

SAVIESA

PERSPECTIVES



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The next Saviesa Perspectives will look at leadership in the age of AI

An ancient question still challenges humanity

Leonor Diaz Alcantara,
Founder, Saviesa

For over two millennia, we have considered what it means to be human without arriving at a settled answer.

In the 5th century BCE, Socrates insisted that the unexamined life is not worth living. Humans should take responsibility for how they think, how they act, and how they understand their place in the world. Confucius was concerned about becoming fully human through conduct and relationship. Later, in medieval Europe, Hildegard of Bingen understood knowledge as inseparable from moral perception; Shakespeare captured that same tension in Hamlet: “What a piece of work is a man.”

The question has never existed in isolation from technology. As our tools, institutions, and technologies change, so too do the conditions through which we understand ourselves, our relationships, and our responsibilities to one another.

In fact, technological change has always unsettled societies. It has done so positively by extending human capacity, but often controversially by altering the terms under which knowledge, authority, and responsibility are understood. When writing began to replace oral culture, Plato warned that reliance on external words would weaken the discipline of memory. Another technological marvel, the printing press, did not simply spread knowledge: it transformed who could claim authority and how that authority was recognised. Later, the Industrial Revolution reorganised work, separating effort from outcome in ways that continue to shape our sense of meaning and contribution, while radio and television reshaped how reality is encountered and judged, where familiarity and entertainment became more important than truth. The internet extrapolated this phenomenon, deeper into the human condition and further over the globe...

With each of these shifts the question of what it means to be human did not disappear. It did, however, change shape, responding to the conditions of its time.

Machines have always extended human capability. What is distinctive now is that artificial intelligence operates within domains that resemble human intellectual activity itself. It produces language, semantic interpretation, and decisions that appear thoughtful—often with fluency and coherence—yet without



experience, intention, or responsibility.

Their outputs are increasingly treated as sufficient, not because they are fully understood, but because they are immediate and convenient, and aligned with institutional pressures towards speed and efficiency. These are the commercial demands of the age. What these systems introduce is something we humans are not accustomed to: outputs that resemble judgment and outcomes that need little human intelligence—with a dearth of analytical tools to critique, counter, or codify this novel form of intelligence, the consequences of which are as-of-yet unmappable. This is a technical problem. It is also a human one.

The questions explored in this inaugural edition of *Perspectives*, by Saviesa, emerge directly from the work Saviesa is already undertaking across leadership, education, institutional responsibility, and human development in the age of artificial intelligence. Again and again we encounter the same underlying tension: societies are advancing their technical capabilities faster than they are developing the human capacity, institutional frameworks, and moral clarity required to live with them wisely.

Perspectives has been created as a space for that inquiry. Published twice annually, it brings together voices from across disciplines to explore not only what artificial intelligence can do, but what its growing presence reveals about human beings, about institutions, and about the conditions under which societies flourish or fracture. At its centre sits a question both ancient and newly urgent:

What does it mean to be human in an age shaped by artificial intelligence?

Saviesa comes from the Catalan word for wisdom because we believe that AI can help humans produce the next tranche of answers necessary for us to continue to move forward as a species. It can organise, summarise, and extend our knowledge with extraordinary speed and pattern recognition, but it would be a mistake to mistake its output for wisdom. Wisdom is not the accumulation of information but the capacity to hold it in relation to context and to consequence.

Wisdom is formed over time, through experience, through reflection, through being prepared to understand oneself thoroughly, and through being accountable for the outcomes of one's own decisions; to create meaning. It is formed from holding perspectives up to the light and bridging those refractions into something more tangible.

What does it mean to remain fully human in a world increasingly shaped by intelligent systems? That is the question that sits at the kernel of *Perspectives*. It is both a tale as old as time for humans on our eternal quest for meaning, and yet incredibly novel as we wrestle with the reality of sharing our planet with an intelligence of our own creation for the first time.

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ABOUT SAVIESA

Saviesa is an independent European think—and do—tank exploring one of the defining questions of our time: what does it mean to be human in an age shaped by artificial intelligence?

As technological systems become increasingly embedded in our lives we examine how leadership, education, and institutions can strengthen the human capacities that matter most, including judgement, creativity, responsibility, and meaning.

Our work brings together voices from across disciplines, sectors, and countries to explore the human implications of technological change. Through research, publications, dialogue, and strategic advisory work, we help organisations and decision makers navigate complexity without losing sight of the values, relationships, and qualities that define our humanity.

As we expand our work we welcome opportunities to collaborate with partners, funders, and organisations who share our commitment to ensuring that technological progress strengthens, rather than diminishes, the human experience.

For further information or to speak to a member of our partnership team, please contact: partnerships@saviesaperspectives.org

ABOUT PERSPECTIVES

Perspectives is a twice-annual print and digital publication from Saviesa, drawing upon our rich and multi-disciplinary network of leaders across business, political, education, government, charity, and the artistic and creative sectors. Each edition asks a vital question that strikes at the heart of public discourse and captures a range of informed perspectives in order to better understand, interpret, and illuminate.

This is the January–June Edition for 2026, and Saviesa’s inaugural edition. The question that sits at the kernel of this Perspective is the one that guides Saviesa as a whole: what does it mean to be human in an age shaped by artificial intelligence?

Noting that good questions are more important in an age of ambiguity than good answers, Perspectives invites you to read and reflect upon each submission in any order you choose.





Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, What Truths About Humanity are You Reflecting to Us?

Claire Koryczan,
Founder and Director, Imagine Beyond

Ever since the birth of computing, we've been building technology in our own image. Deep within its foundations sits the invisible architecture of humanity: our biases, values, decision-making preferences, and ways of seeing the world.

Alongside this human-created infrastructure is an accumulation of our personal data. With every interaction we leave behind a unique digital footprint that compounds over time, revealing profound insights about human behaviour at the grandest scale.

To put this into context, today almost three-quarters of the global population is online (about 6 billion people), and peak global internet traffic has reached 24.92 terabits per second. If Amazon printed this data into standard books, every single second would translate into a tower of books about 20 times the height of Mount Everest—far beyond the scale of any planet-sized distance from Earth. The scale is almost incomprehensible. Human conscious thought processes data at about 10 bits per second—microscopic when compared to AI systems that can move and process information millions to billions of times faster.

As a result of this exponentially growing dataset, technology has, without our conscious awareness, learned a lot about us. Perhaps more than we even know about ourselves, as we stay up late confiding in AI for emotional reassurance, willingly sharing our secrets and troubles with it; treating it as a trusted, non-judgemental confidante living in our imagination with each written word that it generates for us.

WHY SHOULD THIS MATTER?

Because what AI is reflecting back to us in these moments of intimate exchange is a deep, unmet human need to be seen, heard, understood, and valued. To feel significant in an increasingly isolated and fragmented world. In a world shaped by remote working, algorithmic personalisation, and declining shared experiences, digital substitution increasingly becomes the next best thing, seamlessly integrating into the daily fabric of our work and lives. And this matters because we risk outsourcing the very thing we need from each other for human flourishing: to feel seen and understood, and to belong to something bigger than ourselves; to have meaning and purpose; to listen to our intuition about what's important.

We must remember that AI does not, and will never, prioritise relationships in the

way that we humans do. Emotional attachment is the engagement metric. The watch out for us is that human nature is predisposed to form meaningful relationships, so we must act mindfully in our interactions with technology and remember that it is not, and will never be, human.

The alternative is that we inadvertently inflict isolation on ourselves as a form of unconscious self-sabotage. The desire to anthropomorphise is fuelled by the frictionless nature of AI's empathetic and affirming communication. This starkly contrasts with the complexity of real human relationships, at times.

But what if, for a moment, we closed the laptop, put the phone out of view, and simply gave each other our full attention? Choosing to look each other in the eyes, listen, and truly hear and understand one another. Instead of sitting,



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Claire Koryczan is the Founder and Director of Imagine Beyond. She is an award-nominated advisor with over 25 years of experience at the intersection of creativity, AI, and leadership. She partners with global organisations to build future-fit capabilities, scale with purpose, and cultivate entrepreneurial leadership.

Recognised globally, Claire has been

shortlisted for Best Business Coach by the Coach Awards, named a Top Team Leadership Voice on LinkedIn, and featured in SohoWorks' Future50, and Grant Thornton's Faces of a Vibrant Economy. Through her work, she champions entrepreneurial leadership to build cultures that elevate human and technological potential.

hypnotically typing and scrolling. Because in these moments, real human connection and oxytocin rise, and we'd feel so much better and happier for it, in life and work.

Let us not choose the path of least resistance, which, as ancient wisdom reminds us, often becomes the hardest path of all.

We built technology to serve humanity, yet it is now teaching us what humanity is missing. It is ironic that a digital product is highlighting a physical gap we need to bridge, but now this is the work to do.

We have the agency to choose where our attention goes, to what, and to whom. In fact, we are already seeing through the work of the Centre for Humane Technology that there are alternative paths. Ones that are human-centred, conscious of the risks and intentional about the future we want to create.

Perhaps the greatest opportunity of the AI era is not what it seems, at first. It is less about technological advancement and more about rediscovering what makes us human. In fact, being fully

present with one another may be one of the greatest gifts we can contribute, and it doesn't cost anything. Yet it has the potential to create more meaningful, connected relationships. To do this, we must be conscious of our interactions with AI, remembering that it is a powerful tool, but not one that comes at the expense of our humanity; our communities, our conversations, and our connection to each other.

In the gap, there is always an opportunity to discover. Polarity is one of the laws of the universe; as above, so below. AI has the potential to increase the value of the things that matter most to us if we recognise this opportunity: the vulnerability of creativity, as we create to express who we are; the importance of belonging and the potency of physical presence to one another; our empathy to understand different perspectives and worldviews.

And to recognise what we must not forget, as we learn from the reflection in the mirror.

“We don't see things as they are,
we see them as we are.” *Anaïs Nin*

ARTIFICIAL CONVERSATION AND ITS ILLUSIONS: A Critique of AI Chatbots

Luka Goles Babic,

Chair, Council for Technoethics and Antitotalitarianism

The rapid proliferation of AI chatbots raises both technical and philosophical concerns. What are these systems for and how should we evaluate them, and what kind of relationship do they invite us into? To approach these questions is to better sustain a working relationship with these increasingly important agents, as we humans navigate a world where intelligence is plural.

Aristotle's teleological framework centers on the concept of telos, or proper function. Every object or being has a purpose toward which it is directed and its goodness is measured by how well it fulfills that purpose. A knife is good insofar as it cuts well; a teacher is good insofar as they facilitate understanding. Similarly, a person is good if they act in accordance with virtue, or with the telos with which their nature is endowed (Aristotle, 2009). Applying this framework to AI chatbots, we ask:

What is the proper function of a chatbot?

LLMS VS. CHATBOTS:

WHAT ARE THEIR TELOS?

Before defining the telos of chatbots, it is important to distinguish between large language models (LLMs) and chatbots. This distinction matters because the telos we seek does not belong to the underlying model alone, but to the role the chatbot plays in human experience.

LLMs are probabilistic text-generating systems trained on vast bodies of structured and unstructured language data. Its telos is not easily defined, as their apparent goals, intentions, and understanding can seem expansive and intrinsically linked with the commercial ambitions of their parent companies. In a broad sense, its telos may be understood as emulating the breadth and diversity of human intelligence, as expressed through written language.

Chatbots, by contrast, are AI software applications built on top of LLMs (or similar technologies) and designed for human– or AI–interaction, with their form and function largely determined by interface design, deployment context, and user expectations.

What, then, is the proper function of a chatbot? Perhaps it is to provide useful, coherent, and contextually relevant responses. However, in practice, a more specific criterion often dominates, which is that chatbots are also judged by how convincingly they simulate (and stimulate) human conversation. The Turing Test exemplifies this: a system is considered successful if it is indistinguishable from a human interlocutor (Turing, 1950), a standard that persists in modern human preference-based evaluations such as Chatbot Arena, where models are ranked

through comparative judgments of conversational quality rather than measures of understanding (Chiang et al., 2024). Furthermore, technology business models appear designed to keep users engaged in ongoing “conversation” for as long as possible, inline with advertising revenue models seen within adjacent fields such as social media platforms and OpenAI's recent foray into OpenAI for Business. This leads us to the two central illusions of chatbots.

THE FIRST ILLUSION:

THE PSEUDO-SELF

The first fundamental illusion of chatbots is the illusion of a self. Chatbots do not possess consciousness, intention, or identity. Yet their design, manifested through first-person language, continuity of tone, and apparent responsiveness, creates the impression of a unified subject. Users may attribute personality, beliefs, or even emotions to them (Ma et al., 2025), a tendency that is perhaps most reinforced by their frequent use of first-person singular language.

This pseudo-self is not an accidental byproduct of chatbots, but a focal point of their success. Given that human beings possess a sense of selfhood, their conversations are largely conducted from a first-person perspective. This is one of the things that make our conversations human: the fact that we can relate to one another and to the world through what Martin Buber called the I-Thou relationship (Buber, 1970). If chatbots are designed with anthropomorphic simulation as their guiding telos, then the more convincingly a chatbot simulates a self, the more fully it fulfills that telos.

A chatbot, however, cannot enter into a true I-Thou relationship because it lacks a self. Its performance of selfhood is misleading as

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it creates the appearance of one subject engaging another. There is little precedence in human history for this obscuring of the self through discourse and interaction; what was once the preserve of the human being—language as the codified means through which we communicate—is now a feature of a technology that ascribes no meaning to its vastly more powerful output.

THE SECOND ILLUSION:

THE INABILITY TO RECOGNISE IGNORANCE

The second fundamental issue is epistemic: chatbots often fail to recognise when they do not know something.

Because LLMs generate responses based on patterns rather than understanding, they may produce confident but incorrect answers. This phenomenon is now well-known as hallucinating. It is not merely a technical flaw that can simply be bypassed in future versions, but a structural limitation (Bender et al., 2021).

Human consciousness involves the capacity to apply the aforementioned I–Thou relation reflexively to oneself. Most humans are in constant internal dialogue through which we evaluate our actions, thoughts, and habits. As Hannah Arendt suggested, without this kind of internal plurality, something essential to our humanity is diminished (Arendt, 1978). These inner dialogues enable us to recognise the limits of our own understanding and, in a sense, to step outside ourselves in order to reflect and act accordingly. Chatbots, powered by the pattern recognition dynamics of LLM technologies, and so lacking such awareness (i.e., lacking consciousness or an “I”), instead generate responses that merely appear plausible.

This gives rise to the second illusion: the illusion of knowledge—or the inability to recognise ignorance. The chatbot presents itself as an authority even when it is not, reinforcing a tendency to treat it as a kind of oracle that determines what counts as truth (Holm, 2024). This reflects human bias in both directions: technophilic over-trust in its outputs and technophobic under-trust, where its responses are rejected outright rather than critically engaged with.

TOWARDS BETTER CHATBOTS

The following practical measures can be implemented to guide better chatbot development toward forms that better serve the human good.

We could first cease viewing our modern techniques solely, or even primarily, through a technical lens. As long as efficiency remains the highest value propagated by technology companies and our economy, chatbots and similar technologies will continue along their present trajectory (and may even accelerate it) while we lose the capacity to assess whether that trajectory is desirable. The classical tradition may offer guidance here, as its non-utilitarian orientation allows us to step beyond an input–output mode of thinking and cultivate a measured technosceptical stance, positioned between technophilic enthusiasm and technophobic rejection. In doing so, we may regain the ability to guide our technologies, rather than being guided by them.

Second, we must refrain from designing chatbots in ways that embed implicit misrepresentations. They do not possess selfhood;

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therefore, they should not be framed as if they do. Nor can they truly communicate in the full sense of the term, since genuine communication presupposes *communio* or a form of fellowship grounded in personhood (Machidon, 2024). Accordingly, the structure of their responses should reflect this distinction: when providing information, they should do so without implying selfhood or encouraging an artificial sense of ongoing relational engagement that the conversational format puts forward.

Only by rethinking both the purpose and the presentation of chatbots can we better ensure that they serve truth rather than merely simulate it. Whether this requires a fundamental transformation of what chatbots are, in terms of their *telos*, remains open. What can be concluded, however, is that the problems identified in this Perspective are not accidental byproducts of misuse, but emerge from the very logic by which chatbots are currently designed to function: as systems that simulate selfhood, sustain conversational presence, and invite unwarranted attribution of authority. This calls for a sustained philosophical and practical reassessment of their role in human epistemic and social life.



Watch children play and the first thing you notice is the noise. The negotiation, the argument, the sudden collapse into laughter, the silence before someone decides to trust someone else. It looks like chaos. To the adult eye trained on productivity, it looks like the opposite of rigour. It is not. Beneath the mess and the friction and the improbable joy of it, play is one of the most structurally complex things a human being can do. This is where cognition, emotion, and social intelligence converge in real time, under conditions of genuine uncertainty, with no script, and no guaranteed outcome. The rigour is quiet, but it is there, and it may be the most important thing we are at risk of designing out of childhood.

There is a particular feeling I have been chasing for most of my adult life. It arrives unexpectedly, often mid-conversation, when an idea bounces between two people and becomes something neither could have produced alone. Psychologists call it collective flow. I call it one of the most beautiful intellectual states I know. After years of studying human development, child-robot interaction, and the future of intelligence, I have come to think of it not as something we can manufacture, prompt, or reliably call forth, but as something for which we can create the right conditions. That distinction matters especially now. Screens can mediate connection, conversation, and even shared creativity. But the kind of collective flow children enter is more than an exchange of information. It is embodied, relational, emotionally charged, and alive.

Children find it all the time: we call it play.

This matters more now than it ever has. As AI systems grow more capable, more conversational, more present in children's lives, we face a question easy to mistake for a technical one: what should AI do for children? The real question is developmental, and deeply human: what do children need in order to become fully themselves? The answer begins with play.

Play is routinely dismissed as the opposite of serious, squeezed out of education by assessment targets, gamified by product designers into reward loops that mimic engagement. This is a

The Quiet Rigour of Play

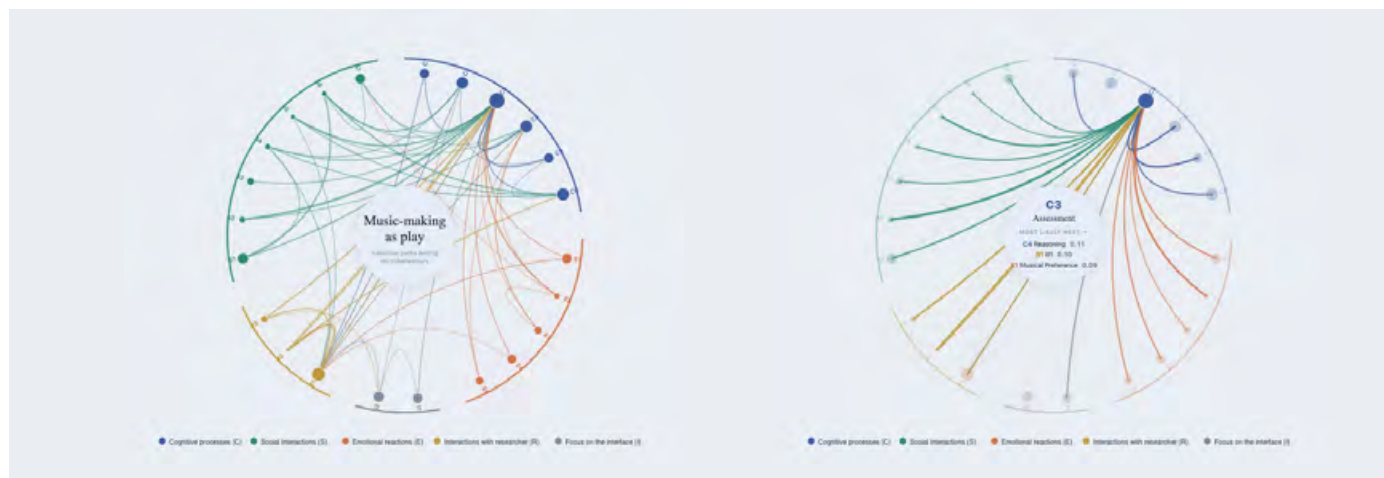
Vicky Charisi,

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profound misunderstanding. Play is not what children do instead of learning. It is how learning happens: how empathy is practised, how leadership is negotiated, how trust is tested, and how risk is calibrated. It is where theory of mind—the capacity to understand that other people have thoughts different from your own—is quietly constructed.

My PhD research, published at the UCL Institute of Education in London [1], gave me an unexpectedly intimate view of this. I placed pairs of four- and five-year-olds in front of digital music-making tools with no instructions and no intervention—just the tools—and each other. Over eight sessions per pair, spanning two months, I conducted a microgenetic analysis, rooted in Piaget [2], letting fifty-two distinct microbehaviours emerge from what I actually saw, grouped across five domains: cognitive processes, social interactions, emotional reactions, interactions with the researcher, and engagement with the interface. Play, the data showed, is a complex phenomenon where cognitive, social, and affective



Each node is a micro-behaviour, placed on the ring and grouped by theme. A curved line from A → B means children tended to move from behaviour A to behaviour B. The first figure shows the interconnections among all microbehaviours and the second shows how Assessment is connected with almost all other microbehaviours.

Charisi, V. (2025). Technology-Mediated Music-Making Processes and Interactions in Early Childhood: The Development of a Micro-Behavioural Framework. Doctoral thesis.

behaviours systematically and continuously interact.

Play, the data showed, is a complex phenomenon where cognitive, social, and affective behaviours systematically and continuously interact (see Figure 1).

The most frequent behaviour was what I called Assessment: pausing, observing, evaluating in real time as a basis for what to do next. Far from passive, it was deeply interconnected with almost every other behaviour in the dataset (see Figure 2): the engine of metacognition, foundational to creativity and self-directed learning. Children did it naturally, spontaneously, simply because they were playing. Alongside it came improvisation: trying something, hearing the result, responding in the moment.

Improvisation is often treated as a musical concept, but it is really a life skill. It is also one of the qualities AI can imitate at the level of output but not yet share at the level of experience. A language model can generate text that looks spontaneous. It can produce novelty and variation. But it does not inhabit the bodily and emotional stakes of group improvisation.

What struck me equally was what happened emotionally. These children had no prior experience with music composition, no knowledge of notation or harmony. And yet when their experiments produced something they recognised as good, a rhythm that surprised them, they danced. Not metaphorically: they physically got up and danced.

Play, at its best, integrates thinking, feeling, and moving in ways no isolated cognitive task can replicate.

This is where AI design should begin: not with the question of how to keep a child engaged for longer, but with the question of what kind of engagement helps a child become more fully human. The opportunity is not to replace play partners with artificial ones. It is to design technologies that protect the conditions of play: embodiment, peer negotiation, shared risk, imagination, movement, and surprise.

That leads to the harder argument. The current generation of AI applications for children is mainly screen-based, and screen-based AI carries two structural limitations that better content alone cannot fully solve. The first is the weakening of physical and social embodiment. Human development, particularly in early childhood, is bodily, spatial, and relational. A screen can mediate aspects of this, but it cannot substitute for the full experience of being together in shared physical space. The second is the architecture of engagement: platforms designed for maximum time-on-device not based on the value of the system but on dopamine stimulators, without clear exit paths, pulling children away from local community and from the irreplaceable texture of life lived with other people, in the world.

My proposal, developed throughout my studies on child-robot interaction and collaborative problem-solving, published at the IEEE International Conference on Robotics and Automation in 2021 [3], and my recent work at MIT on collective intelligence in groups of people and AI agents, is that the opportunity lies not on disembodied screen-based systems but in physical and embodied AI. With this, I don't mean humanoid robots that mimic adulthood, but playful, strange, cartoonish social agents that share space with children and their local communities, scaffold their interactions, and connect them (when appropriate) with peers around the world. During my fellowship at the Berkman Klein Centre at Harvard, working with the Honda Research Institute in Japan, we explored exactly this: robot-mediated global citizenship education, where children in Japan, Uganda, and Greece collaborated through shared play, creating connections that were genuinely social and embodied even as they reached across geography and cultures [4]. UNICEF [5] and the IEEE Standards Association [6] have since taken this work as a case study. These embodied agents are not assistants or tutors. They are designed to create the conditions



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Vicky Charisi is a Research Scientist based at the Singapore-MIT Alliance on Research and Technology, in Singapore. Her work focuses on child development in the context of AI and robotic systems, and on the impact of Human-AI interaction on human flourishing and social transformation. Vicky examines how emerging technologies interact with children's learning, behaviour, and emotional well-being.

Vicky's contributions to the academic community are reflected in her numerous publications in leading journals and international conferences, where her insights have advanced understanding at the intersection of human development and technology. Her research is recognised for addressing both theoretical and applied challenges, creating pathways for impactful, evidence-based innovations in AI by collaborating with frontline industries such as the HONDA Research Institute in Japan. She serves as a chair in multiple advisory boards such as the United Nations agency on Artificial Intelligence and Robotics for their work on Generative AI Literacy.

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for collective flow among a group of children.

The argument goes beyond the individual child.

Collective play, which is open, embodied, and socially unpredictable, generates the behavioural and cognitive variability that societies need. That variability is the raw material of creativity, and creativity is where value-driven innovation comes from: not what the frictionless AI pipelines produce well, but the kind that asks what we are building, why, and for whom. That kind of innovation builds social cohesion. And social cohesion is the substrate on which healthy democracies depend. Play is not merely good for children's wellbeing. It is good for human civilisation and development.

In an era when artificial intelligence is accelerating faster than our understanding of what it is for, the question is not anymore how powerful an AI model is. It is whether we will design AI that puts human needs and best interest first, and play at the centre.



In Humble Gratitude of a Human Condition: **Tenderness**

Dan Đaković,

Doctor of Philosophy, University of Zagreb

Like many today, I think about the big questions behind the rise of artificial intelligence and what it could mean for mankind and the magnificent humanity (*magnifica humanitas*). We still know too little about AI, but we do know that it is only a human invention and will always remain so. As such, it is something lower and less valuable than a human. That's why I keep coming back to one question: will humans allow themselves to be less human and to become more like machines?

We are increasingly organising society around speed, optimisation, productivity, and frictionless efficiency.

We celebrate acceleration and speak of mass production with admiration. We wonder how quickly something can be delivered, processed, automated, or generated. However, beneath this fast, smooth, cold, modern, and high-tech civilization, we might be forgetting the conditions in which human beings actually thrive and flourish. Or perhaps we could put it this way: we are running faster and with better equipment, but we are forgetting where we are running, and, especially, why we are running.

In that context, I want to reflect on an under-discussed human condition: tenderness. It looks like a waste of time. It seems to me that people, somewhat paradoxically, are afraid of tenderness. It seems as if it makes us weaker. And that impression is not entirely wrong. In the short term, we truly do lose something. But stop for a moment and remember all the tyrants throughout history. They ruled with cruelty and had a major short-term impact. And then, very quickly, they were historically condemned and rejected. On the other hand, those who spoke and acted unobtrusively, quietly, gently, and in freedom—their influence extends and remains undiminished for thousands of years. We call them sages, heroes, saints, prophets, martyrs. They were strong and brave enough to renounce cruelty and rely on tenderness. Wisdom—which is more enduring than gold—is actually somehow tender itself.

Anthropologically speaking, tenderness could perhaps be



something like the very core of a human being. This may sound sentimental at first, but in our heritage we have another very important word: mercy. Maybe tenderness is a kind of mercy, or maybe mercy is the kind of love that has slowed down enough to gently touch another person. Maybe mercy is the tender side of love. Because love sometimes knows and has to be rough or sharp or very firm. Think of a child who wants to run away while crossing a dangerous road, and the father holds his hand firmly and does not let go. It's definitely love, but it doesn't seem tender at that moment.

What's more, tenderness is, surprisingly, a theoretically insufficiently researched

term. Nevertheless, we know for sure that the Christian tradition has never defined the human person exclusively through intelligence itself. Human beings are not merely rational beings or productive individuals, but creatures capable of love, tenderness, and mercy. We are moral beings, sacramental beings, spiritual and religious beings, vulnerable, and dependent beings. This is extremely important in the age of artificial intelligence because it is becoming increasingly clear that intelligence alone is not sufficient for human progress. The machine can analyse, predict, optimise, imitate language, and even fascinatingly simulate forms of empathy. However,

bloodless and incorporeal knowledge, and disembodied activity, cannot replace human relationality. Human beings are not only rational: we are corporeal, bodily or embodied beings.

Consider a small child. At first, it does not survive thanks to intelligence but thanks to tenderness. Through being held by its mother and father; through their touch, patience, slowness, warmth, hugs, kisses, eye contact; their attention. Before language—before productivity, before any achievements—there is care. It is the experience of the presence of another human being who, without words, says: it is good that you exist. And so we are born helpless, sustained through care, and



emotionally shaped through attachment. As we are taught and as it is obvious to us, we are finite, dependent on others, and mortal. I believe that this dependency is not a flaw in human life, but is actually one of the conditions that makes us human in the first place. A human being can, among other things, be defined as a being dependent on tenderness and mercy.

If ultimate reality, or what we commonly call God, is not tender and merciful – does life make any sense at all?

This brings to my mind the story of a teacher whose disciples asked him what stages he went through in his search for God.

"First, God led me by the hand," said the teacher, "into the land of Action, and I stayed there for several years. Then He returned and led me into the land of Suffering; I lived there until my heart was cleansed of every disordered attachment. This brought me to the land of Silence, where the secrets of life and death were revealed to my astonished eyes. Then I arrived in the land of Love, whose flame burned away all that remained of my ego."

"Was that the final stage of your search?" the disciples asked him.

"No," replied the teacher, "One day God said: 'Today I will take you into the innermost sanctuary of the temple, into the heart of God Himself.' And He brought me to the land of Tenderness, Joy, and Laughter."

There is another story I often remember when I think of tenderness and mercy. A woman told her parish priest that she sometimes sees God. The priest, quite expectedly, did not believe her and eventually, almost mockingly, told her: "Very well. Next time you see God, ask Him to tell you my most hidden sins, which no one knows but Him." She returned a few days later. The priest asked her what God had said. She replied: "He told me, 'tell your priest that I do not remember his sins.'"

This is not a doctrinal or philosophical discussion about God's omniscience. Rather, there is something deeply moving in this. Tenderness remembers differently—or gives the impression that it



does not remember evil at all. Mercy refuses to organise the world solely through justice, condemnation, or efficiency. What good is a highly developed civilization to us if there is no forgiveness? We want a civilization of love, tenderness, and mercy. We want a civilization that is just, but also knows and can forgive. We want a civilization that protects the weak and values not only speed and efficiency, but also leisure, contemplation, slowness, gratuity, spontaneity and much more.

People are hungry for that kind of energy, or spirit—not because the modern world lacks intelligence; far from it!—but because it lacks tenderness more and more. The late Pope Francis, who titled one of his books, “God’s Name is Mercy”, spoke about the need for a “revolution of tenderness”. In my opinion, this is one of the most beautiful phrases of his pontificate. If the heart of God himself is tender and merciful, then tenderness and mercy are the strongest forces of the Universe, that is, of the entire reality.

Let us reflect further: friendship takes time; reading takes time; learning takes time; love takes time; grief takes time; forgiveness takes time. Today we are offered everything accelerated, but for

what? Where are we rushing to so fast? And why do we build societies capable of doing almost anything, except sitting quietly with another person in their suffering? Sometimes I think that the real danger of artificial intelligence is not that machines will fascinatingly imitate empathy. The real danger, I fear, is that human beings will begin to reorganise themselves around “machine values”.

What do I mean by that?

Machine values treat patience or slowness as inefficiency, and silence as emptiness. In that framework, dependency is mistakenly viewed as a weakness, and reflection or contemplation is seen as unproductive. Worse still, tenderness is framed as a sentimental excess that, on top of everything, wastes time. But tenderness, as any human being can confirm, cannot be rushed. Nor can it ever be fully communicated through words alone. It is infinitely valuable even though it seems useless.

If a child is crying, it is not enough to quickly generate words of comfort: the child must be taken into one’s arms and comforted for a long time. If someone is grieving, there are moments when

explaining becomes almost offensive and insulting compared to mere presence. Many teachers have expressed this in so many different ways, but to reduce it to just a single sentence: there are important forms of human communication that happen beneath, behind, or beyond language itself. Perhaps that is precisely why the body is so important in Christianity. As I wrote earlier, we are bodily beings. That is why we say that we truly meet through presence, gesture, closeness, touch...

The Eucharist itself is not merely an idea to be pondered, but something to be physically received, something to be eaten. And perhaps this embodied tenderness shapes us more deeply than we realise. Is the tenderness received in early childhood the first balm for the coldness that awaits us in adulthood, a sort of spiritual vaccination so that a person can enter the world protected differently from someone who has never experienced such care?

I think it is also important to protect non-sexualised tenderness in the midst of a hyper-sexualised world that inflicts so many

should gently communicate what we believe to be the truth. Truth, namely, must always be spoken in the spirit of truth, which is at the same time the spirit of tenderness, gentleness, and respect.

Furthermore, tenderness does not mean the absence of all pain, and it must not blur the distinction between good and evil. It is important to emphasise that tenderness expands the mind and heart, much like compassion. It has been said that only the human who has expanded their mind and heart in this life dies without regret. And any growth or expansion brings with it some pain. Tenderness also implies bearing pain—one's own and that of others. Think, for example, of the pain of a mother who, despite her fear, brings her small baby to the doctor for a medical procedure that may be painful, but also brings an objective good.

Finally, I want to conclude this essay with the claim that we are not the source of tenderness. Let us see how it is with life or truth. I am alive or I can say that I have life, yet I know for certain that I am not the source of my life; I did not give it to myself, and I cannot

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dan Đaković is a philosopher and lecturer with expertise in metaphysics, anthropology, ethics, political philosophy, and philosophy of religion. He earned his PhD from the University of Zagreb with a thesis focused on Jacques Maritain's personalism, political thought, and the problem of secularism.

Dan served for years as a human rights advisor for the City of Zagreb, focusing on gender equality, civil society, and religious

communities. As part of his doctoral research, he spent time at the University of Notre Dame (USA), working in the archives of the Jacques Maritain Center.

Since 2020, Dan has been teaching philosophy at the Faculty of Philosophy and Religious Studies in Zagreb, where he currently also serves as Vice-Dean.

wounds. The impression is that many perversions of our time stem precisely from the lack of such tenderness, or as a cry for such tenderness. I say this cautiously and speculatively; I am not offering definitive answers. But perhaps this tenderness, more than language ever can, teaches us that existence itself can be trusted.

Without tenderness, I fear that society could become increasingly intelligent, but without the meaning that tenderness gives it. The Christian tradition insists that being human means not just thinking, but loving; not just processing information, but accompanying one another through suffering, joy, birth, failure, success, illness, and, of course, death. Perhaps tenderness is one of the last reminders that human beings cannot be reduced to intelligence alone. Or perhaps tenderness is something even more important than that? I still do not know.

TO CONCLUDE, THREE MORE THINGS NEED TO BE STATED.

First, tenderness must not be separated from truth. Tenderness without truth can become a dangerous caricature. If people live in the darkness of delusion and lies, then we cannot, in the name of tenderness, give in to their darkness. But we certainly can and

prolong it when its end arrives. My life, or the life within me, is not the Life. Likewise, my mind can be filled with truth, but truth is independent of my mind; its source is not within my mind. Truth in my mind, therefore, is not the Truth. In a similar way, my heart can be tender, filled with tenderness, but it is still not the source of tenderness. In other words, the tenderness of my heart is not the Tenderness. Where, then, is the source of life, truth, tenderness, and even intelligence? Here, a famous sentence helps me: *I am the vine, you are the branches...*

Just like our ancestors, from Babylon until today, I think we must be careful not to turn our own inventions into idols and expect them to be the vine. If we are not the source, then AI is even less so. AI is not and cannot be the source—neither of life, nor of truth, nor of tenderness.

OKO,
internationally
recognised multi-
media artist

Artists and the Artistic Vision in the AI Age

How do you explain what an artist does—and why society needs artists—to someone who does not consider themselves creative?

I would say that artists are not manufacturers of beautiful objects. We are translators. We translate things that are difficult to articulate: grief, wonder, contradiction, longing, fear, hope. We take experiences that often live beneath language and give them a form that can be shared. People sometimes tell me they are not creative, but I don't really believe that. Creativity is not a profession; it is a human condition. A child inventing a game, a grandmother seasoning a soup from memory, someone finding a new way to survive a difficult year—these are all creative acts. Society needs artists because we remind people that life is more than function. We help preserve ambiguity in a world that constantly demands certainty. We create spaces where people can encounter themselves, often unexpectedly.

You go by the professional moniker, oko, meaning 'eye', in Croatian. What do you turn your eye to as an artist and can you describe the feelings or sensations that emerge as you notice this process take shape?

I turn my eye toward the places where reality begins to soften.

Memory is one of those places. Dreams are another. I am interested in the moment when a remembered kitchen, a mythological creature, a childhood feeling, and a real animal can coexist in the same image and somehow feel truthful. The sensation is often subtle at first. It begins as a faint pull—something almost invisible asking for attention. Then connections start appearing between things that seemed unrelated. The world becomes slightly more porous. There is excitement in that process, but also tenderness. It feels less like inventing something and more like uncovering something that was already waiting beneath the surface.

Within this process, how do your outer eye—noticing the world and weighing its merit—and your inner eye—your introspection and imagination—work with or against each other?

I think they are in constant conversation. The outer eye gathers fragments: people, gestures, stories, buildings, animals, news, conversations, accidents. The inner eye transforms them. It asks different questions. It is less concerned with what happened than with what it meant. Sometimes they cooperate beautifully; sometimes they argue. The outer eye wants evidence; the inner eye wants metaphor. The outer eye says, "This is what I saw." The inner eye replies, "Yes, but this is what it felt like."

As AI enters more of the creative process, where do you feel your agency expanding, and where do you feel it being surrendered or negotiated?

For me, art often happens somewhere in the space between those two voices.

Technology has always changed the tools available to artists. AI is part of that lineage, but it also raises new questions.

I feel my agency expanding when technology helps me explore possibilities more quickly, connect distant ideas, or move beyond a creative blockage. It can function as a companion to curiosity. But agency becomes negotiated when speed begins to replace attention. The value of art has never been only the image itself. It lives in observation, doubt, memory, lived experience, and the countless invisible decisions that shape a work. If those dimensions

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What is one thing you notice in young artists working in today's digital world that inspires you, one thing that concerns you, and one thing that simply makes you curious?

become secondary to efficiency, then something important is surrendered. The challenge is not whether machines can generate images. The challenge is whether we can remain deeply present while using them.

What inspires me is their fearlessness. Many young artists move fluidly between mediums, cultures, and technologies. They are less constrained by categories than previous generations.

What concerns me is the pressure of visibility. There is an expectation to constantly produce, constantly share, constantly remain present. Art needs exposure, but it also needs incubation. Not every seed should be dug up every day to check whether it is growing.

What makes me curious is how a generation raised inside digital networks will redefine authenticity. Their relationship with identity, community, and imagination is fundamentally different from mine. I am interested to see what entirely new visual languages emerge from that experience.

What do you think artists will still be teaching the rest of us about being human fifty years from now?

I think artists will continue teaching us how to pay attention.

Fifty years from now, our tools may be radically different. We may live among intelligences and technologies that we can barely imagine today. But people will still fall in love. They will still lose things. They will still dream. They will still wonder who they are. Artists will keep returning to those questions. Not because we have answers, but because we are willing to stay with the mystery. And perhaps that is one of the most human things we can do: to keep looking, even when certainty remains out of reach.

The eye remains open.



ABOUT THE INTERVIEWEE

OKO (born Marina Mesar) is an internationally recognised contemporary multidisciplinary artist based between Zagreb and London. She is best known for her surreal, anthropomorphic drawings of animals in human form, as well as her gigantic public murals and site-specific installations.

Her work has been showcased globally. Notable pieces include the gigantic mural "Open My Eyes That I May See" on the facade of the Museum of Contemporary Art in Zagreb, her mural "Equilibrium" as part of the permanent art collection of the European Central Bank, and has exhibited in various major institutions, including the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the e-flux gallery in New York, and the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Bolzano.

What Should Humans Learn When AI Can Think?

Jonnie Noakes,

Director, Tony Little Centre for Innovation and Research in Learning, Eton College

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jonnie Noakes has nearly 40 years of experience at Eton College. There, he is currently the Director of the Tony Little Centre for Innovation and Research in Learning, which is a centre for pedagogical excellence, evidence-informed practice and research into teaching, learning, and leadership in education. In 2020 it won the TES Strategic Education Initiative of the Year.

On a spring morning in Westminster, UK, a group of educators, researchers, policymakers, technology leaders, and employers gathered to discuss a question that may come to define the future of education: What should humans learn when AI can think?

The meeting marked the inaugural gathering of the Future AI Readiness (FAIR) Consortium, convened by Eton College and The Nand & Jeet Khemka Foundation. Representatives from leading universities, international organisations, schools, employers, and educational initiatives across Europe and North America came together to explore what education should become in an age increasingly shaped by AI.

Saviesa participated as part of its ongoing work examining human autonomy, culture, creativity, and leadership in a rapidly changing technological landscape. The significance of the discussion lay beyond the technology itself and in what the technology is forcing society to confront.

Specifically, for much of the past century, education systems have operated on assumptions inherited from the industrial era. We are well used to the assumption that knowledge could be accumulated and information transferred. Achievement, measured through increasingly standardised forms of assessment, then led to a type of success that often depended on mastering and reproducing that aforementioned information more efficiently than others.

Artificial intelligence challenges many of those assumptions.

When machines can generate essays, analyse vast amounts of information, write software, summarise complex ideas, and simulate expertise, the contours of

human education and learning is forced to shift. What becomes of the edifice of human capability if knowledge becomes an automated commodity? This challenge sat beneath almost every conversation throughout the day.

Participants repeatedly returned to qualities that are difficult to standardise and even harder to automate: judgment, creativity, interpretation, adaptability, ethical reasoning, communication, and the ability to think across disciplines and contexts. These are not new capabilities, of course. Yet they may become increasingly important as artificial intelligence transforms the nature of cognitive work.

There was broad recognition that education cannot respond by simply introducing more technology into classrooms, as is being considered in a range of countries—the UK included. The deeper challenge concerns the purpose of education itself.

What should schools and universities prioritise when information is abundant, expertise is increasingly accessible, and intelligent systems can perform tasks that were once considered uniquely human?

This theme also highlighted a growing need for collaboration beyond traditional educational boundaries. One of FAIR's ambitions is to create stronger connections between schools, universities, employers, policymakers, and those developing AI technologies. The transition now underway is unlikely to be solved by any single institution acting alone; the diversity of organisations represented around the table reflected this reality.

Questions of inequality also featured prominently.

Artificial intelligence is already democratising access to learning, expertise, and personalised education. Yet it also carries the risk of amplifying existing (dis-)advantages. Access to advanced tools, digital fluency, and high-quality educational environments may become increasingly important determinants of opportunity. Ensuring that technological progress expands opportunity rather than concentrates it will be one of the defining educational challenges of the coming decades.

And perhaps most striking was the extent to which the conversation repeatedly returned to the humanities.

At a time when public discussion often frames the future as a race for technical skills, participants argued for the continued importance of culture, communication, history, ethics, and human understanding. Far from becoming obsolete these disciplines may become more important as societies seek to navigate increasingly powerful technologies. This surprise is felt most

keenly in Silicon Valley; for pedagogical leaders it is a vindication of what has been known for some time: humans still need the humanities.

Finally, there was little technological evangelism in the room. Nor was there a sense of panic. Instead, there was a sober recognition that education is entering a period of profound transition. The challenge is not simply preparing students to work alongside intelligent systems, but ensuring that technological progress strengthens rather than diminishes the qualities that make us human.

For Saviesa, the themes explored throughout the day resonated strongly with its own work around human

flourishing in an age of intelligent systems. As FAIR develops, it has the potential to become more than a forum for discussion. It could help shape a broader international conversation about what education is ultimately for. Because beneath debates about artificial intelligence, skills and future employment lies a deeper question.

If machines become increasingly capable of thinking, creating and analysing, how do we ensure that education continues to develop thoughtful, grounded and fully human individuals?



What I Learned About Being Human from Dr Jane Goodall

Tara Golshan,

Executive Director, the Jane Goodall Institute (UAE)

Dr. Jane Goodall was a visionary, a woman whose life was defined by curiosity, courage, and an unwavering belief in the power of individuals to shape change. Jane did not simply study the world; she paid a deep and broad attention to it. She listened deeply, to nature, to communities, and, especially, to people.

I remember, when Nelson Mandela passed away, his family asked Jane to write a special tribute to him. One of her lines was that “It’s hard to imagine a world without Nelson Mandela”. And I feel the same now: it’s hard to imagine a world without Jane.

Jane was extraordinary. Not just for her groundbreaking science but for her deep, unshakeable belief in people. Especially young people.

For more than twenty years I had the privilege of working closely alongside her and supporting the growth of Roots & Shoots, the global movement she founded to encourage young people to take action for people, animals, and the environment.

I often asked Jane about what she wanted her legacy to be, and she always cited this programme.

It started with a few students in Tanzania telling Jane about the problems they saw: cruelty to animals, pollution, poverty. They didn’t have money or power, but they had passion. And Jane said to them what she would go on to say to thousands of others around the world: “You truly can make a difference.”

Today, her youth programme that was so close to her heart is an ever-growing global movement, now in 75 countries; a next generation who already understand that every action matters. It demonstrates, daily and globally, that young people are capable of meaningful leadership now—not someday in the future. She wanted Roots & Shoots to be more than a programme. She wanted it to be a movement of compassionate changemakers, people who

act with kindness, courage, and a deep respect for all living things.

Jane never lectured. She listened. She didn’t tell young people what to think—she invited them to see, to question, to connect. And she gave them confidence to believe that hope is necessary.

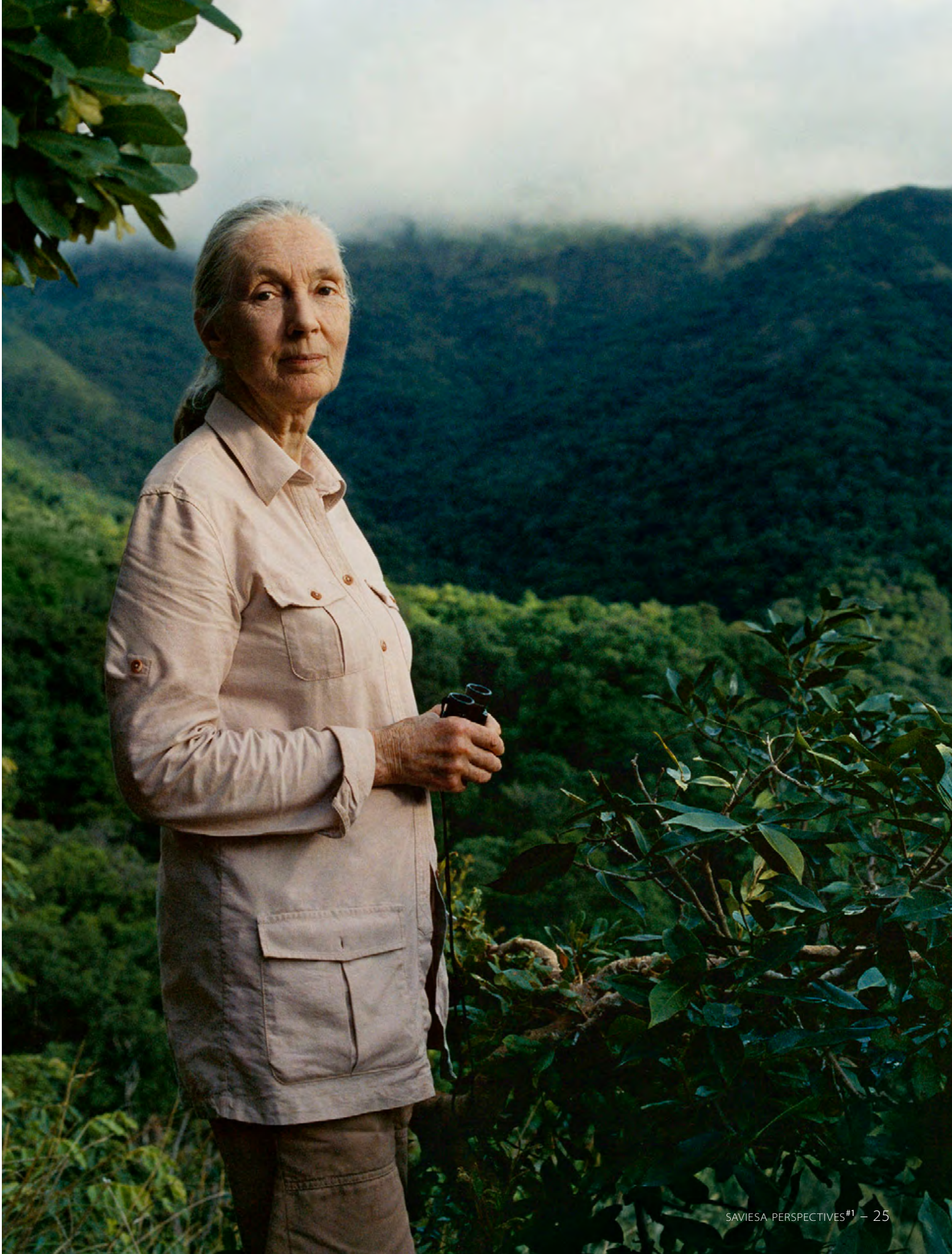
Jane understood that hope is not something we inherit automatically. It is something we choose — again and again. It is shaped through action, through responsibility, and through the courage to imagine something better than what currently exists.

One of my favourite memories was on one of our trips to the UAE. A young lady sat next to Jane on the plane and when she realised who Jane was she immediately burst into tears. She was so emotional she couldn’t speak. I realised then that it was not just because Jane was famous, but because Jane meant something. She represented goodness, gentleness, and hope—at a time when the world desperately needs all three.

Whether you met her for two minutes or worked with her for twenty years, she had this way of making you believe again, in people, in nature, in the possibility of change.

Today, I feel Jane’s legacy is very much a living one. It lives in the science that protects our planet, and the scientists protecting our ecosystems; in the next generation of conscientious youth taking responsibility for our world and in a global community shaping sustainable futures, committed to acting with compassion, courage, and hope. All the values Jane stood for.

It begins with understanding but insists on responsibility. Her work redefined not only how we study nature, but how we value





it—and ourselves within it. Each successful conservation effort, each empowered individual, each restored habitat is part of her ongoing story.

During those years I travelled with Jane to countries across the world and watched her engage audiences ranging from schoolchildren and community groups to business leaders, scientists, and heads of state. Although her work spanned science, conservation, education, and advocacy, I was always struck by how often she returned to the same simple idea. Whatever the subject under discussion, she believed that every individual matters and that every individual has the ability to make a difference.

It sounds simple, even obvious. Yet I have come to believe that this idea sits at the heart of Jane's legacy and offers an important answer to the question of what it means to be human.

Jane's scientific work transformed our understanding of chimpanzees and challenged long-held assumptions about the uniqueness of our species. Her observations revealed forms of intelligence, emotion, cooperation, and social learning that many had previously believed belonged only to humans. Yet she never

saw these discoveries as diminishing humanity. Rather, they deepened her appreciation of our place within the wider living world and reinforced her conviction that human beings carry a particular responsibility for the choices they make.

One of the reasons Jane's message resonated with so many people was its simplicity.

She often reminded audiences that every individual matters and that every individual makes a difference every day.

The question, she would add, is what kind of difference we choose to make. It was an idea that informed her scientific work, her conservation efforts, and the creation of Roots & Shoots, reflecting a lifelong belief that positive change begins when individuals accept responsibility for the choices available to them.

That belief shaped everything she did.

Over the years, participants have undertaken projects as varied as habitat restoration, community gardens, support for vulnerable

groups, animal welfare initiatives, and environmental clean-ups. A group in Lagos cleared truckloads of debris from blocked drainage systems that were contributing to flooding and creating breeding grounds for malaria-carrying mosquitoes. Students in New Zealand raised funds to build sanitary facilities for girls at a school in Tanzania so that they could continue their education. In different countries and different communities the projects looked very different, yet they reflected the same underlying principle: positive change begins when people stop waiting for somebody else to solve a problem and decide to become part of the solution themselves.

What stayed with Jane was never the size of the project. It was the transformation that often occurred within the people involved. Time and again she saw individuals discover that they were capable of making a difference, however modest that difference might seem. In a world that often encourages people to feel powerless in the face of large and complex problems, she regarded that discovery as profoundly important.

People often asked Jane where she found hope. I heard the question countless times over the years and the answer was remarkably consistent. Jane would speak about the resilience of nature, the creativity of the human intellect, the energy and commitment of young people, and what she called the indomitable human spirit. Despite everything she had witnessed, she never lost faith in people's capacity to respond to challenges with courage, ingenuity, and determination.

One of the misconceptions about Jane's work is that it was somehow reserved for those with access to wilderness.

In reality, many of the people she met lived in towns and cities, often far removed from the forests and wildlife that first inspired her. She understood that for most people, a connection with nature begins much closer to home.

Through Roots & Shoots, young people learned that nature is not confined to national parks or remote landscapes. It can be found in a community garden, a local park, a river running through a city, birds nesting on a balcony, trees lining a street or pollinators visiting flowers in a school playground. These may seem like small things, but they remind us that we remain part of the natural world even when surrounded by concrete and glass.

The same lesson applies to adults. Many of us spend our lives in cities, moving between homes, offices, schools and public spaces with little opportunity to experience the natural world in the way previous generations once did. Yet nature remains present if we choose to notice it. It can be found in the trees that soften a city street, the changing seasons in a local park, a community garden created by neighbours, or the simple act of caring for the places we share with others.

Equally important, these experiences remind us that there is always something we can do. We can create green spaces, support local wildlife, improve neighbourhood environments, reduce waste, plant trees or help restore places that have been neglected. The scale of the action matters less than the decision to act.

Jane often encouraged people not to be overwhelmed by the size

of global problems. Instead, she urged them to begin where they were. The lesson at the heart of Roots & Shoots was that positive change rarely starts with grand gestures. More often, it begins when someone notices a problem, cares enough to respond, and inspires others to do the same.

Nature played an important role in Jane's understanding of the world, though perhaps not in the way people sometimes assume. Although she always talked about the healing properties of nature, she never suggested that everyone should retreat to the wilderness or live close to untouched landscapes. Much of her later life was spent in some of the world's largest cities speaking to people whose lives were far removed from the forests of Gombe.

What nature offered, in her view, was perspective. It reminded us that we are not as separate as we sometimes imagine and that our lives are connected, often in ways we barely notice, to other people, other species and future generations.

Whether we live in a village, a suburb or a city of twenty million people, we remain part of a wider living world upon which our lives ultimately depend.

For Jane, recognising those connections was not simply an environmental insight. It was a human one.

Looking back, I do not think Jane's greatest contribution was scientific, important though her discoveries undoubtedly were. Nor do I think it was primarily about conservation. At its heart was a belief in people.

She believed that human beings are capable of extraordinary things when given the opportunity and the encouragement to act. Through Roots & Shoots and through her own example, she demonstrated that change rarely begins with governments or institutions alone. More often it begins when individuals accept responsibility for the choices before them and decide to act.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tara Golshan is the Executive Director of Roots & Shoots, the Jane Goodall Institute (UAE), a global humanitarian and education programme. She has worked across the Institute for 20 years having previously worked as the Executive Director for Education for The Jane Goodall Institute in the UK.

If I had to summarise what Dr Jane Goodall taught us about being human, it would be this: our lives are measured not only by what we achieve, but by what we contribute; not only by what we know, but by how we choose to use that knowledge; and not only by what we take from the world, but by what we leave behind for others.

Predominately, it is not what the world holds for us but what we bring to it that counts.

Our roots are our values: compassion, respect, hope and understanding. And our shoots are our actions: projects, ideas and communities that continue to grow.

More than anything else, Jane taught us that every individual matters. Whether we live beside a forest or in the centre of a city, each of us has the ability to make a difference.

The future we step into now, with all its challenges, is defined by what she entrusted to us: a set of values, a way of seeing and a call to act. Her legacy will live on in the choices we make, the partnerships we build, and the willingness to keep listening, learning, and leading, together. It asks us to hold fast to Jane's vision while allowing new voices to guide how that vision continues to evolve.

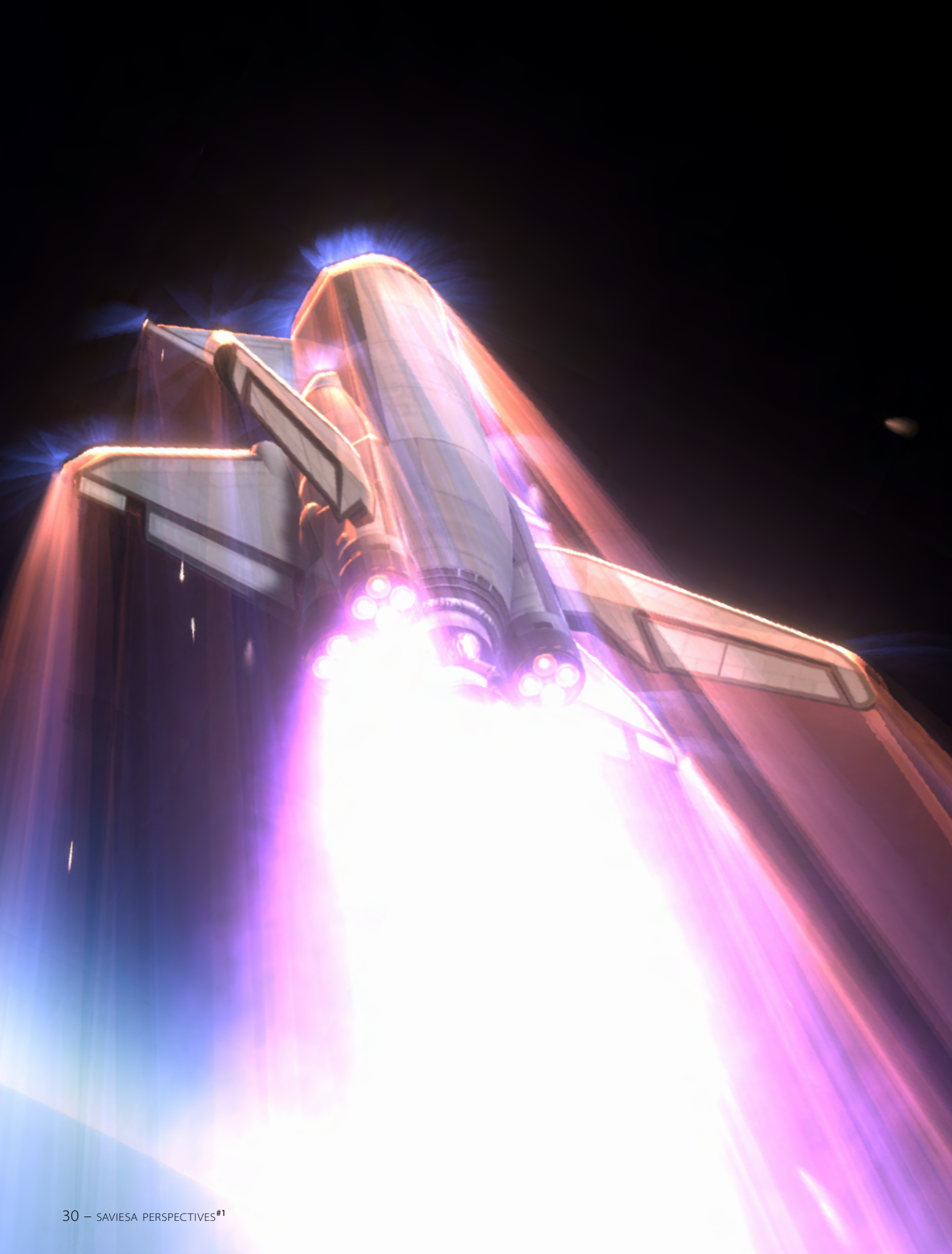
I hope each of us carries one question with us: What action is mine to take? Not someday, not in grand gestures—but here, now, in our lives, the people and the communities that we touch daily. Jane reminded us that no act is too small, no individual too insignificant, to make a difference.

So we pledge that promise to her: that her vision will never fade. That we'll keep empowering young people, keep protecting this planet, keep choosing hope—even when it's hard. That we will make sure her programmes are supported, upheld, and continue to flourish.

And so, may we continue to see the world through her eyes knowing that her work endures in all of us who choose to carry it forward. Jane showed us what it means to lead with purpose; our responsibility now is to live that purpose, together. Our role now is not to preserve her legacy but to advance it.







Gaming

Igor Kolar, freelance product designer and creative director

& What it
Teaches us
About the
Human
Condition

Designing for education often yields games that feel like chores or homework. When they are supplementary material—meant for children young enough to necessitate parental supervision when playing on any device—this is not a problem. It is the modern equivalent of colourful puzzles, picture books, or economical replacements for inaccessible board games. We grow out of that age very quickly though, unlike the need to maintain or increase the rate of learning. Very quickly then, the allure of Modern Warfare (the game, not the act) overrides the appeal of history or traffic sign trivia games. That doesn't mean games designed for a specific kind of fun can't be educational; the problem is not in what they're trying to teach, but how.

Recently we saw the first group of humans orbit the Moon in 50 years. How many individuals looking up at the sky—or, more likely, looking down at their phones at a social media video of the launch—understand the mechanics of such a feat? Those at NASA, and adjacent or competing organisations, certainly. Astrophysicists and mechanical engineers around the world, most likely. Interested parties and so-called nerds, perhaps. That these individuals would understand this is unsurprising. And yet one community of humans would also understand it, humans likely in a range of roles, from different backgrounds, and of many ages. These are players of Kerbal Space Program, or KSP.

In this game you have to put together rocket pieces in order to make literal little green aliens reach, land on, return from, research, and mine their star system. Their home planet of Kerbin is smaller, less dense than Earth, but the physics governing the game design and experience are very real. It has a large online community of people who continually modify its game-play, including turning it into our Solar system, and having to manage pesky things that the designers omitted in order to keep it fun, like food, water, and oxygen. In the game, players are taught orbital mechanics, such as launch and re-entry trajectories, orbit transfers, and how to rendezvous craft in orbits of varying planets.

It also teaches planning, design, and budgeting—but it was never meant as an educational game. Edu-tainment is overt in trying to teach you—to the point of it feeling more akin to propaganda—

whereas, to borrow a contemporary vernacular, something like KSP is more like a psy-op 'most don't even realise is there'.

*Online in-game communication has...
a reputation.*

Put children together in a yard, and they are likely to find ways to play together. Place them in a competitive multiplayer match and you would be forgiven to think you've taken on a band of sailors on shore leave (or remarkably good off-shore internet speeds). And yet, much like the real world, you will find pockets of amazing people. If you fling yourself out into the universe of Elite: Dangerous, a hard core space simulation, you may end up relying on the help of the Fuel Rats. It is not an official faction inside the game, nor is it monetised. It is a volunteer group of players, organised to bail out the odd unfortunate pilot that ends up stranded without gas. Here your progress and accumulated in-game wealth are tied to your player character, raising the stakes of survival. In a not-so-recent attempt, a pilot set off to break the distance record by going the furthest off the edge of the simulated galaxy. It ended in a Fuel Rats rescue mission the logistics of which resembled the RAF 1982 Falklands Raid; far more than just an 'afternoon of playing video games' then.

*But online communities are also a
reflection of our society at large.*

Famously, a bug in World of Warcraft once caused permanent damage to player characters. The bug spread through close interaction with other players. The resulting quarantine procedures that were put in place would probably be eerily reminiscent to everyone who has lived through the COVID lockdowns. These behaviours grew organically out of player interaction and are not necessarily design-able at scale. However, depending on the type of game, the built-in, canonical, even, camaraderie of HellDivers (2), and the paranoia of Among Us, show us we have plenty more to play with game design than just



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Igor Kolar is a Croatian product designer and creative director whose work spans product design, branding, visual identity and digital experiences. His international portfolio includes projects for the Jane Goodall Institute UAE and Entrio, one of Southeast Europe's leading online ticketing platforms. As Co-Founder of the award winning game studio Gamechuck, he led the design of internationally recognised gaming hardware and the acclaimed video game Speed Limit.

A Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, Igor works with organisations to create thoughtful, distinctive design that connects strategy, identity and user experience. Alongside his commercial work, he is particularly interested in how design can support the transition to a circular economy through products, services and systems that are sustainable, regenerative and built to last.

reaching for the latest graphical development.

Back in the offline world, I live in Zagreb, Croatia. I've been unhappy with the mayoral situation in my city for years. I would often suggest a high-level player of a game like Sim City, or the more recent City Skylines, would probably do a better job than the then-mayor. This sentiment has recently been echoed across the pond, suggesting that civil servants would do well to try their best at city simulators, and even a good play of Civilization in order to develop a sense for governance in a risk-free environment. This is not a new concept. Buckminster Fuller proposed an educational simulation called World Peace Game, to help deal with overpopulation and uneven distribution of resources. Like most of his work, it was an ambitious project. It was ahead of both its time and the available computing power, therefore not providing a great deal of simulation fidelity.

Don't Starve is, on its face, a horror game where you try to stay alive in an adversarially inclined forest where everything, including the dark, is trying to gnaw at your sanity, stomach, and overall health. It has a complete, fantastical eco system. There is otherwise no obvious goal in the game beyond survival. And yet, if I play long enough, I can't help getting a profound feeling that it has a lot to teach about achieving equilibrium with nature. You have to gather resources to survive, like cutting down trees and hunting animals for food. But harvest without replenishing, without planned governance of your surroundings, and you'll have a considerably harder time succeeding.

Most people, after finishing school, will go on to learn only about subjects that are interesting to them specifically. But a question which always bothers me is this: would they have been more interested in something else if it was presented to them differently?

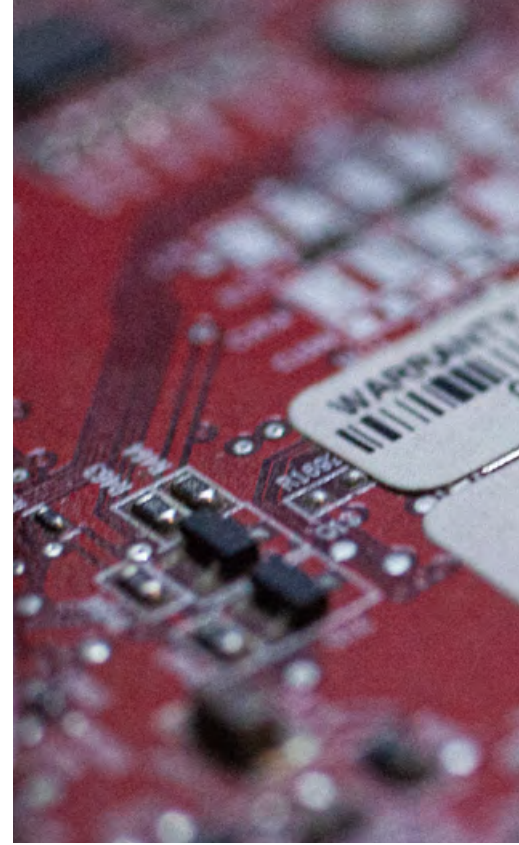




Would they pay more attention to physics in school if they played KSP, for example, and knew about the Hohman transfer orbit long before you had the mathematical knowhow to calculate it— Because it was fun flinging the little alien ‘frogs’ into space?

Educational games are usually nothing more than interactive workbooks, trivia, and occasionally a puzzle or two. There is no substitute for fostering curiosity in children. The question then shouldn’t be what the game can teach, but what the child can learn from a game. There is a difference. It is on the game designers then, to create complex, compelling games, you can learn from, but more importantly, will choose to play. But it is also on society to recognise the importance of gaming as a means of learning, and as a means of navigating what it means to be human in different worlds—albeit as a simulation.

Are We Unintentionally Designing for Non-Human Progress?



Shirah Mansaray, Vice Chair, Amnesty International UK

It is the Eve of a new world, a world where technology whirrs even louder than a baritone saxophone, and quiet nature and silence no longer hold their grip on humanity. A silence that once graced us with moments of reflection and intentional curiosity is now superseded by the hum of machines weaving out an odyssey of artificial intelligence.

A classroom in rural Uganda is now brimming with a chorus of human voices—chatter and laughter emerging from machines and bright computer screens. The children are engulfed in waves of wonderment and intellectual stimulation; for the first time, they have seen themselves reflected behind a screen in what they believe is their ‘true image’. But the adults in this classroom are acutely aware of the data engineers that trained and modelled this ‘true image’ from massive datasets of human faces, voices, and motion to make these videos seem realistic. From within the adult’s eyes, we can see the reflection of the ‘true image’ which is several skin-shades darker than each of the children in this classroom, and the hair finer than the customary balls of curly coiled hair actually adorned by inhabitants of this part of Uganda.

These children, who once sat at wooden desks with pen and paper in hand whilst staring intently at a blackboard, are now convinced that the AI-generated ‘true image’ videos are identical reflections of each of them. Had any one of the data engineers or computer scientists who had designed this suite of AI-generated faces, motions, and voices bothered to ask any adult or child in this classroom to

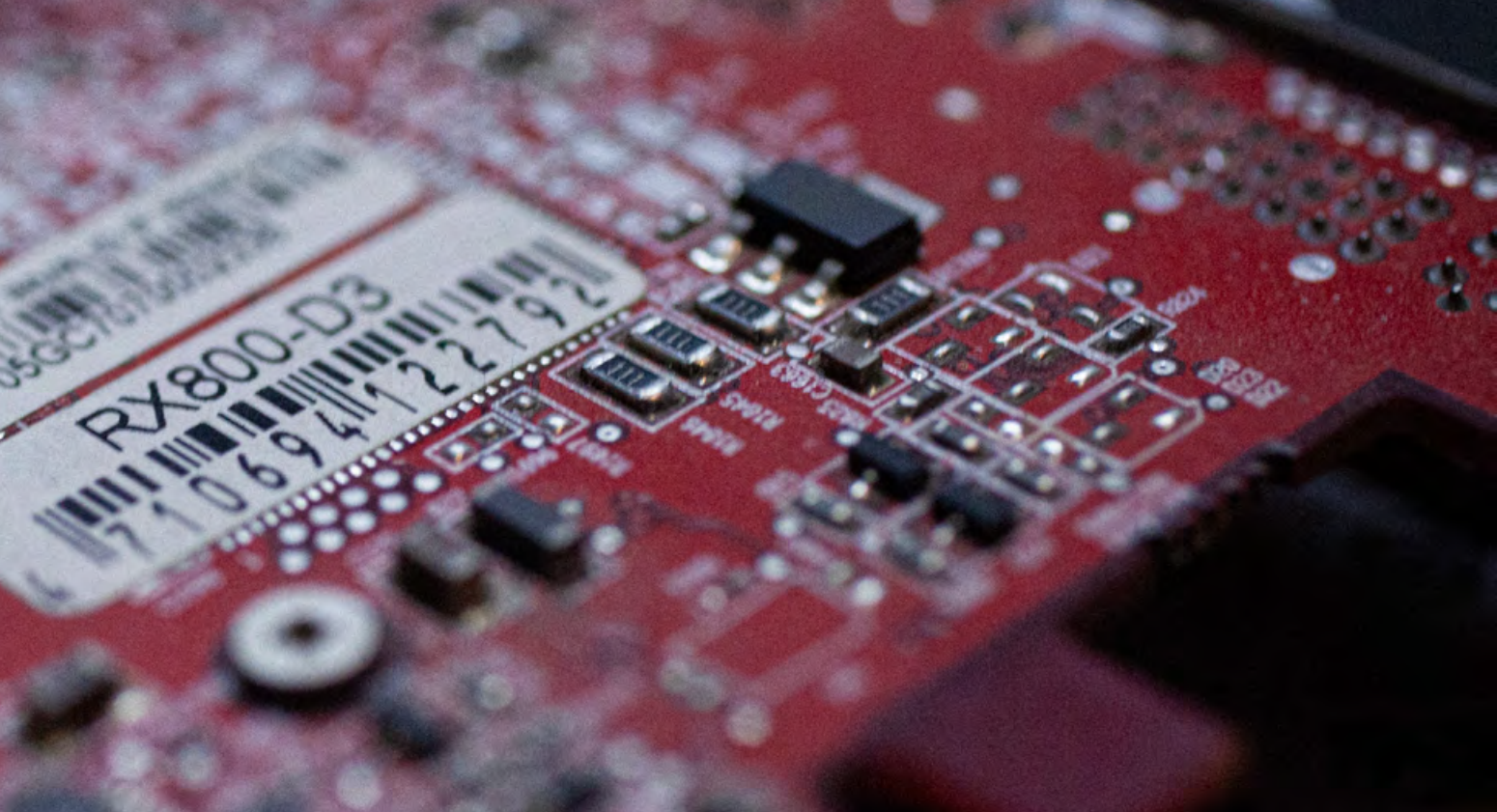
take part in an inclusively designed suite of AI-generated images, then this moment of wonderment and intellectual stimulation may have held more resonance for the adults in the room. Instead, the adults watched in loud silence as the children cradled the memory of the first time their ‘true image’ was reflected back at them from a screen. No one asked aloud whether they had access, were valued or their voices mattered, in the wake of an AI-generated human.

This, I think, is what technological progress can look like when humanity is unintentional, un-relational, and deeply unaware of its moral weight.

The world as we experience it today and perhaps as we may experience it in the future is caught between the morality of an AI that advances at the speed of lightning and the reality of a world fractured by discriminatory algorithms. These algorithms are reshaping educational spaces faster than an encroaching tide and culminating in the reshaping of the very meaning of intelligence itself.

It is widely reported on how a computer algorithm caused a grading crisis in British schools and this seminal example of how an Ofqual algorithm downgraded almost 40% of results, disproportionately harming students from traditionally marginalised groups. Discriminatory algorithms, however unintentional, reveal how invisible structures of bias can be encoded into the very systems designed to optimise human life.

And yet, something curious is happening. Where intelligence



accelerates, meaning lags behind. Thus, when judgement is delegated to algorithms, when thinking is outsourced to digital agents, and when humans are repurposed as AI-generated ‘true images’, we must ask ourselves: What becomes of the human in the process?

What if this new world could be imagined as a world where every digital system begins with one question: Whose humanity must this technology protect?

A new world where teachers sit in nature’s silence whilst co-designing AI tools with communities. Learners are enchanted as they discover the power they hold when consenting to how their data is used by data engineers; with full consent, inclusivity and agency. And our collective humanity ensures that no algorithm is deployed without safeguarding psychological dignity. A world where each human, whether in London or Uganda, encounters technology not as a silent machine but as a collaborator and as the moral compass that amplifies AI-driven curiosity alongside our collective human intelligence.

Progress, then, will not be measured by speed but by inclusion. Not by the scale of our machines but by the depth of our humanity. In this world, when the machines grow quieter, we may once again hear the soft, unmistakable chorus of human curiosity.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Shirah Mansaray is a Trustee and the Vice Chair (NED) of Amnesty International UK, and Partner and Co-Founder of Themis Crown Advocates.

With over 15 years in the humanitarian field, Shirah as Executive Director or Homeless Heroes Aid CiC, as the Founder and CEO of I Am Nobody’s Child (an NGO that works with over 800 war-affected children suffering from mental illnesses due to injuries sustained during the conflict in northern Uganda), with the UN and the Council of Europe, and as a PhD scholar at UCL, where her research focused on mental health, healthcare policy, and sustainable design.



Reflecting on Magnifica Humanitas

Leonor Diaz Alcantara, Founder, Saviesa

Pope Leo XIV's encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas* arrives at a time when artificial intelligence is reshaping the texture of everyday life itself.

Encyclicals are not ordinary public statements. Historically, they have marked moments when the Catholic Church has sought to respond to profound shifts in society, from industrialisation and labour rights to war, totalitarianism, globalisation, and environmental crisis.

When Pope Leo XIII published *Rerum Novarum* in 1891, Europe was in the midst of profound social upheaval. Industrialisation had transformed economies, but it had also produced overcrowded cities, dangerous working conditions, child labour, extreme inequality, and growing social unrest. Across Europe, socialist and revolutionary movements were gaining support among workers who felt excluded from the benefits of industrial growth.

The encyclical intervened directly in what was then known as “the social question”. It rejected both unrestricted capitalism and revolutionary socialism, arguing instead that workers possessed inherent dignity and rights that neither markets nor states could ignore. It defended the right of workers to organise, supported the principle of a just wage, and insisted that economic life should serve the human person rather than reduce people to units of production. Its influence extended far beyond Catholic theology. Catholic trade unions emerged across Europe, social reform movements adopted its language, and a generation of Christian Democratic political parties drew directly upon its principles.

More than a century later, Pope Francis issued *Laudato Si* at a time when climate change was already well established within scientific and policy circles. The encyclical's significance lay not in introducing new scientific evidence, but in reframing the debate. Francis connected climate change, biodiversity loss, consumer culture, economic inequality, and human dignity within a single framework, insisting that environmental and social crises could not be separated. The document quickly became one of the most influential religious interventions in environmental debates. It was discussed at the United Nations, referenced in climate negotiations surrounding the Paris Agreement, and generated extensive engagement among policymakers, academics, faith leaders, and civil society organisations. More importantly, it expanded the conversation beyond environmental specialists. Questions that had often been treated as matters of science and economics alone became questions of ethics, responsibility, solidarity, and intergenerational justice.

Read in that context, *Magnifica Humanitas* represents something more complex than a religious intervention into a technological debate. It signals that artificial intelligence is now being understood as a development with consequences for the social and cultural foundations upon which societies depend—which is also why one does not need to be religious, or indeed Catholic, to recognise the importance of the questions the encyclical is raising.

These questions concern themselves with the conscious and unconscious degradation of four cornerstones of modern humanity: social cohesion, cultural heterogeneity and continuity, moral responsibility, and human dignity. The genesis of such degradation? Pope Leo XIV writes that societies may gradually

begin adapting themselves to the logic of the artificial systems they create. He warns that “the power and prevalence of emerging technologies are interwoven into the fabric of daily life, shaping decision-making processes and deeply affecting the collective imagination.” The encyclical repeatedly returns to the distinction between technological fluency and human judgment because although machines may analyse, predict, compose, and optimise with increasing sophistication, mistaking fluency for wisdom risks equating intelligence for consciousness.

Democratic society, meaningful leadership, and social trust ultimately depend upon the aforementioned four cornerstones. Without them we crumble. Yet the danger is subtle precisely because these systems often appear—and can be so very—effective. When answers arrive instantly and confidently the slower disciplines through which understanding and discernment develop can begin to weaken almost unnoticed, particularly within institutions already shaped by speed, distraction, exhaustion, and constant

informational overload.

The encyclical is careful not to descend into technological pessimism, however.

“Technology in and of itself is not a solution to humanity’s problems, just as it is not inherently evil.” AI is already bringing extraordinary advances across medicine, science, accessibility, and many areas of human life.

In healthcare, AI systems are helping researchers identify promising drug candidates far more rapidly than traditional methods. In 2020, researchers at MIT used machine learning to identify halicin, a new antibiotic capable of killing several drug-resistant bacterial strains, from a pool of more than 100 million chemical compounds. What would previously have required decades of laboratory screening was dramatically accelerated through computational analysis.

AI is also beginning to improve clinical diagnosis. In breast cancer screening, a landmark study published in *Nature* found



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Leonor Diaz Alcantara is the Founder and President of Saviesa, an independent European think-and-do-tank working across leadership, education, creativity and ethics.

For more than 25 years, she has led organisations as a CEO in education and social impact, working across the UK

and internationally, including the Galapagos Conservation Trust, Smart Matrix, the RAFT Institute, and Montessori Global Education. She has also served on the Boards of: PWN Global, London Fire Brigade Enterprises, the Jane Goodall Institute UAE, and more.



that AI systems developed by Google Health were able to detect breast cancer in mammograms with greater accuracy than human radiologists alone, reducing both false positives and false negatives. Similar systems are now being explored across multiple areas of medical imaging, including lung cancer and diabetic retinopathy.

In science, perhaps the most significant breakthrough has been DeepMind's AlphaFold. For decades, predicting the three-dimensional structure of proteins remained one of biology's greatest challenges. In 2020, AlphaFold achieved a level of accuracy that many scientists regarded as transformative. Since then, more than 200 million protein structures have been made freely available to researchers worldwide, accelerating work in fields ranging from drug development and rare disease research to agriculture and biotechnology.

For people living with disabilities, AI-powered technologies are already expanding access to communication and participation. Real-time speech recognition systems now enable live transcription for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. Computer vision tools can describe surroundings, read text aloud, identify objects, and recognise people for those who are blind or partially sighted. Advances in machine translation are also helping overcome language barriers on a scale that would have been unimaginable only a decade ago.

AI is also beginning to strengthen humanity's response to climate change itself. DeepMind's GraphCast has demonstrated weather forecasting accuracy that exceeds many conventional systems, improving preparedness for extreme weather events, while AI-driven flood forecasting tools are providing earlier warnings to vulnerable communities around the world. Machine learning is increasingly being used to optimise electricity grids, integrate renewable energy sources and accelerate the discovery of materials needed for the energy transition.

This is perhaps where Magnifica Humanitas is at its most open to challenge. The encyclical is persuasive in warning against the dangers of technological power detached from human values. Yet it pays less attention to the possibility that intelligent systems may become indispensable in addressing some of humanity's greatest

challenges.

Today's Catholic Pope is asking a question many people, of many faiths, languages, and perspectives are asking themselves: under what conditions, in whose interests, and with what consequences for human agency, are we progressing?

This question feels particularly important from a European perspective because Europe has historically understood itself not simply as a market but as a civilisation shaped by languages, institutions, historical memory, democratic traditions, and different cultural interpretations of a good human life. The concern around cultural homogeneity stems from increasingly centralised systems directly shaping communication, knowledge, behaviour, education, and public discourse, convening these arteries of civilisation in increasingly uniform ways. Smaller languages, regional histories and local institutional cultures risk disappearing within technological environments largely designed elsewhere and optimised according to a business model.

Pope Leo XIV warns against what he calls the "Babel syndrome": the belief that human complexity, cultural difference, and even the mystery of the person, can ultimately be reduced to performance and uniform language. The significance of raising these questions on the global stage should not be underestimated.

Similar concerns have emerged elsewhere.

UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (2021) places human dignity, cultural diversity, and human oversight at the centre of AI governance. The United Nations established its High-Level Advisory Body on Artificial Intelligence in 2023 and adopted the Global Digital Compact in 2024, both reflecting growing concern that increasingly powerful technologies require forms of governance capable of protecting human rights and social cohesion. Religious leaders from other traditions have likewise begun engaging with these questions. The Dalai Lama has repeatedly argued that technological progress without compassion risks becoming detached from human flourishing, while Islamic scholars and institutions have increasingly explored the implications of AI for human responsibility, justice, and moral accountability.

What makes Magnifica Humanitas significant, however, is the platform from which they are expressed. Few individuals possess the ability to direct global attention towards a set of ideas in the way a Pope can. While reports from international organisations often reach policymakers and specialists, an encyclical enters public consciousness through media attention, diplomatic influence, and a direct audience of more than one billion Catholics. Whether one agrees with its conclusions or not, whether religious or not, many people will recognise the importance of a global figure insisting that technological progress cannot be separated from wider questions about dignity, responsibility, solidarity, and the common good.

The pressures described throughout the Encyclical are already visible across multiple sectors.

In education, teachers are grappling with what happens when AI systems begin

substituting for the slower intellectual and emotional work through which understanding and independent thought are formed. Universities are beginning to confront difficult questions about authorship, assessment, and the meaning of learning itself when fluency can be simulated instantly and at scale. In leadership and governance, organisations are wrestling with how accountability survives when decision making becomes increasingly mediated by algorithmic systems and opaque forms of optimisation. In political life, intelligent systems are beginning not only to shape decisions, but perception itself, influencing what societies pay attention to, what they prioritise and how reality is interpreted.

What gives Magnifica Humanitas much of its seriousness is that Pope Leo XIV refuses both naïve enthusiasm and simplistic fear. Instead, he recognises something more difficult and more mature;

namely that technology tends to amplify the political, cultural, and institutional conditions already present within societies.

The conclusion concerns itself with the fact that “in the era of artificial intelligence, when human dignity is threatened by new forms of dehumanisation, ours is the pressing duty to remain profoundly human.”

It is perhaps the clearest summary of the document’s central argument. The challenge posed by artificial intelligence is clearly far beyond merely technical. It concerns the kind of civilisation human beings wish to build, the values societies choose to protect, and whether technological power ultimately deepens or diminishes our understanding of what it means to be human. As Pope Leo XIV writes, “Never has humanity had such power over itself.”



Redefining Creativity in the Intelligent Age

Insights from Saviesa's Panel of Experts, with recommendations for AI policy and regulation in the UK

Peter Stojanovic,
Saviesa, and Editor, HotTopics

INTRODUCTION

With the transformative rise of generative AI, we are arguably living in a new intelligent age. This type of intelligence is unprecedented. How humans reorganise ourselves to better understand and collaborate with AI will come down to how well we understand how AI is built, how well we can map its impact onto current intellectual and cultural frameworks, and how well we truly understand ourselves. At its heart, the debate on the future of AI is in fact a debate on the future of humanity.

To prepare future generations for an AI-driven world, it is incumbent on today's generations to answer those questions. That understanding should be used to shape, amongst others, serious educational reform.

Bringing together a wide range of experts, from educators to artists, policy makers to academics, to technology and business leaders, over panel discussions and more, these debates are refined into suggested policies; action out of the abstract.

This article is borne from a debate featuring the following leaders, moderated by Peter Stojanovic.

Karina Abramova Multidisciplinary creative practitioner, Advisor, and Artist

Success Yole Areeveso Researcher—Student Use of AI in Higher Education, University of East Anglia

Dr. Carla Bonina Associate Professor of Entrepreneurship and Innovation, Surrey Business School

Professor Carl Gombrich Dean, The London Interdisciplinary School

Prajay Kamat Co-Founder and cto, Mergexr Studios

Devi Kolli Co-Founder and CEO, i3 Simulations

Claire Koryczan Founder and Director, Imagine Beyond

Marina Mesar aka, OKO, award-winning contemporary artist

Marine Tanguy Founder, MTArt Agency, and former Forbes 30 Under 30 Europe Art and Culture

Lisa Tse Special Advisor, UN Women UK, and Social Entrepreneur

THE NATURE OF CREATIVITY IN THE AGE OF AI

At its core, creativity allows humans to problem-solve, imagine the impossible and bring new ideas to life. Up until very recently this was considered hallowed ground for homo sapiens, separating us even from a product of our own creativity: the machine.

Today, the journey from machine to AI, and the rise of generative AI, has achieved much. Yet beyond its output, beyond its automation and potential for productivity, its novel ability to create is blurring the lines of what it means to be creative. That is, can we intrinsically differentiate human and non-human creativity, and whether we can or cannot, what does that mean for how we learn and live

alongside one another?

Marcus du Sautoy, author of *The Creativity Code*, suggests that AI-generated imagery most closely resembles “combinational” creativity—rearranging existing data into novel forms. However, the panel commented that this type of creativity lacks the emotional depth and originality rooted in lived experience compared to that of transformational creativity. The ideas generated by the fusing of experience and art, for example, is more than the sum of the combinational parts. Indeed, cutting-edge mathematical creativity, regarded by some as the most remarkable human creativity of all, seems unlikely to come from AI in its current form.

Interestingly in the case of art, there is historical precedence for this debate.

Marcel Duchamp’s infamous porcelain urinal was submitted as art in early 20th-century New York. His challenge to

the status quo offered an opportunity to redefine artistic boundaries and the creative flow. Considering AI’s impact on art’s fluid boundaries, the lived experiences of humans may be important because of its intentionality rather than its novelty.

The active nature of drawing upon one’s life, rather than the passive collection and combination of data, is a clue to defining creativity.

As one panellist noted, “Creativity is rooted in inspiration, which comes from our experiences, emotions, and impulses. AI cannot replicate the human [let’s call it] soul—the spark that drives us to create.”



AI AS A CREATIVE TOOL

Rather than replacing human creativity, then, perhaps AI has the potential to enhance it.

The panel heard how generative AI can support divergent thinking by making unexpected connections between concepts, aiding scientists, statisticians, artists, designers and students in overcoming creative or reasoning blocks. This is particularly useful in early-stage idea development, where unconventional associations can lead to true innovation. The pharmaceutical industry is already benefiting from the speed and power of AI programmes, for example. Demis Hassabis and John Jumper from the team that developed AlphaFold won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 2024 for their work on “protein structure prediction”.

Certain panellists argued that for some young learners, AI can serve as an aid in exploring new artistic forms, or more generally, accelerating idea generation or pattern recognition. AI can also help overcome common creative constraints, such as “design fixation”, where creators become stuck in existing paradigms, and “functional fixedness”, where individuals struggle to see alternative uses for familiar objects.

A balance must be struck: AI should serve as an enabler, not a crutch, ensuring that human originality remains central to the creative process. In business this is known as keeping a “human in the loop”. A hybrid model, where AI assists with mechanical tasks while human creativity drives conceptual breakthroughs, could be a more sustainable approach.

Are AI tools democratising creativity? Across the industry, new tools are making high-quality design, music composition and storytelling more accessible to those without formal training. However, this raises concerns about the dilution of traditional skills, such as drawing or writing, and the risk of reduced cognitive engagement in creative endeavors.

This latter point was raised as a considerable concern for educators. The relationship between raised levels of AI use and cognitive decline, particularly within the important age range of 3 – 5 years, requires further analysis, given it is a new phenomenon. Comparative studies in adults for attention spans, dopamine addiction and depression offer sobering hints. The panel was unanimous in its concern for the over-use of AI (and technology more broadly) in children and adolescents.





THE RISKS OF AI HOMOGENISATION AND BIAS

One of the most pressing concerns is the potential homogenisation of creative output. AI systems are trained on vast datasets that often reflect societal biases—and can be unethically or illegally gained. Without intervention, AI-generated content risks reinforcing stereotypes and limiting diversity in creative expression.

Marine Tanguy warned about “the cognitive cost of convenience”—the idea that reliance on AI-generated visuals can lead to passive consumption and a diminished ability to engage with complex artistic ideas. This phenomenon is particularly evident in social media platforms, where algorithmically generated images create a uniform aesthetic that stifles unique visual expression.

There are darker turns. The Saviesa panelists also pointed to AI-generated imagery favoring certain beauty standards and gender representations, even when explicitly prompted for diversity. Some audience members voiced strong concerns of models curtailing language and perspectives, creating a technological parameter to modern day misogyny and discrimination. The challenge is ensuring that AI models incorporate a broader spectrum of cultural and individual perspectives, even as the majority are created in just two locations: Silicon Valley and mainland China.

To mitigate these risks, AI developers must prioritise diverse datasets and ethical AI training. Techniques like data

rebalancing can help reduce biases, ensuring that AI-generated content reflects a wider range of human experiences. Not all panellists thought this achievable, however, instead advocating to educate people to constantly search and interrogate their own biases. There is, then, an important role for policy and civil society. Governments should commit resources to investing in data processing capacity in local and indigenous languages, ideally working in partnership with NGOs who have deep ties to these communities.

THE ROLE OF AI IN EDUCATION AND THE ARTS

When we think of creativity, many think first to art. Of course, the spectrum of human creativity covers far more: architecture, mathematics, fashion, poetry, product design and conservation, to name a few. Yet the lessons taken from one can still be applied, or used to inspire, elsewhere. Given education is the foundation for all creative outputs, it is important to ground these complex, abstract and philosophical discussions on AI into real-world action.

The panel discussed how AI-powered tools offer personalised learning experiences, helping students grasp complex concepts or refine their writing. Quite apart from the aforementioned

cognitive impairment of the over-use of AI, panelists also expressed concern about the unintended consequences of automation in learning. Generative AI tools like ChatGPT can produce essays, solve problems and generate artwork, but they also risk stifling independent thinking—and so far these artworks are produced by ‘stealing’ original artworks. If students rely too heavily on AI, they may struggle to develop essential analytical and creative skills at the right time. This is seen as an “outsourcing” of creativity and critical thinking.

This strikes at the heart of the debate. Humans need to collaborate with AI in order for human creativity to be preserved

where necessary and augmented where desired. Given the socio-cultural landscape of today, at play with the political and economic dynamics of a disjointed world, certain steps need to be taken to have this as the educator’s north star.

These steps, or policy recommendations, can be found below

Based on the
panel debate,
the proposed
key policy
recommendations
are as follows:

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AI POLICY AND REGULATION

1. Integrate AI literacy and AI visual literacy in education: Teach students how to use AI responsibly while fostering independent thinking.
2. Develop robust AI regulations: Address issues like bias, copyright infringement, and deepfake misuse through clear legal frameworks.
3. Incentivise and fund diverse datasets: Encourage collaboration with underrepresented communities to ensure AI-generated content reflects a broad range of perspectives.
4. Support ethical innovation: Fund research into AI applications that augment, rather than replace, human creativity.
5. Bridge the digital divide: Expand access to AI tools in underserved areas to prevent widening socioeconomic disparities.
6. Protect intellectual property: Ensure that creators are fairly compensated when their work is used to train AI models.
7. Raise public awareness: Educate citizens about AI’s capabilities and limitations to foster informed discussions; specifically, to recognise that AI does not prioritise relationships and that this must continue to be at the forefront of human development.
8. Encourage human-AI collaboration: Promote AI as a tool that enhances rather than replaces human creativity.
9. Monitor and adjust policies: AI policies must be dynamic, adapting to new technological developments and emerging ethical concerns.*

*In countries like the UK, there are tax incentives for technical equipment. The same tax incentives could be put forward for hiring creatives within an organisation to reduce state aid and improve mental health at large.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Peter Stojanovic is the AI Policy Advisor for Saviesa, as well as its editorial lead. He is also the Editor of HotTopics, an award-winning publication and community featuring Fortune 500 and FTSE 100 C-suite leaders in interview and debate.

He has 10 years of experience interviewing business and political leaders across the UK, Europe, and the US, listed as a LinkedIn Top Voice for his business and leadership writing, and supported the London University of Arts' Refugee Journalism Project, which supports refugee and exiled journalists to re-start their careers in the UK.



CLOSING THOUGHTS

The Saviesa panel painted a nuanced and sometimes competing picture of AI's impact on creativity and society. While AI offers myriad opportunities to innovate and solve problems, it also presents risks that must be carefully managed. The challenge is to embrace AI thoughtfully—leveraging its capabilities while safeguarding the uniquely human traits that drive progress—in an economy that prioritises speed, disruption and iconoclasm.

By enacting ethical policies and encouraging responsible AI development,

a significant part of society can ensure that AI serves as a creative collaborator, not a substitute or slave. The goal is to use AI to amplify human creativity rather than diminish it, fostering a future where technology and human ingenuity coexist harmoniously, and human education becomes a foundation for that future.

An earlier version of this article was presented to the Rt. Hon. Lord Vaizey, member of the UK House of Lords, at the House of Lords, London.



Saviesa's Perspectives is an invitation to think more deeply about how technological changes are shaping our world and what it means to remain fully human within them. We do not claim to have all the answers, but we believe the myriad questions present within each perspective matter. If these pages have sparked a thought or challenged an assumption, we would be delighted to hear from you.

If you share our commitment to thoughtful dialogue and meaningful action, we invite you to connect with us. The work ahead will require the support of those who believe that a better future is something we create together.

Please email your comments, thoughts, questions—your perspectives—to submissions@saviesaperspectives.org



Drawing on Saviesa's recent international inquiry into
leadership in the age of artificial intelligence,

the Winter 2026/2027 edition of Saviesa Perspectives

will explore what leadership means in a world where
technological capability is advancing at unprecedented speed.