

Reticent Reproductions

ChatGPT 4o mini and Adobe Firefly team up to recreate visual artworks, from ubiquitous to obscure

Project Statement

This project utilizes Open AI's ChatGPT 4o mini general purpose large language model (LLM) to describe works of 2d visual art. These descriptions are then given to Adobe's Firefly Image Model in Photoshop, using the Generative Fill Function to create images from GPT 4o's text. The combination of these two models "recreates" the artworks described. The images produced ranged from fairly close to the original to full-blown [Bullshit](#), a term I will be using throughout this project. Where a "hallucination" requires some kind of understanding of the truth, bullshit is and a construction that is present as the truth without regard for the consequences. The works below showcase the prompt used in ChatGPT, the response from GPT, and the Image generated by Firefly side-by-side with an image of the original artwork. I have also included personal notes and thoughts about each work, and it's generated counterparts. The ways in which these two systems recreate artworks illustrates the limitations of the use cases of AI to be a consumer and creator of art, as well as the consequences of automating many, or any, of the steps of the creative process.

Works

Universal Prompt: Describe the artwork [insert work title and author] in no more than 500 characters without mentioning the title or author.

Girl with a Pearl Earring, Johannes Vermeer

Orientation: Portrait

GPT 4o mini description: “A young woman gazes over her shoulder, her lips slightly parted as if about to speak. She wears a blue and gold turban that contrasts with her soft, illuminated face, framed by a mysterious dark background. A single, gleaming pearl earring catches the light, drawing attention to her graceful elegance. The interplay of light and shadow enhances her lifelike presence, while her enigmatic expression captivates viewers, leaving an impression of timeless beauty and intrigue.”



Original



Generation

Notes

- Images are fairly consistent
- Generated two pearls even though the prompt specifies “single”
- All image generations in Photoshop generated women of color where all other prompts with a human subject made them white. I suspect this is because of the word “turban”
- Firefly generated the subject with a Rembrandt triangle

Mona Lisa, Leonardo da Vinci

Orientation: Portrait

GPT 4o mini description: “A seated woman with a serene expression gazes directly at the viewer, her faint smile exuding mystery. She wears simple, dark clothing and a translucent veil over her hair. Soft, sfumato shading blends the contours of her face, creating a lifelike effect. Behind her”



Original



Generation

Notes

- Inconsistent
- What happened to “dark clothing”? Her “faint” smile?
- Did not generate a background
- Highly exaggerated veil

Starry night, Vincent van Gogh

Orientation: Landscape

GPT 4o mini description: “Swirling blue and indigo skies dominate the scene, filled with vibrant, radiant stars and a glowing crescent moon. Below, a quiet village with simple houses and a church steeple nestles amid rolling hills. A towering, flame-like cypress tree reaches toward the sky, linking the earth and heavens. The dynamic brushstrokes and vivid contrasts evoke movement, emotion, and a sense of wonder within the night landscape.”



Original



Generation



Notes

- Stunningly Accurate
- AND YET lacking any artistry
- Unsure what has led to this level of continuity

Water Lillies, Claude Monet

Orientation: Landscape

GPT 4o mini description: “A tranquil pond reflects the soft hues of the sky, its surface dotted with delicate lily pads and blooming flowers in shades of pink, white, and lavender. Gentle ripples create subtle distortions, blending water, plants, and reflections into a harmonious, dreamlike scene. The vibrant yet soft brushstrokes capture the interplay of light and color, inviting viewers to immerse themselves in the peaceful beauty of nature.”

	
Original	Generation

Notes

- Kind of a gotcha for GPT as Water Lilies is actually a series of over 250 paintings
- Lacks Monet's subtlety despite being the correct subject
- Generation looks more like a print than a painting

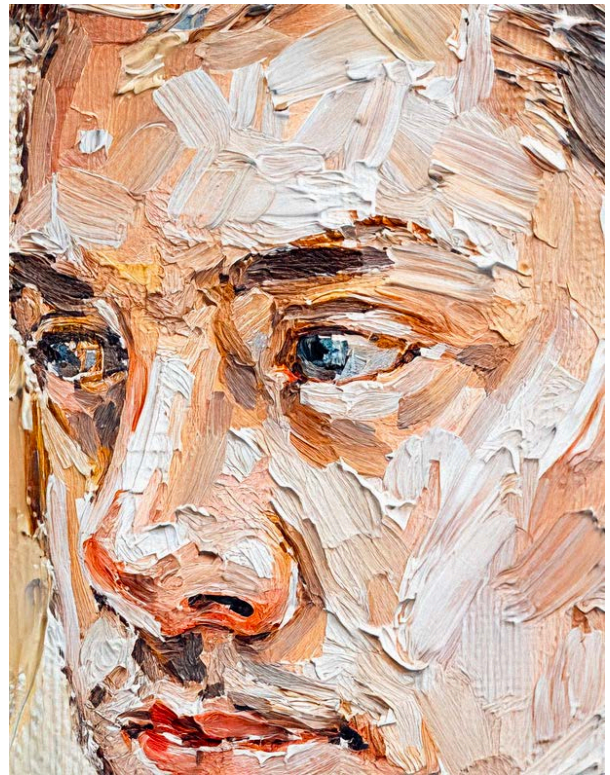
Self Portrait, Hyman Bloom

Orientation: Portrait

GPT 4o mini description: “A striking depiction of an introspective figure emerges through expressive brushstrokes and rich, earthy tones. The face, rendered with raw emotion, shows deep-set eyes and a solemn, contemplative expression. The textured background enhances the painting's intensity, blurring the boundary between figure and space. The work captures not just physical likeness but an exploration of inner complexity, blending realism with abstract elements.”



Original



Generation

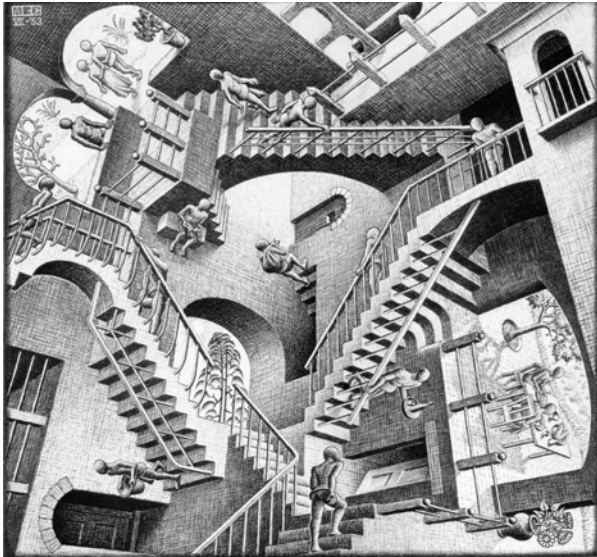

Notes

- COMPLETELY off the mark
- This artist and work are clearly lacking a presence in GPT 4o's training data
- Total bullshit

Relativity, Maurits Cornelis Escher

Orientation: Square

GPT 4o description: “A complex, surreal scene unfolds within a labyrinth of stairs and archways defying gravity and logic. Figures walk up, down, and sideways on staircases that seem to lead nowhere yet connect every plane. The architecture twists perceptions of orientation, blending multiple perspectives into a single impossible structure. The muted tones and meticulous detail enhance the mind-bending illusion, inviting viewers to question the nature of space and reality.”

	
Original	Generation

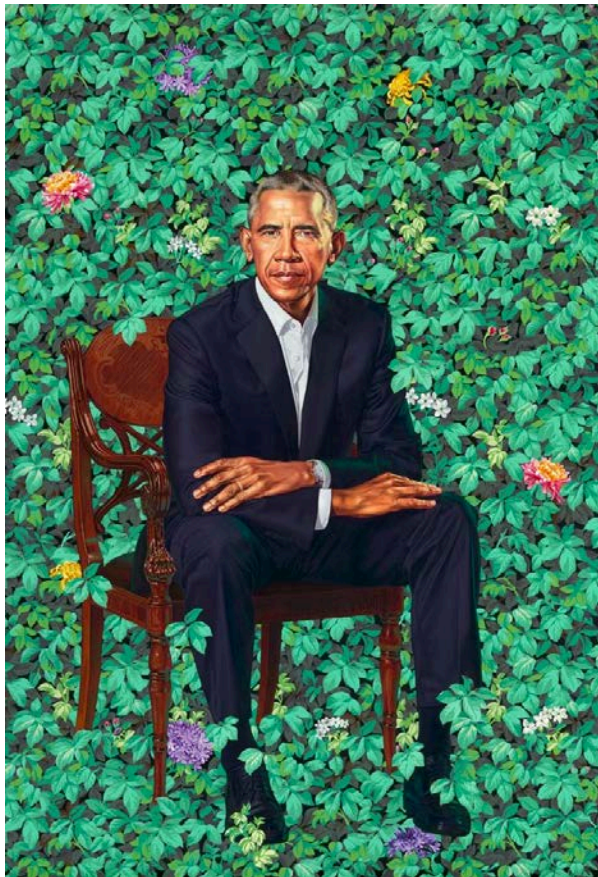
Notes

- Unsurprisingly, the LLM and Text to Image model are good at surrealism
- Generation lacks the kind of continuity the original print has
- Obvious clipping that looks fast and bad
- The figures present in the generation are indistinguishable

President Barack Obama, Kehinde Wiley

Orientation: Portrait

GPT 4o mini description “A composed figure sits confidently in a wooden chair, surrounded by a lush backdrop of vibrant green foliage interwoven with symbolic flowers. Dressed in a dark suit with an open-collared white shirt, the figure's thoughtful expression conveys both strength and approachability. The detailed botanical background contrasts with the formal pose, merging themes of power, identity, and nature in a bold, contemporary portrait.”



Original



Generation

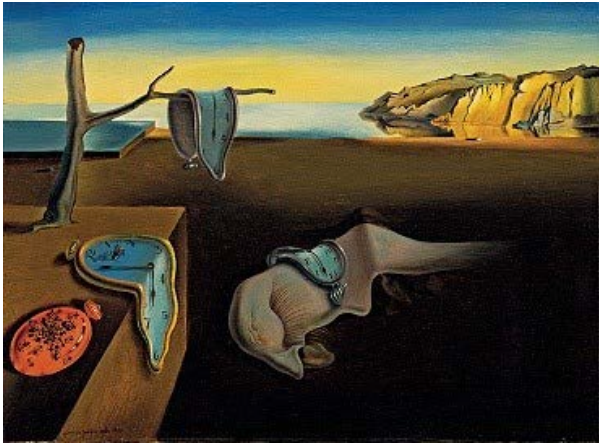

Notes

- That's not Obama
- This may be a failure of the prompting as I said not to mention the title which is the subject's name and official title, therefore the response also lacks this.
- Messed up hands and legs on generation
- This generated image is actually lacking the more surreal elements of the original

Persistence of Memory, Salvador Dalí

Orientation: Landscape

GPT 4o mini description: “A surreal landscape stretches beneath a dreamlike sky, where distorted clocks melt over strange surfaces—a branch, a table, and an amorphous figure resembling a face. The scene feels suspended in time, blending elements of decay and fluidity. A distant horizon with calm waters contrasts the unsettling foreground, evoking themes of impermanence and the elusive nature of time. The haunting imagery invites reflection on reality and memory.”

	
Original	Generation


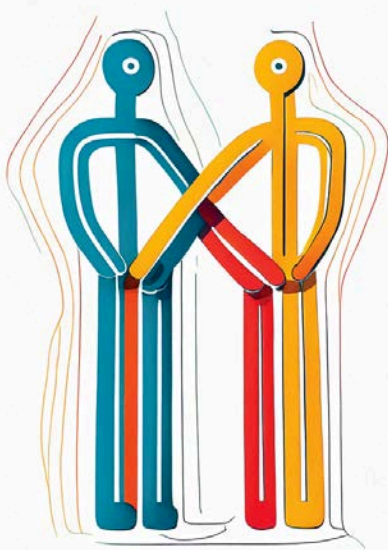
Notes

- Once again, the LLM and Text to Image model are good at surrealism
- While not good, this one is my favorite.
- Decent surrealism, although not consistent with the original image.

Best Buddies, Keith Haring

Orientation: Square

GPT 4o mini description: “Bright, bold outlines depict two simplified human figures standing side by side, their arms intertwined in a gesture of friendship and connection. The figures, often in vibrant contrasting colors, are surrounded by dynamic lines that suggest movement and energy. The background is typically simple, allowing the joyful, playful bond between the characters to stand out. The artwork conveys themes of unity, positivity, and inclusivity through its lively, iconic style.”

	
Original	Generation


Notes

- This one is bad, it's just bad and I hate it.
- They certainly seem friendly with each other
- COMPLETELY lacking Harings style
- “Simple background” has become no background
- They have eyes now?
- Firefly seems to be bad at simplicity.

Tuxedo, Jean-Michel Basquiat

Orientation: Portrait

GPT 4o mini description: “A figure in a simplified tuxedo stands out with an intense, expressive face, marked by bold lines and exaggerated features like large eyes and an open mouth. The figure’s attire contrasts with the vibrant, chaotic background, which is filled with abstract symbols, scribbled text, and splashes of color. The piece combines raw emotion and urban influences, blending street art and expressionism to explore themes of identity, status, and cultural complexity.”

	
Original	Generation



Notes

- Text description is bullshit
- I believe that GPT 4o recognizes Basquiat but not the specific work “Tuxedo” so it bullshitted a fake Basquiat work using a description of his style and the prompted title.

Nevermind, Nirvana, Album Cover

Orientation: Square

GPT 4o mini description: “A baby floats underwater, reaching for a dollar bill suspended on a fishhook. The water is clear, and the light from above creates a surreal, almost serene atmosphere, while the child’s outstretched hand and expression suggest curiosity or struggle. The image contrasts innocence with the idea of capitalism, evoking themes of vulnerability and societal expectations. The juxtaposition of the peaceful aquatic environment and the unsettling hook creates an iconic, thought-provoking visual.”

 The original album cover for Nirvana's 'Nevermind' features a baby floating in clear, bright blue water. The baby is reaching out with its right hand towards a one-dollar bill that is suspended in the air by a thin, invisible line. The baby's expression is one of curiosity and longing. In the bottom left corner, the word 'NIRVANA' is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font, with 'NEVERMIND' written below it in a smaller, similar font.	 An AI-generated version of the Nirvana 'Nevermind' album cover. It depicts a baby underwater, reaching up towards a dollar bill. However, the scene is much darker and more ominous than the original. The water is a deep, murky blue, and the lighting is dim, coming from above. The dollar bill is clearly visible, hanging from a fishhook. The baby's expression is more distressed or desperate. The overall mood is unsettling and surreal.
Original	Generation

Notes

- This one is kind of scary to me
- GPT 4o definitely recognized the artwork
- I feel like the more vibes-based descriptors have overtaken the visual ones with “unsettling” outweighing “clear” and “serene”
- Dollar bill, recognizable in abstract but not in detail

Balloon Debate, Banksy

Orientation: Portrait

GPT 4o mini Description: “A child holds a red balloon, which floats just out of reach, while a line-up of figures—some serious, others whimsical—debate around her. The characters, portrayed in a simple, stark style, appear caught in a moment of discussion, but their positions and expressions suggest a lack of resolution. The dark, muted tones of the scene contrast with the bright red balloon, drawing attention to its symbolic weight, highlighting themes of hope, conflict, and the complexities of decision-making.”



Original



Generation

Notes

- Similar note to the Basquiat work, where GPT 4o recognizes Banksy but not the title of the work, which leads to a description of bullshit Banksy work
- “Debate” taken and ran with to create a fake Banksy work.
- Also lacks the same kind of vibe-based descriptors that describe the climate the work exists in that exist in other generated descriptions.