My entry:

Recently, I stumbled on a documentary from the early 1980s of Peter Gabriel when he first got into sampling, and it was interesting to observe the creative process in a time without PCs and the Internet. When you listen to all the rough takes by the musicians, compared to the released version, you are essentially hearing what AI is attempting to do. Even if machines provide some raw material, the creative decisions still have to be made by humans. (Can you imagine an AI that just uses all the bad takes?) What I'm interested in are ways of working, not necessarily having machines do it, or even assist with it. The big issue is efficiency: Many people that have dishwashers seldom use them because they impose the idea of efficiency to the point it becomes inefficient. AI is that dishwasher in many ways.

Google Duplex, at least at the moment, is about useless automation and is in its very early talking-head phase. Identifying what has been a tedious chore, typically leads to innovation. As far as I'm concerned, simple repetitive actions in an artistic context don't always have to be tedious. We marvel at things that are the culmination of thousands or millions of little actions, huge panels composed only of small elements like drinking straws or knotted gum wrappers, color-coded into representational mosaics, is not that same as the outputs of neural networks. It is evidence of how nature works until it evolves a heuristic. Google Duplex is a forced evolution and a solution in search of a problem. The real problem for humans is the inefficiencies in multi-tasking. But like simple algorithms or macros, the results aren't always perfect, and still need sets of eyes.

Punished by Rewards

Punished By Rewards is a book originally published in 1993. The main premise is that excessive external rewards ultimately diminish motivation for improvement, and can sow cynicism and apathy. The efficiencies gained through technology have been rewarding, but we can also be punished or desensitized by those rewards. As in the example from 1982 in Peter Gabriel's studio, where we see him rummaging through a huge suitcase of cassettes with various recordings of the world music on them. There are no efficiencies desired because they weren't warranted. At the time, no one was complaining about how difficult or inefficient it was to go through a pile of cassettes, and in fact, could sometimes be a pleasurable activity, such as we did making mixtapes for friends. Now we have the technology that replaced it, but we are punished by the rewards of convenience. Instead of 100 cassettes, we might have 2,000 files, perhaps sequentially named: 0001, 0002, 0003. No wonder we don't care. It's the efficiency paradox at play: in the pursuit of convenience and automation of everything, we throw the baby out with

the bathwater. Hypergrowth and all its negative consequences are all born from the idea of efficiency. Planned obsolescence is based on the illusion of efficiency; The old one is always inefficient.

I am hopeful that AI can be integrated into creative workflows, but I'm not ready to say any art form is so inefficient that it should all be automated. Making art manually is too much fun and spiritually rewarding. Composing music with traditional notation--even with pen and staff paper--gives it a more human quality (at least for me), and it's completely "menu-less".

AI music has evolved, albeit at a glacial pace. If it hadn't been for the emergence of AI from its "winter", generative music would have plateaued, and perhaps completely faded out. If applying the Gartner Hype Cycle, AI music may be heading towards the "trough of disillusionment". Since it is moving toward being a software application used for film and game scores, it could have some limited use.

I've noticed that some of the music played in hotels is quite good, and could, in fact, be generative in nature. As ambient music, it works perfectly well. Muzak, while regarded as being a relic of 1970s culture and technology (Muzak is the audio equivalent and derivation of *Kodak*), has actually matured in some ways. The people that produce it (I'm not saying "write"), have created their own kind of arty niche, surpassing the banality of the original Muzak. AI music can extend this further, but like the AIVA Chinese music , isn't impressive yet in an artistic sense. No one is saying "I want to do that", especially if they like playing traditional instruments. You'd have to use it like Brian Eno used Koan in order for it to be art--and his generative music found a limited niche. I have used some of the procedures and they are only marginally useful as composition strategies. It's always good to have real instruments around because they are also generative, ultimately in a more satisfying way. I can see how AIVA could be used as a kind of effect, similar to how musicians have used stochastic methods, such as turning on a radio or TV and letting it inspire the piece. There is a spiritual element to creativity that could arise from AI, in which randomness is a happy accident, and we can attribute that to a universal power locked in music, resonating with human spirituality. AI software doesn't seem like an instrument (vehicle) to that end. They haven't expanded the possibilities but are now rather like "black holes" that absorb all the light of creativity. They are the software of creativity, not the hardware.

AI in music is still being couched as "assisted creativity", (like AI-generated folk tunes) which has interesting prospects. But the real artists of the future will find a way to use it in unconventional ways or to parody or appropriate it. (You can't call it a "fusion" because computers don't have any intrinsically unique musical characteristics, or don't have "ethnicity"). What you want is AI music that sounds naturally robotic, or has characteristic imperfections. Like chip music, it should be a genre in itself. Once everything gets sorted out, it is the youngest generation that in their teens, find a way to make it cool. It hasn't happened in 2019, so we might have to wait until 2029.

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