removal, Non-Negative Matrix Factorization, Wiener Deconvolution

Impact Score: 22.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 4

Educational Value: 3

Innovation / Novelty: 4

Practical Impact: 5

Interdisciplinary Potential: 4

Ethical / Policy Implications: 2

The article presents Translucens, a browser-based tool designed to remove ink bleed-through from scans of medieval manuscripts. It integrates guided-filter estimation, non-negative matrix factorization (NMF) source separation, and Wiener deconvolution to effectively distinguish and eliminate show-through artifacts from recto and verso folio scans. The tool aims to enhance the readability and preservation of historical texts by improving the quality of digitized manuscript images.

<https://digitalhumanitiesnow.org/2026/03/resource-translucens/>

9. 'She's Never Going to Age': Porn Stars Are Embracing AI Clones to Stay Forever Young

Category: Business

Departments: Political Science & Public Administration, Communication, Computer Science

Topics: Generative AI, AI Cloning Technology, Consent-Driven AI Content, Digital Twin Applications

Impact Score: 21.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 2

Educational Value: 3

Innovation / Novelty: 4

Practical Impact: 5

Interdisciplinary Potential: 3

Ethical / Policy Implications: 4

Lisa Ann, a former adult performer, has partnered with OhChat, an AI companion company, to license her likeness for the creation of AI-generated adult content. This initiative allows users to generate personalized scenarios featuring her digital twin, which replicates her voice, appearance, and mannerisms. The move reflects a broader trend in the adult entertainment industry towards consent-driven AI porn, as performers seek to maintain control over their digital representations amid rising concerns about deepfakes and age-verification laws. OhChat, launched in 2024, has rapidly gained traction, boasting over 400,000 users and contracts with various celebrities, while emphasizing a tiered subscription model for accessing content.

<https://www.wired.com/story/shes-never-going-to-age-porn-stars-are-embracing-ai-clones-to-stay-forever-young/>

10. What Is YouTube's Dominance Doing to Us? We Asked Its C.E.O.

Category: Policy & Ethics

Departments: Political Science & Public Administration, Communication, Educational Leadership

Topics: AI Ethics & Safety, Responsible AI Integration, Misinformation Mitigation, Parental Control Systems

Impact Score: 21.0

Rubric Scores

Research Relevance: 2

Educational Value: 4

Innovation / Novelty: 3

Practical Impact: 4

Interdisciplinary Potential: 3

Ethical / Policy Implications: 5

Neal Mohan, CEO of YouTube, discussed the platform's approach to artificial intelligence, emphasizing the need for responsible AI integration to avoid misinformation and harmful content. He highlighted the implementation of enhanced parental controls to provide a safer environment for younger users. Mohan also addressed the broader implications of AI on content consumption and its potential effects on user behavior and societal norms. The conversation underscored the importance of balancing innovation with ethical considerations in AI deployment.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2026/03/28/magazine/neal-mohan-interview.html>