

AI AKCAPA's Stance on AI-Generated Images in Photo Competitions



AI Generative 'text-to-image' Creation by Sheldon Boles

October 1, 2024 – Updates Shown In Red

Introduction

The rapid advancement of AI-generative technology has raised concerns about its potential impact on the integrity of photographic competitions. To address this, the Canadian Association for Photographic Art (CAPA) has taken a proactive stance by outlining its position, guidelines, and rationale for safeguarding the authenticity and fairness of its photographic competitions.

Concerns Regarding AI-Generated Image

The decision to prohibit AI-generated images in photographic competitions stems from several critical concerns that challenge the core principles of photography.

1. **Unjustified Image Scraping and Corporate Profits** - AI image generators often scrape internet images without proper compensation to the original photographer or artists. This practise raises concerns about the ethical

implications of profiting from these unsuspecting image creators. By entering a prompt, the AI-generative created an image from elements contained in their AI dataset of scraped images.

2. **Copyright Challenges** - The unresolved nature of copyright issues surrounding AI-generated images underscores the need for clarity in distinguishing between “**intellectual property rights**” and “**fair usage**” within the scope of AI-generative technology. This complexity adds legal challenges that photographic societies and associations must navigate before considering the acceptance of AI-generated content. In the United States, several AI firms are being sued for copyright infringement and the matters are before the courts.
3. **Copyright Authorship of AI Generated Images** – Creators of AI-generative images are not receiving a copyright for their AI creations. United States Copyright Office’s “**Copyright Registration Guidance: Works Containing Material Generated by Artificial Intelligence**” document outlines why countries are apprehensive in issuing copyrights to AI-generated images. Their guidance document states:

“Based on the Office’s understanding of the generative AI technologies currently available, users do not exercise ultimate creative control over how such systems interpret prompts and generate material. Instead, these prompts function more like instructions to a commissioned artist—they identify what the prompter wishes to have depicted, but the machine determines how those instructions are implemented in its output.”

“When an AI technology determines the expressive elements of its output, the generated material is not the product of human authorship.³¹ As a result, that material is not protected by copyright”

The majority of photographic societies and associations require that an entrant submitting an image into their competition must hold the copyright for their submitted image.

4. **Unfair Advantage** - Accepting AI generated images in a photographic competition would create an unfair advantage, as AI algorithms are capable of producing images at a faster rate or with more precision than human photographers.

Due to the unresolved concerns highlighted above, the recognition of AI-generated images as legitimate photographs in our competitions is contingent on the resolution of these issues. Until then, participants submitting AI-generative images engage in fraudulent practices by presenting ineligible images for in photographic competitions, which is both deceptive and unethical.

Important Article to Review this article - Court Rules Against Photographer Who Sued AI Dataset for Copyright Theft - <https://petapixel.com/2024/10/01/court-rules-against-photographer-who-sued-ai-dataset-for-copyright-theft-germany-laion-robert-kneschke/>

The Majority of photographic societies and associations worldwide have adopted a firm stance, explicitly prohibiting the submission of AI-generative images and photographs enhanced with generative features. For instance, the Australian Photographic Society restricts such entries in their competitions:

Entrants must be the author of any image/s and all parts thereof submitted into an APS Competition.

All parts of the image or images must have been 'photographed' by the author.

'Content-aware Fill' or similar modification that is entirely based on pixels in the original image/s and which does not extend the image beyond its original boundaries is 'acceptable'.

'Generative Fill' or other processes that use content generated by software from written prompts or developed from the work of others is 'not acceptable'.

Question: "Can I use Generative Fill, or similar, to create or remove an object (person, flora or fauna, building, scenery effect etc) in my image?"

- *This is not allowable if you use content generated by software from written prompts or developed from the work of others. For example:*
 - *Removing an 'unnecessary' tree that is replaced with existing associated imagery is allowable.*
 - *Removing a person and replacing them with a 'dog on a lead' is not allowable. Removing the background of an existing bush scene and using text asking for a 'beach background scene' to be added is not allowable.*
 - *Using generative fill to 'add a waterfall' to a scene where the waterfall is not part of an image taken by the photographer is not allowable.*
 - *Turning a summer scene into a winter scene that introduces snow that was not part of an image taken by the photographer is not allowable.*
- *It is acknowledged that this is an area of rapid change and perhaps the most contentious"*

Another example reflecting a comparable stance is The International of Federation of Photographic Art (FIAP), which serves as the umbrella photographic organization consisting of 94 photographic societies and associations worldwide:

"Info 260/2023 states:

Pictures created by artificial intelligence are not allowed in salons under FIAP patronage. Therefore, salon organizers are asked to include the following text into the regulations of their events:

Pictures created by artificial intelligence are not allowed in this salon! It is reminded that all parts of the image have to be photographed by the author who is holding the copyright of all works submitted. Offenders will be sanctioned for life!"

CAPA's Stance and Guidelines

In the Fall of 2023, we establish 'guard-rails' designed to address potential submission of AI-generated text-to-image and photos enhanced with AI-generative technology:

1. *For the purposes of our competitions, a photographic image is defined "as being a captured image on a light-sensitive device (e.g. film camera, digital camera, smartphone, tablet, etc...) and recorded on film or in a digital format."*
2. *An artificial intelligence (AI) generated image is not deemed to be a photographic image because it was created from scratch by the AI system and contains no image captured by the photographer. Therefore, this type of image will not be accepted into our competitions.*
3. *Use of AI features contained within a post processing application (e.g. masking, sharpening, de-noise, enlarging, etc...) are permitted.*
4. *Images that involve the use of AI generative techniques like **in-painting** (where AI fills in generated elements not captured by the photographer or where AI removes elements from a photograph and replaces these elements with AI generated element) or **out-painting** (where the AI extends the image beyond its original boundaries by generating new elements) are not permitted for submission into CAPA competitions, regardless of whether text prompts were used or not.*
5. *Potential winning images may be required to have supporting images (sky, texture, etc...which must have been captured by the submitting photographer) submitted on request by the Director of Competitions.*

Furthermore, the Editing Criteria for all our competitions will be revised to include the following:

The Director of Competitions has the right to request and receive the original un-retouched JPEG or RAW file for a potential winning image in a competition for the purposes of verifying competition compliance.

Upon notification that their image is a potential winning entry, photographers may be required by the Director of Competitions to submit all original images, such as unretouched JPG or RAW files, along with other image files that were integrated into the submitted image.

Failure to comply with the Director's request for image files will result in the potential winning image being withdrawn from the competition and the competition results will be re-sorted.

These requirements aim to ensure transparency and verify adherence to the competition's specifications regarding image authenticity and compliance with the editing criteria.

Prohibited and Permitted AI Features

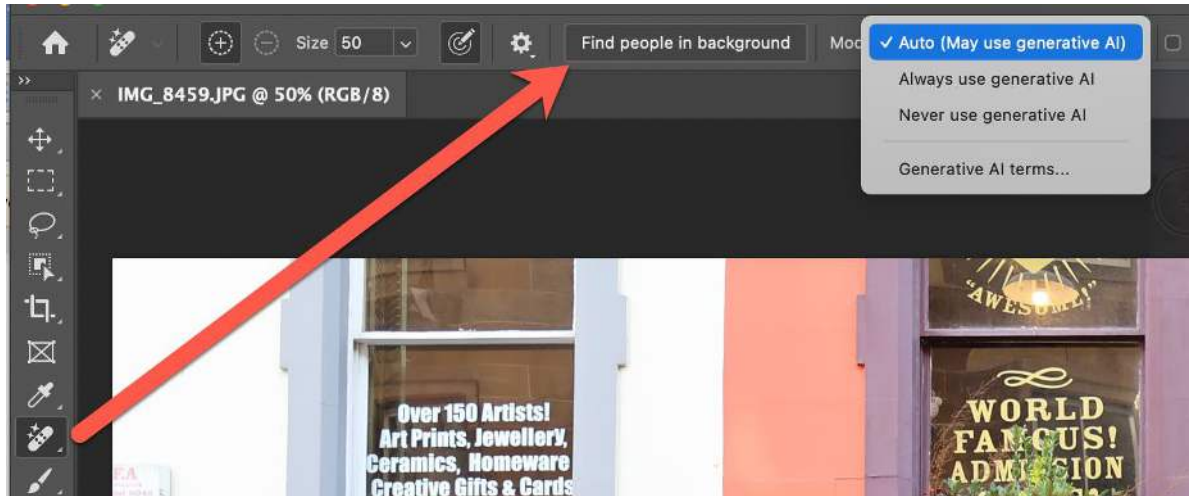
When activating a Generative feature within a post-processing application, the entire image is temporarily transferred to the cloud infrastructure of the application provider. While in the application's cloud, the Generative AI algorithm and associated dataset analyze the image.

Based on this analysis, a new visual element(s) and/or shadow(s) are generated and composited into the original image. These added Generative AI components are derived from a dataset comprising elements obtained through internet scraping of image elements or the provider's proprietary image resources.

What photo post processing applications contain AI-generative features?

As of **October 1, 2024**, **four photo post processing** applications incorporate AI-generative technology:

- Adobe Photoshop 2024 (includes beta 26.0) – Generative Fill, Generative Expand, Generative background, **Remove Distractions (wires & people)** and Firefly AI Generative text-to-image creation. **Following is a screen capture of the new Remove Distraction feature in Photoshop (beta):**



- **Adobe Photoshop Elements 2025 – AI Remove Tool**
- Canva – contains – Generative Expand, and Generative text-to-image creation.
- Clipdrop – contains Generative Fill, Instant text-to-image, Reimage, & Uncrop.
- Lightroom (Cloud version 13.x) includes Generative Remove.
- Luminar Neo – contains – GenErase, GenSwap & GenExpand.
- **Microsoft Paint – Generative Fill, Generative Crop (expand area) and Generative Erase**
- **One Photo Raw – Generative Crop and Generative Erase**
- Photoroom – contains – Generative Expand, Generative Fill, Generative Background and Generative text-to-image creation.
- Picsart – contains – Generative Replace and text-to-image creation.
- Pixlr – contains – Generative Fill, Generative Expand, and Generative text-to-image creation.
- Styler AI – contains – Generative Fill, Generative Expand, and Generative text-to-image creation.

Images enhanced with the noted Generative features are not permitted in our CAPA competitions.

AI features (machine learning AI models) contained in the following photo processing application are permitted in our competitions:

As of **October 1, 2024**, the following is a list of machine learning AI features which are permitted for use in our photo competitions:

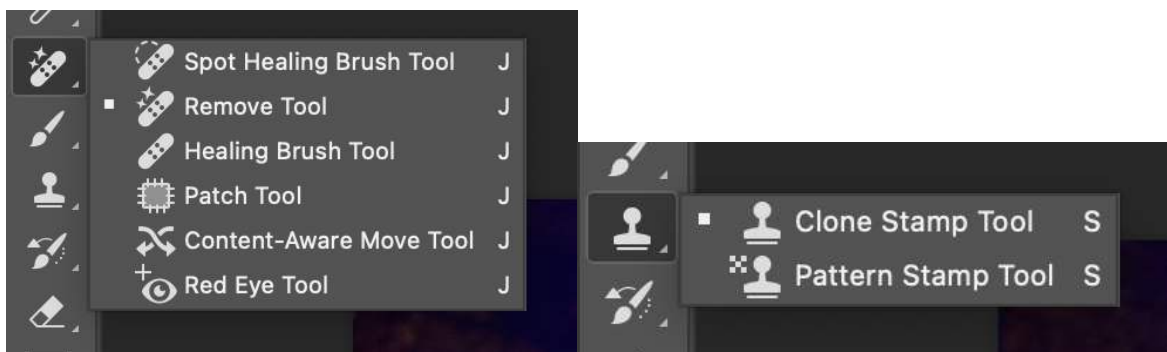
- **Luminar Neo** includes tools like AI Structure, AI Sky Replacement, AI Skin Enhancer, and more that utilize machine learning algorithms to automate and enhance photo editing tasks.
- **ON1 Photo RAW** includes tools like AI Auto Enhance, AI Match Batch Processing, and AI No-Noise AI which aim to streamline photo editing workflows.
- **DxO PhotoLab** includes DeepPRIME AI technology for tasks like denoising, sharpening, and PRIME deblurring powered by machine learning.

NOTE - In August 2023 – a DXO representative stated “*I asked for something simpler to fill in missing edges, like Content Aware Fill or something similar. Generative Fill AI, I don’t think is likely to come from a company like DXO for variety of reasons.*”

- **Topaz Labs AI** includes Gigapixel AI for upscaling images, DeNoise AI, and Sharpen AI leveraging deep learning models.

NOTE: As of January 16, 2024, Topaz Lab representative stated “*we aren’t currently making use of Generative AI as of yet but I can say that this feature is being investigated by our development team for the future version of Gigapixel AI.*”

- **Photoshop 2024**, several tools can be employed to eliminate areas of an image without triggering the Firefly algorithm. These tools include:



Screen capture of permitted Photoshop 2024 features for use in our photo competitions. that are permitted in our photo competitions.

Closing Comments

This document emphasizes CAPA's commitment to upholding the integrity of our photographic competitions and preserving the authenticity of this art form. As AI-generative technology advances, CAPA will remain vigilant in addressing emerging challenges and provide time updates to our members and associated camera clubs.

If you have any questions, concerns, or insights to share, please feel free to reach out to me at competitions@capacanada.ca. Your feedback and input are invaluable as we collectively strive to preserve the integrity and spirit of photographic art.



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ⁱ Copyright Registration Guidance: Works Containing Material Generated by Artificial Intelligence, United States Copyright Office, March 16, 2023, https://www.copyright.gov/ai/ai_policy_guidance.pdf