

leon ferretti



im dunklen
mit farben spielen

eine zine

Embarking on a nuanced exploration, this endeavor unfolds with a tangible manifestation born from a six-hour analog painting session. The artwork intricately captures the concept of “Farbenspiel” (color play), a recurrent motif in anthroposophical art, offering a tangible starting point. As the gaze shifts toward questioning the authenticity of these analog paintings, a compelling inquiry emerges.

Can their essence be replicated through artificial intelligence? The narrative delves into the distinctive attributes that set these analog creations apart from their AI-generated counterparts, prompting contemplation on the evolving landscape of artistic expression. This journey navigates the intersection of spirituality and technological progress, inviting reflection on the changing nature of creativity. It urges one to ponder the unique qualities that distinguish handcrafted endeavors from those brought forth by technology, fostering a thoughtful exploration of the interplay between anthroposophy and transhumanism in the context of artistic creation.

What is transhumanism?

Transhumanism is a philosophical and intellectual movement advocating for the enhancement of human capabilities through the integration of advanced technologies, such as genetic engineering, artificial intelligence, and cybernetics. It seeks to transcend traditional human limitations, fostering a future where individuals can achieve unprecedented physical, mental, and emotional potential.

What is anthroposophy?

Anthroposophy is a spiritual philosophy founded by Rudolf Steiner, emphasizing the development of human spiritual consciousness and the integration of spirituality into daily life. It explores the interconnectedness of the spiritual and material realms, incorporating education, agriculture, medicine, and the arts as avenues for spiritual growth and understanding.



“Licht und Finsternis”

Acrylic on paper
297mm x 420mm
2023



Derivative of "Licht und Finsternis"

Digital, AI generated (Midjourney)
297mm x 420mm
2023



“Neutrale Farben”

Acrylic on paper
297mm x 420mm
2023



Derivative of "Neutrale Farben"

Digital, AI generated (Midjourney)
297mm x 420mm
2023



“Warme Farben”

Acrylic on paper
297mm x 420mm
2023



Derivative of "Warme Farben"

Digital, AI generated (Midjourney)
297mm x 420mm
2023



“Kalte Farben”

Acrylic on paper
297mm x 420mm
2023



Derivative of "Kalte Farben"

Digital, AI generated (Midjourney)
297mm x 420mm
2023

I want to elaborate on one more detail before venturing into the conclusive aspect of this text: the distinctive analysis of work created by hand and that made through artificial intelligence. This distinction is split between the themes and technicalities of both methods. In terms of themes, both products can hold their own weight, as the meaning, relevance, use, and subjective fate are easily placed upon them by the creator of the work. Since a human is still at the center of this creative power, it can be understood that they serve the purpose of its creation equally well.

In terms of technicality, we must acknowledge that the AI-generated artwork seems too detailed. This small detail that separates the appeal of the two methods and favors “real” artwork is what I will call the “Soul.”

It is in what is not seen yet felt that allows the art of the human hand to feel real. Through the use of artificial intelligence software such as Midjourney, we can easily portray the “dead image of the living.” With the aid of technology, humanity has become the master of what is without spirit.

(The concept of the dead image of the living is mentioned in the lectures of Rudolf Steiner about the theory of chromatics. In his example, the color green is the dead image of the living, as it represents the living plant but does not show its ethereal body. Therefore, it is visualized as its physical body, the color green. (Steiner, 1970))

Yet the transcendence of human limitation, as one of the goals of transhumanism, can only be done through belief. Human beings can use belief as a way of knowing (IB Better, 2020), whereas technology can only assist humans in reaching their timely maximum capability. Belief is a very powerful tool against other human life, yet it is the saving grace that differentiates us from machines.

When discussing transhumanism and the spiritual ascension that Anthroposophy promises, it is a combination of both that seems to culminate in the greatest possibility to transcend human limitations. It is through the merging of technology with the human body that we break the physical shackles of existence, and through the freedom gained through spiritual knowledge, we can ascend the human limitations to be governed by that which is destructive.

To reduce the conceptual discussion back towards the two methodologies of producing artwork, the artificially created works can offer the greatest application to further the physical, yet the works made by hand hold significant importance for the betterment of one's spiritual ascension. Therefore I believe that an when we stride onward from this here place we must consider more than our own capabilities, or the capabilities of what is most capable, but rather if our work should contain our soul or not.

Sources used:

Chat GPT (chat.openai.com)

Midjourney AI (midjourney.com)

Steiner, R. (1970) *Colour: Three lectures given in Dornach, 6th to 8th May 1921* with extracts from his note books John Salter. Translated by J. Salter. London: Rudolf Steiner Press.

Ways of Knowing TOK (A Simple Guide) (2020) IB Better. Available at: <https://ibbetter.com/ways-of-knowing/> (Accessed: 9 January 2024).

Cover & Back Images generated using AI (midjourney.com)

To Play With Colours in the Dark.

