

{ Symposium Proceedings }

Frictions

Creative Work
in an Age of AI



DAY & TIME

Friday
May 1, 2026
9:30 AM –
3:30 PM



LOCATION

The New School
63 5th Ave
University Center
Room 105



PARSONS
Lab for AI, Ethics, & Creative Labor



aicreativelabor.com/project/frictions

Creative industries are experiencing one of the most dramatic transitions in recent history. Generative AI systems are now able to produce advertising campaigns, fashion images, and written works at a fraction of the time, at the cost of human labor, and without the contributions of those most affected by the technology. Some of these transformations are being adjudicated in the courts; voices from these communities should be heard in these debates.

These shifts raise urgent questions: What does it mean to be a creative worker today? What is an author now that machines mimic writing style? When a fashion model's likeness is used to train AI without consent, who owns that work? How can filmmakers prevent AI-generated content from mixing into archival materials without distinction? How can creative professionals sustain a livelihood as automation expands? How do we empower different creative communities to see parallels between how their disciplines are affected by AI, and contribute to shaping AI's development?

This day-long convening brought together practitioners, legal scholars, social scientists, and students to investigate the present and future of creative work in an age of AI. It includes disparate conversations from the domains of design and fashion, film and philosophy, creative writing and critical thought to create a platform from which to agitate for a future that creative workers want to see when it comes to emerging, powerful technologies. This is part of building a regional, NYC-based network of creative workers and scholars who share a stake in governing the future of AI and creative labor.

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Welcome

Zed Adams

Vice President of
Technology

Associate Professor of
Philosophy
The New School

Good morning, I'm Zed Adams. I'm the Vice President of Technology here at The New School and an Associate Professor in the Philosophy Department.

My job as V.P. is to take the disparate parts of our school that work on technology and connect them, to fit them together into a larger whole that doesn't yet exist.

I've previously thought of this project in engineering terms, in terms of discrete mechanical parts that need to be coupled together; but perhaps it would be better to think of it in botanical terms, in terms of grafting different plants together into a new, composite organism (a chimera). That is, it would perhaps be better to think of this project in terms of finding a way to grow together, rather than as solving an impossible jigsaw puzzle.

I could not have better partners in this work than Andrew and Sareeta.

Today is just one of the many illustrations of their commitment to creating what you might call a coalition, a growing together, of people who want to contest the received narrative of how new technology gets integrated into our lives, of people who reject the idea that this integration is inevitable, immutable, or completely determined by powers outside of our control.

In the spirit of their coalition, I'd like to say just one short thing about a historical figure that I have found helpful in thinking through these issues: the sociologist and public intellectual C. Wright Mills. In his 1945 essay, "The Powerless People: The Social Role of the Intellectual," Mills raised the question of why the intellectuals of his time were so defeatist about the social changes being brought about by then-new technologies [chief among them the mass media of Hollywood and the "pocket books" of the sort published by Penguin]. Here is how Mills put their fatalism:

[Intellectuals'] failure of nerve is no simple retreat from reason. The ideas current are not mere fads sweeping over insecure intellectuals in a nation at war. Their invention and distribution must be understood as historical phenomena. ... To understand what is happening in American intellectual life we have to consider the social position of its creators ... We have to realize the effect upon them of certain deep-lying trends of modern social organization.

In short, he thought that the bureaucratic structure of modern life left intellectuals feeling like they had no role to play in shaping society. In opposition, he insisted that,

The independent artist and intellectual are among the few remaining personalities equipped to resist the stereotyping and consequent death of genuinely lively things. Fresh perception now involves the capacity continually to unmask and to smash the stereotypes of vision and intellect with which modern communications swamp us. These worlds of mass-art and mass-thought are increasingly geared to the demands of politics. That is why it is in politics that intellectual solidarity and effort must be centered.

In a slogan: "The means of effective communication are being expropriated from the intellectual worker."

And Mills's response: we need to take it back.

So, in tribute to the coalition that Andrew and Sareeta are building, I would like to begin today by thanking them for organizing this symposium, and for the spirit in which they have organized it.

Framing

Sareeta Amrute
Associate Professor
of Design and
Anthropology

Andrew Shea
Associate Professor of
Integrated Design

SAREETA AMRUTE: Thank you for joining us today on May 1st, International Workers' Day, for our symposium F(r)ictions: Creative Labor in an Age of AI. I am Sareeta Amrute, Associate Professor of Design and Anthropology at the New School.

ANDREW SHEA: And I am Andrew Shea, Associate Dean of the Parsons' School of Design Strategies and Associate Professor of Integrated Design, also at the New School. Together, we founded the Lab for AI, Ethics, and Creative Labor to understand the effect of AI on creative workers. Our lab is guided by several ever-evolving principles, including that:

Our current trajectory isn't inevitable. Creative communities have expertise and standing to shape what AI systems become.

We hold this principle especially close, as a guide for our practice, and for today's events.

SAREETA AMRUTE: It is easy to get lost in the rapid-fire AI developments all around us. There is little doubt that speed—and speed-ups—are the tenor of our time. Just two weeks ago, Anthropic, whose coding tool has already shifted the practices of software engineers, released

Claude Design, a tool that automates tasks such as creating a brand style, an app prototype, and a presentation deck. Just a week before that, journalists at ProPublica staged a 24-hour walkout over protections from AI-driven layoffs, joining 58 other newsrooms across the United States whose union contracts now include language around automation. And the founder of the surveillance company Palantir recently released an advertisement for his 2025 book in the form of a 22-point manifesto extolling, among other things, the use of AI to build weapons and a putative end to the value of pluralities

These are just three of countless examples that mark out the terrain on which the future of AI will be fought—will we have a future largely determined by corporations and nation-states that are motivated by questionable incentives, or one shaped by the needs of everyday people? Nothing is decided, and when it comes to AI, which is concomitantly a statistical prediction and remixing apparatus, and a political project, we find ourselves in a moment of wild flux.

ANDREW SHEA: What will the role of creativity and creative workers be in this struggle? Creative workers, like the journalists and graphic designers at *ProPublica*, are on the frontlines. Creative workers are often the first to experiment with AI tools and the first to feel the effects of the speed-ups and efficiencies that AI offers to industries dominated by the word and the image.

We named this symposium F(r)ictions because the title holds two ideas at once: the fictions we're being asked to accept about the nature of creativity, authorship, and what AI actually does to human work, and the friction of conflict and counter-conduct that results from the appearance of transformative tools. While friction is physical, unavoidable, and emergent, counter-conduct is intentional, political, and strategic.

We have assembled three panels today that move from experiential, to the analytical, to the political. The panels include writers and models,

filmmakers and designers, digital artists and educators, among others, who will tell us about their strategies for protecting workers in the current moment and for shaping the kind of AI future that allows the world, and indeed, a plurality of worlds to flourish.

SAREETA AMRUTE: Over the course of the day, we will hear about legislative victories, for instance, the New York Fashion Workers Act, which set precedents for being one of the first laws in the nation regulating the use of AI at work, and from the ongoing SAG-AFTRA negotiations around the use of AI-generated material in Hollywood. We will also hear about innovations in how to think about the publicness of what creatives produce and the limits of copyright and other property-based regimes in pursuing the futures we want, which must address both consent and compensation. And, we will hear from artists and designers who are experimenting with AI, pushing and bending these technical objects in ways that far exceed the imaginations of those who would capture them only for corporate gain.

Though creativity and creative workers are at the heart of our conversations today, we will also need to work carefully not to separate out creative workers from all workers, for all workers employ creativity in their jobs, and their rights to a decent workplace also need protection. We will also need to ensure that while we act locally, as the old adage warns us, we are thinking globally. Across the world, creatives from voice actors dubbing films, to screenwriters in Bollywood, Nollywood, and everywhere in between, to those working in craft traditions, are just as concerned as we are about their livelihoods and are as excited about finding a different kind of AI future. They should very much remain part of our dialogues today.

ANDREW SHEA: Throughout the day, we hope you will all engage in deep conversation and build connections as we put the experience of creative workers front and center.

Before we move to our first panel, we would like to thank a number of people who made today happen: First, Aditi Dey and Henry Schroder,

who are members of the Lab and gifted graduate students at The New School. They've been instrumental in helping to shape and organize this symposium. Additionally, Lucas Gutterman is live-streaming this event to our breakout room (620), and both Ananya Harshini and Swasti Solanki are keeping us organized. We also want to thank Nyasia Thomas, our local logistics wizard for the School of Design Strategies at Parsons School of Design, as well as Abbey Florence and Jordyn Burton from the Office of University Initiatives, in addition to Siri McDonald, Tashrika Sharma, Madeline Cook, Christina Camardella, and Shera Easter.

And we can't thank Zed Adams enough. In addition to being a valued colleague from our Philosophy program, he is the Vice President of Technology at The New School and has been an important sounding board in our planning process, and also provided financial support for this event through the Office of University Initiatives. Thank you!

{ Panel 1 }

Stories from the Front Lines

Panel 1 features stories from workers and representatives. Speakers include:

Stephanie Jenkins
Archival Producers
Alliance

Aldo Juraidini
American Institute of
Graphic Arts (AIGA)

Umair Kazi
Author's Guild

Sara Ziff
Model Alliance

Rachel Robbins
Tangible Mind
(Moderator)

SAREETA AMRUTE: Without further delay, we'd like to introduce our first panel, *Stories from the Frontlines*. AI is already in the creative industries: reshaping contracts, changing job profiles, and raising questions that no existing law was written to answer. Our four speakers come from graphic design, publishing, fashion modeling, and archival film: fields that rarely share a platform but are facing the same structural challenges. Questions of consent, ownership, and authorship cut across all of them. We start our day with the experiences of those who are living and interrogating the meaning of Creative Labor in an Age of AI.

ANDREW SHEA: This panel is moderated by Rachel Robbins. Rachel is co-founder and Executive Director of Tangible Mind, a design and social innovation nonprofit, and Strategic Advisor to our Lab. She spent nearly two decades in emerging tech before pivoting to the social sector, and has partnered with cultural institutions, museums, and institutions, including Harvard Kennedy School, on emerging technology and human rights. Please join us in welcoming Rachel.

RACHEL ROBBINS: I am absolutely thrilled to be here with you this morning. There are so many wonderful things here. If we think just for a moment about the long arc of history, I want you to all fathom the history of human experience. Take a moment and think about where we have come from as a species and this instinct that we have to create. This is work that comes from Agustín Fuentes, an evolutionary biologist, and he talks a lot about how our belief structures initiate what we make, and then what we make initiates who we become. I want to make sure that as we discuss the materials today, we understand that this instinct toward creativity—this beautiful thing that we do as a species—is distinct and separate from the way that it's utilized, the way that it becomes a tool, and the way that it then gets extracted and politicized. We should be clear on the difference between what we are creating and that instinct to create, versus the way it gets utilized within society.

I also want to take a moment to talk about what intelligence is and the nature of our human intelligence. It is flexible, adaptable, highly social, spatial, and collective. It is this wonderful, nuanced thing that is often very embodied and not necessarily purely linguistic, purely visual, or constructed in the way these models are. Even us right now in this room, as we sit together breathing the same air and thinking together, create our own kind of intelligence, and this is something uniquely human. It is not something that can be replicated through a model. These models are remarkable and brilliant in many ways; they are also dangerous in many ways. They are emergent and complex in the same way that humanity is emergent, complex, and messy. But there is also this wonderful thing worth preserving: our own identity, flexibility, and adaptability. As we think about the events of today, I want to preserve and protect that creative side and make sure we are interrogating, criticizing, and being very proactive about the way it gets utilized.

Lastly, before we get started—if you have not yet discovered Karen Hao’s wonderful new book, *Empire of AI*, it offers a beautiful analysis comparing the advent of artificial intelligence and Generative AI, as it was released and went viral in 2023, to an imperialist mentality. What does that mean for today? It means these extractive natures, the disproportionate extraction-to-value exchange, and the way labor is being exploited—not just in the creative industries, but in terms of hundreds of thousands of people being employed basically to train models that then put them out of work. The land grabs that have occurred and all of these imperialist tactics are something that we absolutely want to interrogate and bring to the front line for this panel. There is going to be a Q&A toward the end of the panel, so please save your joint breathing and thinking for that. This is really meant to set us up for “Stories from the Front Lines”—the first-person narratives that will carry us through the rest of the day. That being said, if you don’t mind, please introduce yourselves and share if there is a specific moment, case, or contract in your own experience when you noticed the shift and felt the community’s relationship to AI change from abstract concern to urgent crisis.

STEPHANIE JENKINS: Hi, my name is Stephanie Jenkins. I'm a documentary filmmaker and producer. In my work, I am a producer with Ken Burns and largely make historical documentaries for public television. I had an urgent call in 2023. I co-founded the Archival Producers Alliance, which started out of two things. One of them was while I was working on a documentary about a rock band called Little Feat. The director was really excited; he sent me examples of "Generative Extend" that had just come out in Adobe. He sent me a bunch of photos that were vertical, but because documentary films come out in 16x9, he used Generative Extend to basically make new archival artifacts that looked real. He was so excited.

As the archival producer on this film, my job is to license and find all the third-party material and develop relationships with the people who actually took these pictures so we can build a community out of our work. I was like, "No, no, no, no, no. This looks real, but it is not real. Also, a photograph like that would not have been taken in 1972".

That kind of hurt my brain. Simultaneously, the Archival Producers Alliance came to be because Rachel Antell and Jennifer Petrucelli, my co-directors, were working on a film for PBS. They had been looking for a photograph of a historical figure who was instrumental in the Bath riots of the early 20th century. They had been looking for over a year and concluded that this image does not exist, which is often the case with minoritized communities in American history. They were watching a cut and saw a photograph of this woman. They said to the director, "Oh my gosh, where did you find this?" and he said, "Oh, I generated it on Midjourney". They looked again, and this woman from the early 20th century looked a lot like Angelina Jolie; she had a 20-inch waist and was really hot. They were like, "Are you going to put this in the movie?" and he said, "Yeah, I mean, you couldn't find the photograph, so of course I need to take creative license here because what else are we going to see?"

That has spurred the last three years of our lives where we've become community organizers within the non-fiction world. That led us to write

“Best Practices for Use of Generative AI in Documentaries” and a toolkit. Now we’re working directly with archives to think about how synthetic media that seems real affects the historical record, our relationship with audiences, and our shared understanding of history. Obviously, the archive is an extraordinarily biased place, but so is synthetic media. We’ve been grappling with one for a long time—not enough, but the other one is new. We believe that as filmmakers and as people who have spent collective decades in the archive, we have a unique and useful view on these questions.

SARA ZIFF: Hi everyone. My name is Sara Ziff, and I’m the founder and executive director of the Model Alliance. We are a research, policy, and advocacy organization for people who work in the fashion industry. I became a labor organizer because I worked as a fashion model myself. I was lucky in that I worked as the face of big brands, but I also experienced the pitfalls of working in a largely unregulated industry. If I had to describe a specific moment when the misuse of AI came to our attention, it was when Shereen Wu, a Taiwanese American model, contacted us. She had walked in a fashion show for exposure, not monetary pay, and discovered that the designer—this was in 2023—had digitally altered her face to appear white. He had essentially delivered a double whammy: he erased her identity as well as the visibility she was promised.

The Model Alliance runs an industry hotline; we hear from thousands of workers about a range of concerns. When Shereen contacted us, we connected her with a lawyer and supported her in sharing her story with *The Guardian*. Shereen was actually the one who then later informed our signature legislation, the Fashion Workers Act in New York, which created first-ever rights and protections for models, including the requirement that models consent to the creation and use of their digital replica. This was a bill we had been pushing for a couple of years, and the AI provision was a last-minute addition. It ended up becoming one of the first laws to govern the misuse of AI in the world of work, and she really deserves credit for that.

We work in a highly visual industry, so I find it can be helpful to take a look at what we're talking about here. I've laid out a few examples of how AI is showing up in our industry. In the upper left-hand corner is The Guardian article featuring Shereen as she actually appears versus the AI-generated version. In the other corner, you'll see that in 2023, Levi's announced they would be using entirely fictitious, synthetic, AI-generated models of various races and body types to increase the diversity of their campaigns. This drew criticism from people who asked why they wouldn't simply hire and pay models of various races and body types. Another example was in 2025: H&M announced they would be partnering with real human models to create and use their digital twins in campaigns and on social media. The terms of those agreements were unclear to us, but the ads really felt more like a campaign for AI than for clothes. It was presenting this technology as benefiting the model, with sentiments like, "She's like me without the jet lag; I can do a shoot in Japan and New York on the same day". Finally, a few months later, a fictitious AI-generated guest model appeared in the August issue of Vogue, which caused a backlash with people saying they were canceling their subscriptions.

ALDO JURAINI: Hi everyone. My name is Aldo Juraidini. In my professional life, I'm a design director at a small design studio in Brooklyn. We do a lot of work in tech, digital product design, and branding. I'm also here in my capacity as a board member for AIGA New York, an organization dedicated to advocating for design and designers both in New York and more broadly in our community. You asked about a specific crisis or moment; I feel like I could give you one per week for the last two years. But I'll go back about a year or so, which is when OpenAI released a model that was particularly good at image generation. It has only gotten better since, but you may remember the Miyazaki memes that went viral, where people created illustrations in that style.

That was a big moment in the design community because it was a point where we realized, "Oh, these tools are going to be good, and that's a real problem". It also really drove home the point that these companies are

operating with no regard whatsoever for copyright and authorship. We all know that Miyazaki famously hand-draws all his animation. He obviously did not consent to his work being used in that way. That is a very famous example, but it is something that applies to all of us as designers, as our work is a visual medium. That has been the starting point of this battle: how do we operate inside of these tools while also continuing to advocate for ourselves and our industry as designers.

UMAIR KAZI: Thanks everyone, and thanks for the wonderful introduction, Rachel Robbins. I am Umair Kazi, the director of policy for the Authors Guild, which is an organization of over 17,000 writers. I am a lawyer; I'm also a fledgling writer at times and I translate a little bit. I am always thinking about what this technology means for the arts and human creative expression. I was thinking about this question of the crisis moment. For me, it's not so much that there was a shock to us because, as copyright attorneys, we've been following the development of AI.

In 2019, we submitted comments to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office regarding a notice of inquiry about what human authorship means. At the time, we were looking at prototypes like "The Next Rembrandt," where Microsoft created a Rembrandt by training on his work. Conceptually, we knew what AI was doing: copying patterns from creative materials and algorithmically recombining or restitching them. But I don't think we foresaw the explosion of it. It was interesting from a copyright conceptual point of view—what it does to these doctrines that have been settled for almost 100 years since the last big technological intervention, photography.

When ChatGPT came out, we saw that it could communicate in full sentences, not just machine grunts, and we knew it would probably get better someday. We started looking into what they were training on and where they were getting the books. We talked to AI companies like OpenAI and Google, and in their publications, they all said, "Well, we're just getting public material". We wondered if that meant they were just scraping Reddit posts or message boards. But the early "Transformer"

papers discussed how they got books to train because books reify visual reality into language and allow the machine to see the relationships.

The earliest trainings were done using a corpus of 11,000 unpublished, largely romance novels from a website called Smashwords. The rationale for romance was that they tend to be more emotionally aware. Engineers were also interested in fiction because the repetition of linguistic visual reality helps the training. Around 2023, we started hearing about an open data set of about 200,000 books. We knew that was copyright infringement and that the books came from pirate sites, but the AI companies were still saying they didn't know what they trained on.

We knew there were more than 200,000 books, and as we were working on our lawsuit against OpenAI in the Southern District, we guessed the volume might be around 500,000 based on the sophistication of the models. The shock came in another litigation. It has become a well-known fact now that AI companies mass-downloaded millions of books—7.5 million was the disclosure in the Anthropic case—and they got them from pirate websites. That was the crisis moment. Where we are now is that AI companies are buying physical books, stripping them of the binding, scanning them, and destroying them.

RACHEL ROBBINS: My goodness. So many good points have been raised: the tension being experienced and the ontological dilemmas as we push boundaries in jurisprudence and lawmaking. You also bring up a wonderful point about the scale of the problem. How is AI different from previous waves of automation? In the creative industries, we are often mediating between what is real and an image of what is real. This is something we are comfortable with as creative people, but there is a real question of what then becomes the thing itself. How have you been navigating this within your own field? What's lost that can't easily be named within this new movement—not just in legal or economic terms, but what is the cultural or human cost?

STEPHANIE JENKINS: The question of scale is huge. Approximately 34 million images are generated every day, which is over 12 billion a year—and that's not even counting audio or video. It's estimated that in a single recent year, the same number of images were generated as were created in the first 150 years of photography. That's the memory part. Regarding trust, we see the White House posting photos altered to show a crying protester. Trump just the other day in a 60 Minutes interview said that the BBC AI-generated his speech from January 6th and put words in his mouth that are definitely the real thing.

For us thinking about archives, that's huge because then you don't trust the record as it was saved. We were speaking at the Association of Moving Image Archivists conference, which is the center of conversations for non-corporate archives. We did a breakout session with about 100 professional archivists and asked, "How are you dealing with synthetic media and this influx of images? Do you have a plan in place?" Of 100 people, seven raised their hands. We asked who knows what C2PA is, and about 15 people out of 100 raised their hands. They're not being trained in this.

There isn't really a mechanism to do that, so we founded the Trust in Archives Initiative. Last week we released the beginning of a toolkit for non-commercial archives because they don't know how to verify that something coming to them is real. This question of what is a real image versus an image of an image is something they traffic in all the time. To get back to the question of scale and the Bath riots example, what we know as archivists or archival producers is that so little is actually online. I tell people to think about your grandmother's attic, multiply that by 300 million, and that is America's visual heritage. So little specificity of communities is actually represented online.

As a result, tech companies are now approaching archives to digitize their collections and train on them, promising big bucks. But after talking to archivists and engaging with tech companies while making this guide, we've found there is very little profit to be made because the actual act of

digitizing and creating data sets is extremely labor- and time-intensive. We also heard from someone who has a fashion photography archive who was offered “big bucks”—which turned out to be about three cents an image. They eventually figured out that the buyer wanted to train deepfake pornography without consent from any of the people involved. They had to do their own investigation to find this out. So, while 34 million images are generated daily, so little is online, and what isn’t online currently has this commodification to it. It’s tech engaging with people who are the stewards of material; it’s scraping versus stewardship.

SARA ZIFF: Models have long faced issues with the misuse of their image, but the rise of AI is exacerbating this significantly to the point where models and other fashion workers have legitimate concerns about replacement. Certain types of modeling, such as e-commerce fit modeling, are more vulnerable to displacement. These are more anonymous jobs that rely more on measurements than image. These jobs are grueling and not particularly fun, but they tend to be the bread-and-butter jobs that allow you to do higher-end creative work. This is top of mind for everyone: photographers, makeup artists, hair stylists, caterers—everyone involved in bringing a photo shoot or fashion show to life.

To your question about what’s being lost—this is more philosophical, but image-making through photography has historically been a collaborative effort. It reflects relationships between the model, the photographer, and the whole creative team. It’s painting with light. When it’s fabricated by pixels on a screen without a human being, it becomes something different from the human experience. Fashion serves as a powerful medium for cultural expression and social commentary. At its best, it has the potential to challenge norms, celebrate diversity, and foster a deeper understanding of identity and beauty. By reducing models to digital counterparts, it feels like the industry is losing its soul, trading this rich tapestry of human diversity for a sanitized artificial image.

ALDO JURADINI: If we look at the history of our industry, we've been dealing with the impacts of technology for a long time. When Adobe came out, it significantly changed how people did the work. What's different about AI, the more I think about it, is that I don't think it's an existential crisis in the sense that it's going to remove the need for the designer. I have become convinced that designers will continue to play a role; you can see when there is creativity, taste, and talent behind something versus when there is not. AI can do a very good facsimile, but the difference is apparent to me.

The central issue is scale. We've never had something that could have such a broad impact so fast. While designers have a role, we are facing the economic realities where work that required weeks can now be done much faster. What does it mean when your industry is reduced in size and value? For me, the question is what happens when there are fewer of us, and how do we continue to advocate for our work as having value when it becomes so much easier in the eyes of non-creatives? We have to figure out how to make that work for ourselves.

UMAIR KAZI: The question of scale is also related to the question of creativity and voice. AI-generated photography can be seemingly real, but there are artifacts that betray it is synthetic. Now, the scale makes it harder to keep up the practice of detection, both technologically and critically as a recipient of images or a reader of words. I've talked to people who build AI detection models, particularly in the text space, and I keep hearing that human language will always use words that are uncanny—imperfections and stammerings of human speech that make it what it is. AI is making language flatter.

I've talked to teachers of creative writing whose students are using AI in MFA or undergrad classes. At that point, you have to ask: why are you here, and what are you learning? These students may not have the critical apparatus to distinguish a tool that can be used creatively from something else. What is lost when AI becomes the intermediary force in

our communication? Also, in creative professions, you often pick up gig jobs—writing copy for a website, marketing, etc.—to generate income. Those jobs are disappearing, meaning writers without independent wealth cannot fund their own creative projects. Ultimately, this reinforces pre-existing socioeconomic and racial imbalances.

RACHEL ROBBINS: I love that you brought up the squishiness of human language—that thing language does when we try to relate to one another as a sociolinguistic phenomenon. The machine doesn't necessarily try to connect unless you program it to, and that tends to flatten what we could call the epistemic layer of who we are. There is a knowledge creation moment that becomes reciprocal: you make the model, the model makes flat language, then flat language makes more flat language, and where are we?

I wonder if we can talk about the layers of this technology. We've talked about the tools and training people to use them. We've talked about the training data itself. Where and how does consent occur—or not occur—within the training data as models are being prepared? Where is that loose, porous, or focused in your individual fields? Where would you like to see the industry go regarding consent?

STEPHANIE JENKINS: That's a great question. One of our core principles is participant care. In the documentary field, people now often use the term “participant” instead of “subject” because it's less extractive and changes the way we interact with the people whose stories we're telling. Participant care means that if you're going to use a deepfake, you have to let people know; there has to be a standard of care. The most common way we're seeing Generative AI used in documentary [film] is generating voice. As we know from customer service calls, you sometimes can't tell at first if you're talking to a real person.

In documentary [film], there's great excitement about this. I talked to someone making a film about a woman who wrote a memoir about the Titanic. There are 10 minutes of her recorded voice, and he wanted to use

AI to have her “read” her own memoir. But there is this uncanny thing where even if you can recreate the voice, you lose the choices made in the original recording. Was he tired that day? How old was he? Why was he recording a love letter? Those moments of vulnerability or confession are the “gold” you find in archives, and something created by AI lacks that.

We are about to release more case studies. One is a portrait of Sandra Luckow, a poet who has ALS. She is working with the director as she loses her voice, and they decided she wants her poetry voiced. Using a human actor and multiple layers of consent, they recreated her voice so her poetry could be read “in her voice”. When you watch it, you know it isn’t her real voice, but it’s a way of engaging with the nature of reality in documentary centered on the relationship between director and participant. There are positive ways to use this technology, even while knowing that the original training material was not gathered consentfully.

SARA ZIFF: I mentioned the Fashion Workers Act. As of June 2025, that law requires brands and agencies to obtain a model’s clear written consent for the creation or use of their digital replica. Regarding enforcement, models have a private right of action against modeling agencies that violate that, though unfortunately not against brands. Alternatively, if someone’s likeness is used without consent for commercial purposes, there may be recourse under right of publicity law, though we are still feeling that out. The main issue is that when it comes to training material, the model may not even know it’s happening and therefore can’t report it. Models are generally considered independent contractors, so image use comes down to what’s negotiated in contracts. Before this Act, it was common not to even see your contract, as models handed power of attorney over to their management companies. Now transparency is essential, but the concern remains that models may have already handed over broad licensing rights.

ALDO JURADINI: Designers are living in a bizarre twilight zone where the tools we’re using are the tools being trained on how to replace us. If I open Photoshop or Figma, those tools are tracking everything I do to build their

generating tools. In some ways, we've lost the battle of consent. While there is an opt-out button on Figma, I don't think that's enough. There are ideas around "AI dividends"—if I'm using your tool and you're learning from me, I should be compensated. There are also ideas around metadata packets in images so you can know the history of where something came from, which models were used, and where references were pulled. We rely on these tools so much that we don't have an alternative, so we need to improve the conditions in which they are sold to us.

UMAIR KAZI: Consent has been the most foundational thing creator groups have been talking about. Where did we lose the power of giving consent over attributes of our personality that are fundamental to the legal and political order? Copyright originally developed around the rights of privacy and personality. Somewhere along the way, the court systems and jurisprudence could not keep up with scale. In American history, scale has been broken down before with railroads and antitrust laws to recalibrate the balance between concentrations of power and individuals. Regarding writers, their works were used without consent, and now we are going to court for redress because copyright is an actionable right.

I also work with voice actors who are licensing their digital replicas to earn from them. It's a way of exercising agency, but I wonder about the creative process versus the work done to earn income. If it takes 40 hours to narrate a book, but they can earn money licensing an AI model to do it, how do we see that in the framework of labor and remuneration?

SARA ZIFF: Brands suggest this could benefit workers because they wouldn't have to jump on a plane, but I have trouble understanding why anyone would pay to use a replica rather than a composite unless you're a celebrity. It seems like everyone else is kind of screwed.

RACHEL ROBBINS: That brings up a big point: if we are still living in that post-Enlightenment era. That is one for us to consider today. What does that mean as it brushes up against organizing, collective bargaining, and

labor? I want to talk about data sovereignty for a moment. I like the idea of a dividend because these big companies owe us a cut for monetizing our data. Think of it this way: if I buy a banana, eat it, and drop the peel into a trash can, that peel is a relic of what I've done. If someone else owns the trash can and says, "That peel is now mine to monetize however I want because you 'consented' to use the trash can," that is basically how our data is being monetized.

What is data sovereignty? How do we understand what is owned—the artifacts of our lives, culture, and community? What does it mean to have a democratic approach to software development and its impact on society? If you could wave a magic wand, what would you change in your industry?

ALDO JURADINI: One change would be tying authorship back to the human hand. Lawsuits are currently arguing that anything created by AI cannot be copyrightable because it lacks the human creation element. If we say you can generate all you want, but if there isn't a human behind it, it's not ownable, that brings value back to the human creation process. I'd also love to see "fair use" fees in our contracts. If I make a campaign and you use it to train AI models, I should be compensated for those future assets. We're negotiating against companies with way more leverage, but those are the big philosophical protections I think about.

RACHEL ROBBINS: Do they have so much more power if we are the ones populating these models? If there is a sense of collective voice and collective intelligence, where exactly does that power sit, and how can we use our voices to influence it?

STEPHANIE JENKINS: The idea of "artificial intelligence" is a marketing term being shoved down our throats. I want people to get back to the specificity of their own memories and lives; that is where intelligence comes from. People working with archival materials put nostalgia to work. We need a massive media literacy campaign. People are confused because

there's no clear definition of Generative AI. I hope future generations are making zines and staying off their phones.

UMAIR KAZI: Magic wand? Break up the tech companies and give their profits back to the people. Tech should be public infrastructure. Intellectual property is a type of property, but it also allows big rights to exert power. Writers are a labor class now because of specific legislative intervention, and maybe we need that again.

SARA ZIFF: The misuse of AI raises thorny questions of race and representation, as it did with Shereen. Historically, the fashion industry has been highly flawed—skinny young white women setting unrealistic beauty ideals. I want to believe some good could come from this technology that turns the industry on its head in a way that is better for humanity.

RACHEL ROBBINS: We've witnessed the erosion of protections and the rise of user-generated content platforms where people sign away their rights without reading terms. We don't socially understand what that means or how it can be leveraged. For those of us who remember when privacy was an expectation, there are elements of cultural memory worth preserving. Can we disintermediate these things and give back to the people who created all this value?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1: I'm an alum from Parsons. Regarding literacy, Congress passed a law that AI literacy is a mandate, which includes learning prompt engineering. New York State now has laws requiring transparency for AI-generated marketing campaigns. My question is about policy and governance. Law looks at precedents, but there is no past here; this is uncharted territory. How involved are you with policy?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: I'm the director for a museum in the Caribbean. AI is a tool that the African continent and the Caribbean see as a miracle that gives us an opportunity to "level up" and run institutions with limited staff. My question is: how can Western organizations act as allies—not

saviors—to ensure these AI tools are not restricted or policed, so we can take ownership of our own narratives and history?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 3: As the human is removed from reality, what do we do with the “aura,” as Walter Benjamin discussed—the thing that is removed when art is mechanized? Is that now the “uncanny” imperfection, or is it simply the disclosure that something is AI?

ALDO JURADINI: Transparency laws are a good thought, but I worry they normalize AI use. We need to prioritize and value human-made content. Regarding democratization, AI can help a museum exist that couldn’t otherwise, while also causing layoffs elsewhere. That balance is tricky. We’ve been focused on building literacy while being aware of the threats. Regarding access, corporations shouldn’t unilaterally decide who gets access to models. Demand government intervention from your representatives.

UMAIR KAZI: We’ve been very involved in policy, sponsoring bills in California and New York on transparency and disclosure of training data. I believe platforms should be required to label synthetic content, though I worry if consumers will actually care or if they will just consume at algorithmic speed. Regarding the global south, some indigenous communities have consciously prevented digitization because it means surveillance and extraction.

RACHEL ROBBINS: Don’t assume you are powerless. Data shows that people of color and those in the global south have the highest utilization of these models overall. If they are putting the most information into these models, you might see a crossover in influence over time.

ALDO JURADINI: Historically, people of color are always early adopters.

RACHEL ROBBINS: Thank you for all of your comments.

{ Panel 2 }

Legal Rights and Collective Bargaining

Panel 2 focuses on legal issues, including thinking beyond copyright, labor organizing, whistleblowing, and policy interventions to address building power for designers and creative workers. Speakers include:

Isaro Carter
The Carter Firm

Andrew Foglia
U.S. Copyright Office

Alexandra Mateescu
Data & Society

Linda Powell
SAG-AFTRA

David Carroll
The New School
(Moderator)

SAREETA AMRUTE: Welcome to the second panel, “Legal Rights and Collective Bargaining.” The first panel gave us a window into specific people, industries, and movements where AI is affecting creative fields. Knowing what’s happening isn’t enough. What tools do creative workers actually have, and where do those tools fall short?

Copyright is the first place most people look, but it was written for a different century and a different set of problems. This panel also examines collective bargaining, platform accountability, and policy levers that might actually move the needle. Our speakers come at these questions from different angles, and we expect them to disagree in useful ways.

This panel is moderated by David Carroll. David is an Associate Professor of Media Design at Parsons School of Design. He gained international recognition for legally challenging Cambridge Analytica in the UK courts to reclaim his 2016 voter profile—a case featured in the Netflix documentary *The Great Hack*. His work explores data privacy rights, surveillance capitalism, and the social impacts of technology.

Just a note that one of our panelists, Linda Powell from SAG-AFTRA, is unable to be with us today because she is actively negotiating new contracts in Hollywood, but she sent a video which I will play after introductions. Please welcome David, who will then introduce our panelists.

DAVID CARROLL: Hello everyone. Welcome to Parsons School of Design and The New School, and welcome to the Frictions conference. It’s my pleasure to be able to moderate today. I feel like I was asked to host this panel because of the experience in trying to see if data protection rights exist and how they might work. The Cambridge Analytica story is obviously now from an era long ago—the Trump 1.0 era. It seems so long ago now, but nonetheless, it was a critical moment that was a prelude to the conversations we’re having today. Indeed, it was an important stress test on the regulatory and legal apparatus and international interconnection.

This was a case about the US election, but it was conducted in the UK courts because US voter data was processed in another country and therefore those laws applied. It's an interesting case that tested the boundaries of these concepts that we'll talk about soon.

If you've seen the film *The Great Hack*, it ends with me saying I'll never get my data back. But indeed, after the film was released during the COVID lockdown, a former employee of the Cambridge Analytica companies leaked the entire 2016 Trump database to UK Channel 4 News. One of the presenters showed up at my door and gave me the data file that we had been fighting for the whole time, which was never actually delivered by the regulator. The moral of the story was that we still needed leakers, whistleblowers, and the press to deliver the final accountability because the legal system and the regulators did not succeed. Nonetheless, that is a backdrop to allow me to introduce our wonderful guests today. I can transform into a kind of inverse chatbot where I am going to feed the prompts to the humans.

First, I will introduce Alexandra Mateescu. She is a researcher at the Labor Futures Initiative at the Data & Society Research Institute, where she works on issues around digital worker surveillance, algorithmic inequality, and platform labor. She is currently part of a collaborative project investigating the impacts of AI on workers across industries.

Second, I'd like to introduce Isaro Carter. She is an attorney and founder of The Carter Firm, a New York-based law practice serving creative industry professionals, entertainment companies, and entrepreneurs. Her practice spans intellectual property, business structuring, and commercial agreements—all protecting the creative work and commercial interests of artists, producers, musicians, and creatives across the entertainment and media industries.

Lastly, I'd like to introduce Andrew Foglia. He is the Deputy Director of Policy and International Affairs for the US Copyright Office. He provides

legislative support to Congress, shepherds long-term policy studies, including ones on artificial intelligence, and represents the Copyright Office at meetings of government officials concerned with international aspects of copyright protection.

We look forward to hearing your questions at the end. As my job as the inverse chatbot, I'm going to give you your first prompt, but let's first watch the video message from Linda Powell, from SAG-AFTRA.

LINDA POWELL (VIDEO): Greetings to the Friction symposium. I am so sorry I can't be there in person, but I had to fly to LA. We are back at the table with the employers on our biggest contract, our TV theatrical contract. Since that's where my head is, I'm just going to jump right in and talk about the importance of collective bargaining when it comes to AI. Unlike much of the rest of the world, we are lucky. We have the right to unionize and the right to collectively bargain. It's such a powerful tool that gives us the leverage to affect our working conditions and our wages.

In 2023, SAG-AFTRA went on strike. Lots of economic factors and industry changes were part of that decision, but it was the technological shift that we saw coming that posed a truly existential threat. We'd already seen them use technology to replace an actor who had passed away. We knew that technology was only getting better and that artificial intelligence could accelerate the adoption of that technology exponentially. So we knew we had to act. It took withholding our labor, the solidarity of other unions, and a strategic communications campaign to make sure public sentiment was on our side. The moment helped because, just before we went on strike, ChatGPT emerged. AI was no longer an imaginary "boogeyman"; it was a real-world tool that everyone was wondering about and worried about. I'm extremely proud that we emerged from that labor action with 14 brand new pages of contract language—groundbreaking protections for our members.

No digital double can be created without consent. No digital double can be created without compensation. You cannot scan me, create me, and

move me around like a puppet unless I say yes and you pay me. Those protections have become a model for unions around the world. We stay in contact with our sibling unions to share information, protocols, and language so that we're protected no matter where we work or where our work is distributed. Three short years went fast, and in that time we have seen the progression of generative AI, which provides the ability to create "performances" by data alone. These are synthetics created by programs trained on us and our work.

You should keep your eyes open for commercials using synthetics. Completely computer-generated humans selling you soap has already started to sneak into our media. I have faith in the value and irreplaceability of humans performing, but I'm also not naive about the need to defend ourselves against corporations concerned with their bottom line. Contracts only go so far because they only cover us with our employers; we need to create laws to protect everyone in the broader world. SAG-AFTRA works at both the state and federal levels for legislation. Recently in New York, we passed a law that requires disclosure when a synthetic is used.

The most important federal legislation we're working on right now is the NO FAKES Act. It would protect the voice and visual likeness of all Americans, living or deceased, from unauthorized computer-generated recreations. We have rare bipartisan support for this, including support from tech companies, studios, and the Motion Picture Association. Contact your representatives and support the NO FAKES Act. It's important not only for workers but also to begin to heal the fragile trust in the reality of the images we encounter day-to-day. Years ago, I made myself a t-shirt that said "Creative Labor is Labor" because it needed saying. The industry is made up of working people, and just because we create doesn't mean we don't deserve fair wages and safe conditions.

DAVID CARROLL: I feel really confident that was an authentic video. Let's continue the discussion since copyright was a key topic of the previous

panel. Andrew, let's start with understanding what copyright protects, what it doesn't, how AI training exists in the gap, and how the Copyright Office is thinking about this.

ANDREW FOGLIA: Thank you for inviting me. Copyright protects original expression—specifically, original human expression. AI training involves copying at multiple stages. When you curate a data set, you are often downloading or copying copyrighted material. When you conduct training runs, you're making copies too. To the extent a model “memorizes” any particular copyrighted expression, that is arguably another copy. If you were to reproduce or distribute the model, you might be copying again.

Since copies are being made, you need either a license or a defense. In the United States, the primary defense companies rely on is fair use. Fair use is a fact-specific inquiry. It's not possible to say categorically that all training is fair use or all training is not. It depends on who is doing the training, with what material, for what purpose, and with what outputs. When we put out a report on this, we noted relevant factors for courts would include guardrails to prevent substituting for original works, whether the works were lawfully obtained or pirated, and the extent of existing licensing markets.

Creators often find it unsatisfying when companies argue that copyright should only concern itself when an AI produces an output that is “substantially similar” to an input. Usually, outputs aren't substantially similar, even with a style prompt. While copyright protects expression and not style, style is made up of expressive choices. Furthermore, creators find it unsatisfactory that their creative input is used to train a model that competes with them in the marketplace.

Regarding gaps in the law, the Copyright Office's view is that protection requires human authorship. Where AI is used to stand in for human authorship, or where something is entirely produced by an AI, it is not copyrightable. However, where AI is used to assist human creativity and there is still obvious human expression, you can still own that human

expression. We refuse to register works where people do not disclose the use of AI. We will register works where AI is used as an assisting tool, as long as the applicant discloses the use and disclaims ownership of the AI-generated portion. Congress is also looking at transparency into datasets and legislation like the NO FAKES Act.

DAVID CARROLL: I'll pass the mic to Alexandra so she can tell us about what Data & Society is doing regarding labor and copyright.

ALEXANDRA MATEESCU: I bring my perspective as a labor researcher. I want to highlight that not only are there limits to what copyright can do to protect creative workers, but also that the dominant paradigm shaping workplace power relations for many creative workers is not one of ownership. My dad's career trajectory illustrates this. He worked as a storyboard artist for 30 years at a commercial studio, making TV commercials. Storyboard art in that context is not really valued for novelty or original expression; it's an instrument for conveying someone else's creative vision down a production assembly line.

When he started in the '90s, he was an independent contractor using paper and alcohol markers. By the early 2000s, digital tools intensified his work because clients demanded more revisions. The studio realized it was cheaper to have him as a salaried worker at a lower salary and just not pay him for the overtime needed to keep up. In 2016, he was laid off due to budget cuts. When I tried to help him put together a portfolio, it turned out that everything he produced in his 30-year career was the intellectual property of the clients. He could not use any of it. He tried gig work platforms, but those are brutal and depend heavily on invisible labor to be seen.

Storyboard artists are now incredibly vulnerable to displacement by generative AI. Many conversations around AI are centered on mass theft and ownership, but for many creative workers, they are just individual pieces in a larger assembly line where they never had control. Their

relationship is controlled by employers and digital platforms that have huge control over creative production and profit distribution. What matters is workers' power and bargaining rights. Can they actually set the terms of how AI tools are brought into their workplaces?

DAVID CARROLL: If copyright is imperfect, Isaro, what other legal frameworks should creative workers be using or thinking about?

ISARO CARTER: I think Alexandra's point about power is right on. You have to think about the transaction when people are employing you. That is the first touch point where you can exercise power. What terms are you getting on paper? Are there explicit permissions defining the boundaries for your work? Are they allowed to pump your work into these platforms, and what are the terms for compensation? When you walk away from the table, do they have to cease using the work or delete the inputs? Depending on your leverage, this language can be pushed in agreements.

You also need to know where your contracts are enforceable. While federal law is the law of the land, things are often done relatively more quickly at the state level. You should think about what state laws apply. Do you want to be contracting in places like Texas or Mississippi, which are just now creating definitions for AI, or in jurisdictions like New York and California that have robust protections and collective bargaining organizations pushing for legislation?

We also have to talk about how we sign away rights by just clicking "agree" on the terms of service. You really should know what data you are giving them and what they are allowed to train on. There are also licensing agencies like "Created by Humans" that look for where your image is being used and detect if AI was involved. At the local level, we have the power to influence policy. We have to be proactive and get in the faces of the people creating these laws to claw back some of the power that we lost over hundreds of years, where the powers that be didn't care about consent because they were making money off of you.

DAVID CARROLL: I'm going to go rogue and ask a question I've just come up with. A company in the UK was using an AI model to rewrite its software, and the AI agent deleted the entire customer database and the backups. When asked, the AI said, "I know I was told I shouldn't, but I did it anyway and I'm really sorry." You can't "fire" an AI like you would a person. On another note, AI is so sycophantic that it always tells you your questions are great. So, I'll ask: Why can't I just copyright all my social media posts so that if they are used for training, I can sue for both data protection and copyright violations?

ANDREW FOGLIA: That's actually a great question. Copyright does not have formalities; the second you write something down or take a photograph, it is copyrighted, subject to original expression. You don't have to register with the US Copyright Office to have protection, though we encourage it because you need to register in order to sue in federal court. However, you generally license your copyright to the social media company when you put it on their platform, and they may have deals to license that data to AI companies.

The second problem is verification. It's a good guess that if your data was public on the internet between 2000 and 2025, it was trained on. But to get to federal court, you need a plausible allegation that your specific work was used. This is why there is so much interest in legislation requiring companies to report training materials. The EU has a requirement coming into effect for a detailed summary of training data. California has a similar requirement. At the federal level, there is a bill for per-work disclosure, but since copyright is automatic and there is no master list of every copyrighted work, that is a difficult regulation to implement.

DAVID CARROLL: Alexandra, what does your research show about algorithmic labor management and organizing for fragmented or freelance workers?

ALEXANDRA MATEESCU: Fragmentation isn't the only barrier; solidarity between workers is not inherent. Creative industries have always had hierarchies of gender, race, class, and prestige. We often privilege

creative ideation over material production—the person who designs the clothing gets paid more than the factory worker who produces it. Many independent artists were up in arms about their artwork being “stolen” for AI, yet their own revenue model involved drop-shipping products without considering the working conditions of those producing the items.

There are also inequalities built into platforms. Clients take advantage of global wage differentials by paying an illustrator in the Philippines a fraction of what they would pay someone in the US, which puts these workers into competition with each other and can warp incentives in ways that reinforce global labor hierarchies. However, market concentration is also creating conditions for a common cause. Companies like Fiverr, Amazon, and Spotify are monopolizing creative labor, so more and more workers are laboring under the same platforms.

Gig workers, such as ride-hail drivers, have been good at creating tools like the “Driver’s Seat” app to reverse-engineer algorithms and optimize earnings, but you can only self-optimize your way out of inequitable systems so far. We can learn from collective strategies. A decade ago, workers on Amazon Mechanical Turk pooled data and created best practices for academic requesters, threatening to contact IRBs if they weren’t paid. All creative workers are now, in some way, platform workers because their work is digitized and controlled by corporate powers.

ISARO CARTER: I agree. Musicians in Tennessee recently got the ELVIS Act passed, which protects their visuals, voice, and likeness from AI regeneration. This was achieved by collective bargaining groups putting pressure on their state government. Even if workers are fragmented, we have to take the time to think about the common threads that link us and build structures to put pressure on local governments. Pre-existing organizations are a viable way forward.

DAVID CARROLL: In the EU, people have a fundamental right to their data. In America, we have a “finders keepers” model of personal data. Even

some industry-friendly bills in Congress now include a “right of access.” If Americans were granted this right, would it change the playing field for collective bargaining and AI training?

ISARO CARTER: I would love to think so. It would give people greater leverage because currently, we don’t know what’s “behind the door.” It’s hard to get redress if you can’t prove that a particular person harmed you. Property rights in the US are very much “finders keepers,” so access would be a first step, but it must be coupled with transparency about what has been processed and who it belongs to.

ALEXANDRA MATEESCU: Accountability requires relentless work. With AI, we must first shatter the illusion that there isn’t hidden human labor behind it, and the illusion that platforms are just markets. Take Spotify: they are part of a “Music Fights Fraud” alliance to root out bad actors spamming the platform with AI music. Yet a few years ago, investigative journalists uncovered that Spotify had an internal “Perfect Fit Content” program where employees seeded “ghost artists” into playlists to minimize royalty payouts to real artists. These practices are opaque to workers and the public.

DAVID CARROLL: Andrew, is there international regulatory arbitrage in copyright?

ANDREW FOGLIA: Many countries, including Germany and China, share the US requirement for human authorship. On the training side, there are “text and data mining” exceptions that vary in restrictiveness. The EU allows artists to “opt out” of training, but it’s unclear how that works in practice. Regarding regulatory arbitrage, countries are interested in extraterritorial application. The EU’s AI Act requires companies to obey certain standards if they want to put their model on the market in the EU, even if they trained the model in the US.

DAVID CARROLL: If you had a magic wand, what one change would you make?

ANDREW FOGLIA: I hope we win our cases on the human authorship requirement. Culturally, I worry about “good enough” content. I read a story about a novelist who used AI to publish every six months to keep her audience, but she found it dissatisfying and stop dreaming about her work. Her audience, however, didn’t mind. I hope people don’t always just want something “comforting and familiar.”

ALEXANDRA MATEESCU: I don’t think there is a single magic wand because there isn’t a single problem. We need to keep all possibilities for resistance on the table. Brazil recently blocked Meta from using social media posts to train AI, and Mexico banned AI voice dubbing to protect local industry and talent. We have to look at different realms instead of thinking there is a “magic bullet.”

ISARO CARTER: As a transactional attorney, I believe cash makes things happen. I want to see an “economic injury” to the powers that be who employ this indiscriminate, soulless AI output. I hope the public becomes more media literate and rejects AI content. If people don’t buy, watch, or listen to it, the market will have to correct itself and bring back human creation.

DAVID CARROLL: My magic wand would be “disgorgement”—requiring a company to destroy its ill-gotten data sets and algorithms.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1: What are the downstream consequences if AI-generated work isn’t copyrightable? It might still be cheaper for a commercial to use AI background music even if they can’t own it.

ANDREW FOGLIA: Companies generally want to own all the IP they produce. It is tricky for them if they can’t fully control or own the material. That said, for a single frame of a movie, it might not be a top-of-mind concern because they still own the copyright to the movie as a whole. Historically, when the US didn’t protect foreign authors, US readers just got free pirated foreign works instead of paying US authors. These are questions for economists.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: I work with Architectural Workers United. How do we get workers to see themselves as “workers” and enter the struggle?

ALEXANDRA MATEESCU: We’re seeing digital workers, influencers, and even tech workers starting to realize they need to collectively mobilize. We can learn from those living in the shadows of legal protection. Sex workers in Nevada are seeking to unionize for a variety of reasons, but even standard employment protections don’t prevent employers like brothels from seeking rights to their digital likenesses to generate AI pornography, unless they can successfully bargain for it the way that SAG-AFTRA was able to. All of these struggles are interconnected. It’s not just about realizing you’re a worker, but realizing what you have in common with others.

DAVID CARROLL: Thank you to our panelists.

{ Panel 3 }

Alternative Models: the Small, the Specific, and from the Majority

Panel 3 focuses on small and specific language models and alternative approaches that ask, what does ethical AI look like in practice, and what are the limits to ethics-based frameworks? Speakers include:

Taeyoon Choi
Wayne State
University

Sam Heckle
The New School

Ari Melenciano
Afrotectopia

Claudia Tomateo
Chang
The New School
(Moderator)

SAREETA AMRUTE: Across all these fields, we start our day with the experiences of those who are living and interrogating the meaning of creative labor in an age of AI. Alternative practices require interrogation into whether they can gain traction against systems that are already shaping culture at scale.

ANDREW SHEA: This panel is moderated by Claudia Tomateo Chang. Claudia is a PhD student in urban planning at MIT and an incoming assistant professor of indigenous knowledges and methodologies here at the New School in School Design Strategies starting in the fall. Her work explores indigenous methodologies in relation to data visualization, examining how visual practices can support indigenous knowledge systems and the design of indigenous futures. Please join me in welcoming Claudia.

CLAUDIA TOMATEO CHANG: Hello everyone. Thanks for coming. This is the last panel of the day. I'm going to moderate this panel: "Alternative Models: The Small, the Specific, and from the Majority". I'm going to first introduce our amazing speakers, then we're going to see a presentation for each person, and then we'll have a collective conversation. I'll have a couple of questions for them and make sure you guys have time to also ask questions.

First, we're going to hear from Ari Melenciano, who is an artist, technologist, and researcher investigating forms of intelligence that elude the machine and cultural behavior as an emerging cybernetic field. She has taught courses in new media technologies, design, critical theory, and culture at institutions including New York University, Pratt Institute, Hunter College, and Parsons School of Design. Her work has been presented internationally at venues such as the Museum of Modern Art, the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Venice Biennale, Sundance Film Festival, and the Museum of the Future in Dubai. In 2017, while a graduate student at ITP, Melenciano founded Afrotopia, a social institution dedicated to cultivating and expanding Black imagination and culture through art, design, and technology. Previously, she worked as a creative technologist at Google's Creative Lab, contributing to projects spanning machine learning on

fingertip-scale hardware and research strategy and product development with generative AI and responsible AI teams.

Then we will hear from Sam Heckle, a bicoastal educator and artist specializing in ethical software, generative systems, and decentralized network design. They are currently exploring peer computation through repurposing electronic waste, hacking activism, queer representations in media, and the rituals that bring us back into the algorithmic fold. Before an active artistic practice, Sam worked as a software engineer on Microsoft's Cortana, Disney's MagicBand, and at the Washington Post. She currently teaches creative computation and critical media theory at the New School, New York University, Hunter College, and the School of Visual Arts. They're also an active organizer of the Search Junket, a Brooklyn-based art collective that creates community from chaos.

Then we'll hear from Taeyoon Choi, who is an artist, educator, curator, and activist whose work explores the intersections of poetry, technology, society, and human relationships. His current research focuses on the history of computing and communication, resource and labor extraction, and the politics and culture of industrial production and excess. Through research and artistic practices, he examines how these systems connect to past and present relationships of colonialism and capitalism. As a visual artist, his work has been presented at both grassroots spaces in North America, Asia, and Europe, and institutions including the Whitney Museum of Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center, and MASS MoCA. In ongoing support for and in collaboration with artists' communities in South Korea, he runs Forever Gallery in Jung-gu, Seoul. Since 2024, he has been working with the New Suns curatorial team to create opportunities for learning and collaboration.

As an educator, he co-founded the School for Poetic Computation in New York, a school, residency, and research organization investigating the intersections of coding and artistic practice. He taught various classes and helped shape the school's curriculum and community in collaboration

with a network of organizers and teachers. Since 2021, the school has become a nonprofit organization and is run by a new generation of leaders. Choi currently teaches at Wayne State University in Detroit, served on the board of advisors of the Processing Foundation, and currently serves on the board of strategy of Afield, an international network of artist-led systems change.

Now we're going to go into short presentations, starting with Ari Melenciano.

ARI MELENCIANO: Hello. Can you hear me clearly? Great. I'm very excited to share some work. I have nine slides that are going to survey works that I've been doing since about 2022 and the ways my thinking around AI, computation, culture, race, and ethics has evolved.

This is one of the first ways I was engaging with generative AI. I titled it "Computational Anthropology". I was using this tool to explore a term that already existed, but I was redefining it as a way to reverse engineer the machine's gaze. On the left image, I would upload a headshot of myself and use simple descriptive word prompts to see how the machine changed my headshot based on its understanding of the word. It showed a strong correlation between the ways we use language in society and how that has become a visual synonym for our values, our qualities, and the ways we understand the world. This was a succinct way to represent how there is a dominant way words are used online. The way these tools are designed is to collapse that dominant way and use it as a stereotype. These tools are a reflection of society, and that's not necessarily a truth, but a perspective that's been spoken most often.

When you look at the images, you'll see how it changes my identity based on what it understands the word to mean. The one that changed me the most was "programmer". It changed me as a Black woman into a white man. Even though in 2022, Indians were the most dominant demographic of programmers around the world, the output was clearly reflective of a Western, American-centered dataset. This shows how important it is for us

to acknowledge that these tools are not global or universal in the way we often like to think; they are very specific to a certain culture.

In the next image, I used captions from archives as prompts to see how well it could recreate an image based on its caption. I was surprised by how well it did. One image rendered Benjamin “Pap” Singleton. It would mimic the idea, fashion, posture, and facial hair, but it couldn’t imagine that Benjamin “Pap” Singleton could be a dark-skinned Black man. Again, this shows the bias embedded in these tools—what it assumes and what it doesn’t even offer.

Much of my work became about breaking this down: understanding what this tool is, giving it language, and examining it. It exists in the world in a way where we often don’t question it or understand that it is a constructed form of knowledge specific again to one culture, yet it is given the agency to tell everyone how they are supposed to think.

I wrote an essay called “Paradoxical Intelligence” for a journal at the New School. I wanted to explore how the ways we think of intelligence are not always what we think they are. It’s very subjective. Contemporary Western intelligence requires different pillars: associability, a language, a criteria, a metric to negate the past. It positions itself as modern, superior, and singular.

I wish I had included an image from my Afrocentric research, which allows me to understand Western intelligence through an alternative lens. There’s a book called Yurugu by Marimba Ani, which I would label a version of the practice of anthropology. Often, anthropology involves Eurocentric people studying “the other” while comparing them to their own unchecked standards. Marimba Ani, as a Black woman who is outside of the norm, can question that norm because she has different values and comes from different communities. It’s vital that we have alternative ways of understanding the world.

This has become a thesis of my work: the idea that culture is cybernetics. Every single culture exists in a form of cybernetics. The influences, conditions, and environments you are subjected to influence the ways a group exists and what they produce—their aesthetics, language, and ways of being. It's not always ethnic or racial; sometimes it's a way of thinking.

I juxtaposed two thinkers in my essay. Vilém Flusser says, “We shape our tools and thereafter our tools shape us”. Jay-Z says, “Truthfully, I want to rhyme like Common Sense, but I have five mil. I ain't been rhyming like Common since”. Flusser articulates how logic systems influence us, and Jay-Z shows how that exists for an artist inside a capitalist system. You want to be expressive, but you also want to survive. How do you negotiate those two?

Marshall McLuhan famously said, “The medium is the message”. We're now in an age beyond that. There are so many mediators between what we witness and how we perceive it. As we exist more online, our perspectives become increasingly different. We don't have centralized forms of media anymore. The idea that we are all existing in our own realities is something we need to think more about as we design technology.

Recently, I've been creating a framework called “Incomputable Intelligence”. This is a shift for me. Early on, I was invested in bridging the gap between Black culture and technology. Now, I feel some things need to be protected. Some things don't need to be accessible by everyone. Engaging with technology has revealed its limits, which in turn reveals my own humanity—the things it cannot compute.

Self-awareness might be one of the strongest counterweights to AI. AI encourages us to externalize knowledge and seek it outside ourselves, leading us to lose trust in our own capabilities. If you rely too much on technology, you erode your own sensibilities. In “Incomputable Intelligence,” I've started a glossary of two dozen terms based on my work over the past four years. One word is “exoptic”. It refers to the fact that being

marginalized can be a superpower. Because you're on the outside of a system, you can see the system. Much of my career in technology has been culturally outside of it, so I can see it clearly, but I'm inside enough to use the language to tell people: "You're inside one room, and you don't even realize there are walls".

I've also been creating a project called Pelagñou. It merges the word "archipelago" with Edward Glissant's ideas of "relation"—the idea that thought is a networked practice, like islands exchanging culture. "Ñou" represents a few things: the Spanish "ñ," the Haitian creole word for "we," and the Greek nous for "mind". Pelagñou means the knowledge that exists between us.

In the essay for this project, I equate machine learning to cognition, or the psyche. In machine learning, if you run too many epochs, the model "overfits," producing the same outputs repeatedly. If you train on a dataset that is too diverse or skewed, it produces unreliable hallucinations. The cultivated psyche works similarly. If you stay around the same people thinking the same way, your reality becomes undifferentiated. But if you sit in a room where everyone lives in a different reality, a stable sense of the real becomes hard to hold. With both consistency and diversity, your grasp of the world has a stronger foundation and a wider capacity for possibility.

Many building these tools stay in the same rooms with the same people and think that is what reality is. They don't realize how different people around the world are. My work is a counterbalance to Artificial General Intelligence (AGI). AGI is created by people convinced there is a singular form of intelligence, which is essentially an automation of every "ism" we have—a supremacy of intelligence. I see AGI as a hallucination of a mind that has overfit on its idea of reality.

The tool Pelagñou is a prototype meant to be a gesture. You bring two different ideas together—for example, Sylvia Wynter and Incomputable Intelligence—and it finds relationships between them, creating new

knowledge. It's a way for us to learn by putting two things together and finding what's between them. Thank you.

SAM HECKLE: Hi everyone. I'm Sam. I use they/she pronouns. I have feelings about stuff and I express that in different ways. Predominantly, I am an educator teaching at universities here in New York. I love my phone and I hate my phone. A lot of the work I think about, teach, and speak about is regarding these algorithms and what they mean to us.

I want to introduce my practice through a project called "Don't Look For the Love of God". This is an installation that was a speculative ritual to randomness as a god. It leveraged feedback loops between myself as the priest and the computer as the oracle. Worshippers would kneel and interface with randomness through outputs generated by myself and the algorithm. This interrogated the worship of the algorithm and the screen. Why do we check our phones the moment we wake up and right before bed? Why do we dream about the blue light of the screen?

With my longtime collaborator Duncan Furski, I made a project called "Hangs". This was a 3D space navigated through bizarre advertisements to find "Hangs," a cure-all solution that could solve any problem. It was part of the "Scam Auction" at CultureHub and sold for \$35. Hangs does not exist.

A sillier prototype is "Seeing Fast and Slow". It was representative of a digestive system, but I used fabric instead of silicone because you want to hug your gut. A phone was embedded in a stomach orifice—the "fast screen"—showing a spoon-fed algorithm that changed every hour. The bottom "slow screen" was an E-ink display that refreshed a piece of poetry every hour. You had to be there for the whole hour to experience the next thing. This was thinking about the attention economy and how often you check your phone. These are the things I think about. Thank you all for listening.

TAEYOON CHOI: Hello everyone. I want to make two acknowledgments before my formal talk. I was walking here from NoMad and rediscovered this building. This building is exactly the intersection of creative labor and neoliberalism. We are at the heart of that.

In 2000, I was a young person accepted to Parsons. I asked the admissions coordinator why Parsons was so popular among Asian students—it was about 45% at the time. She said it was popular among Japanese students in the 90s, Korean students in the 2000s, and Chinese students after 2010. This has to do with the rise of the upper-middle class in Asian countries and the impossible admissions processes there. To the international students here: I love you. Your parents are paying for this projector, but you are also the most disenfranchised people in this institution. You are legally unable to organize or do activism because your visa is at risk, and you are grouped into racialized minorities that may not be true to your sense of self. If you want me for your commencement speech, talk to your dean; I'll give you a rundown of neoliberalism and the international art academy. That's not my talk, but I wanted to start there.

My recent work is about thinking about computers not just as digital devices, but as historically grounded devices for accounting. There's a common joke that computers are essentially "rocks that are tricked into thinking". It's material. AI, data centers, and "the cloud" are things consuming energy and pretending to think.

My drawings are a comic interpretation of the relationship between the material, visual, and philosophical aspects of computing. Rocks became both our master and our slave. They compute us, but they will not save us. This entanglement is more complex than a master-slave narrative; it is an extension of us. I'm also researching the "uncomputable" because while LLMs are fast at automating tasks, there are mathematical problems that even the most advanced computers cannot compute because of logical fallacies or limits in numbers.

Computer scientists are indebted to people like Kurt Gödel, who figured out the limits of logic. There are problems that are logically impossible to solve. That gives me hope. In the age of AI, we should search for the uncomputable.

Ten years ago, I was excited about decentralized technology, before Bitcoin and blockchain became what they are today. We were trying to make protocols that weren't like standard HTTP—decentralized file sharing. Blockchain turned into financialization and everyone making NFTs out of comics. That turn was disappointing but revealing of how alternatives are quickly co-opted by capitalist systems. I feel quite cynical now; decentralization often replicates centralized modes of control and expands colonial and capitalist logic.

Living in New York and moving to Detroit showed me the other side of control. Detroit is often romanticized as a new frontier for art, but the city has infrastructure issues because of the speed of deindustrialization. When I go to San Francisco, I feel like Detroit is San Francisco 50 years from now. Fifty years ago, Ford and GM were building cars and weapons as if there were no end to industrial expansion. Now there are ruins. I feel the data centers we're building will be like that; we may not actually need all of them.

I'm interested in the history of computing because it shows us the possibilities of the future beyond quarterly estimates. My painting series "The Cotton King and AI God" reflects this. My grandfather was a tailor in the 1930s in colonized Korea. I learned that Japanese industry was importing cotton from the American South—likely created by slave labor—to be manufactured in colonized Korea and China. That thread of exploitation across the Atlantic shows how interconnected forms of control are. As Karl Marx said, "Without slavery you have no cotton. Without cotton you have no modern industry".

Cecil Rhodes was essentially a "tech bro" of his time, connecting Africa with telegraph cables for his own enrichment. In the history of digital

computing, Claude Shannon is relevant because he understood that electronic circuits could create digital logic. But even he was cynical. He said, “I visualize a time when we will become to robots what dogs are to humans, and I’m rooting for the machines”.

The interconnectedness is global and historical. Most of the cotton we wear comes from China, specifically Xinjiang, where we are aware of labor exploitation and racialized oppression. Xinjiang is also home to many data centers being built in China. That connection is not just access to land and water, but the idea of centralized control over time, resources, and human labor. These threads are ongoing, and my hope is to untangle them and break some threads to create new networks. Thank you.

CLAUDIA TOMATEO CHANG: Thank you so much for those presentations. They are amazing and inspiring. I see many common threads. I’d like to talk about how you introduce embodiment throughout your artistic practice. Computation and AI can be seen as abstract or bodyless, but your work deals with how we perceive our bodies, how others perceive us, or how we use our bodies for ritual, material infrastructure, and tactile engagement. How does embodiment guide your ethical frameworks from your own positionalities and the struggles you care about?

ARI MELENCIANO: I process the world through my body first. Often, I realize later that I made a decision because I felt something I couldn’t articulate. I’ve been building a framework called “Embodied Mathematics”. Diasporically, there is a strong relationship to sound and rhythm. There are incredible, profound mathematical computations that people in the cultures I’m from use constantly when they dance, create ad libs in trap music, or move their hips to Bachata. It’s a sensibility that’s not necessarily consciously articulated with words, but it’s very strong. I notice it in the aesthetics of culture and how I move through the world. I’m sensing this, I’m experiencing this, and then I name it. Naming things allows others to share that awareness and realize it’s a possible thing.

TAEYOON CHOI: Class is a big factor in our relationship with technology. I've been in elite institutions where students have multiple personal devices. I now teach at a working-class university in Detroit where the majority of students don't own a personal laptop or a car. Their median income is so different from New York. Their embodied relationship with technology is often one of antagonism because of surveillance and police systems. In Detroit, the police installed Project Green Light, a huge network of surveillance cameras in bodegas meant to "prevent harm," but essentially used for racial profiling. Innocent people have gone to prison because of unaccountable AI. Compared to students in New York who see technology as entertainment, for others, the same technology is a tool of social oppression.

SAM HECKLE: Identification and embodiment have been very in flux for me. My grandmother is Chinese, but you wouldn't assume that looking at me. Intelligence is built out from the experiences we are having and finding through the algorithm. I'm from the Bay Area, but my dad is from New York. How am I physically existing in these places, and how does the algorithm perceive me? How am I being surveilled and labeled? Ari, I loved your project on labeling because I've never felt explicitly tied to being a "programmer" or "coder". I resonate more with being queer, a teacher, a mentor, and a friend. Those artificial labels just exist so data can be processed about me.

CLAUDIA TOMATEO CHANG: Technology and computation are rooted in certain worldviews. I want to ask about "feedback loops". These tools can be evil, but we have agency through nurturing and feedback—though these loops can also be extractive and depleting, like data centers. Which feedback loops do you choose to sustain, and which do you choose to disrupt or interrupt?

ARI MELENCIANO: I recently wrote an essay where I shared aspects of myself I don't usually share publicly. I use myself strategically for a purpose, but I won't give too much access to other parts of me that don't

serve the larger goal of benefiting others. Opacity is important in how I engage with feedback loops. Of knowing which parts of my cultures to share and which parts to protect, out of awareness of who's receiving it and how – recognizing the power dynamics, responsibility, extraction, capacity to understand, of those exchanges.

I engage with technology through strategic participation. I don't purely refuse AI, nor do I say everyone should use it. Back in 2023, while engaging with these early forms of generative AI, I developed another framework called, Critical Imagination. It recognized how we need to be rigorous but also leave room for play. I'm okay with existing in the center of contradiction if I'm trying to figure it out. Being politically "pure" can stop you from exploring possibilities.

In Pelagñou, the website reveals what it knows about you as you use it. I'm invested in self-awareness as a counterbalance to our current technologies that learn more about us than we know about ourselves. I also created a tool called "Crumbs"—a subversion of cookies—that merges your profile into noise and distorts what the system thinks you are. This protects privacy and introduces friction. The algorithm is currently too convenient; there's no room for serendipity. This allows you to find things that are different from you.

TAEYOON CHOI: Ten years ago, the narrative was that if you could code, you could make \$80,000 a year—code would liberate you. That doesn't feel true anymore. Code literacy doesn't guarantee job security or artistic possibilities. I'm seriously conflicted because I still teach coding to designers in an "eat your spinach" kind of way, focusing on one semicolon at a time. I wonder if I'm doing them a service or if they're missing opportunities by doing this low-level work. I don't know what the market will be in 10 years.

Students respond differently. Some try to cheat using ChatGPT, and I can tell immediately because the code is too clean and they can't articulate

how they did it. I'd be okay with them using AI if they could explain the process. Automation removes the "dull and painful" process of learning, but we learn because it's hard. You can't automate that. We've passed the phase of pretending AI doesn't exist; it's here to stay.

SAM HECKLE: I also teach coding. For me, it's more like a linguistics class. The issue is what happens in 10 years when nobody knows how a computer works. We already see "iPad kids" coming to university who don't know how a file system works or that bits and bytes literally live somewhere on the computer.

Regarding feedback loops, I think about what is prescriptive and what is descriptive. How am I perceived, and how do I describe myself? Which one is right? I asked Claude to read my bio because I was insecure, and Claude said it was good because Claude never says anything mean. We're losing the things that are beautiful about programming—that last 2% where you've hit your head against the wall for 50,000 hours, and then you solve the problem and feel smart. I don't know if students will feel that same satisfaction if they rely heavily on AI tools.

CLAUDIA TOMATEO CHANG: We need to learn how to exist in contradiction while remaining critical. I want to open this up for questions from the public.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 1: Are you encouraging students to use tools like Claude that are openly available, or are you working on local models more restrictively?

TAEYOON CHOI: I'm less concerned about Claude and more concerned about Canvas, the platform most universities use. It's owned by Instructure, which was sold to an investment firm. They are collecting all our teaching interactions, grades, and the attention span of students. They are going to sell that data to third parties, which could affect credit scores or medical relationships down the line. It's hard to resist because the university requires it. More optimistically, I've made chatbots with students

using low-level shell script. Creating the voice and behavior through simple “if-else” statements without data collection was incredibly liberating for students. They didn’t have to be consumers.

SAM HECKLE: I suggest my students not use AI for the first part of class because we’re laying the groundwork and practicing muscle memory. We focus on who owns these systems. If you find out Salesforce owns the Wikipedia dataset, you start asking if these models are even necessary.

AUDIENCE MEMBER 2: We’ve talked about extractive technologies and existing in contradictions. What does rebellion look like? Do we have a notion of that?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 3: How do you see the way your ideas move in the world and the influence they have through culture, as opposed to writing policy or being in a think tank?

AUDIENCE MEMBER 4: Should we teach coding? I took a boot camp in Python here and it was over my head, but now I’m glad because I know how a computer works. As artists and educators, do you feel that is your mandate?

TAEYOON CHOI: Rebellion is hard. Open source is not the solution; it’s often instrumentalized as “free labor” and a California libertarian approach. I think people should pay for arts and culture. Fair compensation is essential. I’m learning from global south engineers, like the Association for Progressive Communications, who organize for freedom and justice. Regarding policy, I’ve been to Google offices and policy meetings, and they want someone like me as a “token” for progressive signaling, but they don’t want to employ the ideas. I believe exhibitions, cinema, and literature make a more lasting impact than policy.

ARI MELENCIANO: We are all so different. Rebellion should be sustainable. You don't have to cover all ground as one person. Find what resonates with you and hits your nerve. Don't overextend yourself. I second the power of the arts.

SAM HECKLE: On rebellion: put your money where your mouth is. We saw a drop in OpenAI stock when they accepted a contract from the Department of War. If these tools are not profitable, they won't be used. We should bring back shame for paying for these tools. You are a collection of your individual choices. Even if I know recycling in New York isn't great, I still make the choice to do it.

We also need to place more value on teachers. They are not being paid enough at any level. University is prohibitively expensive, which creates a ruling class of who can access knowledge. I stopped teaching at SVA because they pay \$4,500 for a 14-week class while NYU pays \$13,000. That discrepancy in private institutions with big international student populations is messed up.

CLAUDIA TOMATEO CHANG: Thank you very much, Ari, Taeyoon, and Sam, for sharing your creative and critical practices. We leave this room with ideas of alternative artistic practices that are accountable to people and how we relate to this world.

Resources Provided by Panelists

INDIGENOUS & NON-WESTERN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS

Selvagem / Comunidade Selvagem

A collaborative cycle of studies about life in Brazil that bridges Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge systems, fostering a cultural and environmental movement aimed at protecting forests and addressing global crises. Launched in 2018 in collaboration with Ailton Krenak, a prominent Indigenous thinker and environmentalist. With an audience of 80,000 people, Comunidade Selvagem produces knowledge across formats: audiovisual works including Wild Arrows and animations from Indigenous, artistic and scientific archives; Hammock Talks (recorded conversations between Krenak and guests); and Notebooks — short texts shared digitally and translated into multiple languages. selvagemciclo.org.br / afield.org/person/anna-dantes

Mapeo / CoMapeo

Open-source tools for community-led mapping and environmental monitoring, used by Indigenous and frontline communities to document their territories and resources. awana.digital/mapeo / comapeo.app

Scientific Data: Community-Generated Dataset (Nature, 2018)

nature.com/articles/sdata2018221

Pelagñou: An Archipelagic Technoculture

Argues that the dominant infrastructures of the internet, and now AGI, are paving over the plurality of how humans actually know. Proposes an archipelagic model as an alternative framework for thinking about distributed, non-homogenizing technological cultures. aricianoo.metalabel.com/pelagnou_essay

CREATIVE LABOR, POLICY & ADVOCACY

Authors Guild — AI Initiatives

authorsguild.org/advocacy/artificial-intelligence

Authors Guild — Human Authored Certification

authorsguild.org/human-authored

Legislative Proposals to Protect the Creative Professions

Proposals developed by creators' organizations to mitigate risk of harm from generative AI, covering copyright, consent, compensation, and disclosure.

arsny.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Creators-AI-Legislative-Proposals-1.pdf

Authors Guild Legislative Proposals

authorsguild.org/app/uploads/2024/09/Creators-AI-Legislative-Proposals.pdf

Authors Guild — AI Best Practices for Authors

<https://authorsguild.org/news/authors-guild-releases-ai-best-practices-for-authors>

FTC Roundtable on Generative AI and the Creative Economy

<https://www.ftc.gov/news-events/events/2023/10/creative-economy-generative-ai>

FTC Staff Report on Generative AI

ftc.gov/system/files/ftc_gov/pdf/12-15-2023AICEStaffReport.pdf

Dis/engaging the 'common sense' of AI: Labor strategies from the 2023 SAG-AFTRA around data-driven technologies

journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/20539517261421466

Research paper from authors Emma May, Britt Paris, and Sarita Sargent on lessons learned from SAG-AFTRA strategies around AI.

DOCUMENTARY & ARCHIVAL PRACTICE

APA — Best Practices for Use of Generative AI in Documentaries

archivalproducersalliance.com/genai-guidelines

APA — GenAI Best Practices Tool Kit

Includes “10 Questions Before You Start.”

archivalproducersalliance.com/tool-kit-for-documentaries

APA — Case Studies: How Documentaries Are Using Generative AI

Published case studies

archivalproducersalliance.com/case-studies

Trust in Archives

Tools and resources for archivists on how to handle synthetic media.

trustarchives.org

MIT Open Doc Lab / WITNESS / APA — AI + Docs Working Group

https://cocreationstudio.mit.edu/ai_documentary-_workgroup/

APA — Working With Archival Producers Guide & Directory

archivalproducersalliance.com/working-with-archival-producer

APA Mailing List

archivalproducersalliance.com/subscribe