

# What is this zine?

The **CyberPoetic Zine** is a project by Alessia Vadacca, the editor and interviewer of this issue!

At its core the zine explores the intersection of poetry and technology. Each issue will feature interviews with artists, poets, educators, designers, hackers, and others working within poetry and literature, people who are actively challenging the boundaries of poetic form and experimenting with how literature is evolving because of technological influence.

**Re\_authorship** is the debut issue, a provocative publication, born from Alessia's master's thesis research, called **"In between Human and Machine, Poetry in the age of AI"** ([thesis.html](#))

This issue delves into how artificial intelligence is reshaping poetic creation, focusing on how authorship as a concept is being challenged and shaped. This zine it's part confession, part experimental reflection.

## Who am I?

My name's **Alessia**. My background is in traditional printmaking and etching techniques. I've studied fine arts all my life, but I did step out of my comfort zone to explore publishing in a broader, more experimental context.

I've always been fascinated by the intersection of technology, literature, and poetry, surely where they merge with mixed media. I'm a poetry lover and I enjoy writing poems myself, but what intrigues me even more is how poetry is published, and how technology and the industry are reshaping the public's relationship to poetry as an art form. That's why I started an intership at Poetry International, where I deal with the programming aspect of the organisation, including the one of the main poetry festival of the Netherlands.

My interest in the relationship between AI and poetry started from my deep belief in poetry as a cathartic and therapeutic experience. We live in a world where AI still levitates somewhere between a short lived trend and a dystopian threat for humanity. In a time when speculation moves incredibly fast, I started searching for some firsthand perspectives from people directly involved in AI generated poetry. I wanted to understand why they bring AI into their creative processes, and what that says about the future of artistic authorship.

In the future, I hope to work closely with poetry.

This zine is a personal and professional stepping stone, and a way to close the chapter of my two year master's experience, while also opening up to new understandings of what poetry might become.

The voice of **Audre Lorde** always echoes in my mind when I think of poetry as "a vital necessity of our existence". I have always seen poetry as an otherworldly force, uprooting you from the ground, able to say everything with nothing and nothing with everything, scratching the bottom of your head. In my mind, poetry cannot be anything but human, thought and told by human beings for human beings. Its value, intrinsically connected to humanity.

was an American  
writer, professor,  
philosopher,  
intersectional  
feminist, poet  
and civil rights  
activist.

As I worked on my thesis, exploring how poetry can be understood in combination with technology, I had my doubts. Doubts I slowly started to unpack, thanks to conversations with poets, artists, friends. As my research progressed, the core question changed. Rather than focusing on how people were engaging with generative tools, I began asking why. Why involve AI in poetry at all? Why does the question of authorship seem so present in this exploration?

Who owns the words we write?

Can a machine coauthor a poem?

What does it mean to reclaim your voice in the presence of automation?

These questions didn't start at the beginning, they emerged unexpectedly, especially after my first interview with Dan Power, editor of the **AI Literary Review** (<https://ailiteraryreview.co.uk/>), one of the projects I explored in my thesis. Through our conversation, and later with **Gabriela Milkova Robins** (<https://gabrielamichelemilkova.com/>) and **Alex Mazey** (<https://alexmazey.substack.com/about>).

For this zine I chose to speak with them because they are all connected to the AI Literary Review, one of the main projects I explored in my thesis, and because it was clear to me that each of them brings a distinct approach to poetry and technology. Their shared connection, combined with their differing practices connected to poetry, made them the ideal contributors for this first issue of the Re\_authorship zine.

After talking with them I am not seeing AI as a tool anymore. or just as a tool, but as a provocation. A mirror. A symptom. In this issue, I look at my fascination with poetry, AI, and the evolving notion of creative ownership. This isn't a thesis chapter. It's more like a confession. A reflection. A documentation of curiosity.

At the end of my research, after a year of battling a thousand questions, many still unanswered, I've come back to one core belief: it is essential to protect the human, visceral side of poetry, just as we must for all other forms of art.

# Would you like to present yourself a little bit?

## Dan Power

*Yeah, so I'm studying Creative Writing at Lancaster University here in the UK. My project explores whether AI language models could be seen as a kind of modern muse, something that inspires poetry or helps get the ball rolling.*

*I'm looking at how humans might use AI to spark their own creative work, rather than replace the creative effort they'd normally put in. Most of what I'm doing involves working with chatgpt as a kind of draft generator. I'll prompt it with something, and it gives me a starting draft.*

*Then I go through and rework that draft, until the authorship feels like it's been fully transferred from chatgpt to me. I'm basically replacing the draft, word by word, until the final poem is something entirely new. It might still resemble the original in shape or theme, but the voice and language are mine. So, a lot of what I am doing is about reclaiming authorship and whether or not you can attribute authorship to chatgpt, does it belong to the program, does it belong to other people whose words have been trained. Does it belong to no one? It is a tricky one.*

## Gabriela Milkova Robins

*I'm Gabriela, I'm a poet from Macedonia and a PhD researcher in the School of English at the University of St Andrews, Scotland. My creative work spans both English and Macedonian, and it has been featured in a variety of publications, including Bad Saturn Media, Seedlings, The AI Literary Review, The Ekphrastic Review, DIVERSITY, and three Macedonian anthologies.*

*In 2020, I released Do You Know the Sea?, a series of five audial poems that debuted on UK Radio. I was the StAnza Poet-in-Residence in 2023.*

*I've also had the chance to engage with poetry in more visual forms, including being a featured artist in the off-page 24 visual poetry exhibition at Many Studios in Glasgow, and in the off-page StAnza 2025 Kallax exhibition.*

*I've contributed to arts communities by being part of the committee of The Directorate of Arts and Culture in Skopje, and on the planning committee of StAnza—Scotland's International Poetry Festival.*

## Alex Mazey

*My name is Alex Mazey. I won the Judge's Prize in the Magma Poetry Competition in 2025, a Creative Future Writers' Award in 2019, and the*

Roy Fisher Prize from Keele University in 2018.  
A contributing researcher on sociology and postmodern theory for the international academic journal *Baudrillard Now*, I'm also the author of *Sad Boy Aesthetics* (2021) and *Living in Disneyland* (2020). My debut poetry collection, *Ghost Lives: Cursed Edition*, was published in 2024 by the award-winning *Bad Betty Press*. I'm currently working on an essay exploring hyperreality as a mode of synthetic transcendence for *Baudrillard Now*, a novel, a collection of visual poetry in the vein of what I've published at the *AI Literary Review*, and a sequel to *Ghost Lives: Cursed Edition*.

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*I chose to talk with Dan because I find his project extremely interesting. His **AI literary review** is an intriguing space. Using AI in the title is already quite provoking.*

*The fact that it is called "AI review" does sort of let people assume that it is a project solely on AI generated poetry, and not with human effort put in it. So maybe not the best name!*

*And that's true. The AI literary review is a non profit journal, founded by Dan during 2024, to document and support the development of poetry in a post-GenAI (Generative AI) world.*

*One of the most interesting part for me of the description of the journal, is to be found at its end ☿↗*

*This journal believes that through direct engagement and experimentation with the AI and its outputs we can revive its zombified text, rewilding our language, and steering it away from total automation*

*It's somewhat ironic that a space like the AI literary review emerges, in a world where automation is already widespread, and doesn't seem to slow down at all. A curatorial space for those poets and artists who are intrigued by new technological sparkling tools, and would like to engage with them in a different way. I find myself wondering where AI should be positioned, if it will become one of those pivotal turning points in our history, on the same level as the printing press.*

Do you think  
the ★  
meaning of  
poetry will  
shift in the  
future  
because of  
AI?

*I am not even sure what poetry means, it is such a vague and  
open ended concept.*

*I think it will definitely change the way people engage with it. I  
don't think this is something to be worried about, because  
everything is always changing.*

*I think there will be a lot more of it, like there will be a lot more  
of everything. There is a lot of content.*

*\* ° ÷ ୨୯*

*Poetry might be shortened, because of people's attention span,  
they will become a lot more personal, and this has not been  
going on just with poetry,*

*but with every aspect of popular culture. Things that are  
authentic and real are very valuable, and much more now than  
before, while celebrities are turning to a more natural way of  
letting themselves out to the public for example.*

*Humans are still valuable, surely it will come through in poetry  
too.*

*Especially since what the other option looks like, something that  
is not human emulates poetry for them. Writers will put more  
and more of their humanity in their practice to sort of underlying  
the fact that they have written it themselves.*

While I was talking with Dan about his own vision of AI and poetry, I found myself wondering what we were really talking about.

Every time I ask people about AI and poetry, what I get back is a conversation about anything but that. That's because AI isn't just a tool. It's not like using a pen or pencil.

And I keep coming back to that question: How much is AI like the printing press, historically?

Is it a shift of that scale? Or something else entirely?

To me this specific involvement of AI in creative processes, in poetry, is not just a trend, but a symptom (or maybe trends are symptoms?).

# What do you really want to give out to the public with your poetry and literature?

*Maybe this is an ego thing, but I believe that every poem I write and share should feel like something I came up with. If people like it, I want them to like me by association, because it came from my own mind. If you get a computer to create a poem from beginning to end it's less fun to share with other people.*

*Writing is inherently a form of communication.*

*When you write something like a poem, it's often because you can't express what you want to say in any other way. That makes it personal. It comes from ideas turning over in your mind.*

At the beginning of my research about poetry and AI, I got fascinated by the amount of people misusing the tools to create. In the case of chatgpt, it was never built to generate poetry, but people started using it as they pleased, in the most human creative way.

Do you see any pattern in  
the tool usage of the people  
submitting their work to the  
ai literary review? \* Do  
you see an  
evolution on how  
the tools are  
intended to be  
used, or the



creative aspect of  
it? \* How did you  
see this kind of  
poetry expression  
evolve over time?

*Everyone's work seems to be really different, which is really reassuring, because if you ask the same thing to both gemini or chatgpt, they will get kinda the same response.*

*I didn't see any remarkable trend going on, from when it started a year ago to now. I know that in the meantime all these AI accessible tools, like chatgpt and others, have been improved, but people have always worked a lot on the output coming from the tools, so it always feels human. Although, recently people have been starting working with many different tools, not just chatgpt, but branching out and more often play with different tools, not just language tools, some people are using speech to text or auto generated subtitles. People are getting more adventurous with it, maybe using just chatgpt is getting a little boring. More unusual*

*tools could generate some more unusual results.  
People are getting more playful.*

And I am still fascinated about it, as I will ever be fascinated by any human using a stick to move a mountain, or challenging the status quo, or misusing the tools to make fun directly of the provider of that tool.

✦ What about  
your own practice?

How did you see  
your practice  
change with the  
evolution of ai  
tools, from the  
beginning of your  
research?+°

*I think the main difference between now and when I started, is that I write things much quicker, because I am used to using the drafts I get. If the draft is not working I don't try to work on it anyway, if it doesn't feel right I don't push myself to edit it.*

I found the choice by Dan quite strong. I don't agree with his personal usage of chatgpt, I think the approach of using these tools should be taken really carefully and critically. Not used at all would be the perfect choice. Maybe, reframing the relationship that we have as artists with this tools, if we look at them as we would look at a pencil, is the right answer. Maybe that's the solution, that might disempower the usage of AI. People will naturally search for it, with curiosity and then stop using it after they served them creatively. Without losing themselves, becoming slaves, breeding data cows.

What are the \*̂ challenges that you are facing right now with the AI literary review and Trickhousepress, as a curator?

*I found a couple of people online that commented on the AI literary review negatively, saying "look at where the world is going", and getting it kinda personally, being very upset about it. And I understand it,*

*although I have never had this for trickhouse press, which is also breaking the rules. I think the anger some people have doesn't come from not liking ai, rather than not liking what we are doing with it.*

*People are skeptical of it, they are right to be skeptical, because AI is going to change a lot of things. Some things are going to be worse, I get why some people don't like it.*

I do see the value in spaces like the AI Literary Review. I think these spaces can offer something important: more room for poets, artists, even just curious people, to come into contact with this technology. It's an invitation to experimentation, and to open up conversations.

These spaces encourage people to investigate the tools more deeply, to look at what's happening behind the curtain, to ask what artificial intelligence really means. Or at least, this is what I observed with the poets I talked with that published through the AI literary review.

Many of them seems not to use AI for convenience, they are using it as a mirror, a question, a disruption. Their work point to the question: where do we position ourselves, as poets and artists, when the concept of authorship begins to shift because of this black box technology called AI?

While writing my thesis, I tried to understand how come no one was talking about algorithmical poetry or, in a much more general sense, electronic literature.

I worked on a small zine ([elit.html](#)) , a little archive of historical and less historical projects, that involve literature and poetry on so many different levels.

Artificial intelligence isn't new. We've seen it in different forms for decades. People were engaging with algorithms in poetic ways long before OpenAI existed, long before the personal computer became mainstream.

Yet, no one is talking about electronic literature.

Electronic literature seems to exist as a niche within a niche. To me, it feels somewhat hidden. When I proposed, as an idea for next year's poetry festival here in Rotterdam, during a brainstorming meeting at Poetry International, to involve artists and poets who engage with electronic literature, people looked at me a bit puzzled. I think many are aware

that electronic poetry exists, but not really as poetry, more as artistic experiments. Perhaps the reality is that electronic literature has carved out a small space between literature and technology but never expected any recognition. Sometimes, the artists themselves don't even consider themselves artists or poets.

Even if E-lit engaged and is still engaging with AI models, markov chains, automatisations, machine learning, to generate poetry in a much more critical way, because artists themselves engage in working with the wires of technology, building their own tools, it seems still marginal to the literature discourse.

At the same time, I don't think electronic literature has ever demanded a place into the traditional poetry publishing structure. Electronic literature built its own liminal space, between technology and literature, exactly to disrupt, but still to open up new perspectives on both worlds. Now, with tools like chatgpt becoming common, these boundaries are being tested again. What I am wondering is where a possible new type of poetry, like the one that sees AI as a collaborative tool for the poets, positions itself.

What's then the difference, on a conceptual level, between the electronic poetry, made by artists/poets/authors, and the AI poetry that is included in the AI literary review project?

When it comes to electronic literature projects, some involve authors custom-building their own AI/ML models. Their creators aim to make a full artistic statement. In contrast, AI poetry projects, like those featured in the AI literary review, focus on the poetic text and the dynamic tension that arises when a human collaborates with a chatbot.

So the electronic literature approach emphasises on the whole process, starting from the conceptual design and internal development of the piece. While, AI poetry tends to focus on the input and output, often leaving the middle stages of the process less visible or understood. The magic of AI poetry often lies in the mystery behind the scenes, unknown to those who are not deeply involved with the tools already.

Electronic literature seeks to unravel these mysteries, while AI poetry raises questions about the tools themselves, as well as our human knowledge and philosophy.

Do you imagine that  
at some point this  
kind of  
experimentation will  
slip into what we  
call traditional  
publishing\*, or catch  
the attention of  
mainstream  
publishing houses  
and artistic spaces?

*If that was going to happen we would kind of change people's expectations, cause at the moment ai is new, people are using it lazily to kind of write very bad poems.*

*I think a lot of publishers sort of put a blanket on it, on AI, they say no to it.*

*Probably because they have been inundated with terrible AI generated poems. What I wanted to do with the AI Literary review was document people's experiments. Partly, what I wanted to do was sort of change people's perception that AI generated poems are always bad, because if you use the tool kinda skilfully and thoughtfully you can do interesting things with it.*

Still, it's not possible to close your eyes, forget about the massive implications of these tools on everybody's life. It is reactionary, yes, to use the tool to talk about the tool itself, but, as said, doing it skillfully. The data that tools like chatgpt are using is stolen, but remixed so hard it's impossible to get back to the original source.

**When you then use those tools are you participating in that same theft? What if you are part of that data soup that gets back rewarmed in your plate, are you stealing from yourself?**

**\*∴ Have you ever  
thought about  
building your own  
model?**

*That's a bit beyond me, coding is a bit mysterious to me. But there are many people doing it, and really complicating the question about **authorship**.*

*If you build a model and the model is writing poems that are very unique.*

*You could argue that the model is a work of literature, code, there is a rhythmic aspect to it, in that case the person writing the code is the author of the program, but then what is the model doing? Is the model assembling from the data it got available. So it is kinda like an author within an author.*

*I think one of the real problems with authorship is the fact that no one came up with words, or sentence structures, like everything you say is borrowed, not referenced, you cannot speak without plagiarism.*

*On a small sentence by sentence or word by word level, everyone is plagiarism all the time, but we wouldn't say that , because that would be very unreasonable. But at some point if you do enough sentences and you haven't attributed them to someone, then plagiarism comes.*

*There is no clear playermark in which pont plagiarism happens.*

*My belief, that people might not agree with, is that you can't plagiarise language. It is a communal thing. It is a team effort. No one should claim to be the author of anything, all ideas and words are borrowed. No one owns any experience, what we are doing is just making our own arrangements. Kinda like when you are on the beach, and you see some shells and pebbles, you pick them up and put them in a circle, you are the one that has done that, but you are not the one that originally came up with the idea of making circles of shells.*

*You are making a contribution to the overall structure of the beach, or you are making a contribution to the overall knowledge of the human race.*

*To claim that you are an author it's individualistic and maybe a product of*



*capitalism, and might in a way do more harm  
than good.*

*But obviously people like to be compensated  
for their work, they need to be able to say "this  
piece of writing is mine".*

*Maybe authorship more than anything else, a  
practicality. It is something we do to keep  
society running, but it is not something that  
really exists.*

I am not sure for me it is just about compensation.  
I want to be seen, this is mine, I feel this is a much rooted  
behaviour at the core of our human spirit, it is not necessary  
something that comes just from capitalism (or is it?).

I want the prize, I want the glory, the acknowledgement I am  
creative, I want a "bravo". Is it just egoism and self centrisms  
talking? The individualistic brain?

At the same time I wonder if losing the boundaries of  
authorship, and the copyright laws that bloomed around it,  
might mean a shift of power, a shift of power that might be  
unfortunate for authors themselves. I mean, that is already  
happening.

If language is a communal thing, and no one owns anything,  
then openAI is right in doing what they are doing. Obviously  
that is not the case, what I fear is forgetting about the fact  
that losing authorship doesn't mean losing responsibility. I  
am sure on a creative level, and activism level,  
experimenting with authorship can be useful, to bring light  
to some major issues around us, but if the solution is letting  
then corporation use your data, that you don't feel it's  
important to own, because language is not owned by  
anybody, then it is a free pass for those corporation to exploit  
it, while you might lose the already small platform left for  
creativity.

If they then use your work, building a tool, that is then  
normalised, that becomes just creepy, just knowing they will  
ask you money for a tool that was built on the rubble of your  
work, asking you to produce more to alimentate their tools,  
to make more money

Where are, then, the boundaries?

Some artists may find copyright infringements acceptable,  
using tools like chatgpt, because they feel that change is  
coming in a way or another. Artists often rely on copyright as  
their primary protection, even when the system frequently

fails them anyway. The art and creative industries are increasingly being defunded and privatised, leaving artists struggling. As a writer and poet, do you think in the future copyright will still matter if the concept of ownership itself shifts? Could it be because of a societal desire to escape hyperindividualism and by a growing awareness of how corporations exploit data?

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It seems to me people want to dissolve, to give out agency.  
**Are we too tired?**

But we live in a society where individual identity is everything. Are we searching for a steady companion? A steady companion that won't reclaim his authorship, that will let us shine clapping for us? Is that loneliness?

*I think if you bring the computer into the  
process you risk diluting the sense of  
humanness in your poems, you risk putting  
your intentions and feelings on the side and  
replacing them with something else. So when I  
use an AI tool in writing, I try to find a balance.*

*I want the tool to help generate useful material  
without sacrificing the personal concerns and  
ideas I care about, the ones I want to express  
in a poem.*

*That's also what I look for when reading  
submissions for the literary review. I want to  
read work that feels like it truly comes from  
the person who submitted it, something that  
doesn't feel impersonal or overly computerised.*

Aren't we all, constantly, trying not to be diluted?  
Trying not to watch our humanness disappear, shredded into  
a million pixels?

The boundaries between us and technology have never been  
fixed, now we are foreseen what the future could look like.

As AI is built on our stolen data, is working with AI then as  
working with our own reflection on the mirror? If we are  
working with ourself, then, why people don't say out loud  
they are using AI to write their own papers, texts, mails, art  
pieces, messages to their loved ones?

These tools  
have started to  
be used  
massively, many  
° ☆ writers  
probably use  
them without  
saying it, or  
anyway they are  
not open about  
the matter(?)

*Yeah, sure, people will judge you for it. You don't want to be seen as cheating, or being dishonest. Many ai tools are writing tools, so I guess people are giving it a go, they are curious. But still people feel they need to hide it, which is a shame. If you are very honest about it, that should be ok. I feel in years time it will be*

*the norm, so people won't be judged.  
In that case the ai literary review won't be considered something  
different from the norm. It would have served its purpose,  
becoming no different from any other literary magazine.  
It would be niche if it didn't feel like it needed its own niche,  
separate section of poetry.*

*The risk of drawing a line, and saying "this is ai poetry" would  
make it harder for it to sort of be side by side with traditional  
poetry. But I also think that if there wasn't this space carved it  
would either not be published at all, or it would get published  
under the guise of being completely human made, and people  
would pretend there was no ai involvement in it.*

*I guess putting a label on it, putting it out in the open is doing  
something to normalise it.*

AI is a concept in evolution.

Artificial intelligence is often used as a catch-all term. What AI actually refers to is a broad spectrum of systems with many different capabilities. Most of what we call AI today falls under the narrow AI (ANI) or weak AI bubble. These systems are excellent in specific tasks, such as language processing or image recognition. While they might appear to *understand*, they still lack true reasoning or self awareness. They do it because we ourselves don't know what reasoning and self awareness means. Neither intelligence.

The media often likes to play instead with the idea of artificial general intelligence (AGI), the sentient machine of science fiction, the AI that matches and surpasses human intelligence. AGI remains purely theoretical.

*The AI trend is slowing down, is not novel  
anymore. The uncanny that was perceived at  
the beginning of the trend, is not interesting  
anymore from the writer and reader, because it  
has been seen already.*

As said, artificial intelligence is not a novel concept. Algorithmical poetry that uses computational processes to generate poetry from built databases is not novel either.

What's new is having general access to a massive artificial intelligence scraper chatbot machine, still based on corporations' extractive cloud business models. What is new

is looking at the chatbot as a person, saying hello and thank you to the bot.

That's fragile, and beautiful in its own human way, then you remember that saying thanks to the bot won't save you. A massive AI chatbot that sounds like a sweet lovely muse, and your perfect fan.

Warhol would have loved this.

**Do you perceive  
chatbots powered by  
AI as the new  
muses? Did your  
mind change with time  
while you were  
studying this matter  
for your PhD? Do you  
regret your stance?**

I'm not so convinced that AI could be a muse these days. I think it could go to the way that makes it act as a muse, so what I am doing is just ask the AI to draft a poem, I give it a couple of fine tuning prompt, like "don't use fake words", "don't try to explain what is happening in the poem", that sort of things. It's less like a provider of inspiration, it gives you material

that then you can “muse” with. So it gives  
you sort of, I guess, inspiration, stuff you  
can work with.

What I find interesting is the process that brought a human to ask to the machine through prompt to get material, but then in the muse system, so the desire from the human to get inspiration, but just enough, not too much, you get the opposite process: the machine is giving prompt to the creative human mind that the mind work with, elaborate, as we are the machine, in this game of who is the real machine at the end?

*It does the drafting, which years ago I was  
feeling was really convenient. It means I can  
write poems quickly and I don't need to wait  
for inspiration, because I can get the  
inspirational demand, and these days I feel  
more like actually that that takes out the fun a  
little bit.*

As a society we see leisure and labour as two different things, yet we cannot stand to lose time in favour of our own pleasure, if it doesn't serve to produce. Still, we constantly try to find ways to merge the two, finding methods to be productive while resting, having fun, or even sleeping.

When poetry, which in contemporary society is often viewed as a pleasure act of self expression and creativity, is combined with AI, it feels to me like this approach turns creativity into just another form of production.

There are countless YouTube videos promising to help you overcome creative blocks, but the anxiety they generate reveals something important: when creativity is stripped of spontaneity and reduced to a task or obligation, it becomes labour rather than art. Is that what a possible automatisations of poetry, in a dystopian future, might look like?

*And also I find the drafts that the AI gives me  
quite similar, and I end up writing down very  
similar poems. So, now, I am surprising myself  
less.*

*It's a mixed blessing, it's definitely reliable in  
its speed, no matter what you say to it, and you  
work with the draft and do something good.  
But it is less organic and it doesn't feel as  
good.*

*And if it doesn't feel as good then it is not as  
fun to write with, and it is not going to have  
much magic, as opposed to a normal poem.*

*Also as a muse, if our scope is to get material  
to work with, we can work with anything in the  
same way.*

*Like, things you see, walking downtown, the  
whole world is kind of a muse. In that sense, so  
to that end, what is AI bringing to the table  
that the rest of the world isn't?*

I fear the answer is its placebo effect, as a sweet sedative. .★

*I think it is definitely bringing something, but in terms of it being  
a muse, it's probably not [AI] main advantage that it has to  
writers.*

What is the advantage then?

Maybe the advantage is finding ourselves wondering about  
why we are using AI in the first place.

In the most hypocritical stance, I was heavily using AI while  
starting my master, XPUB. How do you think you would ever  
grasp on any computational concept from a completely  
different background? I didn't even know how to switch on a  
computer.

That's no excuse, isn't it?

I had already erased from my system, on a deep intimate  
level, the possibility of asking others for help. Because of a  
broader education system where I was flourishing, seeking  
support became a taboo, because of my upbringing.

When my master's tutors asked if anybody had any question  
I always kept silent, as I refused to acknowledge they were  
sincere, that I was in need and that probably, everything was  
too challenging, that maybe that path I chose wasn't for me.

It was for debugging before, then explaining computational concepts, then summaries, then for psychological support. After a while I had millions of conversations open with chatgpt. I didn't even read the answers anymore. Half of the world water surface has probably evaporated because of me.

You tell yourself they're saved, archived. You could always come back to them later. But of course, you never do. It's like piling up websites' bookmarks, or saving images on pinterest, or creating curated Instagram albums. That's compulsive archiving. That's just trying to have control over the flood of information your brain cannot fathom.

Is there anybody already studying virtual hoarding?

So I turned to my sweet chatbot friend. I fed him drafts, and then its own draft. When I started my internship at Poetry International, and I had to write mails constantly, the situation didn't change.

At some point my internship supervisor told me I could safely be much more informal in my email exchanges, less stiff. Then, I realised the situation. Obviously chatgpt simulates your own voice, it is just a mirror. It was spitting my own rigidity back at me. I stopped using it to write mails.

After that, my workload increased like crazy. I realised how much writing an email with chatgpt was resulting in me wasting much more time than I assumed. When I started sending emails in bursts without even the chance to have the time to feel insecure, then I saw how much I didn't need to use it. It didn't help me at all.

The use of AI chatbots such as chatgpt is empowered by insecurities, a lack of individual and structural support, and a society that drives us to exhaustion. When companies capitalise on natural vulnerabilities of the human experience, what began as a tool easily turns into an addiction. It's just that easy, we see that.

With Gabriela I was talking exactly about this.

*I don't know if you read... Joseph Fasano the poet, I really like one of his poems "For a Student Who Used AI to Write a Paper" (<https://poets.org/poem/student-who-used-ai-write-paper>), I like his phrasing, "what you are so afraid of, the miraculous task of it?",  
"What are you trying to avoid?"*



Right now I am looking at my hand, mid air. It's trembling because of all the caffeine I ingested today. I am still battling myself. I'm still working on the balance between passion and obsession, between working and resting. Accepting the process, the wait, the patience.

✚ + Sometimes AI is called  
a collective voice. If we  
understand AI as a form of  
collective authorship (that is  
owned by no one and  
everyone, even if it is still  
based on extractive cloud  
business models from  
corporations), what does that  
mean to the poems it  
generates? And poets and  
writers as individual ✚ . + .  
creatives?

*It's really difficult to speculate about what the future will look like. I feel there will be a natural lag. So, people that have done it a certain way will probably continue to do it a certain way. But thinking about the younger generation... I am not sure about how many of them will like to write themselves. When I think about the amount of things that I, in my lifetime, have*

*automated. So many things. The idea of writing manuscripts to me sounds impossible, memorising entire epic poems to orally narrate... all these kinds of things that were manual... I don't know what will become antiquated in the future. Maybe someone will feel it was crazy to read books, or think, from scratch...*

*Our generation already had a relationship with the past and with innovation, there could be some kind of retro turn back, a nostalgia, a niche, a trend.*

*I want to continue to write. The idea to automate my own poetry, choosing to have AI for the rest of my life writing for me, seems really dissatisfying. The reason that most people write poetry is not for monetary gain or fame. Poetry is the least lucrative art form of all.*

If I use chatgpt when I am exhausted maybe the point is to understand just why I got to that point in the first place. Why did everybody get to that in the first place?

~+~9e~+~

**Gabriela Milkova Robins** is a Macedonian poet and SGSAH-funded PhD researcher in the School of English based in Scotland.

Her poem "Yield" is featured in the [fourth issue of the AI literary review](https://ailiteraryreview.co.uk/issue04) (<https://ailiteraryreview.co.uk/issue04>).

How did you find  
out about the AI  
literary review?

*I found it through Instagram. I saw Dan's post about the previous issue of the AI literary review. I was really intrigued, because I didn't actually understand what that meant. So I read the past issues, and what I liked about it is that specifically the goal of the AI literary review is human poets. It's specifically not about just AI-created work. Which, I think, it seems to me he had some problem with defining exactly what AI creative work, or aided work is. I saw he updated the criteria to apply to the issue.*

*It's about humans in conversations with these tools. It's interesting because, when I submitted my work I actually never even thought about doing this till I saw the project. So I wrote a poem specifically for them.*

This was my second interview, I wasn't trembling as a leaf anymore.

✦. + How important is it  
for you to experiment within  
your practice? How come  
you choose to work with  
chatgpt for your poem,  
"Field"? + °m, '-

*I love experimentation in my practice, it was a new way to involve experimental practices in my poetry. I love to work with any elements, from different sources, whether it be music or visual art, sound, concrete poetry, or visual poetry. [The AI*

*literary review] seems quite an interesting project, it brings together many different tools, so I was immediately intrigued. Reading the past issues to see how people had used AI to come up with their work and it seems to be really variable and innovative.*

*The way I did it was almost completely random in my mind. For some reason I really loved this image of the bath bomb dissolving in a bathtub. I showed it to chatgpt. It wrote a poem called "Effervescence" and it really wasn't very good.*

*I just thought, ok, this is not great, but I liked a few images, the colors, the dissolution, the bubbling, so I thought it would be better to combine it with one of my previous poems <name>. This was one of the poems I didn't really like myself, so I didn't do much with it. It was called <>. It was kind of a solitary, seasonal, playful poem. It was fun. So for some reason it evokes the images, colors, the melding of the colors. I asked chatgpt to combine the two poems. When it came up with the response, I preferred a lot more those associations that came from that, and then kept what I liked, edited some things, and came up with the published poem.*

*I found it really interesting, I enjoyed the process.*

**Who is the author  
of Field? ★.°  
Would you  
consider yourself  
the sole author, or**

could AI as well  
be considered a  
collaborator in its  
creative process?  
Do you own  
Yield as a poem?



*For this poem, I'd definitely say collaborator. I think there are variations in which you can use the AI, a spectrum, so people have a choice.*

*A lot of the phrasing in Yield came from chatgpt, and then a lot of phrasing is mine. So, I would say, it was 60% from me, 40% from AI, in terms of phrasing specifically. Then, I was the editor.*

Was it the first time you  
approached chatgpt °+•ε to  
create a poem?  
Did your  
approach to AI  
change after your  
involvement in the  
AI literary  
review? 63 •+°

*Yes, it was the instigator.  
I didn't even think of it as a possibility before.*

*I have not quite understood yet, especially AI is evolving so  
quickly that I haven't even thought that it was capable of writing  
any poetry before. I think two years ago it wasn't doing a great  
job. Now I realise that it has really evolved, and it can write  
some poetry, still some mediocre poems. Poetry seems the*

*hardest for AI to get, and the easiest for people to tell if a poem is AI generated. But I was surprised that it seemed to be learning from me, so the more poems I was showing, the more I preferred what it was coming up with as well.*

*It does learn on the spot and it can very quickly figure out who you are, what you like, and I find that interesting and terrifying.*

*Some poets have gone public entirely, because they refuse to allow Meta to use their poetry to train AI, which is effectively what I have done with chatgpt by myself, I was training it to write like me. It definitely made me consider how advanced it has become, how quickly it is learning.*

*I do believe it is going to basically be indistinguishable, and quickly, in the next few years, to be able to write incredible poetry. It's not making me reconsider my relationship with AI specifically, but what will it mean to be a human creating, and how can you prove that it is your work as well.*

AI is seeping through anything, its usage being advertised everywhere. I always believed that in a way art is something over our societal structures, Creativity comes from within. At the same time we are the living sons of pop culture, or hyper capitalism, what did we expect? Art has been a commodity from ages. It seems just the natural course of things, to extend this desire for automatisaton to everything, everything that lets us feel alive, because we are tired, exhausted.

*How many people are going to use AI to become a poet? Even in the AI literary review, if you ask people to not submit poetry generated just with AI, you're just going off the honesty and integrity of the people, but will never know for sure.*

# How do you think AI is reshaping

# the idea of authorship? ★ ° ∩

*That's the thing, as I said it's going to be very difficult to prove  
what is created by a human mind and what is from AI.  
Performance, maybe, we will need performers.*

*Performance in poetry might become more prominent rather  
than text, because people will connect with a specific performer.  
But, I think it's just going to be a case of trust. Trust in the  
individual.*

*I think we will always value what is human-made and made  
through effort. Some sort of effort has gone into it rather than  
just the clickable button.*

*We do value the time that is going through something. There will  
be a drive for human-made poetry, but as to how to decide on  
what we believe is human and what AI, is going to be very  
difficult. It is becoming an issue everywhere, including  
academia. Right now I am doing a PhD, I don't think AI is very  
far from also being able to write my PhD entirely.*

*Which then begs the question of what is the point? And whether  
the point of art, creating, writing, might just become for our  
personal benefit rather than our glory.*

*It might be for just our own satisfaction, because I do think  
humans do enjoy the work they might have put effort in making,  
they enjoy the satisfaction in what they have done. A lot of the  
satisfaction will come just from knowing "I wrote it, I did it, I  
enjoyed it." If authorship becomes more of a contentious idea we  
might have to turn more inward, and find the value in art and  
writing, and each of our personal endeavours.*

This tension between performativity and individuality feels like one of the central knots in this whole conversation. What Gabriela described, that AI gives us more time to be creative and to look inward, is something talked about by many people that are in favour of AI.

But that's not what's happening. Because our society isn't built like that. It's built on inequalities, on structural imbalances that don't just disappear when a new tool arrives.



The idea that everyone will suddenly have time to be creative is not just naïve, it's unsustainable. Our systems still depend on someone constantly doing invisible labour. And right now, that someone is us, the users. The so called "free time" we're being offered is often just more time spent producing data, refining prompts, correcting outputs, and feeding them back to the system.

Society needs slaves, and AI needs them too. We're being positioned as those slaves. It doesn't seem like AI is helping much with those inequalities, because AI is a mirror.

It has biases. Because it's built on the internet, and the internet was built over decades through the corporates' games, cultural hegemony, and systemic exclusion.

Saying that performativity will be the new beauty of poetry and literature feels fragile to me. Firstly, because performance is indeed already part of our lives.

Social media gives priority to performativity.

We are constantly being asked to be performative in every aspect of ourselves: our work, our appearance, our opinions, even our grief. This constant self display becomes a kind of performance we follow in order to stay visible, to stay relevant. We're not just writing or creating anymore, we're selling ourselves.

Knowing that it is now difficult to understand if the person you are seeing on screen is real, then digital performativity might not be the solution.

AI doesn't seem to have any problem at fabricating extremely realistic videos of performances anymore. It doesn't need humans to do so. It can imitate vulnerability, style, even poetic urgency. And if digital performativity is our only metric for value, AI can do that just as well, maybe better.

I still feel in real person performance will be important, as Gabriela said.

But this might mean we will find ourselves constantly fighting to keep our voices ours, to keep technology out of that space. And that could lead to an increasingly black and white division: human vs. machine, embodied vs artificial, authentic vs simulated. Where the real battle might be ourself vs our own societal system supported by corporations.

That's a troubling place to end up, where nuances disappear and every act of creation and art becomes a kind of resistance.

What if, as a poet and artist, I don't want my piece of art to be a piece of resistance? What is the true reason people write poetry?

# What is your reason to write poetry?

*I go out of satisfaction. It's therapeutic, it's creative, it's playful.  
As I heard from many other poets, the only reason you want to  
share it is because people will inevitably connect with you, they  
will get inspired, and want to write as well. Satisfaction too, to  
listen, the joy of beauty. Seeing someone else seeing the effort.*

*I do hope that people will keep having the drive to create.*

*There is always a discourse around connection around poetry.  
People like to write poetry not just for themselves, but for  
everybody. Isn't then a future where poetry will be just done for  
ourselves as individual creatives, a dystopian one? Aren't we social  
creatures?*

# Do you feel language is a communal human experience?

*Definitely. Of course we have all different ways of communicating in different ways that certain forms of language will communicate with us. It is one of the first things we learn, there's a lot of joy in it. I have a one-and-a-half-year-old at home who is just learning how to speak, and he is teaching me a lot in general about language and communication and how much joy it can bring, learning. To think that we all went through that, the joy of language, signs, making sense of the world around us. It is a very communal experience.*

*It is not chaotic, it has such an order and sense to it.*

Language is something that goes hand in hand with society, and culture.

AI is seeping already through language, that itself is not weird at all, language is not static. At the same time, Language being shaped by AI is not just about that, it is about how it will use our own biases to keep people at the margin. How would poets and artists reposition themselves because of this?

How could poets  
reposition  
themselves in  
society? + :-  
Would + :-you like  
to reposition

# yourself in society? Are you doing it already?

*Well, I used to say, the first jobs due to AI will be the programming ones.*

*A lot of the STEM practices. But, I believed AI was not going to be able to create art.*

*I don't know why I believed that. What I believed was that our careers are going to be indispensable in the future. As for now, the future... I think poetry and art will always have a place in human values and affection. They have been the main ways to pass down our history. Mythology, ancient texts, Gilgamesh, the Bible...*

*For the future it will be just a matter of retaining that and I do have faith that we will because it has been innovations that we have had for so many eras in humanity. Almost every age thinks this is it, this is the end of everything. They even talk about it in old apocalyptic scripts and texts, they say clearly this is revelation, clearly the world is ending. So, I am trying not to be too pessimistic because the value in poetry is going to have to be found in what it can provide both to the writer and the reader.*

*It should be a two-way system. I do hope and believe humans will have a role in that, but maybe our AI counterpart will also participate.*

.. + ✚ .. +

Right now I am looking at my hand, mid air. It's trembling because of all the caffeine I ingested today. I am still battling myself. I'm still working on the balance between passion and obsession, between working and resting. Between accepting the process, the wait, the patience.

The starting point of my interview with Alex, was the endless stream of content

° ☆+ We all live in a constant  
state of sensory overload,  
struggling to breath into an  
endless stream of content.  
Do you think AI poetry is  
another product of our  
contemporary condition?

*Absolutely.*

*At the very least, it's an honest product too.*

*The idea that AI is about to happen — that it is going to change everything — is hilarious to me because I feel like it's already taking place in ways that are so ubiquitous that we can't see the wood for the trees.*

*A good case in point is the sensory overload you mention there — the endless stream of content which is delivered to us by algorithms not only controlled by artificial intelligence but by algorithms that are made up of an ever-increasing degree of AI-generated content. It is simply the case that no one likes to believe that what they're consuming right now is the work of AI.*

the dead internet theory is one of the most interesting phenomena happening right now.

This theory suggests that much of what we see online today isn't created by humans but by bots, scripts, and AI generated content. According to this theory, a significant portion of the internet's activity is fake, designed to simulate human interactions, while lacking true human intent. This theory raises questions about authenticity, creativity, and the nature of the digital world.

The rise of AI made poetry become quite intriguing in this context. Is poetry contributing to the killing of the internet, where authentic human voices are drowned into an abyss of algorithmical waste?

*And no one likes to believe that the same algorithms that deliver an endless stream of AI-generated content across our screens*

*knows what you'll like today, and can predict with terrifying accuracy what you'll like next week. This is seductive, and produces the effect of what I've called astral ambedo. I use the word seductive here in the Baudrillardian sense but that's just blatant intellectual cope for what is libidinally seductive, since my algorithm so-often descends into pretty e-girls doing cute dances.*

*Of course, we're suppose to feel outrage over all of this, all of the time, but — like so much of the outrage in this world — the outrage is, in the end, performative.*

*I can tell it's performative because I've never seen so many people who never really enjoyed art or poetry get so upset at machines for creating art and poetry. What's really fascinating however, is the way that all of this AI-generated content — all of the socio-algorithmic manipulation that results from the use of artificial intelligence — is an affront to something ineffable.*

I'm quite impressed about the fact that performativity, while talking about AI and poetry, is something recurrent. When Gabriela explained that, for her, performativity might be a way to save poetry from the doom of automation, I knew this might have meant two things: approach performativity as a saviour approach, to still keeping some relevance, or a disrupt approach, to make fun of the performance itself.

One of the most intriguing, even amusing, aspects is the thought that the entire outrage against AI generated poetry could itself be generated by AI. It feels like we're merely spectators.

**How central is human  
agency  
in defining what art or  
poetry is for you?**

*The question you present here is interesting to me because it falls into that vein of philosophical thinking that tries to decentralise human agency, to push it beyond even the periphery.*

*In my experience, I have found thinking beyond the human is often considered politically heretical because it's like you're supposed to — even in the most theoretical considerations — prioritise the wants and needs of human beings. It's ironic in the sense that you can still undermine the collective social bonds of our hyper individualism in thinking theoretically beyond the human. I suspect this kind of thinking throws a hammer into the cogs of a society constantly having to be reminded that we're all individuals, together, remember? It seems platitudinal to even mention that we have a tendency, as a species, to place ourselves at the centre of things, prioritising our own wants and needs as a collective to the detriment of — say — the natural biodiversity of the planet. Contrary to that dominant worldview, I love to imagine a universe that doesn't place human agency at the centre of things.*

Yes, this is the one knot I was searching for.

I believe many have studied about that pivotal moment when we shifted, as a western society, from being at the center of the universe as God's creations, to being just creatures in the universe, an enlightened one, center less.

I wonder if the rise of AI, its challenge to traditional notions of ownership and authorship, is part of a new kind of Galilean rupture. Perhaps this is another turning point, one where we are once again searching for a decentring, not by the nature of the cosmo this time, but by the tools we've built.

*I have certainly benefited from thinking realistically about the limitations of human agency — and I am trying more than ever to care about human concerns — even though my thinking, and therefore my poetry, is often predicated on questions that seek to break from the strictly 'human'. In many ways I'm interested in centring human agency in my poetry only so that I might consider what the world might look like without it. One of my favourite poets is Georg Trakl because his poetry seems to deal with human agency in relation to the great cosmic indifference of the world. I say in relation to and not 'in conversation with' or even 'in opposition to' because I feel like it's not even a case of us attempting to go beyond it, but rather it is beyond us.*

° ☆+ You mentioned that AI  
isn't great at producing  
creativity as we know it. But  
creativity has always been  
defined by human production.  
Isn't it possible that we're  
going through a cultural shift  
right now, that could see  
humanity embrace the  
"artificial ghost" as a  
legitimate author? If we are,  
as you described, living in a  
"hypereschatological condition"  
, isn't it possible that a new  
normal will emerge?

*Ghost Lives: Cursed Edition* (<https://badbettypress.com/product/ghost-lives-cursed-edition-alex-mazey/>) began, in part, as a reaction to artificial intelligence allegedly writing poetry.

*I was interested in producing a counter-poetics that machines couldn't simply reproduce. It was ironic that this poetry collection ended up as a singular fusion of formal poetry and ascii art because the latter is often associated with the rich history of creative computing. In many ways, the formal poems*

What I am referring to, with this question, is an article written by Alex, "Getting #Lainpilled: Towards a Definition of the (Hyper)Eschatol Condition" (<https://baudrillard-scijournal.com>)



were included in that collection to demonstrate my ability to write according to tradition whilst ultimately wanting to do something that hadn't been done before in poetry.

I say ironic here because it seems endlessly funny to me that Large Language Models struggle to interpret simple, text-based visual art, initially designed with the limitations of machines in mind. Consequently, the ascii characters, sitting adjacent to text-based art forms, seemed like the ideal foundation for a poetics that could sit antagonistically to what machines were capable of producing, and perhaps more importantly, what machines were capable of interpreting.

What a machine is able to interpret about the world is way more interesting to me than what a machine can produce. So whilst people were discussing the extraordinary capabilities of Chatgpt on release, I was more interested, at the time, in revealing what those Large Language Models actually lacked — not because I think they're no good but because I actually respect the technology too much to mindlessly accept its alleged capabilities. What I discovered through using text-based visuals in relation to LLMs was a vulnerability in terms of what those machines were actually capable of interpreting. They remain, to me, at least, incapable of operating at any serious level of nuanced interpretation which makes them creatively weak as opposed to creatively strong. I think before we can produce creatively we have to interpret creatively, and that power of creative interpretation, as it stands, is what AI currently lacks in my opinion.

A lot of this is made apparent in playing around with the technology on offer to us, which is all great if you're emailing in a pinch, but not so good if you're out there trying to write a great novel. I always liked that meme where Fred from the Scooby-Doo gang pulls off the mask of the monster — represented, in this instance, by ChatGPT — only to find Microsoft Clippy. Likewise, it appears to me that LLMs are merely another neoliberal means of optimising productivity;



If we are culturally at the edge of a precipice, eschatologically speaking, then it's not a surprise if the boundaries of authorship, authenticity, and creative labour are being brought into question. In this specific context AI becomes less of a tool and more a sign of the times.

The publication by Alex, Ghost Lives: Cursed Edition, is fascinating as a deliberate counter practice. It's made from a refusal

getting-lainpilled-towards-a-definition-of-the-hypereschatological condition/), published on the Baudrillard Now (<https://baudrillard-scijournal.com/>)

to let the machine fully decipher the language it uses. When I hear about ASCII my eyes sparkle. Knowing that ASCII functions as a kind of poetic encryption, that resists machine interpretation, makes me incredibly happy.

Language learning models don't have an interpretive core. They can mimic, but they cannot digest or absorb anything. I really appreciate Alex's mindset, surely his observation that much of the discourse around AI is soaked in nostalgia and often, pointless fear.

When I think about the word ghost that as I used it in my question, I realise that part of its wonder is rooted in the mystery that AI still have for many, included me. It's intangible. There's an aura around it. That aura invites us to project something mystical onto it. But we shouldn't be tricked by our own human fancy for the sublime. AI is built from familiar patterns. Its advertised power is productivity, but its true mystical force is control.

*If Baudrillard was correct when he said the end of our world had, in fact, already happened then the hypereschatological condition is that purgatory in which we continue to wait for our final judgement as a species. It is, in this way, not quite done with us yet — perhaps more ubiquitous now than ever. Perhaps the afterlife of planet Earth will be defined by all the artificial intelligence we'll have left behind. Certainly, the final irony of our existence would be a utopia on planet earth that didn't include us.*

What I find most fascinating about poetry as an art form is its indefinability.

To be clear, I don't believe art can ever truly be defined. Art constantly escapes any fixed definition. And yet, poetry feels even more palpable.

Poetry speaks from a place you know exists, but feel you cannot see, as if it were speaking from the clouds above you or the ground beneath your feet.

Hilma af Klint, Group IX/, The swan, no 1



Some time ago, I wrote a short essay on poetry as liminal ([https://www.poetryinternational.com/en/poets-poems/archive-tours/archive-tour/105-30505\\_Between-Worlds](https://www.poetryinternational.com/en/poets-poems/archive-tours/archive-tour/105-30505_Between-Worlds)).

"You've been walking for a long time, unable to see where you started or where you're heading, and then, suddenly, you become

aware of it”.

I’m stealing my own words here to describe the feeling of liminality: the sensation of floating in transition.

Poetry, to me, is a liminal language. It finds energy in the pauses between words, in the silence beyond the lines, beyond any structured form, beyond absence itself. It was then natural to ask if this nature of poetry was seen by others too, and if this same nature would influence how we perceive poetry into the AI context.

# Do you see AI poetry as liminal?

*This is a fantastic question. I have written about liminality a lot and have started to argue that the ideological function of liminal space is to suggest the existence of an outside. What the liminal offers is never truly exterior or in-between but rather acts as the shadow-double of an emptiness inherent to the inside; a corridor leading back to the only realism it wants us to know. Perhaps this is why such spaces, caught at the right time of day, take on a uniquely sinister quality. To say, liminality is rarely neutral, and so the simulation of the outside that these spaces conjure is often — if not always — a collection of things already known to us. In this way the liminal is tethered to the familiar, seducing not through genuine departure but through the promise of return.*

*It has been suggested many times elsewhere that today’s realism exerts its hold not by resisting opposition but by subsuming it entirely. This subsumptive quality has been perfected to the extent that even the concept of absence — of in-betweenness — of our realism going beyond itself has been fully-integrated, reconstituted into the controlled aesthetic experience we call the liminal.*

*So to answer your question — yes. AI poetry is, by this definition, liminal because AI Poetry hints towards an outside, of an attempt to go beyond what is already known about poetics, even if that appeal to a world beyond brings us back to what we already know. In this way, AI poetry only plays at alterity.*

° ☆+ You've submitted two poems to the AI Literary Review. What were the differences (conceptual, technical, emotional) that led to the creation of All Secret Endings and \$TARDEW\_VA::EY\_GUN\_MOD.EXE:? Do they represent an evolution in your practice with poetry, and AI?

*As of right now, I've actually submitted three poems to the AI Literary Review. Two have been published there. All Secret Endings was published in Issue One, and the poem, Wii Sports Coloured Icee, was published in Issue Four whilst \$TARDEW\_VA::EY\_GUN\_MOD.EXE was rejected by the editorial on the basis of it pushing the boundaries of what a poem is a little too far. In my mind, its rejection only affirmed its success: to exceed the genre meant to be excluded from it. In many ways this only confirms what I said regarding the liminality of AI poetry as a means of bringing us back to a recognisable poetics. That's not a criticism of the AI Literary Review — that's just how it is sometimes.  
poems here - poems*

A recognisable poetics

*My favourite of the three poems is perhaps Wii Sports Coloured Icee because I think it achieves a nice synthesis between the AI-*

*generated content and a poetic voice I enjoyed channeling. That poem represents a place where my work with AI has landed most comfortably, and is certainly representative of an evolution in my practice with poetry, and AI. I suppose if AI Poetry is about achieving a synthesis between AI and human intelligence then perhaps this poem is an even better example of AI poetry than All Secret Endings — but that's more dependant on what you think AI Poetry should be.*

Are you the author of  
your work? Are you  
collaborating with the  
AI tools, and  
algorithms, that are  
involved in the  
generation of the text  
you are using? Do you  
own the result of their  
process?

*Does Bob Ross own your painting if he taught you how to paint on YouTube? What about Hobbycraft, just because they sold you the paint?*

*I wish I had a more provocative answer, but I feel like all art can be reduced to the loneliness of the author — alone someplace, aching for a connection to something transcendental. There was once this idea that technology resembles magic, but maybe really powerful technology just resembles sentience.*

*Certainly, these tools look so powerful to us that there is a tendency across all the fields of artificial intelligence to mythologize, but ultimately AI is just another sophisticated tool — no more and no less than a paintbrush was to Rembrandt, or a piano to Chopin. I wish it were more complicated than that. But I don't think it is.*

*Of course, AI isn't passive. It throws things back at you, sometimes strange, sometimes stupid, sometimes sublime. But so does paint if you work with it long enough. So does music. You shape the thing, and in that shaping, the authorship is yours.*

At the same time, while I can respect that choice, it doesn't change the reality that, while some people may choose to step away from authorship, others may be forced to do so, by the fact their authorship won't allow them to make a living. I know, I know people will say that that's how things work, and I guess we are all just waiting to be the next.

# Can an algorithm be an author?

*I've said elsewhere that I suspect those algorithms that can deliver an endless stream of memes and viral videos — defined in part by their use of generative-AI — will be remembered as the popular art of our time.*

*This has less to do with algorithms as authors per se and more to*

*do with the disappearance of authors by way of algorithms. A few years back now, I remember watching two-hours worth of reels — late at night — with friends and feeling devastated when the video had finished and realising, in that moment, that we'd sat there as a group to watch a series of 10~ second clips on an expensive projector designed for arthouse cinema.*

*The experience made me consider the sociological differences between watching a meme compilation and sitting down to watch a film. What's the real difference — if any — between those two activities, and what made a meme compilation more appealing than watching Wesley Snipes kill vampires for an hour and a half? Will the future be defined by people choosing a meme compilation over watching a film? Will friends sit down together for a meme night? What's more, who will we attribute the authorship to when it comes to defining our favourite compilations — will their authorship even matter? How many people have a favourite meme; or recall reels today in the way people used to recall movie scenes? My favourite reel is Dripvangelion — is that an unusual thing to know about oneself?*

*I don't recall where exactly, but I remember listening to a story of an adult asking some young people what music they were into and the young people saying they liked lofi hiphop. Interested in a genre they hadn't heard of before, the adult asked the group what kind of artists they should listen to in order to get an impression of the genre. The young people looked confused, saying they didn't know — they just liked the music on a livestream they listened to.*

*Is that really any different from an older generation saying they enjoyed listening to the radio? Even so, the adult in that situation was horrified, but I suspect that horror has something to do with many people viewing artists, and authors, as a revered category.*



or copyright.

The contemporary idea of artistic value and individual authorship is a relatively recent development in human history.

Before the Renaissance artists were largely unrecognised as individuals. Art was primarily seen as a craft, a functional, communal activity, rather than a personal or expressive one.

What we now call “artists” were considered in fact artisans, skilled workers who completed commissions for wealthy patrons or religious institutions, without any notion of personal ownership

It was the rise of Renaissance humanism that brought a cultural shift, with it a celebration of individual creativity and introduction of the idea of the artist as a unique “genius.” The practice of signing artworks, something we take for granted today, only became widespread in the past few centuries.

A notable example of this shift is Albrecht Dürer (1471 - 1528), the German master printmaker, who used his initials “AD” as a form of personal branding, asserting authorship in a way that was ground breaking for his time. I mention Dürer before others, such as Michelangelo, because although artists like Michelangelo did sign their works, their style and authorship were already unmistakable. Their creations were protected by the prestige and power of their wealthy patrons. No one was likely to question or counterfeit their identity.

Dürer's case is different. He lived in a world where printmaking was becoming more common. While it wasn't industrial printing as we know it today, it hinted at a future of mass image reproduction. As a printmaker producing etchings, Dürer had to struggle to the early challenges of artistic ownership in a medium that could be more easily copied than any other before. He even fought legal battles to gain protection for his work.

I am wondering if we are all terribly done with this.

*thought it was interesting when you had a sign-value of sorts attributed to Charli xcx fans who kind of aligned themselves with a certain aesthetic vibe. How much of that was sincere, I don't know — it seemed like post-irony par excellence to me.*

*On the other hand it felt like a pendulum swinging back in a reactionary moment to the way the author as a revered category had begun to diminish, only to reassert itself tenfold in the phenomenon of Brat Summer. I think there is an unresolved tension between this idea of authors and algorithms. Intuitively then, I'm more inclined to think of Instagram's algorithm as more of a legitimate author than ChatGPT.*



Sometimes AI is perceived  
as a collective voice, ethereal.  
If we understand AI as a  
form of collective authorship  
(that is owned by no one/  
everyone, even if it is still  
based on corporations'  
extractive cloud business  
models) what does that mean  
to poets and writers as  
individual voices?

*I worry that this framing ultimately circles back to a kind of romanticised  
AI mythologization — a techno-fetishism dressed up as collectivism.  
Roland Barthes would likely see the current fascination with AI as a kind  
of modern myth — where the technology is stripped of its infrastructural  
and economic context and re-presented, in Barthesian terms, as a  
second-order semiological system: a seductive, quasi-mystical force. It's  
no longer seen in terms of code, hardware, and corporate capital but  
rather it becomes the ghost in the machine, the collective unconscious,*

*the new god. That's what I mean when I say mythologization — and that's what I try to resist. Though I appreciate how alluring that utopian thinking is, because in many ways, it's designed to be that way. It's ideology doing what Žižek suggests it does best: disguising itself as its own critique. So maybe it doesn't change anything for poets and writers as individual voices.*

*Or rather, it changes everything, but the essential condition of the poet — working with tools, within constraints, in dialogue with context and language — remains.*

*AI is just a new pressure on the voice. And maybe that's what a poem like Wii Sports Coloured Icee is really about. There's a Baudrillardian reversibility at play in the way artificial intelligence doesn't erase authorship so much as it throws it into sharper relief. It is hypereschatological to say AI is supposed to be the end of the author, when in practice, it reveals the human more starkly. That's the reversal.*

° ☆+ As a writer, as a poet, what were the most difficult challenges you faced when authorship and intellectual property agreement started to enter the picture in your practice?

*The work I've published at the AI Literary Review is a very small part of what I do as a writer, so I've not faced many challenges so far. I've found the AI Literary Review's submission guidelines especially helpful, particularly in stressing the importance of human intervention when it comes to AI-generated materials.*

*That human role is key, and it's why I'm always keen to mention the editing software I use to create these kinds of visual poems.*

What is your experience with publishers? What

would you like to change  
in the publishing system  
you experienced until  
now?

*If you're talking about my experience with publishers in relation to AI materials then I haven't had much experience because I've only published that kind of work with the AI Literary Review, which is already geared towards it. Outside of that, it's all the obvious stuff, really, because the truth is, no one gets paid enough — especially writers. Everything is always so precarious.*

*I've been very fortunate with the publishers of my books, of course, but that's not been without hard work on my part, a world of pain and rejection and heartache that I wouldn't wish upon anyone. I know I'm biased, but Bad Betty Press might be the best thing to happen to UK poetry in recent years, and they deserve support.*

*It would be nice to see publishers become more open-minded in what they might publish, as opposed to chasing market trends. Though I appreciate print publishing is bound by cost limitations, it's fun to imagine what books as objects might look like if those limitations were lifted. Publishers like Trickhouse Press give a small glimpse into that world I suspect.*

o

☆+ A last intense long

question: Some artists may  
find copyright  
infringements acceptable,

using tools like  
ChatGPT, because they  
feel that change is coming  
in a way or another.

Artists often rely on  
copyright as their primary  
protection, even when the  
system frequently fails  
them anyway.

The art and creative  
industries are  
increasingly being  
defunded and privatised,  
leaving artists struggling.

As a writer and poet, do  
you think in the future  
copyright will still matter  
if the concept of  
ownership itself shifts?  
Could it be because of a  
societal desire to escape  
hyperindividualism and  
by a growing awareness  
of how corporations  
exploit data?

*I'm probably not the best person to ask about this because it's not my area of expertise so please take what I've got to say on this matter with a*

*pinch of salt but I think you're right when you say everyone knows the winds of change when they feel them. Artificial intelligence is likely to shape the world in ways we cannot even begin to imagine — or expect — and with that in mind, I think societies defined by flexibility and openness will far outperform those that remain resistant in their appealing to some classical age of ownership.*

*I think there's a distinction to be made between creativity and the concept of the artist as a protected class — because I've seen those protections used to punch down, not laterally. Again, I'm not an expert on this by any means, but to me it seems all about protecting what already exists because what already exists is known for its collusion; it has already found a place either in the system we recognise or in the system of antagonisms that sustain it. The real threat comes from a creativity that cannot be placed into one of those two camps. I think this circles back to your idea of past creativity as something tending to be defined by human production and so it may be the case that artificial intelligence is cast into a genuinely indeterminate liminality where no one is sure what camp it belongs to just yet.*

*I've used this musical genre already, so I'll use it as a case in point here: I feel like lofi hiphop ended the moment it became visible to the mainstream because so much of the genre was tied into the creative sampling of bygone soundbites and genres — which was an absolute copyright nightmare. That's partly what gave it its texture. But like anything that unsettles too much, it had to be reterritorialized by capital. You see the same thing with early soundcloud music — stuff that once felt unstable, now cleaned up and sold back in a more manageable form.*

*I've seen people horrified that Lil Peep tracks are still being released, but I suspect that's less about artistic legacy and more about long, bitter battles over attribution — the backend of a system trying to sort out who gets paid. That's all speculation, of course, and maybe it's a case of Occam's Razor in that scenario, and they're just out there wanting to make more money out of an artist in the same way you can now pick up a Nirvana t-shirt at Primark. Nothing really changes and creativity is still systematically decimated while legacy structures profit.*

*Many of the same pre-internet artists — once praised for breaking boundaries — now weaponise copyright against emerging talent, even though their own success was built on a mountain of unacknowledged borrowings and appropriation so blatant it reveals a deep contradiction.*

*The artist isn't a naive participant in all of this. History tells of a rich tradition of bypassing laws through pseudonym and samizdat. I'm very aware of the ways in which artists — especially those associated with generative-AI — now masquerade under the anonymised protection of collectives, in order to avoid both political and legal retribution. But that's another story entirely. Perhaps this would be the future of AI poetry too, if not for the way poetry in the contemporary moment lies in such close proximity to the identity of the individual — making it especially vulnerable to co-option by the very state of hyperindividualism you mention. The other question might be whether poetry, like so much of contemporary art and cinema, is now exhausting itself — and whether that exhaustion reflects a broader societal desire to move beyond them.*

*Whether or not that begets innovation, I cannot say. But we can still hope, can't we?*

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