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(Art)ificial Reminiscence of Cultural Heritage in the Service of Marketing Communication

Abstract

This scientific paper represents a complementary and parallel extension of the initial empirical study “Deepfake: Digital Reincarnation of Art” (Štosel & Spálová, in press). The primary objective of the aforementioned study is to identify the attitudes of fans and followers on social media who responded to marketing and communication activities related to the application of generative artificial intelligence tools of the Deepfake type, in the context of the digital reincarnation of artworks presented within cultural institutions such as The Dalí Museum in Florida, the Danish Museum Fredericia, and the Liptov Museum in Ružomberok. This research study builds upon the same methodological foundations, while focusing on a different empirical dataset. The main aim of the research is to examine the attitudinal responses of participants on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube, in relation to three curatorial projects: Ask Dalí, Deepfake: Unstable Evidence on Screen and

Interactive Holograms: Survivor Stories Experience of the three cultural institutions The Dalí Museum, Museum of the Moving Images and Illinois Holocaust Museum. The output is framed within a qualitative approach, grounded in content-based sentiment analysis. This analytical procedure makes it possible to explore participants’ attitudes as articulated through comments on social media toward the application of generative artificial intelligence tools of the Deepfake type, with particular attention devoted to their use in the digital reincarnation of artworks.

Key words

Art Marketing Communication. Cultural Institutions. Deepfake. Digital Transformation. GAI.



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Introduction

The intersections of advanced digital technologies in the cultural and artistic environment should no longer represent a fundamental challenge in the 21st century. Nevertheless, it can be observed that the management of certain cultural institutions adopts a more reserved attitude towards the process of digitalization. Although the professional community acknowledges the importance and benefits of digital tools within the realm of culture and art, their application is not regarded as universally appropriate, nor is their implementation automatically advocated at all costs, merely because it represents a current trend. In this sense, the prevailing view is that the management of cultural institutions has the right to independently determine the form and extent of the use of digital technologies (Dolák, 2019).

At the same time, digitalization can also be perceived as a turning point that revealed to the management of cultural organizations the potential of intelligent tools (Kapucian, 2023), particularly in the field of art marketing communication (Hufschmidt, 2023). The use of advanced sixth-generation digital mechanisms has thus gradually evolved into a strategic management instrument, enabling management to gain a competitive advantage in the art market (Villaespesa, 2021).

As a result, cultural organizations have transformed into entities capable of profiting from a symbiotic relationship with hyperrealistic digital platforms, even in the early phases of the digital revolution (Cipparrone et al., 2025). Within this environment, institutions that deliberately engage with generative technologies, such as Deepfake, are emerging with increasing frequency. These tools offer professionals the opportunity to digitally reincarnate cultural and artistic content (Pitoňáková et al., 2025), thereby opening new dimensions of artistic interpretation, perception, and experiential engagement with art.

1 Literature Review

In the current process of digitalization, a dynamic increase can be observed in the use of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) tools (Li et al., 2024), which are emerging as significant catalysts of advanced digital transformation (Belenioti & Kypri, 2025) in both tangible (Gaber et al., 2023) and intangible cultural heritage (Zhang et al., 2023). Within art marketing and art marketing communication practices, these tools have gradually established themselves as integral components of managerial processes (Aydın, 2024). They are applied not only in the analysis of internal and external data but also increasingly as autonomous systems generating interactive and personalized outputs (Menotti, 2025). Their influence is not limited to supplementary exhibition presentation (Krewani, 2024), but

rather reaches into the very core of the visitor experience.

A similar view is shared by Floridi (2018), Kerner and Risse (2021), and Šulc (2024), who argue that if digital technologies are employed within ethical principles, they can serve as instruments enriching cultural and artistic production, not to mention their potential to create new, interactive experiences. In line with these claims, the aforementioned authors also provide several explicit examples confirming that the implementation and application of advanced next-generation digital technologies have a justified role within the sphere of cultural heritage. For instance, *The Next Rembrandt* project (2016) by Microsoft was based on the targeted training of an advanced algorithm on 346 of Rembrandt’s artworks. The system was subsequently able, upon command, to synthesize an entirely new portrait rendered in the style of the Dutch master. Another example is the digital clone of the speech that President John F. Kennedy was meant to deliver during his visit to Dallas in 1963, during which he was assassinated. Based on 831 authentic recordings, a synthetic voice was created in collaboration with the company CereProc, allowing the animation of the unrealized address.

However, even the positive contributions of Deepfake technologies bring certain ethical discrepancies (De Ruiter, 2021) directly related to the authenticity of artistic creation (Pansoni et al., 2023). A fragment of the expert

community expresses concerns that generative systems may contribute to the devaluation of artworks or specific cultural artifacts (Bellaïche et al., 2023). As we have seen, however, current developments suggest the opposite trend (Johnson & Diakopoulos, 2021). Cultural institutions, together with curators and artists, increasingly reflect on the potential of GAI as a tool for the revitalization and reinterpretation of cultural heritage, rather than as a means of its deliberate destruction.

2 Methodology

Based on the identification of current theoretical and empirical foundations that highlight the diversity of application approaches to the Deepfake tool within the environment of cultural institutions, our research focused on two main dimensions: (a) the perception of such hybrid artworks by audiences on digital social platforms, and (b) their artistic quality.

PG1: To identify how participants/followers of the official social media profiles (Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube) of selected cultural institutions perceive and evaluate, through comments, the synthesized media-artistic outputs created by using the generative Deepfake tool.

PG2: To identify the artistic value of the synthesized media-artistic outputs created by using the generative Deepfake tool by selected cultural institutions.

2.1 Research Material

In the initial study “Deepfake: Digital Reincarnation of Art” (Štosel & Spálová, in press), the research material was collected through deliberate and strategic sampling (Sedláková, 2014) during the period from January 1 to April 30, 2025. Based on this approach, three curatorial projects from three cultural institutions were identified: *Dalí Lives* (The Dalí Museum, Florida), *Deepfakes of Famous Historical Figures of Danish History* (Museum Fredericia, Denmark), and *Deepfake of Young Nobleman Jan Korvin* (Liptov Museum, Ružomberok).

In the present study, we adopted a different method of material collection, namely convenience/opportunistic sampling (Ferjenčík, 2000), conducted from May 1 to August 31, 2025. This change was prompted by the fact that the tools used in the first study (Google and ChatGPT) were able, based on predetermined instructions, to identify only a limited range of institutions, without direct reference to additional projects that could have formed part of the pilot research dataset. The new cases were discovered entirely by chance, through opportunistic contact with various sources outside the original systematic search.

Although their selection was random, we assessed these projects as fully meeting our criteria, as they involved cultural institutions directly working with Deepfake

tools in the context of the digital reincarnation of artistic and cultural artifacts. The research dataset thus again consisted of three curatorial projects, this time implemented by the following institutions: *Ask Dalí* (The Dalí Museum, Florida), *Deepfake: Unstable Evidence on Screen* (Museum of the Moving Image, New York), and *Interactive Holograms: Survivor Stories Experience* (Illinois Holocaust Museum, Illinois).

RQ1: For what purpose was the Deepfake tool employed within the art marketing and communication strategies of The Dalí Museum, Museum of the Moving Image, and Illinois Holocaust Museum?

RQ2: How do participants/followers of the official social media profiles of the selected cultural institutions (The Dalí Museum, Museum of the Moving Image, and Illinois Holocaust Museum) perceive and evaluate the implementation of Deepfake in the context of the digital reincarnation of artworks?

RQ3: What is the artistic value of the synthesized artworks produced by The Dalí Museum, Museum of the Moving Image, and Illinois Holocaust Museum?

The present empirical study is methodologically built on the same foundations as the pilot study (Štosel & Spálová, in press), namely on qualitative sentiment content analysis (Cambria et al., 2017). The given

sentiment was similarly evaluated using a five-point Likert scale. This approach enables the identification and interpretation of the attitudes of social media users, who expressed their subjective opinions and beliefs regarding the application of the Deepfake tool in the context of the digital reincarnation of cultural heritage through comment statements under individual posts. The second qualitative level of analysis reflects methodological approaches typical for art interpretation, specifically hermeneutic methodological procedures.

3 Results

3.1 Perception of Synthesized Works by Digital Platform Audiences

Ask Dalí

The Ask Dalí project was launched on April 11, 2024, by the Salvador Dalí Museum, in collaboration with the agency Goodby Silverstein & Partners. It utilizes existing speech data of the artist, which were reprocessed into a new format. The result is the iconic interactive exhibit *Lobster Phone*, allowing visitors to communicate with Dalí.

Regarding the marketing communication activities of the project, the media campaign was deployed across multiple digital platforms. On YouTube, a video campaign appeared on April 11, 2024, which recorded 17,777 views and 107 likes, but did not receive any audience comments expressing

opinions. On Instagram, a series of posts was published starting April 26, 2024, with two additional posts in June and August of the same year. All three posts focused on the *Lobster Phone* exhibit, collectively achieving over 12,000 impressions and 1,024 likes. A significant indicator was the feedback in the form of 36 comments, the majority of which (77,8%) positively evaluated the use of the Deepfake tool, while 22,2% of comments were neutral. No negative reactions were recorded. On Facebook, no posts directly communicated this campaign.

Overall, the campaign was most successful on Instagram, where it achieved not only a higher level of interaction but also qualitatively meaningful feedback. While YouTube generated a substantial number of views, it did not foster audience participation, and Facebook remained unused in the campaign's communication.

Deepfake: Unstable Evidence on Screen

The Museum of the Moving Image (MoMI) focuses on presenting digital-media forms that have influenced American history. The exhibition *Deepfake: Unstable Evidence on Screen*, which opened on May 15, 2022, featured the installation *In Event of Moon Disaster* (Lees, 2024), which staged an alternative outcome of the Apollo 11 mission through a synthesized speech by President Richard Nixon.

The project combined artistic, historical, and technological dimensions, aiming to stimulate critical reflection rather than to question the historical event itself. The communication campaign was conducted across multiple platforms. On YouTube, a video campaign was published on



Figure 1: Lobster Phone of Salvador Dalí.

Source: Salvador Dalí Museum. (n.d.)



Figure 2: Deepfake of Richard Nixon Speech

Source: Museum of the Moving Image (2022)

February 9, 2022, receiving 15,000 views and 36 likes, but no comments. On Facebook, a post appeared on April 26, 2022, with 11 reactions, also without any comment-based feedback. The highest level of interaction was observed on Instagram, where two posts (April 22 and May 12, 2022) reached 874 views and a total of 380 reactions. However, even under these posts, no comments were available that would allow analysis of audience attitudes.

The results suggest that while the campaign achieved quantitative reach on social media, it did not provide the qualitative feedback necessary for a deeper assessment of participant reception of the topic.

Interactive Holograms: Survivor Stories Experience

The Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center focuses on issues of antisemitism, and is among the pioneers in the targeted application of artificial intelligence tools for conveying living heritage.

The exhibition *Abe & Ida Cooper Survivor Stories Experience*, opened on October 29, 2017, utilizes holographic projection and Deepfake tools, allowing visitors to engage in interactive dialogue with the digital avatars of survivors.

The project was accompanied by an intensive media campaign. On Instagram, the first post appeared on October 19, 2017. Since then, the museum has published a total of 56 posts, which received 2,200 likes, 50 comments, and 4 organic shares. Sentiment analysis showed that 94% of the comments were strongly positive, 14% positive, and 6% neutral. On Facebook, the first post was published on April 13, 2018. The museum shared 29 posts in total, achieving 2,366 reactions, 223 comments, and 477 shares. Positive responses predominated here as well: 88% strongly positive, 9% positive, and 3% neutral. On YouTube, three videos were published starting February 21, 2018, which collectively garnered 25,444 views and 149 reactions, but no comments.

The results indicate that the project elicited a strongly favourable response, particularly on Instagram and Facebook, where higher-quality feedback in the form of comments and shares was observed. YouTube contributed a high number of views, but did not facilitate audience participation in discussion.

3.2 Artistic Value of the Synthesized Works

At this stage of image creation using artificial intelligence, the following typology of AI-generated images can be considered, along with their degree of originality:

- 1) The creation of new images based on a given theme and a specific visual style and genre.
- 2) Replicas of historical artworks derived from the analysis of available data.
- 3) Animated motion-advanced images, brought to life – reincarnation in a dynamic mode, linked with the ability to engage with the viewer.



Figure 3: Abe & Ida Cooper Survivor Stories Experience.

Source: Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center (n.d.)

It is precisely the last type that appears particularly attractive to art institutions aiming to offer recipients an expanded field of artistic reception and to stimulate interest in, and study of, other static, non-animated works presented in the museum. It should be noted that, fundamentally, two types of institutions work with images/artifacts: historical museums, which possess images as “figures of memory” (Assmann, 2001) and whose artistic quality may vary, sometimes significantly. These institutions engage with animated images more freely and purposefully. Works of the highest, expert-assessed quality serve as evidence of the development of art; art institutions approach the animation and reincarnation of images cautiously, so as not to disrupt the unique, inherent fluidity often associated with the physical materiality of the artifact (e.g., the tangible layers of a painting), which a digitalized reference cannot fully convey.

Unlike the examples assessed in the previous study (Štosel & Spálová, in press), which primarily focused on the application of Deepfake models to stimulate engagement and communication with audiences in art institutions or historical museums, the cases presented in this study possess a framework that is distinct in terms of artistic quality within the context of art discourse. Although they fundamentally incorporate features of the original work, they creatively employ both its formal and content aspects (e.g., Dalí: *Lobster Telephone*, 1936, and the later version *Off-white Aphrodisiac Telephone*, 1938), following a strategy of appropriation, leading to a shift in meaning and expression enriched by a completely new element-interactive AI-generated communication between the author (Dalí) and the recipient. This occurs through the use of the bizarre object itself (containing sexual connotations), based on the principles of ready-made and simulated ready-made. The

difference between the original work (Dalí, 1936/1938) and the currently modelled version (2024), which exhibits traits of technicality, artificiality, mimicry, or paraphrase, demonstrates a discernible deviation from the correct form. In aesthetics, this deviation is considered an attribute of artistic value, representing a statement that transcends mere imitation to provide added significance; this is the subject of hermeneutic interpretation. The live exhibition also incorporates an architectural-installational environment-staging communication with the reincarnated author (Dalí). The staging of interactive communication, integrating artificial intelligence into the production of the event, follows a surreal poetic logic, full of absurd associations, and embodies a dual quality: on one hand, it undeniably possesses inventiveness, originality, and artistic value; on the other hand, as constructed, it functions as an element of gallery dramaturgy,

education, and the formation of the recipient.

The second case under study deepfake of Richard Nixon speech, similarly integrated the Deepfake speech into the setting of an ordinary living room, creating a domestic and intimate atmosphere. It prompted reflection on the credibility of information in the media and mass communication channels, which have the power to influence the public through familiar, private domestic spaces. The environment, as a legitimate form of contemporary post-conceptual art, aligns with current artistic strategies. The decisive factor is the conceptual content and message, which this installation effectively conveys.

The final case under study, from the Holocaust Museum and Education Center, employs as its central and innovative feature an interactive dialogue with digital avatars of survivors created using GAI. Its primary aim is education, formation, and the deepening of sensitivity toward the experiences of racially and socially marginalized populations – in this case, the Jewish population during the Holocaust. The animated beings provide an exceptionally impactful and immersive way to engage with these historical experiences, which also constitutes an element of artistic communication. In this instance, the project can be regarded primarily as educational, employing visual, dramatic, cinematic, and other artistic strategies and qualities, and

it should be evaluated according to the criteria of aesthetics, applied creative dramatics, and historical evocation.

Conclusion and Discussion

The development of generative artificial intelligence tools is dynamic (Štosel et al., 2025), and Deepfake is no exception. Tools such as Deepfake, initially perceived negatively (Alsolai et al., 2025; Naffi et al., 2025; Kaur et al., 2024; Martovič, 2023), primarily due to the dissemination of misinformation, manipulation of public opinion (Broda & Strömbäck, 2024; Wu et al., 2025), or the dehumanization of socially exposed individuals (Tauli, 2019; Maddocks, 2020; Whyte, 2020; Vrabec & Zubková, 2025), are gradually being rehabilitated within contemporary professional and academic discourse and acquiring new cultural and societal significance (Chang & Chien, 2024; Gregor, 2025). This potential is particularly evident in cinematography (Chadha et al., 2021; Hutson & Smith, 2025), advertising (Danesi, 2024), and the fields of digital preservation and interpretation of cultural heritage (Zakharov et al., 2019; Mihailova, 2021; Stanciu & Ciupercă, 2024; Mi & Zhang, 2025).

The escalation of digital tools simultaneously transforms the traditional role of the visitor (Romanelli, 2020), who becomes not only a consumer but also an active and participatory agent. Next-

generation technologies enable visitors to engage directly with institutional processes and critically evaluate the presented artifacts (Derda, 2024). Contemplation, meditative experience, and participation in sharing the message of a work are primary objectives of both artistic and historical-museum institutions (Kesner, 2000). All the discussed examples demonstrate high artistic merit and exceptional quality through the application of new technologies and institutional staging creativity. They also indicate that GAI holds a significant place and future in artistic projects.

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