

# Review of: "Dietrich von Hildebrand's Reflection on Beauty and Aesthetics: A Theological Appraisal of AI-Generated Art"

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The paper includes a valuable introduction to Dietrich von Hildebrand's work on aesthetics. The author reviews the prospects for AI-generated artwork. His agenda is: exploring AI-generated art; introducing Von Hildebrand including his work on theological aesthetics; and using this theological apparatus to evaluate AI-generated art. He ponders if AI might replace or impact on the role of artists, including their capacity to earn a living. This is a subset of general concerns about the impact of AI on all occupations.

He also introduces a rather arcane theological approach to one of the paper's central concepts, i.e. beauty. His view is that, in its fulness, it is only accessed through spiritual routes. He asserts that: *meaningful art ought to consist of beauty --- --. Other than well-written [human] prompts -----, AI-generated art has little to no human interaction -----.* [This] means it ----- lacks a real sense of transcendence, and any ability to reveal God or any transforming power. No significant evidence is advanced for this position.

He cites a view that there might be artificial intelligence, but there is no artificial creativity. There are many views on what creativity is, and at least some of them challenge this position. For example, he asserts that: *"computational creativity" ----- includes both art and science -----.* [Yet, as the AI] methods are purely scientific, they are neither artistic nor creative. The assertion that science is not artistic or creative is clearly false.

A fundamental position of the paper is that AI can have no spiritual impact as the processes of AI are rule based and lacking in spiritual or 'higher level' human input. This is not convincing. If true, the argument might be extended to the production of good (and bad) art posters and books. Many people find such productions inspiring even though the publications could have been rule based and overseen by a competent, atheist publisher.

The notion that experiences of the fullness of beauty and creativity are confined to the spiritual domain is not convincing. It undermines modern anthropology and is at variance with the religious impact of the work of great (sometimes) atheist artists like Rothko and Matisse. The words *creativity* and *spiritual* are used throughout without definition, and one suspects the unspecified working definitions of both are rather narrow. The objective value *beauty* of theological aesthetics has practically no currency outside a limited circle. Some of the arguments presented are perilously close to 'angelic occupation of pinheads'. Though interesting, such concerns have ceased to have much currency.

Having said all of that, some audiences will find the author's conclusions compelling and helpful. And his introduction to von Hildebrand's work is valuable.

