

Department of Philosophy
University of Delhi

Cordially invites you to

Weekly Seminar on

Does Generative AI Make Art?



By

Ritwik Agrawal
University of Arizona

Date: 12/1/24

Time: 3:30 PM

Venue: Department
Library

Generative AI systems, such as ChatGPT & Midjourney, have garnered significant interest in recent times. Among the claims that have been advanced regarding the remarkable capabilities of this new type of AI, is the ability to create works of art. Tools such as Dall-E and Midjourney are being used to create works that are being submitted to art galleries and competitions. In this talk I apply the widely respected art theory of Arthur C. Danto to the case of AI created art. In a nutshell, according to Danto's "transfiguration" theory of art, a work to be an artwork must satisfy both the following conditions:

1. It must stand in relation to other works of art and art history, what Danto called "the artworld".
2. The work should have a meaning, what in philosophical terms is called "intentionality" or an "aboutness" relation to the world.

Then I turn to research in cognitive science and artificial intelligence to assess whether we can meaningfully say that works created by generative AI satisfy the above conditions. This discussion brings us to an exploration of the agency displayed by modern AI systems, with deep implications for ethics, politics, policy, law, and myriad other domains.

Bio-note

Ritwik Agrawal is a doctoral researcher and instructor at the University of Arizona, affiliated to the Philosophy Department, the Cognitive Science Program, the Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE) program, and the Center for the Philosophy of Freedom. He has research interests in political philosophy, cognitive science and the philosophy of artificial intelligence, aesthetics, and Indian philosophy. He is also interested in questions at the intersections of these areas, and in their interfaces with the world. Apart from academic research and teaching, he also regularly consults with governments, multilateral organizations, and corporations, and writes for the popular media. He studied mathematics and philosophy at University of Delhi and has taught at St. Stephen's College. He is a recurring visiting faculty member teaching the philosophy of cognitive science and AI at Ashoka University. He recently edited a book length symposium on social trust and is working on a textbook integrating Indian and western perspectives on ethics.