

## Paper Mache for 10-3-25 by David Read

Recently, I was reading *Time* magazine's edition about the world's 100 top AI influencers. Or is it "A1," like the steak sauce, as our Secretary of Education recently said? Regardless, the list was fascinating. Of course, there were familiar names like Sam Altman of OpenAI and Mark Zuckerberg of Meta, but more than 80 others were completely new to me. What struck me most was the number of artists across genres who are now using AI platforms to enhance creativity and expand their practices.

AI has rapidly transformed contemporary artmaking. In music, film, literature, theater, and visual art, creators are experimenting with new tools for expression, collaboration, and production. While I don't consider myself an artist, I admit to using basic AI platforms to create images for articles or press releases when photos aren't available. Even at this simplest level, AI opens up possibilities.

One example highlighted in *Time* was Natasha Lyonne, co-founder of Asteria Film Co. She is using AI in her upcoming film *Uncanny Valley*, employing it to reduce the costs of visual effects and postproduction. In music, apps like Splice allow musicians to hum an idea and then swipe through AI-generated samples to build songs. Meanwhile, platforms such as DALL-E, MidJourney, and Stable Diffusion let visual artists generate complex images from simple text prompts. Some use these tools to produce finished works, while others treat them like sketchpads, quickly prototyping before painting, sculpting, or digitally refining. These practices challenge traditional ideas of authorship and originality while broadening the creative palette.

In music composition, tools like OpenAI's MuseNet and Google's Magenta generate melodies and harmonies in styles ranging from classical symphonies to electronic dance tracks. The South Korean group IITERNITI, formerly known as Eternity, takes this further: they are a fully virtual, AI-powered K-pop ensemble. With eleven digital members, their visuals and music are created through "Deep Real AI" technology. They perform as idols without human performers behind them, drawing thousands of social media followers and appearances at global events.

Writers, too, are engaging with AI as co-authors. These platforms can draft passages, suggest dialogue, or shape narratives that authors then adapt. Poets use AI to toy with structure and syntax, exposing the tension between machine language and human feeling. In the performing arts, AI finds its place both on stage and backstage. Playwrights test AI for script prompts, while choreographers use motion-tracking algorithms to invent new dance sequences. Increasingly, theaters employ AI-driven projection systems or lighting designs that respond to performers in real time.

Filmmakers are also turning to AI for editing, color correction, restoring archival footage, or even creating synthetic actors and voices. Perhaps the most extreme example is Tilly Norwood, an entirely AI-generated "actress" created by the studio Xicoia. She debuted in a short comedy sketch called *AI Commissioner*, scripted with ChatGPT and built with multiple AI tools. While her existence has ignited controversy—SAG-AFTRA has condemned the project as undermining human actors—her presence illustrates how far this technology has already gone.

Across all disciplines, AI platforms act as collaborators, mirrors, and provocateurs. They allow artists to stretch their practice, blur boundaries, and engage audiences in new ways. At the same time, they raise profound questions about creativity, authenticity, and the future of human expression. Frankly, I find it all a bit overwhelming. I'm not a Luddite, but it feels dizzying to keep up. AI may never replace the spark of human imagination, but it is undeniably changing the arts—and forcing us to reconsider what creativity itself means. Ah, to be young again, diving into this new frontier with curiosity rather than trepidation.