

## Artificial Intelligence in Music: Innovation or Invasion?

Artificial intelligence is transforming jobs all over the world, from writing to acting. It's even transforming how students study and do schoolwork. But surely you've heard about all those before. About how AI can copy actors' images and manipulate into what the movie needs. About how writers for late-night talk shows have gone on strike due to AI's ability to generate scripts. About how students use AI to write their own essays or do their homework. But have you heard about how AI is transforming music? AI can generate song lyrics and actual music. In addition to that, AI can also replicate someone's voice, like a famous artist's or your own, into any kind of audio output, including singing. While yes, some may argue this can be a tool, to a certain point, it can be a tool to people who need it. On the other hand, however, it can be taken advantage of too, just like any other tool. This might lead you to wonder how exactly AI could ever take over music. Well, I'll explain it. First, let's explore what music means to us humans.

As stated by *Greater Good Magazine*, music impacts us in ways other sounds don't, and for years now, scientists have been trying to find out why. Whether attending a concert, listening to the radio, or singing in the shower, there's something about music that can fill us with emotion, from joy to sadness. This might be because, according to Heidi Ahonene who is a professor of music therapy at Wilfrid Laurier University in Ontario, Canada, music feels "like something that can reflect how you feel." Heidi describes it as this feeling that you're *not* the only one who is experiencing this. "Somebody, maybe the composer or the songwriter, also experienced this. It's human beings sharing something and that experience of empathy is always very healing for us when we go through difficult things." She added. There's this idea where music can be everything to one person. It can be happiness, it can be angst, it can be sadness, it can be anger and rage. Heidi states that this is really important because sometimes we don't have people around us who are empathetic to our experiences. "That empathy is found in music instead," she said.

You can conclude that the emotions we feel from music are because that music is written by another human being who understands our own feelings. It wasn't written by an AI who experiences no emotions. Arguably, the best part of music is that it has personality. Take Olivia Rodrigo for example. *Universal Music Ireland* claims that her music is characterized by the raw and honest lyrics that touch on the topics of heartbreak, love, and hardships of growing up. Because of that, she resonates with younger generations. AI may be able to write about it, but could it really copy the emotion and feeling music needs?

As you can see, music has always been a deeply personal and emotional experience, but technology is now transforming how we engage with it. AI is playing an increasingly significant role in shaping the experience of listening to music. For example, Spotify has been using AI to create 'Daylists', a playlist made three times daily based on your personality and music taste. One in the morning, one in the afternoon, and one in the evening. Spotify has also added a 'DJ'. When users use this feature, they start listening to songs of a specific genre that they've listened to before. Clearly, the AI collects data from their recently listened music. Similarly, Apple Music also added personalized new music discovery playlists for users based on their listening habits. Many music streaming platforms are using AI to create a positive experience for their users. Evidently, this demonstrates how AI can be a tool and can enhance the user's experience. This is a good example of what we should be using AI for. It doesn't take major jobs away, like creating music.

Yet what we see in streaming platforms today is just one example of AI's growing influence, which has been building since its invention in 1956. Since 2010, Artificial Intelligence has evolved and become a major tool over the years, but it can also be a weapon.

Aisha June, a senior marketing major and journalist from Chicago spoke about her worry about AI creeping its way into the music industry. “The threat of AI being able to take somebody’s voice and make a song threatens the position of need for actual artists if it’s used with no restraints.” she said. “[AI] isn’t something that should replace an artist or producer.” In fact, an AI generated song with fake Drake and the Weeknd has already been made. It went viral online, getting millions of plays across TikTok, Spotify, Youtube and more before getting removed. While these creations can be interesting and fun, they also highlight the growing threat AI poses to real artists.

This is just the beginning of a much larger issue. While AI's potential in music may seem exciting, it also raises deep concerns about the future of artistic expression and the role of real musicians. The rapid rise of AI in music demands for us to confront some difficult questions. Should we allow Artificial Intelligence to reshape and replace the way we create and experience music? Even if it can take away creativity and motivation from singers? And not just current singers, but our future artists too. Little kids, kids my age, young adults. They can have talent, they can have dreams, but if AI is the one making music, what use is their talent? Is it worth it? If we continue to allow AI to take over the creative process, will future generations lose and miss the magic of music made by real and passionate artists? I believe that ultimately the answer lies in our hands. It’s up to us to stand together and prevent AI from taking over the music industry.

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