

L^AT_EX Structural Alternatives: Creative Autonomy on Social Platforms

Lynn Rosa Haag¹

¹Film University Babelsberg KONRAD WOLF, Germany



Figure 1: Teaser Image. Explain the image.

Abstract

- 100-150 State the problem, Why is it a problem and why is it interesting? Your solution and achievements. What follows from your solution? -

Instagram's design has changed what it means to work as an artist. Sophie Bishop's (2025) concept of influencer creep describes this: self-branding, algorithmic optimisation, and performed authenticity have migrated from influencer culture into artistic labour, increasing pressure to constantly perform visibility and deepening inequalities already present among artists. These pressures come from specific features of the platform, including engagement-ranked feeds, opaque algorithmic governance, and monetisation incentives. Because these features are identifiable, they are also changeable in principle. Current research on this topic mostly describes what Instagram does to artists without asking what a differently built platform would need to do instead. This paper addresses that gap. It treats Bishop's three tenets as a framework, mapping each one onto the design choices that produce it, then evaluates the platforms Cara and Sub to see whether their current features interrupt each pressure, simply relocate it, or fail to address it at all. The paper's contribution is a projection, based on these platforms' present features, of how they and future alternatives could be developed further to separate creative visibility from algorithmic performance, while still preserving the discovery and competitive energy that also drive creative growth.

1. Introduction

Algorithmic feed design on major platforms like Instagram increasingly shape how digital artists create, driving overwhelmingly fast trend based features, and put on performance pressure. There is little escaping the echo chambers. What drives creative autonomy if not algorithms or advertisements? Yes, right– authenticity. In the ever-evolving landscape of digital technology, user experience (UX) design and structure plays a crucial role in guiding consumer behavior. With this paper I want to examine this and the other side of the canvas, the many developers and what intentions they creator their user experiences. Digital artists tend to criticize and distrust the recent developments of algorithmic developments on app design structures of big player platforms like Instagram. But what could be helpful for the digital artist community and what is notinhg and flagged as actually helping us and what is making the app be either it leaves them feeling overwhelmed and the pressure to perform with their work. The question of the paper asks: What do alternative apps (e.g. Cara and Subs) try differently and with what alternative intentions do they design and develop their softwares.

Filtering out from the approaches that we’ve already come across in big player apps like Instagram, how do they use deceptive design practices that manipulate users into taking actions they did not intend to take or would have avoided if they had been fully informed. Maybe they don’t need to be, and they don’t to be. It’s about shifting away from what we’ve already learned that works on our artist community, but rather how designers and developers can find a way to improve and alternate. People like Kevin Gallas Mayer already developed a concept and I want to see how this could in future visions can be developed further without taking out all the fun.

Could there be a future where we decentralize from just Instagram as an app, and turn towards smaller community apps that are chronological and not heavily algorithmic apps; specifically designed for a more niche and theme specific purpose? What would be necessary to still keep the engagement fun so people actually use them to interact with each other and not to either consume or hate on the content?

2. Related Work

References

- Di Geronimo, L., Braz, L., Fregnan, E., Palomba, F., and Bacchelli, A. (2020). UI Dark Patterns and Where to Find Them: A Study on Mobile Applications and User Perception.
- Bishop, S. (2025). Influencer creep: How artists strategically navigate the platformisation of art worlds. *New Media & Society*. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epub/10.1177/14614448231206090>
- Zuboff, S. (2019). *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*.
- Wang, X., Liu, Y., et al., and Bai, Q. Ideological Isolation in Online Social Networks: A Survey of Computational Definitions, Metrics, and Mitigation Strategies.
- ZDF Kultur. 13 Fragen. <https://www.zdf.de/play/talk/unbubble-100/socialmedia-13f-100>
- Algorithmen und Autonomie: Interdisziplinäre Perspektiven auf das Verhältnis von Selbstbestimmung und Datenpraktiken.

Platform Links

- Cara: <https://blog.cara.app/about>
- Sub: <https://www.subs.tv/?lang=de>

Planned Interviews

1. Software engineer who has already developed a platform: Kevin Gallas Mayer
2. Student developing a fair platform concept: @saraluna.r
3. Content creator using AI: Sophia Becker, @sophia.info

3. Main Content - Name and Structure the Main Content According to your Paper

3.1. Method

The aim is not to analyze Instagram in isolation, but to identify what differentiates it from emerging alternatives, and what specifically drives users to stay on it for hours at a time. The method proceeds in three steps:

1. Review existing research on interface design, distinguishing between design choices that are known to keep users engaged and those that do not work well.
2. Use interviews to generate fresh perspectives on app structures that support more conscious and mindful use, while remaining enjoyable and practical for artists working on the platform.
3. Identify what would need to change in current platform design to support that kind of use.

Discussion points (work in progress)

- Judging from critiques developers have already raised, and improvements they have already attempted, what features and values around sharing artwork with others could become more important for artists in the future, as AI generated content increasingly fills these platforms?
- Should AI generated content on social platforms be flagged, and if so, how?
- A shift in content format across platforms: long, slow paced films giving way to shorter series and formats, long YouTube videos condensing into short podcast snippets, and the broader rise of short form content such as Reels.
- Whether discovery and community functions can work without an algorithm. This raises the question of the trade off between algorithmic and non algorithmic design for newer, sustainable social platforms: is it chronological ordering itself that limits discovery, or is discovery more a function of community size, niche specificity, and social curation, meaning people sharing work directly, as opposed to heavy virality? Algorithm free does not necessarily mean discovery free, if community structure can take over the algorithm’s function.

3.2. Results

WIP A sketch of an app that is Social and community driven, not so heavily algorithmic, less features that focus on advertizing products etc.

WIP

3.3. Discussion

WIP One open question for the discussion section is whether moving toward more niche platforms would actually reduce the human drive toward individuality and self-branded artistic personas, or whether it would do the opposite. Niche apps built around interaction and communication, rather than broad visibility, could widen the gap between undifferentiated, random content and artistic personas that are deliberately built with a clear purpose. In other words, removing the pressure to perform for a mass algorithm might not eliminate the urge toward self-presentation altogether. It could instead separate artists who use these platforms mainly to communicate and connect with others from those who continue producing content without real intention behind it, regardless of the app's design. WIP

4. Formatting your paper

4.1. Bullet Points

The following is an example for a bullet points list. The contributions of this paper are

- my greates achievement number one,
- a second awesome insight,
- and last but not least the third contribution.

4.2. Figures

All graphics should be centered.

If your paper includes images, it is important that they are of sufficient resolution to be faithfully reproduced.

Instructions from the original conference template (for the ACS FUB it is not that relevant):

To determine the optimum size (width and height) of an image, measure the image's size as it appears in your document (in millimeters), and then multiply those two values by 12. The resulting values are the optimum x and y resolution, in pixels, of the image. Image quality will suffer if these guidelines are not followed.

Example 1: An image measures 50 mm by 75 mm when placed in a document. This image should have a resolution of no less than 600 pixels by 900 pixels in order to be reproduced faithfully.

This is an exemplary reference to Figure 3, which shows the incredible test image from the Eurographics conference.

4.3. Tables

A simple table might look like the following. However there are several ways to create and layout tables - it is up to you to style a table up to your liking. This is a reference to Table 1.

4.4. Formulas

In L^AT_EX it is fairly easy to add mathematical symbols and formulas. See the following as example [wik19]:

$$a = bq + r \quad (1)$$



Figure 2: Here is a sample figure. All figures must have sensible captions and must be referenced in the text.

Col1	Col2	Col2	Col3
1	6	87837	787
2	7	78	5415
3	545	778	7507
4	545	18744	7560
5	88	788	6344

Table 1: Here is a sample table. All tables must have sensible captions and must be referenced in the text.

which is true if a and b are integers with $b \neq c$.

$$L' = L\sqrt{1 - \frac{v^2}{c^2}} \quad (2)$$

4.5. Footnotes

Please do not use footnotes at all.

4.6. References

References are layouted automatically. Add the needed entry to the bibtex file and use the citation command to reference the entry.



Figure 3: Two-column width figure

If you don't want to mention the author's name just add the citation to the end of the sentence [Per85]. You can also cite more than one references at the same time [GSH18, Per85, SLKD15].

Sometimes you want to refer to the authors name. With this template you need to write out the names manually. For more than two authors you only use the name of the first author and abbreviate the remaining names with "et al."

An example for more than two authors:

Raul et al. [RRDR09] thoroughly review the different approaches for segmentation algorithms. Our problem requires the segmentation of color images, summarized by Cheng et al. [CJSW01].

An example for two authors:

Also aiming for a fragmented aesthetic appeal by transforming original image data "piecewise", Collomosse and Hall [CH03] render from salient image features a cubist version of an input. Similarly, Lai and Rosin [LR13] loosely aim for a cubist appearance by segmenting an input and by simplifying the segments into constant colors, while maintaining global structures.

An example for one author:

Artistically, we are inspired by the art of Wehrli [Weh03], who manually creates image decompositions and rearrangements.

5. Conclusion

Please direct any questions to the production editor in charge of these proceedings.

References

- [CH03] COLLOMOSSE J. P., HALL P. M.: Cubist style rendering from photographs. *IEEE Transactions on Visualization and Computer Graphics* 9, 4 (2003), 443–453. 4
- [CJSW01] CHENG H., JIANG X., SUN Y., WANG J.: Color image segmentation: Advances and prospects. *Pattern Recognition* 34, 12 (2001), 2259–2281. 4
- [GSH18] GEBHARDT C., STEVŠIĆ S., HILLIGES O.: Optimizing for aesthetically pleasing quadrotor camera motion. *ACM Transactions on Graphics* 37, 4 (2018), 90:1–90:11. 4
- [LR13] LAI Y.-K., ROSIN P. L.: Artistic rendering enhancing global structure. *The Visual Computer* 30, 10 (2013), 1179–1193. 4
- [Per85] PERLIN K.: An image synthesizer. *SIGGRAPH Computer Graphics* 19, 3 (1985), 287–296. 4
- [RRDR09] RAUT S., RAGHUVANSHI M., DHARASKAR R., RAUT A.: Image segmentation — a state-of-art survey for prediction. In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Advanced Computer Control* (2009), IEEE, pp. 420–424. 4
- [SLKD15] SEMMO A., LIMBERGER D., KYPRIANIDIS J. E., DÖLLNER J.: Image stylization by oil paint filtering using color palettes. In *Proceedings of the Workshop on Computational Aesthetics* (2015), Eurographics Association, pp. 149–158. 4
- [Weh03] WEHRLI U.: *Tidying up art*. Prestel, 2003. 4
- [wik19] Latex/advanced mathematics. http://www.ananth.in/Notes_files/lmtut.pdf, 2019. Viewed June 26, 2026. 3