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The cover image began with an illustration by SCAD associate chair of architecture, Dr. Mike Hill, which was then recreated in Adobe Illustrator.

ChatGPT generated the prompt for image creation in Adobe Firefly.

Summarized prompt: Create an abstract form to represent Al itself. A sine wave or point cloud; Simple geometric architecture made of glowing lines or data points.

Summarized ChatGPT prompt used in Adobe Firefly: Minimalist data sculpture on a dark background. A smooth, flowing ribbon or wave made of luminous points of light, arranged in an elegant arc.

Next, Canva's Magic Studio Expand tool was applied to the resulting image.

To achieve the final result, designers used Adobe Photoshop's Generative Expand powered by Firefly.



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 $\Diamond$ 

Image from an urban context and building systems architecture studio course.

Vincent Zheng, B.F.A., architecture, 2025.

Work created using ComfyUI.

Prompt: A modern seafood market building on stilts over coastal wetlands, featuring exposed timber framing and a rhythmic roof structure. Include native marsh vegetation, water lilies, and a docked fishing boat. Overcast sky with soft light reflecting on calm water.

# Gen Al: The New Medium

resists containment, evincing why metaphors like tool, mirror, and brain fail to fully describe its nuances. At the 2025 SCADask AI Summit, it became clear; AI behaves like a tool but acts like a system. It reflects like a mirror but distorts like a prism. It responds like a friend but answers without soul. A new medium made of media, AI exhibits the power and magnitude to refine our creative DNA, the deep habits, intuitions, and aesthetics that compose the substrate of human expression.

When Marshall McLuhan declared, "the medium is the message" in *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, he had studied technologies across human existence — from timepieces to typography, advertisements to automation — to discover that the form conveying the message could eclipse the message itself. The medium carries its own meaning. This matters because media do more than deliver content; they alter human attention, perception, and possibility.

In the age of AI, the medium responds, predicts, and co-creates. Though McLuhan never witnessed generative AI, he anticipated its future, saying, "the hybrid or the meeting of two media is a moment of truth and revelation from which new form is born." He set the stage for AI to be perceived as unique. It transcends the hybrid with the multiplicity of mediums built into its very creation and surpasses the creative toolkit with the power to restructure workflows, aesthetics, and even authorship itself.

Before this year's AI Summit, SCADask reached out to creative business leaders to understand what impact AI had on various aspects of their industries. 75 shared their real-world takes on how AI reshapes design workflows, what they're actually looking for in new talent, and where they see AI heading. Their insights are highlighted throughout this report.

McLuhan recognized creatives' prescience to see "the message of cultural and technological challenge" before it becomes fully realized. Their agency, born from discovery, provides the creative vocabulary to "enable one medium to use or to release the power of another." Now, artists and designers wield unique power to shape Al's trajectory.

# "I think of AI as a medium."

- Tomasz Opasiński,

Creative Technologist at Adobe

Building on this framework, the 2025 SCADask AI Summit convened to explore the delta between last year — understanding AI and its potential — and this year — moving forward with AI applications and growing its capabilities. McLuhan believed that the artist's role was to diagnose emerging impacts from technologies before society comprehends. Today's designers inherit this mantle and must lead with distinctly human skills — skills machines cannot replicate, only respond to. AI does not replace designers. It amplifies their vision.

Designers carry the responsibility to challenge assumptions, bend outputs, and probe limitations — to create alongside AI, to push against it, and to channel it into unexpected forms. When algorithms converge to generate a new medium, designers answer with the foresight and human skills that secure a better future.



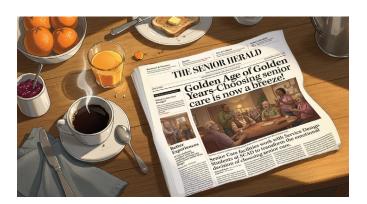
From the presentation "Easing the Emotional Turmoil of Choosing Senior Care: A Service Design Approach."

Maitreyi Badami, M.B.I. service design; Jingzi Han, M.F.A. user experience (UX) design; Junyan Sun, M.F.A. user experience (UX) design.

Work created using ChatGPT for prompts and ImageFX for images.

Prompts: (Above) A top-down view of a breakfast table where the newspaper is the clear focal point.

(Below) A hand-illustrated graphic novel-style scene capturing Joshua seated at a round table laughing as he participates in a card game with fellow residents.





"When hiring a designer, I look for three things: Presentation, because what Al doesn't replace is your ability to connect with another human being and get your ideas across; Idiosyncrasy, because if you have the craft to make something weird or unusual, compelling and beautiful, you can do anything; Collaboration, because we still live in a human world. These are what's enduring about creativity. It's the future. It's the vision. It's what we as human beings aspire to, and bring to, this world."

 Eric Uhlir, Group Creative Director and Group Experience Director at Deloitte Digital

**78**%

of leaders consider AI a positive disruptor to their industry's economic landscape.

# SCAD AI VALUES

### Be Human-Centered

Prioritize AI design that enhances human experience, addresses real-world needs, and promotes sustainability.

### Be Inclusive and Equitable

Design initiatives and solutions for all while empowering the SCAD community to develop and affirm AI advancements.

### Be Involved

Foster positive collaboration and shared knowledge among faculty, staff, and students to explore Al's creative potential.

# Be Curious and Adaptable

Embrace professional development opportunities surrounding AI to continually build literacy in trends, practices, and ethics.

# Be Empowered

Encourage the entire SCAD community to participate in Al-related initiatives, research, and decision-making.

# Be Transparent and Accountable

Provide clear road maps on AI development and implementation while communicating AI-related impacts, capabilities, and challenges.

### Be Ethical

Uphold ethical standards and principles in AI design, development, and deployment, prioritizing fairness, privacy, security, and respect.

# The Creator's Playbook

he inaugural SCAD AI Summit, held in February 2024, grappled with the scale, speed, and hype surrounding Al's development. This event ignited dialogue about the technology's creative and educational implications, culminating in the award-winning report and AI resource website: *AI Insights 2024* and SCADask AI Advantage Portal.

Both publications drew inspiration from SCAD's core values — Be strategic, innovative, positive, collaborative, transformative, and compassionate — and translated them into a framework tailored for Al's impact.

These principles shaped SCAD's approach to curriculum design and revision, faculty development, academic expansion, and institutional strategy. Together, they established an environment for

ethical, human-centered, AI innovation across the university community immersed in, or curious about, the technology. For example, chair of digital communication and interdisciplinary artist, Wioleta Kaminska, has infused her classes and SCADextra workshops with AI, encouraging students to dive into its ethical use, explore its possibilities, and test its limitations. She explains to her students, "I'm not here to promote AI or to tell you to use it. I'm here to guide you."

For her own practice, she says, "I want to know what everybody's talking about, so I'm learning how to build it. I want to be part of the conversation."

This year, SCAD invited a new cohort of industry innovators, university leadership and faculty, and students to the 2025 SCADask AI Summit to reassess AI's role in design education.



# **Moderator**

# **Utkarsh Seth**

Senior Staff UX Manager, Google

# **Internal Panelists**

# **Dan Bartlett**

Dean, School of Animation and Motion, SCAD

### Diana Diriwaechter

B.F.A., computer art, 1997

Professor, visual effects, SCAD

### **Edward Eyth**

Professor, production design, SCAD

# Kudzayi Kanyama

M.F.A., luxury and brand management, 2022

Professor, fashion marketing and management, SCAD

### Nye Warburton

Chair, interactive design and game development, SCAD

# **External Panelists**

# **Cyril Foiret**

Founder and Creative Director, Maison Meta

### Fred Gilbert

VP, Google Workspace Head of User Experience, Google

### **George Joblove**

Digital visual effects pioneer and motion picture imaging consultant

### **Onur Kece**

Founder and Chief Creative, The Refreshment Club and The School of Future Fundamentals

# Tomasz Opasiński

Creative Technologist, Adobe

# **Seth Piezas**

Founder and Executive Director, Colabi Foundation and Senior Product Manager, NVIDIA

### Joshua To

VP, Product Design, AR, Al, and Wearables, Meta

# Eric Uhlir

Group Creative Director and Group Experience Director, Deloitte Digital

# **SCAD Leaders**

# Jason Fox

M.F.A., graphic design, 2000; B.F.A., graphic design, 1998

Chief academic officer, SCAD

# Erin O'Leary

VP, institutional effectiveness, SCAD

### Tara Oviedo

VP, curriculum and assessment, SCAD

# Jesús E. Rojas Aché

VP, SCADpro and innovation, SCAD

# **Executives in Residence**

### Kate Aronowitz

B.F.A., graphic design, 1997

Portfolio Operations Lead, GV (Google Ventures)

# **Bob Chavez**

Former Executive Chairman, Hermès Americas and Board Member, Macy's Inc.

### **Bob Weis**

Author, Speaker, and Former President, Walt Disney Imagineering After two days of discussion, breakout sessions, and debate, the key message became clear: humanity and creativity endure alongside any technologies, past, present, or future.

As Al accelerates what can be built, human creativity sharpens its role and output; humans refine ideas, synthesize insights, craft narratives, and shape solutions that resonate across cultures and communities. The ability to envision what remains unseen — and to build it thoughtfully — defines the highest level of design.

In a landscape saturated in technological acceleration and abundance, success hinges on creatives' ability to embrace change, navigate across disciplines, craft intuitive and elegant solutions, interpret complexity, and lead with imagination.

"While people are expected to have some skills — and those will be changing — I think the real focus is the higher-level stuff. It's creativity. It's perspective. It's how to integrate and synthesize whatever materials are available, or that you have, to achieve the higher goal of art and design."

— **George Joblove,** digital visual effects pioneer and motion picture imaging consultant

The following skills provide a road map for how designers historically have — and will continue to — strengthen and yield their uniquely human capacities. Regardless of chosen medium(s), the creative advantage belongs to the dreamers and storytellers who infuse creation with meaning.

# Leaders expect stronger foundations

58% agree — Al literacy matters — but leaders also want graduates who have mastered the timeless fundamentals: connecting the dots across disciplines, big-picture strategic thinking, and core creative and technical know-how.



"I want to make great things — and I think everybody does — but those things are temporary and you play your part in them. It's the journey, the people who go along with you, that really matters in the end."

# **Inside Design:**

# FRED GILBERT

"Now is no different than when the web first started," says Fred Gilbert, "It was a time of great transition. Eventually the world settled down and we had Amazon, Google, Facebook. Today's the same. A lot of things are being created at the same time, but most of it's not stitched together to do anything really well. Designers need to explore, be willing to jump in there and go for it."

More than 17 years ago, Gilbert got his start at Google as one of the first mobile designers. He personally designed or led the user experience for over 37 of Google's products and creation of three subscription services, including Google Maps, Photos, Gmail, and YouTube. He now leads Google Workspace defining the next era of productivity with AI at its core. With each product and service, he has fearlessly pushed boundaries and raised design standards, iteration after iteration. "Everything a young creative learns today is going to have to change," he says. "That's been my career. Everything keeps changing and I have to keep relearning as new things come along. I think that's a major skill — don't fear having to relearn or learn new things many times over."

With each role, Gilbert sharpened his UX awareness to understand the empathy that good design requires. He explains, "The most important thing for me to find is someone who comes up with elegant solutions because there's many ways you can design a product for billions of users. Many designers put in the time and make a solution that's only good for them. A designer has to create the easiest, simplest way for all users — the elegant solution. And that requires a deep understanding of people."

Gilbert's career has always been human-centered — both creating for people and working with them. "It's all temporary. It's the humanity that matters more. Everything I've ever designed has been redesigned by somebody else."

Reflecting on his past, Gilbert finds that "the actual meaning, enjoyment, and satisfaction was the time I spent with others. I want to make great things — and I think everybody does — but those things are temporary and you play your part in them. It's the journey, the people who go along with you, that really matters in the end."

# **Feed the Inner Sherlock:**

# Curiosity and Problem-Solving

The essence of meaningful design work alongside AI requires creatives to deliberately cultivate curiosity and structured problem-solving, with an emphasis on developing these qualities independent of specific technologies. Effective designers understand that curiosity functions as a muscle that requires consistent exercise. They make daily habits to scan environments, consume diverse content, and maintain an appetite for learning across domains. This fundamental curiosity must be rooted in their intrinsic desire to understand human experience, cultural contexts, and unmet needs. With constant exposure to art history, technological trends, and a wide range of disciplines, designers build a robust mental library from which innovative ideas emerge.

True problem-solving begins with the fundamental ability to identify roadblocks or challenges. This recognition requires designers to identify patterns in existing work and analytically determine how to differentiate their approach. When working with generative AI, these abilities become particularly crucial in the process of analyzing, evaluating, and directing outputs. The ultimate design choices and creative direction must be human driven to enable innovative, disruptive, and appropriate solutions.

"Curiosity combined with perseverance yields a very different set of results. Be open-minded, constantly learning. Your curiosity needs to be sustained with the perseverance of learning things deeply so that you can capture the nuances and apply innovation in context."

- Alessandro Cannatà, chair of

luxury and brand management at SCAD

"In the world of AI and real-time technology, problem solving is really important. You have to be very comfortable with stuff constantly breaking and changing."

- Diana Diriwaechter,

professor of visual effects at SCAD





Moodboard from an Al exercise in a fibers course.

Saira Mary Netto, M.A., fibers, 2025; B.F.A., fibers, 2022.

Work created using

Adobe Firefly.

Prompt: Firefly moodboard with batik, green and white, floral batik, with color chips.

# Text-based AI use prevails

Text-based AI tools have surged in the last year -90% of leaders now regularly dive into text-based applications. Also notable is the rise in AI use to mine data for breakthroughs, ranking second among leaders at 56%. Generative art comes in third with 53% of leaders actively employing image generation in their creative work.







SketchUP 3D model (above) and image (below) from the process book for the "Echoes of Earth" SCADpro project.

Rowan Cardani, B.F.A., production design, 2025;
Mitsu Dalal, M.F.A., production design, 2025;
Bindi Davda, M.F.A., production design, 2025;
Logan Derrickson, B.F.A., animation, 2025;
Jake Kozak, M.F.A. illustration;
Ryan Liu, M.A. interactive design
and game development;
Tiffany Tawil, B.F.A. industrial design;
Anushhka Thakur, B.F.A. immersive reality.

Work created using ChatGPT.

Prompt: Enhance this SketchUP 3D model to appear more photorealistic.

# **ACTION GUIDE**

# Curiosity as a Practice

Develop curiosity as an evergreen discipline strengthened through consistent inquiry and exploration.

# **Adaptive Problem-Solving**

Embrace nonlinear approaches that combine diagnosis, disruption, and improvisation.

# **Analytical Creativity**

Recognize patterns and systems before deviating from them with intention and meaning.

### **Historical Context**

Ground innovation in knowledge of past precedents to make holistically informed creative decisions.

# **Technological Resilience**

Redefine creative problem-solving as emerging technologies transform, or augment, traditional approaches.

"I think the most important role is problem-solving. When we prescribe a series of steps, a framework, or some way to think — that's going to be disrupted. Designers have to be willing to improvise and experiment."

 Nye Warburton, chair of interactive design and game development at SCAD



"Always keep in mind how you fit into the bigger picture. Even if you're just a cog in a big machine, how does that cog keep the whole machine working? And how can you keep it better oiled?"

# **Inside Design:**

# **GEORGE JOBLOVE**

Revolutionary innovations often emerge from seemingly disparate fields. Formally educated in computer science and computer graphics, Academy Award-winner George Joblove found his career at the intersection of digital technology, photography, and filmmaking. Working alongside creatives, he recognizes that the transition from traditional to digital techniques requires preserving the artistic essence that made the original craft valuable.

"Seventy years ago, people in animation were inkers and painters on cels," he explains. "They knew more than how to ink a cel. They had a vision and imparted character into their work. How does that translate today? What are the creative skills that go beyond the mechanical?"

For Joblove, problem-solving in the rapidly evolving field of visual effects requires more than technical expertise — it demands historical context. "All art is based on the exposure people have had to what's come before so you can decide where to branch out."

Throughout his career spanning Industrial Light & Magic, Warner Brothers, Sony Pictures, and various consulting roles, Joblove has navigated the complex

relationship among history, artistic expression, and technological capability. He maintains that understanding one's place in the larger ecosystem is essential. "Think about what the ultimate goal is," he advises. "It may be making a movie. It may be making a profit — hopefully, it's both."

This larger awareness guides problem-solving efforts toward meaningful outcomes. "What is your boss and your boss's boss thinking about what you're doing?" he asks. "What's your contribution?"

For professionals at any level, Joblove recommends maintaining this perspective: "Always keep in mind how you fit into the bigger picture. Even if you're just a cog in a big machine, how does that cog keep the whole machine working? And how can you keep it better oiled?"

By remaining curious about both the creative possibilities and expanding the narrative capabilities of visual effects, Joblove has helped create some of cinema's most memorable moments. His journey illustrates the power of integrating knowledge across disciplines to ensure that the soul of artistic expression is visually conveyed.

# **Discover Magic:**

# **Experimentation and Playfulness**

Al integration in creative processes highlights experimentation and playfulness as essential drivers of innovation and originality. Experimentation invites creatives to deliberately step outside conventional methods, asking themselves bold questions. Do they take risks, break the rules, and challenge norms? When curiosity is complemented with a sense of play, designers can embrace idiosyncrasies and build the courage to disrupt standard practices. By dismantling traditional forms and reconstructing them, the true creative discovers compelling and novel expressions. The resulting work is often visionary, impactful, and enduring.

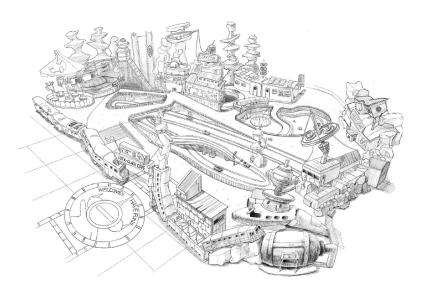
Playfulness amplifies experimentation by shifting mindsets from obligation to dynamic exploration. By approaching new technologies and ideas through play, spontaneity removes fear by transforming learning and creation into activities driven by excitement and joy. When designers immerse themselves playfully, they open avenues for surprise and encourage creative revitalization. This approach has proven particularly powerful in the context of generative AI, where fun and experimental interactions form unexpected insights and reinvigorate professional practices, which then lead to renewed excitement and innovative breakthroughs.

# Experimentation has become reality

The tinkering phase is over. Most organizations — 61% — have woven AI directly into their creative DNA, while another third are still actively testing the waters. Only 5% are just starting to dip their toes in.

"If you have the mindset, 'I'm going to play with AI,' it's different than, 'Oh, my God, I have to learn it. I have to apply it.' It's like anything else that you would consider play. It should be fun. It should be exciting. You should want to do it."

 Ray Crowell, director of SCADpro Venture at SCAD







Variation on an original sketch (above) of a theme park.

Mio Sato, M.F.A.

themed entertainment design.

Work created using NewArc.ai.

Prompt: An aerial view of a colorful android theme park.

# **Innovative tactics**

Here's how creatives are using AI to move their industries into the future:

"Behavior forecast[ing] and correlation of insights at massive scale."

"A product ... that turns literature into comics to assist autistic individuals with social and emotional context."

"Targeted narrative design for messaging campaigns across different groups."

"I think that mindset of breaking stuff is the coolest thing. That's part of the journey, along with the reward when you figure out how to fix it."

- Diana Diriwaechter



A mascot character used in "The YouTube Revolution: Why Creators are Rethinking Long- and Short-Form Content."

Matt Cross, M.B.I. design management; Tanisha Darshani, M.B.I. design management; Prathamesh Patil, M.A. design management; Milap Salot, M.A. design management.

Work created using ImageFX.

Prompt: Create a stylized 3D cartoon male character with a friendly demeanor shown in a medium wide shot, revealing him from around mid-torso upward.



# **ACTION GUIDE**

# **Bold Exploration**

Foster a willingness to challenge norms, embrace idiosyncrasy, and actively disrupt conventions.

# **Playful Learning**

Shift the mindset from rigid learning to exploratory play, making experimentation enjoyable and dynamic.

# Innovation Through Rule-Breaking

Value and actively seek unconventional approaches that challenge existing creative boundaries.

# **Surprising Outcomes**

Leverage the unpredictable nature of AI to generate novel insights and revitalize creative practice.

### **Continuous Reinvention**

Encourage iterative processes and personal experimentation as methods for growth and professional renewal.

"History is full of millionaires whose ideas started in a college class or an incubation space — in playful, experimental environments."

 Dan Bartlett, dean of School of Animation and Motion at SCAD



"You are an outsider right now. So, think how, with your experience and feelings, you can create something that will resonate."

# **Inside Design:**

# TOMASZ OPASIŃSKI

"I describe myself as an iconoclast," says Tomasz Opasiński, who has made disruption his professional signature. Now innovating at Adobe after successful stints at Netflix and in entertainment advertising, Opasiński has built a career challenging creative and technical norms.

At Adobe, he is part of a team focused on innovation. "I'm looking for new technologies to replace current technologies," he explains. "When we talk prompting, I already think about how we can kill it. I'm a troublemaker, essentially."

This constant push toward disruption serves a purpose: making better products and services for creators who want to embrace the future. Opasiński values experimentation when evaluating talent, looking for what he calls a "passion engine" that keeps designers moving forward — creatives who bring "awesome friction" to his team.

Opasiński's priorities when evaluating portfolios include "new ways of interpreting what's been done." His boredom with conventional approaches is evident: "If I see a portfolio with a slider, I'm completely against it. There are new paradigms, new ways of doing stuff."

In the spirit of play, Opasiński designs "mischievous tests" to evaluate potential team members' "storytelling skills" and thought progression: "Show me the process. How did they come from A to B to C to the why? What were they thinking? How did they iterate based on data that they were given."

Amid highly technical work, Opasiński finds his background in visual storytelling gives him an edge. "I work with engineers with 100 patents each. Yet every time they look at my images, they ask, 'What did you write?' My prompt was a third of theirs, but I ask the right question because I'm skilled with cinematography."

For newcomers to creative fields, Opasiński offers encouragement: "You don't have to be a developer to create software right now. Nobody from Airbnb worked at Hilton Hotels. They were outsiders. You are an outsider right now. So, think how, with your experience and feelings, you can create something that will resonate."

In Opasiński's view, the most valuable innovations come from creatives who bring a playful, experimental mindset to the design challenges at hand.

# **Balance Logos with Ethos:**

# Critical Thinking and Ethical Awareness

Critical thinking in design encompasses the disciplined intellectual process of active analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information gathered through observation, research, and experience. This enables designers to discern between subjective aesthetic preferences and objective strategic value while continuously questioning assumptions that underlie technological capabilities and conventional

creative practices. In the face of extreme accelerated development and content saturation, designers face critical challenges maintaining ethical integrity and creative vision. The foundation of meaningful work requires creators to cultivate critical thinking that grounds process in deliberate intention.

"How do you shift your mindset from being a wrench turner to somebody with a point of view? That's going to be the critical infrastructure of tomorrow in terms of ideas."

- Eric Uhlir

# A critical creative crossroads

Leaders' concerns about AI — including job displacement, a decline in creativity and originality, copyright and ethical issues, overreliance on AI, and diminished quality of creative output — underscore a crucial opportunity to guide its integration and ensure lasting value in human-centered work.

The tension between thoughtful creation and rapid production remains a challenge as practitioners note the risk of designing without purpose, disconnected from historical context and strategic underpinnings. True creative leadership requires individuals to maintain distinctive viewpoints and understand their responsibility for what they release into the world. The most successful designers establish their vision and intent at the outset, allowing generative AI to augment rather than dictate creative direction. This approach demands the ability to defend creative choices and analyze design elements with precision — breaking work into component parts to identify enduring value and to discard what does not serve the vision.



From the "Don't Melt My Home" campaign.

Tasha Khasakhala, M.A. advertising; B.F.A., fashion marketing and management, 2023.

Work created using ChatGPT for prompt and Midjourney for image.

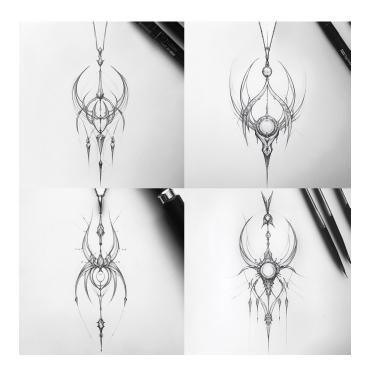
Prompt: A giant iceberg shaped like a wolf emerging from the ocean, partially melting, realistic texture, icy blue tones, overcast sky, cinematic lighting, dramatic atmosphere, environmental message, hyper-realistic.



The process of maintaining ethical awareness in design practice involves nonlinear thinking, methodological experimentation, and active engagement in ethical discourse. As AI accelerates production capabilities, the craft of thoughtful ideation faces possible erosion, potentially allowing visually polished outputs to mask strategic emptiness. Designers must recognize when overreliance on AI becomes a crutch while also understanding its technological frameworks, inherent biases, and appropriate applications. This critical examination prevents dependency and enables informed collaboration. By contextualizing current technological disruption within historical perspective, designers can approach AI with balanced frameworks — neither dismissive nor reverential — while asserting their irreplaceable human judgment in guiding ethical outcomes.

"Critical thinking isn't just linear. You go back and forth. You try different methods, which is part of the professional world."

 Wioleta Kaminska, chair of digital communication at SCAD





Sijia Pei, M.F.A., fashion, 2025.

Work created using Midjourney.

Prompt: (Left) Jewelry sketch, only lines, cat foot with nails elements, pendant, sharp feeling, simple, for evening wear, the pendant is on the back.



# **ACTION GUIDE**

### Intentional Foundation

Establish clear design intent and vision before engaging technological tools, ensuring that purpose drives production.

# Logos-Ethos Balance

Cultivate rational analysis (logos) alongside ethical responsibility (ethos), ensuring design decisions reflect technical excellence and moral consideration.

# **Analytical Deconstruction**

Practice methodically breaking designs into fundamental components to distinguish between enduring value and fleeting trends.

# **Ethical Engagement**

Participate in ongoing conversations about responsible technology development and use, contributing an artist's perspective to collective standards.

# **Technological Literacy**

Study underlying frameworks and algorithms to recognize inherent biases and limitations, and to effectively communicate with developers.

"I think it's really important for people to look under the hood of AI and understand how these things work so that you have some framework to understand when you're getting the results that you want and when there might be inherent bias."

> Joshua To, VP of Product Design for AR, Al, and Wearables at Meta

"There's so much creativity that goes into using AI where it's very human-led."



# **Inside Design:**

# ONUR KECE

Onur Kece stands at the intersection of traditional creativity and artificial intelligence, concerned about the erosion of critical thinking in an era of instant and abundant Al-driven output. As a seasoned entrepreneur, he observes the Al revolution with informed enthusiasm.

"There's such a demand for content that often strategy and ideation are put behind," Kece says. "With AI we can create something that looks amazing, maybe has nothing to do with anything, but looks amazing." His worry is fundamental — that creators lose the essential ability to think because polished execution comes effortlessly at the expense of artistic integrity and ideation. "I think every creative has to be inspired by something. What you need is an idea."

A creative professional who values tangible experiences, Kece initially resisted Al's allure. "I love architecture, I love touching things, I love feeling things. I'm not doing that," he recalls thinking when first introduced to generative Al. His entrepreneurial

path — from advertising to launching Australia's first pomegranate juice company to partnering with Danone on mineral water — was built on authentic creativity.

Now, Kece embraces the technology's potential. His Paris and Dubai-based agency, The Refreshment Club, has collaborated with brands like Hermès, Westfield, Havas, Sabonet Group, and others on AI-enabled creative communications and strategy. "There's so much creativity that goes into using AI where it's very human-led," he observes, emphasizing that human direction remains essential.

Kece's journey reflects his ethical awareness: facing his initial fear of new technology while maintaining critical vigilance. "What I realized is that instead of taking away my creativity, it made my creativity blossom in different ways," he says. His message is clear — embrace AI but never surrender the human capacity for original and critical thought.

# **Learn from the Masters:**

# Taste and Creative Judgment

To create the best solutions, top designers cultivate their ability to recognize and appreciate artistic quality, style, and meaning. Their frame of reference, shaped by personal and cultural influences, serves as both a guide and a filter in their creative practice. Taste is subjective, develops with experience, and is closely aligned with values and exposure to a wide range of disciplines. While artistic tools and mediums offer diverse capabilities, creative excellence requires refinement, judgment, and cultivated aesthetic. This ability emerges over time with deliberate study and deep exploration of historical and contemporary influences. Through continuous immersion and research, designers learn why particular styles and visions resonate — the foundational knowledge that anchors their original ideas.

Creative judgment, similarly, acts as the crucial editorial eye behind every artistic choice that guides creations like photography, music production, painting, and more. Authenticity remains central to effective creative judgment, distinguishing genuine engagement from superficial presentations. Creative professionals leverage their personal vision, nuanced judgment, and distinct taste to transform raw materials — whether traditional or Al-generated — into meaningful outputs. This creative discernment ensures that chosen mediums express authentic emotion and original ideas.

"People train their entire lives to physically play an instrument while others push buttons and create a song. Their music is all available in the same stores, but the cream rises to the top. It takes somebody with an ear and a vision to create that."

Kate Aronowitz, Portfolio Operations
 Lead at GV (Google Ventures)

62%

report moderate improvement to the quality of their creative output, suggesting AI is only one facet of a broader design toolkit.





Product visualization for an elevated trash receptacle.

Alex Murcia, B.F.A. graphic design.

Work created using Claude for prompt and Midjourney for image.

Prompt: (For trash receptacle) Design a sophisticated three-compartment waste management system embodying minimalist elegance while maximizing functionality.

(For setting) Luxurious modern backyard with marble outdoor kitchen, premium teak outdoor dining set, and manicured garden beds with exotic plants.

"Working with AI is a journey. It's not just putting a prompt into the generator and then taking what it spits out and using that as final. You have to master it to get to a refined result."

— Kudzayi Kanyama, professor of

fashion marketing and management at SCAD







Jewelry design project for a digital organic modeling course.

Hailey Paquette, B.F.A. jewelry.

Work created using Microsoft Copilot.

Prompt: Create a high jewelry collection utilizing faceted pink sapphires, cabochon fire opals, faceted green diamonds, and cabochon aquamarine. Use white diamonds on pavé elements.

### **ACTION GUIDE**

### **Deep Dives**

Develop taste through continuous education, historical and cultural awareness, and immersive engagement in creative traditions.

### **Human Vision**

Recognize the importance of human judgment and vision behind any creative medium or tool to achieve refined and authentic results.

### **Expressive Editing**

Prioritize genuine expression and authenticity to connect deeply and meaningfully with audiences, differentiating substantive creative work from superficial content.

### **Niche Exploration**

Embrace experimentation within hyper-niches to uncover unique personal styles, continuously refining creative judgment.

### **Choice and Responsibility**

Maintain active editorial control over creative outputs, using personal vision and taste to elevate and define outcomes.

"What I look for is not the usage of AI but the quality of the image. I also ask myself: 'Does that person have the eye to recognize that this is something beautiful."

- Diana Diriwaechter



"You're not going to just write a prompt, push a button, and say, 'That's my finished project.' No—explain, try to work on it more and not use it to cut corners, but to amplify your vision and creativity."

### **Inside Design:**

### CYRIL FOIRET

Cyril Foiret champions the irreplaceable value of human taste in creative work. His perspective is clear: "Al does not have taste. The person behind it brings their vision and taste."

As fashion brands form innovation teams to implement AI solutions, Foiret positions himself at the convergence of human discernment and technological advancement. He compares AI to photography saying, "Whoever is behind the camera has their own vision, their way of framing. It's the same with AI."

His position as Founder and Creative Director at Maison Meta — a leading Gen AI creative studio that specializes in AI-driven marketing campaigns in fashion, beauty, and luxury — provides a sturdy foundation for his perspective on creativity and technology. Foiret observes the industry's transformation firsthand, consulting with major companies like L'Oréal, which has committed to authenticity by ensuring that humans remain central to their creative campaigns.

He observes an emerging craving for "human experiences," particularly in luxury retail. As technology expands, he explains, "the more human connection will be needed. On one side, technology is helping us and we're advancing, on the other side, human connection will need to prevail."

To address this tension, Foiret advocates for a balance between artistry and technology. What drives brands toward AI, he says, is "time, cost, and efficiency," noting that traditional photoshoots requiring months of planning can now be executed in half the time. Despite the ability to decrease costs, he insists Alfueled efficiency shouldn't compromise authenticity. "You're not going to just write a prompt, push a button, and say, 'That's my finished project.' No — explain, try to work on it more and not use it to cut corners, but to amplify your vision and creativity."

As an "extremely curious person" whose eyes "scan rooms and see every single detail," Foiret embodies the artistic judgment he embraces. He delights in Al's occasional "element of surprise," unexpected outputs that spark new perspectives and possibilities, while maintaining that human discernment remains essential to the process.

For Foiret, the future belongs to those who understand how to merge traditional craftsmanship with contemporary innovation: "Authenticity, craftsmanship, taste, and the new technology goes a long way — one is not replacing the other." In his design practice, Al augments the human touch.

## **Ideate with Humanity:**

# Emotional Intelligence and Empathy

Emotional intelligence integrated with technological capability represents a powerful combination for contemporary designers. By maintaining an awareness for feeling, creators ensure their work transcends technical impressiveness to achieve genuine connection with the audience or users. This perspective reframes technological proficiency as a means to enhance emotional expression, allowing for more frequent, authentic engagement that complements traditional approaches. Educational frameworks increasingly recognize this balance, emphasizing that empathetic awareness of consequences must accompany creative empowerment. The most successful organizations actively cultivate cultures of connection, compassion, and emotional intelligence, recognizing that these seemingly simple human qualities represent sophisticated professional capacities. By prioritizing foundational human elements, designers ensure their work achieves its ultimate purpose: creating authentic and memorable connection that resonates.

"We look at empathy and compassion when we're engaging with people but they also show up in the process of designing products for people — to serve your customers and audience."

 Muunuu Nandigjav, associate dean of School of Animation and Motion at SCAD In design's heart resides the irreplaceable human capacity for kinship and empathetic understanding. While technological advancements offer unprecedented creative possibilities, practitioners emphasize that fundamental human qualities like relatability and compassion remain the essential foundation of sincere work. This perspective repositions technology as optional rather than obligatory, with creators free to choose their mediums. The ability to craft genuine emotion in the visual arts, for example, via facial expressions, body language, and contextual elements represents knowledge gained through lived experience. This emotional dimension

"If I don't have something to say, if I don't connect with the audience on some level, they're not going to care. They're not going to know what tools are used. The emotion in the story is all that matters."

- Diana Diriwaechter

distinguishes human creativity, with many design leaders noting that audiences instinctively seek humanity in what touches them — the affinity that cannot be manufactured through computational processes alone. This empathy extends beyond creative output to professional environments, where positive attitudes and collaborative spirit elevate production.



Image from senior fashion collection.

Milky Kidane, M.A. creative business leadership; B.F.A., fashion, 2024.

Work created using Midjourney.

Prompt: Envision an avant-garde back-centric garment sculpted from metallic organza, defying convention with a structural masterpiece.



### The human touch matters

Storytelling-rich industries like film, game design, television, and graphic design adopt AI more selectively — over half use AI in 20% of their creative projects or less, prioritizing human creativity while their tech-focused peers dive in deeper.





From a series of storyboard images for "International Students' Healthcare."

Pallavi Borkar, M.A. service design;
Aijia Fang, M.A. service design;
Toko He, M.A. service design;
Omkar Talwalkar, M.A. service design;
Jiaxue Tang, M.A. service design;
Tianlan Wu, M.A. service design.

Work created using ChatGPT.

Prompt: Illustrate the scenario of an international student visiting a doctor in the U.S.A. for the first time.



### **ACTION GUIDE**

### **Emotional Authenticity**

Prioritize genuine human expression and emotional resonance, recognizing these qualities as the foundation that technology should enhance.

### Story-Centered

Position narrative purpose and emotional impact as governing principles.

### **Relational Proficiency**

Develop interpersonal skills — communication, collaboration, and empathy — with the same deliberate intention given to technical expertise and other facets of design.

#### **Mediums and Options**

Approach generative AI and emerging technologies as choices that can amplify creative vision.

#### **Emotional Awareness**

Practice empathetic consideration of how creative work affects others, recognizing that creative empowerment carries implicit responsibility.

#### **Connection Prioritized**

Focus on creating authentic moments that transcend technical impressiveness, understanding that emotional resonance represents design's ultimate value.

#### **Cultural Cultivation**

Contribute to professional environments that value connection, compassion, and positive attitudes as sophisticated professional competencies.

"I still need that human component."

Kudzayi Kanyama



"By talking to somebody, relating to them, having someone understand them better — It's human kindness. It's compassion."

### **Inside Design:**

### **BOB CHAVEZ**

"I lead with emotion because I think it's important," says Bob Chavez, Board Member for Macy's Inc. and Executive in Residence at SCAD. Recently retired as Executive Chairman of Hermès Americas, Chavez built his remarkable career on a philosophy that defies modern corporate convention — embracing the power of emotional intelligence in relationship-building.

When challenged about this unorthodox leadership style, Chavez responds: "How can I not?" For him, emotional engagement from leaders is a fundamental necessity that creates bonds more profound than transactional relationships. "The impact that it has on people is significantly greater than if you don't get them emotionally connected," he explains.

Chavez observes today's paradox of connectivity — people physically together yet mentally elsewhere, tethered to digital devices. He recounts witnessing a couple at dinner, food untouched before them, both absorbed in their phones. "We should be IRL — in real life," he says. "They were out to dinner and didn't even look up and talk. If you can't relate to people, then you can't communicate and make a connection."

Social disengagement troubles Chavez and informs his perspective on authentic interaction. "It starts with basic human instincts," he explains, "communication, relatability, collaboration ... human kindness. Empathy." These fundamentals converge to build relationships that endure beyond the surface.

During his tenure at Hermès, these principles shaped the company culture. "We can teach you everything about Hermès. We can teach you how to stitch, how to make a handbag, how to understand the history and the culture," he says. "But we cannot teach you how to smile." For Chavez, this authentic warmth remains an essential quality and leads to profound transformation.

"When you develop a culture of connection, compassion, empathy, and emotion, it brings people together," he says. This inclusivity creates what he describes as "a family unit" where people feel seen and valued, fostering "a better feeling inside" that transcends professional satisfaction and fosters an exceptional professional environment. "By talking to somebody, relating to them, having someone understand them better — It's human kindness. It's compassion," Chavez says. "We can't forget those very simple basics."

## **Roll with Challenges:**

## Adaptability and Resilience

Today's creative professionals recognize that maintaining a flexible mindset requires a dedicated spirit to self-educate through teaching and learning. This perspective shifts the focus from technical mastery and particular methodologies toward versatile design that prioritizes vision and outcomes. Although some creators have the luxury to choose preferred platforms, professional contexts often dictate technological constraints that require flexibility and agility. To further

professional development, creatives must maintain a maker's mentality that allows them to consistently produce work and form distinctive viewpoints at the same time. In the face of change, the ability to operate through discomfort and embrace friction drives innovation. Many technologies aim to eliminate struggle; however, creative growth emerges from progressing through design without the immediate answers.

"The creative process is not about having a broad palette of tech or software skills but having a flexible one where the focus is on the vision or an idea along with the ability to create an outcome rather than the specific things needed to make it happen."

Dan Bartlett





User journey storyboard concept from "CropClan," a smart community platform connecting young adults.

Punasa (Bee) Sihsobhhon, M.F.A. user experience (UX) design; B.F.A., graphic design, 2023; Xinjin Xu, M.F.A. interactive design and game development.

Work created using Canva.

Prompt: 25-year-old Asian girl with long ponytail, wearing yellow shirt and blue jeans with white sneakers sitting in room with moving boxes;

Style = Color Pencil; Orientation = Landscape.

When accelerated change and uncertainty prevail, mental pliability — an openness to novel methodologies and frameworks — provides the fundamental ingredient to thrive. This resilience complements adaptability as new technologies beget novel ways to think, design, and build. Tenacity extends to collaborative design, where adaptation and support move projects forward. The most valuable creative mindset combines strong convictions with loose attachment, arguing for robust ideas, but exhibiting a willingness to yield to other points of view. This learning orientation prioritizes understanding over comfort and seeks challenges that expand capabilities. Transforming setbacks into progress distinguishes successful practitioners, who

"These are the people I want to be around. People who are excited to keep learning new things, and people who have strong opinions loosely held."

Fred Gilbert, VP and Google Workspace
 Head of User Experience at Google

recognize that friction and constraints often yield revelations and breakthroughs. By maintaining momentum through continuous learning and contextualized understanding of technological history, designers develop the confidence to frame future challenges as opportunities.



From "BeeHop," a project exploring more seamless transportation for SCAD students.

Ishita Banati, M.B.I. design management;
Tanisha Darshani, M.B.I. design management;
Isha Deosthali, M.A. design management;
Lester D'sa, M.A. industrial design;
Angela Tseng, M.A. graphic design
and visual experience.

Work created using Adobe Firefly.

Prompt: Inside a modern shuttle bus, looking toward the front. Large windows show a sunny countryside view. The space feels clean, spacious, and comfortable.



### Al blasts through the tedium

Speed and efficiency dominate the AI opportunity space by a landslide — nearly half of leaders utilized descriptors like "faster," "quickly," or "efficiency." Additional opportunities include workflow fine-tuning, production scaling, tedium reduction, democratization, data synthesis breakthroughs, and rapid ideation.



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From a dramatic writing limited series original pitch assignment.

Ashley Wilson, M.F.A., dramatic writing, 2024.

Work created using Midjourney.

Prompt: A spotlight shines on a Roman emperor. He stands on a massive stage and performs for an empty colosseum, strobe lights, bright colors, painting.

## **ACTION GUIDE**

### **Learning Perpetually**

Embrace continuous education as both teacher and student to promote selfrenewal and expansion.

#### Vision-Centered Flexibility

Develop technical versatility anchored by creative purpose, prioritizing outcomes.

### **Productive Discomfort**

Reframe struggle and uncertainty as essential catalysts for creative growth.

#### **Balancing Conviction**

Cultivate strong creative viewpoints held with sufficient flexibility to incorporate others' insights and collaborative perspectives.

### **Navigating Roadblocks**

Transform setbacks into developmental opportunities by focusing on adaptive responses.

### **Contextual Understanding**

Position technological disruptions through a historical lens to demystify change and approach evolution with informed confidence.

### **Conserving Momentum**

Sustain creative motion through continuous making and learning, recognizing that adaptation requires active engagement.

"Designers need the dedicated spirit to embrace these technologies and continually educate themselves. I find myself learning as much as I am teaching."

> Edward Eyth, professor of production design at SCAD



"Be willing to evaluate what you could have done better and then go at it again. Sometimes it doesn't work and sometimes it's a success."

### **Inside Design:**

## **JOSHUA TO**

Josh To thrives at the intersection of emerging technologies at Meta, where he champions adaptability as the cornerstone of creative progress. He approaches each new design challenge with openness, seeing shifts in the industry as opportunities for innovation.

"The more pliable and flexible the mind is to new ways of working, to new ways of building — that's going to be the fundamental ingredient you need to help a business thrive and grow," To says. He deliberately seeks junior talent to refresh his team's perspective, valuing their adaptability and willingness to challenge entrenched methods

When projects face obstacles, To sees them as essential learning moments. "All the best laid plans can fall flat," he says. "It's how you deal with the setbacks that will be the difference-maker between forward progress or being bummed out and giving up."

This resilience stems from his own journey — one marked by determination and what he calls "spirit and hustle." He reveals he shouldn't have the job he holds today, but fought for it, finding back doors when front doors remained closed.

To believes the most innovative solutions emerge from restrictions rather than unlimited resources. "History proves that some of the best solutions come through when there's a bunch of constraints," he says. "It's not when you have \$1 billion and all the tools at your disposal. It mostly happens with a limited budget, limited time, and team members with varying skills."

Through embracing adaptability while maintaining his core values, To navigates industry challenges with optimism and purpose. His approach balances openness to new methods with the resilience to overcome inevitable setbacks, even when design ideas are challenged. "Sometimes you're going to have a strong opinion and want to manifest it into the world but it's either not a good idea or it is, but it's not the right time or with the right team," he says. "There will be moments in your life where your job is to be a good follower and recognize a good idea that someone is pushing and do everything you can to help."

For To, design is a process that builds character. "Be willing to evaluate what you could have done better and then go at it again," he says. "Sometimes it doesn't work and sometimes it's a success."

## **Build Relationships:**

# Communication and Collaboration

Effective communication and collaboration, whether with human teams or generative AI, rely on clarity, empathy, and adaptability. Success emerges when creatives master the ability to articulate their vision clearly, translating complex ideas into precise language and intuitive visuals tailored to the distinct audience — whether colleagues, users, software, or systems. Communicating effectively with AI requires a new vernacular, a skillful interplay of words and images that differs from traditional human interactions. This proficiency ensures that both human collaborators and AI platforms become partners in creative processes.





"Formula 1 Experiences Expansion Proposal" for service design course.

Bianca Falcão, M.F.A. service design; Daniel Guth Vega, M.F.A. service design; B.F.A., architecture, 2019; Ruiwen Shou, M.F.A. service design.

Work created using ChatGPT for prompt and Midjourney for image.

Prompt: A stunning rooftop bar atop a modern Scandinavian-style motor sport hotel, located on the third or fourth floor, offering breathtaking panoramic views of the Silverstone F1 track in the background.

84%

are optimistic — leaders are betting on AI to elevate design.

At the heart of successful collaboration lies the power of storytelling — the ability to present a compelling narrative around an idea or product that ensures it stands out with authenticity in an increasingly crowded creative landscape. Storytelling demonstrates a profound understanding of human psychology and motivation that culminates with emotional resonance and lasting impact. Moreover, fostering collaborative environments cultivates critical soft skills: interpersonal communication, organization, and adaptability under pressure. Ultimately, embracing open dialogue, empathy, and strategic optimism equips creative teams with innovative and unexpected insights.

"Communicating with AI visually, putting in sketches, is a different process than communicating for a person because you have to strike a different vernacular — a different style and visual language."

- Edward Eyth

"It's not necessarily how well-made something is. It's also the story told behind it because people will be overwhelmed by lots of designers saying that they're making something."

- Eric Uhlir





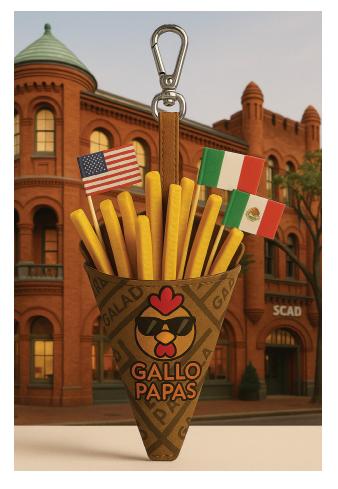
From senior showcase project "Gallo Papas: Crafting Identity Through Flavor, Design, and Ritual."

Alejandro Galvan Venegas, M.A., luxury and brand management, 2025.

Work created using DALL-E and Adobe Firefly.

Prompts: (Above) A product display featuring collectible travel-themed keychains from the Gallo Papas brand.

(Right) A close-up product shot of a luxury keychain shaped like a designer-style cone filled with golden french fries. The background shows the iconic red-brick Poetter Hall.



## **ACTION GUIDE**

### **Clarity Across Mediums**

Employ precision and adaptability in verbal and visual languages to effectively communicate with people and AI.

### **Storytelling Power**

Leverage compelling narratives to differentiate creative projects and ensure emotional resonance.

### **Crossing Boundaries**

Embrace collaborative methods that transcend traditional divisions among disciplines and foster seamless interaction between human teams and AI systems.

### **Human-Al Fluency**

Develop specialized communication skills and strategies suited for interactions with AI, balancing clear instruction with openness to experimentation and discovery.

### Interpersonal and Digital Empathy

Strengthen empathy and deep understanding of human psychology to enhance interactions within human teams, while simultaneously building intuition for productive collaboration with Al.

"Interpersonal skills are going to be the new superpower of this generation and the generation beyond."

Alessandro Cannatà



"The ability to curate, to think critically, to communicate well— those will be hard skills that protect our human place."

### **Inside Design:**

### SETH PIEZAS

Seth Piezas navigates the technological landscape with a unique perspective shaped by his journey from the arts to the forefront of Al. Having traveled from Pixar and Adult Swim to the frontiers of autonomous systems at NVIDIA, he brings an artist's sensibility to technological advancement, seeing beyond the technical capabilities to the human elements that drive meaningful innovation.

"Focus on the human connection. Communication and other soft skills are increasing in weight," Piezas says, recognizing that technology's greatest potential emerges through effective human collaboration.

This philosophy led him to establish the Colabi Foundation: a nonprofit dedicated to advancing successful human-AI collaboration. The foundation works to build the governance to fund, develop, scale, and deploy superintelligent domain models that are safe, democratized, and equitable. Through this work, Piezas engages with students and practitioners across various fields to address workforce transformation as AI's impact expands.

His approach to collaboration stems from lessons learned throughout his career, like the value of honest inquiry, recalling how the brilliant chief scientist at Pixar, Tony DeRose, engaged with the team. "Tony was the smartest guy in the room." Piezas says,

"Maybe because he was the smartest guy, he would ask questions whenever he didn't know something. I thought that was amazing because there were people who knew far less but were ready with an answer regardless. Even if they didn't know, they just put it out there. By revealing what he didn't know, Tony taught me that asking questions was as brave as answering them."

In an accelerated and evolving technological landscape, Piezas emphasizes that certain human skills remain invaluable. "The ability to curate, to think critically, to communicate well — those will be hard skills that protect our human place," he insists. While technical capabilities inevitably change, the capacity to make thoughtful selections and articulate ideas well remains constant

Furthermore, as the interface to AI reduces to natural human communication patterns (language, visuals), these communications skills bode as well for human-human collaboration as they do for human-AI collaboration.

Through his deeply considered philosophy of humancentered technology, Piezas intends to carve a path with AI that remains strongly "human aligned."

## **Imagine Tomorrow:**

## Foresight and Strategic Thinking

Foresight and strategic thinking equip creative professionals with the ability to anticipate shifts, recognize opportunities, and build sustainable solutions. Effective foresight involves defining long-term goals while carefully observing market signals, consumer behavior, and technological developments. It means understanding the ultimate objectives of both the project and the stakeholders involved, allowing designers and artists to consistently align their contributions with broader organizational strategies.

Strategic thinking demands a blend of structured, repeatable approaches and innovative disruptions. Creatives who excel strategically master the established formula and diverge from it with deliberation to carve out new markets and compelling alternatives. Whether by open-sourcing technological frameworks, investing in human talent alongside technology, or strategically breaking from industry norms, creative leaders use foresight to craft resilient, distinctive futures. They actively anticipate change, build agile systems, and continually refine their vision, understanding that careers, brands, and impactful creative solutions remain intentional.

"You have to be in the store, be on the scene. You have to understand and listen to the clients. What are they saying? What are they looking for? It will help you understand the business. My philosophy is: Don't look at the paper. Look at the product."

 Bob Chavez, Former Executive Chairman of Hermès Americas and Board Member at Macy's Inc.



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Image from a speculative brand film and immersive campaign, "Into the Stream: Beyond the Bingewatch."

Chloe Christianson, B.F.A., advertising and branding, 2025;

Meg Filar, B.F.A., social strategy and management, 2025;

Bianca Laurita, B.F.A., advertising and branding, 2025;

TK Pickett, B.F.A. social strategy and management;

Gabbi Studier, B.F.A., advertising and branding, 2025.

Work created using Midjourney.

Prompt: A lone figure standing on a glowing glass bridge suspended in a surreal void. Floor panels illuminate with vibrant red, emerald green, and magenta neon light.

91%

measure successful AI integration by its ability to give back precious time.

### **Economic relief**

Al is delivering bottom-line benefits without cannibalizing jobs. Two-thirds report slashed operational costs while a third celebrate revenue bumps. Nearly a quarter have expanded their teams with Al-focused roles. Remarkably, only 10% have trimmed traditional creative positions.

"Strategy is a foundational element that needs to be amplified."

- Kudzayi Kanyama



Reverse process from AI to human from the project "Made by Humans: The AI Art Collective."

Laura Garcia Gomez, M.A. graphic design and visual experience.

Work created using Adobe Firefly.

Prompt: (Below, left) A digital illustrated texture of flowers and organic lines on a solid color background.







## **ACTION GUIDE**

### **Goal-Oriented Vision**

Align creative efforts with clarity and purpose to strategic objectives.

### **Creative Divergence**

Master established industry norms while strategically challenging them to create unique value and differentiation.

### **Human-Centric Insight**

Directly engage with, and understand, real-world contexts to guide strategic decisions.

### **Technological Fluency**

Adopt and adapt openly accessible technologies to amplify creative potential.

### **Intentional Impact**

Construct and nurture careers, brands, and creative solutions for lasting impact and value.

"Figure out how you create repeatable, incentivized structures for people to engage with technology in bite-sized ways to solve discrete challenges."

- Eric Uhlir

"Today's students could be the generation who adopts AI and adds it to their already growing artistic competence. It's still their vision. AI has the potential to extend their reach."



### **Inside Design:**

### **BOB WEIS**

With decades steering Disney Imagineering's immersive worlds from concept to reality across global parks, Bob Weis has developed a distinctive ability to anticipate shifts before they arrive — discerning patterns in emerging technologies and cultural movements long before they become obvious.

"Keep yourself always on the frontier," Weis says. As an Executive in Residence at SCAD and former consultant with Gensler, one of the world's largest architectural firms, he offers perceptive advice on navigating design through storytelling and immersive interaction in the face of explosive technological change.

Weis' foresight is rooted in historical perspective. Years before AI impacted creative careers, he recognized how technologies follow predictable patterns from novelty to commodity. He recalls, "PowerPoint democratized the ability to tell a story on a computer."

Over time, the novelty waned, "Nobody cared about it anymore. It was just the way to tell the story, and the value became whoever the best storytellers and presenters were," he says.

His experience frames technological disruption as an inevitable cycle to be strategically navigated. "There's going to be noise everywhere," Weis explains. "It's internal to how you want to use that artistically and

socially. What are you creating? How do you make yourself the most unusual, most creative in a world where that will be the most valuable commodity?"

As a creative strategist, Weis notes patterns within disruption. He mentions, for example, Meow Wolf's Las Vegas installation, located away from the standardized casino layouts of the Strip. "That renegade with the signature broke through and figured out that something else could happen in Vegas besides what everybody else had done by formula. You have to read the formula and ask, 'What innovation can I extract?'"

For emerging designers, Weis advocates strategic positioning at the intersection of established institutions and personal expression. "You could be working for Adobe and doing pottery if you want, and you should do both," he advises. "They'll feed on each other and you won't know where that endpoint really is yet."

Above all, Weis champions the strategic advantage of embracing uncertainty. "This is a blank sheet of paper. This is a completely open road," he says. "Today's students could be the generation who adopts AI and adds it to their already growing artistic competence. It's still their vision. AI has the potential to extend their reach."

### **Guide the Vision:**

# Leadership, Initiative, and the Entrepreneurial Mindset

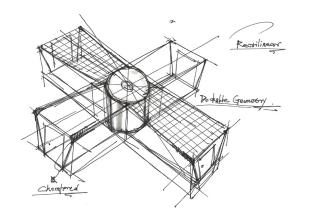
Creative leadership demands initiative, vision, and the humility to build alongside others. True leaders model curiosity, responsibility, and empathy while creating space for others to meaningfully contribute. In both traditional design teams and Al-augmented environments, leadership is increasingly measured by how well one cultivates independent thinkers, unlocks potential in others, and fosters a sense of shared purpose.

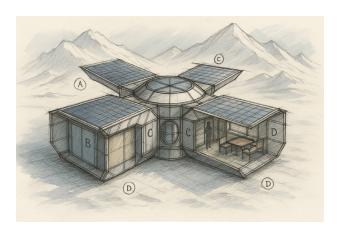
Initiative and entrepreneurial mindset go together — they involve seeing opportunity in constraint, acting decisively, and taking ownership without waiting for permission. The most impactful creators today hack together tools, build systems, and explore ideas in motion. Their mindsets thrive on hunger, experimentation, and craft honed through personal exploration and professional development. As creation becomes more democratized through AI, leadership will belong to those who master the technology alongside foundational design principles. They will inspire others to act, solve problems, and build something meaningful — as a team.

71%

cite expertise gaps as a significant hurdle, positioning AI-savvy designers to fill a massive opportunity void. "As an employer I could teach you any software program. I'm looking for the storytellers, the motivators, the hungry."

- Diana Diriwaechter









Concept development images from "Aira: Life Protection in Extreme Environments."



Zhengyuan Chen, M.F.A., interior design, 2025.

Work created using ChatGPT and Midjourney.

Prompt: A high-plateau safety pod system made up of multiple modular units connected linearly. Each module has the same volume and structure, and is protected from extreme wind and snow conditions by an aluminum alloy curved shell on the outside.





From "The North Face" final presentation in Future of Shopping: Retail Innovation for Customer Empowerment course.

Morgan Webb, B.F.A., fashion marketing and management, 2025.

Work created using Adobe Firefly.

Prompt: Puffer jacket floating amongst a snowy mountain landscape with a reflective alpine lake. Hyperrealistic, nature blending with fashion, centered subject.

## **ACTION GUIDE**

#### **Decisive Action**

Ground bold action that signals initiative and earns trust in the problem-solving process.

### **Hunger and Humility**

Balance ambition with the humility to learn, listen, and collaborate.

### **Builders at Heart**

Make, test, iterate, and refine solutions with visible passion and ownership.

#### **Systems and Support**

Design repeatable structures that nurture team growth and unlock the potential of emerging contributors.

### **Relational Responsibility**

Root leadership in empathy, responsiveness, and shared accountability.

"Al will democratize creation itself. This new world is going to be a world where independents and entrepreneurs can create anything, get it going, and get it out there — start their own business. And that's going to be more possible than ever before. It's a different mindset."

Fred Gilbert



"What separates people who continue to rise? They approach ideas from a place of humility. They see a problem, have an idea, and make it happen."

### **Inside Design:**

### **ERIC UHLIR**

Creativity demands leadership that nurtures potential and initiative. As Group Creative Director at Deloitte Digital and a visual artist, Eric Uhlir understands this balance through 25 years of experience spanning commercial technology, brand communications, and public sector work.

His human-centered approach stems from his own artistic journey. "When I embarked on a career in creativity, working professionally for IT companies, agencies, etcetera. I made it a goal to hold on to my practice as a painter because that was first and foremost the most important. It gives me creativity and feeds me."

The creative life requires entrepreneurial thinking, something Uhlir actively cultivates in his role at Deloitte and as a successful artist. "Part of creating entrepreneurial mindsets is a societal reflex to turn people into opportunity makers," he says. In his practice, this means transforming potential downsides into new business opportunities and creative solutions.

Uhlir's approach reflects his understanding of diversity. "You have to have empathy and respect for different people's learning styles," he notes. "My biggest obligation is to help them be successful." This

perspective shapes how he introduces new tools like Al to his teams, creating what he calls "repeatable, incentivized structures" that allow design professionals to incrementally engage with technology.

Initiative stands central to Uhlir's definition of creative success. He searches for it when seeking team members, often recruiting beyond traditional channels like CreativeMornings, a global monthly breakfast lecture series that celebrates creativity and fosters connections among creative professionals. "If you're putting in the energy to show up to CreativeMornings at eight in the morning on some rainy Thursday, you've already got to be motivated," he says of his unconventional approach.

For designers, Uhlir's guidance is practical: "Prioritize. Come up with a backlog. Focus on what's most important." But perhaps his most valuable insight comes from observing proactive talent: "What separates people who continue to rise? They approach ideas from a place of humility. They see a problem, have an idea, and make it happen."

At its core, Uhlir's leadership philosophy is about connection. "It's me as a human relating to these other human beings. I understand there is something new, like AI, and ask them, 'How do I help you with this?"

# Infuse Works with Meaning:

## Storytelling and Presentation

Stories and the forms in which they are told become the connective tissues that breathe creative work to life. Whether through a pitch, an immersive experience, or a conversation with a client, the ability to frame ideas and emotionally connect with an audience transforms good design into compelling, memorable narratives. In a world increasingly shaped by technology, clarity of vision and emotional depth conveyed with an authentic voice resonate the most. As mediums are invented and evolve, the story remains a crucial element in design that endures.

By articulating process, building trust, and inspiring belief, presentation skills add polish to the final creation. Effective communicators know how to construct an argument, make it relevant, and express it with confidence and empathy. This includes the ability to talk intelligently about one's work, positioning oneself as a creator with purpose. Generative AI may enhance narrative through interactivity, personalization, or language modeling but the role of the human storyteller remains central: to create connection, evoke emotion, and weave design with significance.

"The most effective, meaningful outcomes are created by humans who articulate their exact vision."

— Dan Bartlett

"In an AI world where now my boss is generating conceptual ideas and coming to me and saying, can your team refine this? Can they make more of this? Can they execute on this? Well, it's not necessarily that specific craft that's going to set you apart. It's your ability to tell the story, to really represent it. It's your ability to convince people. I think it rebalances those factors in different ways."

- Eric Uhlir



**☆** 

"Treehouse Village in Deep Forest" project in Game Art: Virtual World Building course.

Pooja Kamble, M.A. interactive design and game development.

Work created using Unreal, enhanced with AI plugin, Dash, for creating the cables.

Prompt: Cable tool [Dash plugin offers options for customizing width, number, radius, and more].





From a fibers course exercise to create a repeated pattern in Al and adjust the result to repeat for manufacturing.

Arti Rajput, M.A. fibers.

Work created using Adobe Firefly.

Prompts: (For room)

Room view, plain white wall, white couch.

(For wallpaper) Large pink and powder-blue modern florals straight repeat pattern with broad stripes background.



From the final project in luxury and brand management, "Fragrance as an Experience: Elevating the Kessler Collection's Sensory Identity."

Cimone Jefferson, M.A., luxury and brand management, 2025.

Work created using Leonardo.Ai.

Prompt: Create an immersive lobby experience where guests engage with illuminated crystal forms.



# **ACTION GUIDE**

#### Story at the Core

Build every creative effort around a clear and compelling narrative that guides design choices, allowing mediums to support the story.

#### **Emotional Connection**

Move the audience through emotionally rich and memorable storytelling.

#### **Authentic Voice**

Articulate the design perspective to give work clarity, credibility, and meaning.

#### **Relational Communication**

Strengthen storytelling with trust, relatability, and clear rationale tailored to the audience.

#### Al as Amplifier

Employ AI as a supporting tool to expand storytelling potential alongside the human ability to craft and communicate meaning.

"I want to see a designer who can pitch me an idea, go back to their seat, mock a prototype up, and then come back and pitch it again."

- Nye Warburton



"I look for curiosity, problemsolving, storytelling, idiosyncrasy, all these things. I've hired hundreds of designers in my career way before AI ever came along. These were the characteristics I was looking for then, and these are the characteristics we're going to continue to look for."

#### **Inside Design:**

# **KATE ARONOWITZ**

SCAD graphic design graduate and current Executive in Residence, Kate Aronowitz, possesses over 25 years of experience with designers and brings a fundamental truth to her work with founders and teams: Storytelling is essential to creative success. As an executive who built world-class design organizations at eBay, LinkedIn, Facebook, and Wealthfront, her approach emphasizes timeless creative skills over technological trends.

"I look for curiosity, problem-solving, storytelling, idiosyncrasy, all these things," Aronowitz explains when describing the qualities she seeks. "I've hired hundreds of designers in my career way before Al ever came along. These were the characteristics I was looking for then, and these are the characteristics we're going to continue to look for."

In her current role at GV (Google Ventures), Aronowitz coaches portfolio companies on design processes and product development. When advising early-stage founders, she consistently emphasizes presentation and narrative skills above technical proficiency.

"Who I'm usually talking to is a founder who has a great idea and they've used some type of tool to cobble it together enough to get some money to make it," she says. Her guidance remains consistent: "Be articulate. Be a good storyteller. Be curious and adaptive."

Her appreciation for substantive storytelling extends to how Aronowitz evaluates pitches. "When we're seeing founders pitch ideas to us, it's very apparent what makes a lot of smoke and mirrors versus a very good idea that's well thought out," she says. Authentic presentation matters: "Is the product that's coming in just a horse with some wheels bolted onto it, or is it actually a cart?"

Even in her own communication, Aronowitz consciously applies storytelling principles. "I write something and think how I would explain it to a first-time founder. How would I do it in a more direct way? How would I do it with a warmer approach?"

For emerging designers and professionals alike, Aronowitz's message emphasizes that while mediums evolve, the art of storytelling remains central: "What made a great designer 10 years ago with Photoshop is what will make a great designer today with AI."

# This Epoch of Freedom and Responsibility

he distinctly human skills — curiosity, experimentation, ethical awareness, taste, emotional intelligence, resilience, communication, foresight, leadership, and storytelling — form a comprehensive foundation for meaningful engagement with AI as an emergent medium. These timeless human capacities empower designers and artists to harness generative AI's potential while safeguarding creative authenticity and ethical integrity.

As AI becomes more democratized and integrated into creative practices, these skills grow even more vital. Creatives now face profound responsibilities alongside unprecedented opportunities, requiring technical mastery and a nuanced grasp of ethical integration, originality, and intentional design amid rapid AI-driven production.

Looking forward, designers stand at the threshold of transformative possibilities, collaborating with AI to reshape workflows, aesthetics, and the very purpose of creative endeavors. Human skills serve as essential guides in navigating this evolution, anchoring AI-driven innovations in authenticity, meaning, and connection. Those who actively define how and why they create will ensure that technology amplifies the enduring human core of creativity.

# **ACTION GUIDE**

#### **Active Engagement**

Experiment with AI technologies to understand their strengths and limitations; maintain a proactive stance, viewing AI as an evolving creative partner.

#### **Critical and Ethical Judgment**

Evaluate AI-generated outputs rigorously, ensuring alignment with creative vision and ethical standards; establish ethical frameworks to guide responsible integration and application of AI.

#### **Continuous Learning and Adaptability**

Update knowledge about emerging AI technologies, tools, and best practices; cultivate adaptability to integrate new methodologies seamlessly into workflows.

#### **Uniquely Human**

Strengthen emotional intelligence, curiosity, critical thinking, and resilience; prioritize authentic storytelling and emotional connection.

#### **Al Within Creative History**

Study historical technological shifts to understand Al's role within the creative continuum; leverage Al to complement traditional media, enriching established creative processes.

"Your process is yours. Whatever it is, you're going to customize it. And the better and weirder it is, the more interesting your work's going to be for other people."

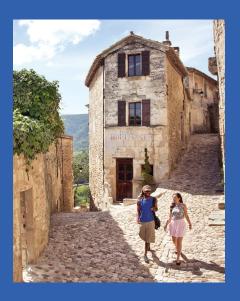
 Nick Dine, SCADpro professor at SCAD

# **Spring Sprint at SCAD Lacoste:**

## Human-Centered AI for Animation

In Spring 2025, animation and visual effects students collaborated in a design sprint at SCAD Lacoste to demonstrate how creative leadership enhances technological development. The intensive three-day challenge invited four teams of 2D and 3D animation students to create solutions for real workflow problems in the industry. The event addressed growing concerns among major studios about integrating AI while preserving creative jobs and artistic integrity.

The sprint utilized no-code and low-code platforms including RunwayML, Leonardo.Ai, Vizcom, Meshy, and ComfyUI through JarvisLabs.ai. Students also worked with AI assistants like ChatGPT and Claude to generate code and troubleshoot technical issues. This approach allowed students without extensive programming backgrounds to make viable products.



#### Team 1: Maya 2024 Animators Toolkit —

Team 1 developed a comprehensive Maya 2024 plugin suite that addresses several pain points in the 3D animation pipeline. The solutions include seven integrated tools that visualize, annotate, analyze, update, and save various aspects of animated content and development.

#### Ramón Abreu

B.F.A. animation

#### **James Barsin**

3.F.A. animati

#### **Allie Carson**

REA animation

#### Nate Mashke

B.F.A. animation

#### Savannah Robertson

B.F.A. animatior

#### Riley Willard

B.F.A. animation

#### Team 2: Annamate — Al Animation Assistant –

Team 2 created Annamate, an AI feedback assistant with a functioning prototype that analyzes animation work. The system analyzes clipping detection, color consistency, asset inconsistencies, and motion path evaluation.

#### Celina Chung

B.F.A. visual effects

#### Victoria Garcia

B.F.A. anımatı

#### Sania Khullar

REA animation

#### Fiona Rizvi

B.F.A. animation

#### Cassandra Santa Maria

B.F.A. animation

#### Team 3: GridMotionRotoscope

Team 3 built a plugin that bridges motion capture data with stylized animation. The GridMotionRotoscope tool allows animators to apply artistic interpretation to realistic motion data, creating a hybrid approach that combines efficiency with expressiveness.

#### Paige Hering

B.F.A. animation

#### Bella Huckaby

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#### **Alexa Miars**

BFA animation

#### Alyssa Rash

3.F.A. animation

#### Julia Stieglitz

#### Team 4: 3D-to-2D Reference System —

Team 4 produced an innovative workflow using Al-generated 3D models with Meshy as dynamic reference for 2D animation. Their system addresses four key areas: character consistency, dynamic camera planning, lighting reference, and production efficiency.

#### **Ashton Courts**

B.F.A. animation

#### Carmon Dyken

B.F.A. animation

#### Ash Gerasimovich

B.F.A. animation

#### Gabriella Louchart

1.A. animatior

#### Kara Nelson

B.F.A. animation

#### Raechel Rinkoski

B.F.A. animation

As studios increasingly seek hybrid professionals skilled in both traditional animation and AI development, emerging technologies democratize students' capacity to address industry-wide challenges. The SCAD AI Design Sprint establishes how animation students proactively shape their future careers with market-ready, human-centered solutions.



# Timeless Design

reators stand at a pivotal moment of maturity and transformation where generative AI offers unprecedented creative possibilities alongside significant ethical responsibilities. Designers have the unique opportunity—and imperative—to define how it integrates into the creative landscape and beyond.

Creativity has historically thrived at the intersections of passion, purpose, and technological innovation. Yet, amidst the practical rush toward skills acquisition, it remains essential to preserve creative spirit. Innovation flourishes when individuals make space for exploration and expression. A hybrid, interdisciplinary approach, blending personal passions with professional pursuits, sparks originality and ensures resilience.

Moving forward, designers who master the art of agentic workflows — AI processes designed to act alongside creative professionals — have the power to thrive. This process begins by analyzing workflows, identifying critical problems, and innovatively using AI-driven automation and cloud integration. The resulting dynamic processes, built upon transparent data handling, responsible inferencing, and agile iteration, will distinguish future industry leaders.

Tomorrow's designers will act as curators, guiding AI with discernment and sophisticated creative judgment. While AI can rapidly produce content, quality work remains inherently human, infused with distinctiveness and vision that algorithms alone cannot achieve. Designers must actively develop their taste and creative discernment, reinforcing the authentic and intentional in their output.

### Increase trust in tech

The attribution gap tells a story: 12% never acknowledge Al's contributions while 36% always do, revealing a clear opportunity to establish industry-wide ethical standards.

On this journey, emotional intelligence and ethical responsibility must anchor creative practice. The allure of AI efficiency risks overwhelming intentionality, threatening to produce visually appealing yet hollow content. Maintaining a disciplined approach grounded in critical thinking and empathy ensures work remains meaningful and ethically sound.

Ultimately, human connection is irreplaceable, growing more vital as technology advances. Designers and creators who prioritize genuine, empathetic relationships will harness Al's capabilities most effectively, enhancing rather than replacing human experiences.

"Show your work, have a point of view. Have a craft. Tell a story. As long as you do that and keep showing up, your audience will find you. That career will find you. That job will find you, because at the end of the day nothing will ever replace us. Nothing replaces human beings."

- Eric Uhlir

# **HORIZON GUIDE**

This guide shares summit participants' collective forecasts on Al's near future:

#### Agent Networks and Video Al

Future advancements will be marked by powerful agent networks and sophisticated generative video technologies that democratize film and multimedia storytelling.

#### **Curated Discovery**

As AI lowers barriers to creation, platforms for discovering meaningful content will become more critical.

#### **Craft and Authenticity Resurgence**

A renewed appreciation for craftsmanship and tangible handmade creations will emerge in response to Al-driven saturation, highlighting human uniqueness and intentionality.

#### **Interactive Luxury Experiences**

High-end markets will emphasize in-person, emotionally resonant experiences as technology amplifies the demand for genuine connection and luxury authenticity.

#### **AI-Infused Roles**

New positions like AI Creative Directors and specialized AI designers will arise, blending creative talent with technological fluency.

#### **Ethical Design Paradigms**

Increased scrutiny around ethical use of data, transparency in Al models, and responsible deployment will define successful brands and organizations.

#### **Empowered Entrepreneurship**

Independent creators and small businesses will gain unprecedented ability to compete globally, empowered by Al-driven tools that significantly reduce production and operational costs.

#### **Dynamic Educational Models**

Continuous learning and adaptability will become the cornerstone of creative education, requiring frequent retraining and adaptation as AI evolves.

#### **Human-Centric Interfaces**

Communication and collaboration tools will change rapidly, with designers mastering new vernaculars for interacting seamlessly with AI technologies.

As in the past, artists and designers will continue to choose the mediums that best express the vibrant human story, provide solutions that propel humanity forward, and illuminate the intangible threads that bind shared experience. As human ingenuity and generative AI meet, the creative voice is what ignites a renaissance. Humanity's greatest creations have always emerged from the convergence of technical mastery and soulful expression — that sacred intersection where the head and hands meet the heart.

The future belongs to those who maintain the courage to create with purpose, the wisdom to design with compassion, and the vision to imagine beyond the horizon. In a world increasingly defined by automation, the ability to dream, feel, and connect remains the most timeless design.

# Creative (r)evolution

Al is unleashing creativity. By reclaiming time from mundane tasks, democratizing creative endeavors, and expanding artistic possibilities, Al is freeing leaders to pursue deeper, more meaningful creative expression.





Image from a series promoting Korean scenery across seasons.

Kyounga (Elsa) Son, M.F.A. design management.

Work created using Midjourney.

Prompt: A mystical night scene in traditional Korea featuring a dragon and a large full moon glowing in the sky, casting soft light over a tranquil Hanok village surrounded by mountains. A woman in a colorful hanbok stands looking up at the moon.

# **GUEST BIOS**

#### Kate Aronowitz

Kate Aronowitz has empowered teams at some of Silicon Valley's most iconic companies. She leads GV's (Google Ventures) operations team and coaches GV portfolio companies on cross-functional design processes, scale, product development, and management strategy. Aronowitz is also an Executive in Residence at SCAD, where she earned a B.F.A. in graphic design.

#### **Bob Chavez**

Former Executive Chairman of Hermès Americas, Board Member for Macy's Inc., and SCAD Executive in Residence Bob Chavez is a distinguished retail executive with more than 45 years of experience in the luxury retail sector. Under Chavez's stewardship, Hermès significantly expanded its presence, growing the company's e-commerce business.

#### **Cyril Foiret**

Founder and Creative Director of Maison Meta, the world's first generative AI studio for fashion, beauty, and luxury brands, Foiret revolutionized marketing campaigns with cutting-edge technology. His innovative approach has garnered recognition from industry leaders, earning him a spot in Vogue Business' Top 100 Innovators in Tech.

#### Fred Gilbert

As Vice President and Head of User Experience at Google Workspace, Fred Gilbert has raised design standards across Google's platforms. He developed and led the first-ever visual design and motion graphics teams dedicated to Google products. At the company for more than 17 years, Gilbert oversaw YouTube's expansion into music, TV, gaming, VR, shopping, and more.

#### **George Joblove**

Digital visual effects pioneer and motion picture imaging consultant George Joblove has three decades of experience with companies like Sony Pictures Entertainment, Warner Bros. and Industrial Light & Magic. Recipient of a Scientific and Engineering Academy Award, Joblove has also served as Vice President of Technology and Standards and Cochairman for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences' Science and Technology Council.

#### **Onur Kece**

Founder and Chief Creative of The Refreshment Club, based out of Paris and Dubai, Onur Kece has collaborated with brands like Westfield, Havas, Sabonet Group, Hermès, and more. Alongside his agency, Kece is a creative advisor for Maison Meta and the founder of The School of Future Fundamentals.

#### Tomasz Opasiński

Creative Technologist at Adobe, Tomasz Opasiński shapes the future of innovative tools and solutions for complex technologies using AI and machine learning. With more than two decades in entertainment advertising, Opasiński has contributed to more than 560 brand campaigns across theatrical, streaming, television, video game, and interactive industries.

#### **Seth Piezas**

Founder and Executive Director of Colabi Foundation, Seth Piezas began his career 25 years ago with Pixar Animation Studios as a technical director, producing lighting and shading for *Toy Story 2* and *Monsters, Inc.* Today, as Senior Product Manager at NVIDIA, Piezas advances autonomous systems.

#### **Utkarsh Seth**

Spanning more than 15 years in the user experience (UX) industry, Utkarsh Seth builds and scales UX teams who make profound impacts on their products. Currently, he serves as Senior Staff UX Manager at Google and recently authored *Applied UX Research: Bridging the gap between academia & industry for early career professionals.* 

#### Joshua To

Visionary design leader, Josh To, serves as the Vice President of Product Design for AR, Al, and Wearables at Meta. With nearly two decades of experience, To has made significant contributions to the tech industry, particularly in augmented reality, virtual reality, artificial intelligence, wearable technology, product design, and social impact.

#### **Eric Uhlir**

Group Creative Director and Group Experience Director at Deloitte Digital, Eric Uhlir steers the consultancy's interdisciplinary national design team on projects like a collaboration with Google Cloud that demonstrates how AI and human-centered design enhance digital government experiences. An accomplished visual artist, Uhlir exhibits his artwork around the world.

#### **Bob Weis**

Bob Weis is an Executive in Residence at SCAD where he consults on academic issues and mentors students. He is the retired President of Walt Disney Imagineering, having spent four decades leading major projects at every Disney site around the world including resorts and cruise ships. Weis is the author of the book, *Dream Chasing*, available from Penguin Random House.

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ChatGPT, Claude, and Perplexity assisted with survey insights and analysis, and with editorial support. Student work prompts were adjusted for brevity.

SCADask is an applied research studio that leverages the university's collective expertise to facilitate and generate strategic insights for business and media partners. Our design-centered research identifies business opportunities that reveal the future of commerce, creativity, and culture. SCADask initiatives include the university's annual Al Summit, an event that unites design and technology luminaries with SCAD leadership, faculty partners, and students to discuss Al's impact on design, education, and creative careers. SCADask research and publications like the *Al Insights 2024* report have been featured in Fast Company, Paste Magazine, AP News, Yahoo! Finance, California Business Journal, and more.

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