



Is AI a new palette, chord progression, or an abomination of humanity?

There was a time when the paintbrush itself was considered radical. When oil paints replaced tempera, when the camera obscura assisted Renaissance masters, when photography emerged and threatened to “replace” painting—each moment carried a familiar anxiety: *Is this still art?* History has answered that question again and again with a steady, unbothered yes.

Today, that same question echoes around **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**.

But perhaps we are asking the wrong question.

The better question is this: *What kind of tool is AI, and how does it belong in the artist’s hand?*

The Palette Expands

An artist’s palette has never been limited to pigments alone. It includes:

- Brushes, knives, and fingers
- Light and shadow
- Cameras and lenses
- Software like Adobe Photoshop and Procreate
- Soundboards, loops, and digital instruments

AI simply joins this lineage.

It is not a replacement for the artist—it is an *extension*. Like a brush, it responds to pressure. Like a camera, it frames possibility. Like digital software, it accelerates execution. But it does not originate intention. That remains firmly in the domain of the human spirit.

AI as Instrument, Not Author

At its core, AI is a system trained on patterns—vast constellations of images, texts, sounds, and forms. It does not feel awe at a sunset, nor grief at a memory. It does not long, ache, or dream.

The artist does.

AI can generate, suggest, remix, and iterate. But it requires direction. The prompt becomes the new gesture. The refinement becomes the new layering. The curation becomes the new composition.

In this sense, AI resembles earlier tools:

- The camera did not eliminate painting—it transformed it.
- Synthesizers did not erase acoustic music—they expanded it.
- Digital editing did not destroy photography—it democratized it.

AI follows the same arc.

The Artist's Hand Still Matters

A brush in untrained hands produces little of consequence. The same is true of AI.

What distinguishes meaningful art from noise is not the sophistication of the tool, but the *clarity of vision*. An artist working with AI must still decide:

- What story is being told?
- What emotion is being evoked?
- What form best serves the idea?
- What should be accepted—and what must be rejected?

AI can produce abundance. The artist imposes *meaning*.

A New Kind of Collaboration

Rather than viewing AI as a rival, it is more accurate to see it as a collaborator—one that is fast, tireless, and sometimes surprising.

This collaboration can take many forms:

- **Ideation:** Generating visual or conceptual starting points
- **Iteration:** Exploring variations at a scale previously impossible
- **Refinement:** Enhancing detail, color, or structure
- **Translation:** Moving ideas across mediums—text to image, sound to form

But like any collaborator, AI must be directed, challenged, and sometimes overruled.

The artist remains the editor-in-chief of the creative process.

The Risk—and the Responsibility

Every tool carries risk.

The camera enabled documentation—but also manipulation. Digital editing allowed precision—but also artificial perfection. AI introduces its own challenges:

- Overreliance on generated output
- Loss of personal voice
- Ethical concerns around source material and originality

These are not reasons to reject the tool. They are reasons to use it *consciously*.

The artist's responsibility deepens as tools become more powerful.

A Continuum, Not a Break

It is tempting to frame AI as a rupture in artistic history. It is not.

It is a continuation.

From charcoal to oil, from film to digital, from analog to algorithm—the artist has always absorbed new tools into their practice. What changes is not the essence of art, but the range of its expression.

AI does not redefine art.

It redefines *possibility*.

The Final Measure

In the end, no viewer stands before a work and asks, “What tool made this?”

They ask:

- Does it move me?
- Does it reveal something true?
- Does it linger?

AI cannot answer those questions.

Only the artist can.

Conclusion: The Living Palette

Artificial Intelligence belongs in the artist's palette not as a dominant color, but as another shade—powerful, flexible, and evolving.

It does not diminish the artist. It demands more of them.

More vision.

More discernment.

More intention.

Because when every tool can generate, the true art lies in *choosing*.

And that, as it has always been, is the work of the artist.

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