# Thom Yorke warns AI threatens genuine creativity with ‘tech-bro nightmare’



Thom Yorke has voiced profound concerns regarding the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on the creative industries in a recent interview tied to the release of *Tall Tales*, a collaborative project with electronic artist Mark Pritchard. In his critique, the Radiohead frontman describes a troubling landscape where AI generates what he deems "pallid facsimiles" of original creative works, suggesting a future dominated by a "weird kind of wanky, tech-bro nightmare."

Yorke's comments highlight a pressing dilemma within the industry: the exploitation of human creativity to train AI systems without appropriate recognition or compensation. He articulates a belief that AI can only produce variations of genuine artistic expression, rather than true original creations. "The economic structure is morally wrong," he states, underscoring that the work of human artists is frequently overshadowed or diminished by AI's imitative outputs.

His observations echo broader industry concerns regarding the unlicensed use of creative works to develop generative AI models. Notably, companies such as Suno and Udio have been accused of employing large datasets of copyrighted songs without proper authorisation, claiming protections under the "fair use" doctrine. Such practices have led to legal challenges from the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), representing major record labels like Universal Music Group, Warner Music Group, and Sony Music Entertainment. Recent reports indicate that both sides are in discussions about potential settlement terms that may involve licensing agreements, which could reshape the dynamics of AI-generated art.

Yorke's discontent is not isolated; he is among thousands of artists who have rallied against the appropriation of their work for AI training. An open letter, supported by notable figures including Björn Ulvaeus of ABBA and actor Julianne Moore, decries this unlicensed usage as a "major, unjust threat" to their livelihoods. Amidst these conversations, the spectre of historical precedents like Napster looms large. Analysts have drawn parallels between the disruption caused by peer-to-peer file sharing in the early 2000s and the current AI landscape, underscoring the evolving tensions between innovation and intellectual property rights.

Interestingly, amidst Yorke's stark warnings, some artists are navigating the integration of AI into their work. Jonathan Zawada, who collaborated on *Tall Tales*, shared insights into his use of AI technologies. He acknowledges the complex relationship with AI, stating that while he has employed these tools in his creative process, he remains cautious about their implications. Zawada's approach highlights a nuanced perspective, where AI can be seen as both a tool and a source of ethical concern.

As the debate ensues, the future relationship between AI and the creative industries remains uncertain. The discourse reflects a delicate balance between embracing technological advancements and safeguarding the rights and recognition of human creators. With thousands advocating for change, the call for ethical frameworks governing AI's usage in creativity could reshape the landscape of artistic expression in the coming years.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://news.google.com/rss/articles/CBMijgJBVV95cUxNMDlvd0doSlhsTnJlX2ltUjRRMkJET0tRUnFvSUItRmdCVmhWd3dpU0J2RktCdmplY3BNcGVucENBcWpDdTl6WmVVLVVMV0NrZ3ROWHJwa0tIRnJsVHpwMERxOUVIZ1NXZFI4dTZTcXNEV2tPLXI5X0RpNFYwc09DSGhmeHl0OGJiNjF1YmRuSS03ODJhR25saVQtVFc5ZlZOY2ZJNnpyVjBqSG1IbV93dk54WU1oRGF6TnhMbTJPcWh6RkNQMFhXbnlLVWRSWjRFNnp6bmVtM1FSNTF6SlBOa0JKWG5Bd19FNkFuQ1ZqVVZsQ015SkJsaUNkLUpaVFhndk1HdFlpbUk1YTR4S2c?oc=5&hl=en-US&gl=US&ceid=US:en), [[3]](https://apnews.com/article/ba9091a6095876affe8c09f6bf9fe12d)
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## Bibliography

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2. <https://www.ft.com/content/5bfa8508-d4cd-41d6-ba92-047522e61740> - This article examines the lessons from Napster's rise and fall, highlighting the conflicts between AI companies and the creative industries over the use of copyrighted content. It draws parallels between Napster's disruption of the music industry and the current challenges posed by generative AI companies claiming 'fair use' of copyrighted works for training their models. The piece also discusses the global divide in handling these issues, with market solutions like licensing agreements emerging as potential resolutions.
3. <https://apnews.com/article/ba9091a6095876affe8c09f6bf9fe12d> - Musicians from ABBA, Radiohead, and The Cure have joined forces with actors and authors in a protest against the unlicensed use of their creative works to train artificial intelligence (AI) tools. Thousands of artists signed a letter expressing their concerns that AI's use of human-made works without permission is a significant and unjust threat to their livelihoods. Key signatories include Björn Ulvaeus of ABBA, Robert Smith of The Cure, Thom Yorke of Radiohead, Nobel laureate Kazuo Ishiguro, and actors Julianne Moore, Kevin Bacon, and Rosario Dawson.
4. <https://www.ft.com/content/c7c0e8bf-9cdd-4a42-8e01-d2a36ba06298> - Over 11,000 artists, including Björn Ulvaeus of ABBA and Thom Yorke of Radiohead, have warned about the threats that artificial intelligence (AI) poses to creative industries. In an open letter, figures like Kazuo Ishiguro, James Patterson, Julianne Moore, and Kevin Bacon expressed concern over the unauthorized use of creative works to train generative AI, describing it as an unjust threat to their livelihoods. The artists fear that AI-generated content could overshadow human-created works and offer minimal compensation for the copyrighted pieces used in training these systems.
5. <https://time.com/4132472/thom-yorke-nazi-youtube/> - Radiohead's lead singer Thom Yorke expressed his disdain for YouTube in an interview with an Italian newspaper, likening the platform to Nazi Germany. Yorke criticized YouTube for monopolizing control of art, profiting significantly from ads while underpaying artists. He questioned the fairness of the system, highlighting that while services like YouTube and Google earn substantial profits, they exploit creators' work. Yorke also lamented the loss of personal connection in digital music, contrasting it with the tangible experience of vinyl records.
6. <https://www.theguardian.com/film/2024/oct/22/thom-yorke-and-julianne-moore-join-thousands-of-creatives-in-ai-warning> - Thousands of creative professionals from literature, music, film, theatre, and television have backed a statement warning against the unlicensed use of their works to train artificial intelligence systems. Authors like Kazuo Ishiguro, musicians including Robert Smith of The Cure, and actors such as Kevin Bacon and Julianne Moore have signed the letter. The organiser, Ed Newton-Rex, expressed concern over AI companies using creative works without permission, viewing it as a threat to the livelihoods of creators.
7. <https://www.theverge.com/web/2013/2/28/4039732/thom-yorke-says-google-apple-have-made-music-worthless> - Thom Yorke, the ethereal-voiced lead singer of the music group Radiohead, isn't a fan of what Apple, Google, and other technology companies are doing to media. In an interview with UK-publication The Guardian, Yorke lamented what he said were attempts by tech companies to turn songs into commodities. 'They have to keep commodifying things to keep the share price up,' Yorke said. 'But in doing so they have made all content, including music and newspapers, worthless in order to make their billions. And this is what we want? I still think it will be undermined in some way.'