

AI-informed Field Notes for a Roman Travel Experience

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ABSTRACT: This paper explores the intersection of artificial intelligence and architectural sketching in the context of international travel experiences. Traditional hand-drawn sketches, once a medium for capturing and projecting architectural visions, have waned in the face of digital photography and social media's image-centric culture. To address this challenge, a one-week workshop was designed, leveraging AI text-to-image generation technology to document Rome as the chosen experiential site. By employing AI image generation tools, participants crafted altered narratives that provided deeper insights into Rome's essence, synthesizing historical layers with innovative elements. This pedagogical approach not only exposed attendees to the cultural richness of Rome but also empowered them to envision a future that transcended conventional design boundaries. By incorporating AI into their creative process, participants bridged the gap between past and future, history and imagination, thus fostering a productive dialogue between computation, representation, and culture.

KEYWORDS: text-to-Image AI, generative AI, storytelling, travel experience, Rome

1.0 AUGMENTING THE TRADITIONAL SKETCHBOOK

The architect's sketch has a long history, serving as both a medium for capturing lived experiences and a tool for projecting visions for the future (Darley 2008). However, with the proliferation of high-resolution cameras included in every cell phone and the visually-focused nature of social media, hand-drawn sketches have been displaced by the convenience and immediacy of capturing images. Nevertheless, there is a desire to merge the ease of photography with the analytical and projective potential of sketches.

In recent times, the significance of sketches has undergone a transformation, particularly within the past year, owing to the widespread adoption of diffusion models for generating high-detail images that function as digitally native sketches (Jacobus and Kelly 2023). Since July 2022, text-to-image and image-to-image AI platforms have emerged as novel tools that have made the creation of high-quality and visually compelling images accessible to a global audience. Contemporary advancements in this technology facilitate the rapid production of images as a means to visualize ideas stemming from a natural language text prompt or photo blend. These methods provide users with multiple image iterations to choose from, all available within a matter of seconds. The rapidity with which visual ideas can now be rendered and iterated reflects a transformative shift in the creative process (Kudless 2022). Therefore, in this digital age, artificial intelligent vivid image-making has become the contemporary equivalent of the abstract napkin sketch, providing opportunities for imaginative and speculative exploration (Boden 1998).

In response to the potential of these new tools, a one-week workshop in Rome utilized AI text-to-image and image-to-image generation as a means to both document an international travel experience and design on-the-fly. Leveraging AI's immediacy in capturing and augmenting these travel experiences, participants engaged in on-the-spot imagination. This approach served to enhance the traditional practice of visiting architecture and urban sites in person, an aspect of the design discipline with roots tracing back to the Renaissance-era Grand Tour.

While the cultural influence of the Grand Tour was historically conveyed through sketchbooks and notebooks (Darley 2008), contemporary international travelers are seldom without their cameras, capturing moments on pocket-sized devices to preserve the details of their journeys. A digital camera, with its storage capacity, eclipses the limitations of traditional pencil sketches or written journal entries. On one side, photographs have the unique ability to evoke memories and emotions when revisited, providing a connection to significant times and places in one's journey. On the other, hand-drawn sketches and written narratives include inherent narrative and interpretive dimensions that may be absent from candid photos.

Text-to-image AI exhibits the potential to synthesize these elements, facilitating the creation of synthetic field notes, storyboards, and images based not only on photographs but also on descriptive textual narratives. AI emerges as a tool for constructing a digital sketchbook capable of capturing the essence, ambiance, character, texture, and colors of embodied experiences with immediacy and high-fidelity representation (Figure 1).

The authors believe that high-quality AI prompts are contingent upon the existence of an underlying cultural foundation. It necessitates a comprehensive awareness of historical antecedents and site specificity. Travel experiences play a pivotal role in cultivating this place-based cultural understanding. As Francis Bacon highlights in the essay titled "On Travel," journeys serve as a form of experiential education. While traveling enables the acquisition of knowledge within a condensed timeframe, individuals should gain information from trustworthy

sources and provide themselves with ample records of the trip so that later reflections inspire subsequent creative actions (Bacon 1888).



Figure 1: Roman atmosphere with warm light, monuments merging with environmental forces, and urban life in motion. Source: (Megan Kaminski 2023)

The Roman travel workshop allowed for the creation of an AI travel guide for a Rome that doesn't exist, through the use of AI-generated images. This process paralleled the methodology employed by architects when "mining history", finding inspiration by exploring design precedents. In this case, rather than using the static precedents found in books or online, the travel experience supplied rich experiential precedents imbued by light, sound, smell, temperature, and multiple simultaneous sensations. In fact, new outcomes were created by sampling elements in the spot from the past, projecting them into the future or a fictional, altered present (Figure 2).



Figure 2: Reinterpretation of Saint Peter's Basilica as a Scientific Institution echoing Galileo Galilei's legacy through symbolic sculptures and novel artistic icons. Source: (Ghalib Ghalib 2023)

2.0 SIMULTANEOUS SYNTHESIS

The workshop was grounded on two foundational objectives. First, transforming traditional analog sketching techniques into in-the-spot digital synthetic creations of travel speculations. Secondly, creating a narratively cohesive outcome in the format of a shareable tour book as a means of amplifying the conditions for which Rome can be imagined.

The city of Rome was chosen as an experimental and historically significant site to explore these ideas. Workshop participants engaged in a vibrant urban environment steeped in history, often called a palimpsest because of the simultaneous layers that exist and protrude through one another (Scott Brown et. al. 1984). The aim was to encourage attendees to find, contemplate, and propose AI-informed storytelling that captured known and unknown histories of Rome. This included incorporating moments, experiences, and atmospheres that both stood out to them and defined the city. The use of AI image generation provided a unique opportunity to synthesize participants'

observations and knowledge, allowing them to build a wide literacy of architectural forms, theories, and semantic elements that were simultaneously new and tied to the place.

To get the most out of this process, the workshop utilized Midjourney, a text-to-image AI tool embedded in Discord. This feature promoted real-time interaction among participants and the sharing of prompts and outputs, fostering a social learning environment that encouraged knowledge exchange. Each participant worked in a dedicated channel linked to a collective server, enabling a process of mutual inspiration and influence that pushed the overall communal creativity. The AI-informed work methodology promoted both a collaborative digital environment and a physical conversational analog where the imagination sparked during on-site visits emerged within a virtual space of dialogue rather than in isolation, amplifying the range of results and speculative exercises.

With Midjourney, the group of individuals was able to generate altered narratives that offered a deeper understanding of the city. They utilized the "imagine" and "blend" functions of the software, enabling them to create entirely new situations or blend AI-generated ideas with the photos they took during their daily visits. Many of the AI-generated images were crafted in situ. In some instances, attendees made quick text annotations of experience-specific adjectives that could be later used as part of an AI prompt. In this case, the slight delay allowed for more careful and intentional crafting between visits, upon their return to the hotel, or even at a local café.

The week-long trip to Rome was structured around thematic daily focuses, with excursions to baroque spaces, imperial monuments, and contemporary architecture. To enrich the educational experience, each participant was assigned a specific site to study beforehand, with the responsibility of delivering an on-site presentation during the trip. These presentations served as sources for supplying historical context and proposing prompts and keywords to guide the image-generation process. While conducting these on-site presentations, attendees had the opportunity to prompt on-the-fly using Midjourney. Instructors could monitor their notes and progress in Discord or provide direct over-the-shoulder insights, facilitating immediate feedback and offering supplementary guidance to ensure positive outcomes. The integration of technology and prompt-driven observations rendered the learning process dynamic and interactive, fostering a more enriched and engaging experience.

The AI-influenced travel guide presents an opportunity for collaborative and imaginative storytelling, designed for an audience of inquisitive future explorers. The tour book format acknowledges Rome's enduring status as an iconic destination, revered by intellectuals, architects, historians, artists, and tourists throughout history. The selection of this outcome type stems from Rome's historical longevity, allowing individuals to grasp its context and renowned significance over time. This pedagogical tool aims to enhance the tradition of international visitors experiencing Rome, offering insights into the fundamental principles of architectural, social, and planning dynamics that underlie the city's profound cultural heritage.

2.1 Influence of art, sculpture, and history

The AI-generated travel guide showcased and reimaged key elements of Rome's rich cultural history spanning various epochs. One example of text-to-image generation involved overpopulating classical facades with hyper-ornamental sculptural apparatus (Figure 3). In other instances, the images juxtaposed contemporary everyday rituals, like sipping coffee or slicing a pizza, with the historical iconography of ancient tiles and mosaics. A contemporary symbol of the city, the she-wolf, was reinterpreted as a more dramatic depiction of the founding myth of Rome. In a fictional signature dynamic style by Bernini, a baroque she-wolf delivers a more consistent perspective that captures Rome's turbulent history. As the author of the AI portrayal pointed out, the AI-generated image challenged the conventional depictions of Romulus and Remus peacefully suckling from a static and placid she-wolf. Instead, in this altered reality, the Baroque sculpture depicted a multifaceted history marked by ferocity and survival, encapsulating an empire frequently embroiled in conquests and sieges (Figure 4). This alternative sculpture offers a deeper insight into the intricate and dynamic nature of ancient Roman civilization. It's one thing for a designer to passively remark that Rome's history is turbulent, but for a designer to roll up their sleeves and begin playing within that history represents a synthetic and educationally rich experience. The designer imagined viewing a sculpture at Villa Borghese (while in Villa Borghese) that remade the city's mythical icon through Bernini's mastery and arrogance.

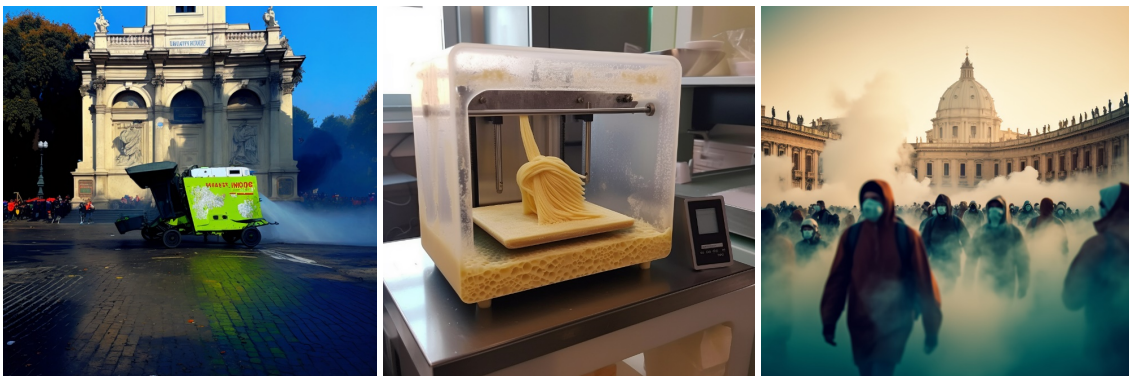
2.2 Explorations of the Roman atmosphere, food culture, and daily rituals

Immersing oneself in the intricate urban layout of Rome offers an opportunity to analyze the city's operational dynamics and the inherent challenges associated with navigating it. During our observations, the group examined the urban logistics of product distribution, from the main roads to narrow backstreets. This involved an analysis of how the city's mechanics intersect with those of vehicles, such as cars and vans that bypass monuments of immeasurable historical value to deliver pallets of goods or other commodities to the storefronts' entrances during the early hours of the morning. To enhance the city's functionality and alleviate logistical complexities, AI-generated proposals were put forth. These proposals included the conceptualization of specialized devices like street sweepers (Figure 5) and delivery bots designed to harmonize with the city's scale and contribute to its smoother operation. Another iteration of images depicted a composite urban landscape characterized by the juxtaposition of design brand showcases and artisan workshops illuminated at night. These depictions included scenes of craftsmen shaping handmade violins, illuminated with a poetic quality of light, within the corners of Piazza Farnese. When in Rome, the group was inevitably immersed in the rich and diverse food culture, a staple of Italian culture. This experience inspired them to visualize future-focused trends combining the traditional craft of food with transformative tools like digital algorithms, robotic arms, and recipe-making bots (Figure 6). On-site observations at Mount Testaccio revealed how the food culture of Rome is present throughout the layers of the city. Testaccio's topography is composed of shards from ancient terracotta amphorae used for olive oil transportation, which have been discarded over the centuries. Participants conceived a similar stratification process occurring with modern hyper objects (Morton 2013) like discarded smartphones, reflecting how contemporary technology influences our

“anthropocentric” cultural landscape. Additionally, the symbolic grandeur of Vatican City triggered storytelling that started with a fictional Second Scientific Revolution and the restitution of Saint Peter’s as a Scientific Institution. In this vision, members of the revolution orchestrated riots in Saint Peter’s Piazza in an effort to take over the establishment (Figure 7). An army of scientists marching down piazza San Pietro contributes to appointing a new reference value and system in the hearth of the city.



Figures 3-4: Hyper-ornamental classical façade, and Baroque she-wolf. Source: (Nolan Barrios and Douglas Furia 2023)



Figures 5-6-7: Street sweeper bot. Technology-augmented Roman cuisine. Riots in Saint Peter’s Piazza after the Second Scientific Revolution. Source: (Nathan Jacquot and Ghalib Ghalib 2023)

2.3 Proposed adaptive reuse and cross-programming scenarios

Inspired by Stan Allen’s method of site observation (Allen 1989), participants envisioned a “fictional present” for Rome. In this creative exercise, they contemplated a scenario where Rome’s historical past seamlessly coexists with contemporary urban stratifications and programming. In this speculative cityscape, the Colosseum transcends the confines of time, continuing to serve as a venue for entertainment and public spectacles. Piazza Navona takes on a dynamic role, hosting boat contests that harken back to ancient aquatic events, while the Circus Maximus exudes a historical ambiance with its well-preserved stands. These experimental field notes drew inspiration from Piranesi’s Campo Marzio, a reference project dedicated to reconstructing ancient Rome and exploring the intricate relationship between individual city fragments and the broader urban configuration. By constructing this bridge to historical continuity, new avenues of creativity and exploration were pursued. For example, the Pantheon was reimagined as a futuristic venue for e-sports, while the Baths of Caracalla found renewed purpose as a restaurant (Figure 8), a modern spa (Figure 9), or even a rock-climbing wall integrated into the ruins (Figure 10). Through these innovative concepts, which selectively embraced and redefined history, the city’s enduring presence of the past was challenged and celebrated. Participants charted cross-programmed (Tschumi 1996) alternative pathways that expanded the horizons of Rome’s potential future.

2.4 Investigation into urban rituals and festivals

The Roman experience is brought to life through both tangible elements, such as historical landmarks, and intangible visual aspects, exemplified by the illumination of streets and monuments. Some AI-generated images have explored the urban impact of light reflections, examining how they interact with the city’s transportation infrastructure and its layered urban landscape (Figure 11). In one example, a radical proposal envisioned a scenario of bustling car traffic in the iconic Piazza Navona (Sartogo 2014). Piazza Navona holds a special place in the thoughts of Christian Norberg-Schulz, who sees it as a vital component of the “Genius Loci of Rome”, the unique spirit or essence of a place shaped by its physical, cultural, and historical context. According to Norberg-Schulz,

"Rome is a city where one feels inside while being outside," and the city's piazzas act as urban interiors (Norberg-Schulz 2014). Among them, Piazza Navona stands out as a prime example, creating a sensation of truly being "indoors" despite its open-air setting. This distinctive atmosphere has served as the inspiration behind the annual Soggiorno Film Festival held at Piazza Navona (Figure 12). The festival transforms the square into an outdoor living room, where people bring their own couches and comfortable seating to enjoy film screenings on large outdoor projections. It's a cinematic celebration that truly makes the city its living room. Adding to the magic, colorful artwork is projected onto the three fountains, enhancing the immersive ambiance of this urban space.



Figures 8-9-10: Baths of Caracalla reimagined as a restaurant (left). Baths of Caracalla reimagined as a spa (center). Baths of Caracalla reimagined as a climbing rock (right). Source: (Jakeb Jackson, Kathryn Winterscheidt, and Nolan Barrios 2023)



Figures 11-12: Parametrically-designed Baroque tempietto. Vending machine of marble putti. Source: (Megan Crumrine and Matthew Ruiter 2023)

The proposals reimagined the contemporary city by drawing upon the historical context of Rome not as plans or blueprints but rather as a casting of memory out of the past and into the future (Figure 13). The proposals were hypotheses on Rome, which would have resulted had it continued to be imagined not as a whole but proposing a palimpsest of imagery in the same way that Rome emerged organically (Argan 2014).

Workshop attendees were encouraged to engage in locally speculative thinking and employ "ifs" at will, to weave compelling and evocative proposals into the complex historical fabric of the city. By digitally synthesizing existing historical layers with their proposed or reimagined elements, AI was critically examined as a tool for disciplinary investigation. The group delved into the cultural significance of the city and developed a specific understanding of the visited sites by creating something new that is informed by that experience (Figure 14). By incorporating AI into their creative process, a bridge was established between past and future, history and imagination.

3.0 AI FOR RAPID IDEATION

Designers operate in the realm of the future, where they have the power to shape and create projects in places that do not yet exist (Allen 2000). New designs are profoundly influenced by cultural factors. Past and present are repositories of information, shaped by localized cultural perspectives and embodied experiences. The examination of precedents constitutes a fundamental aspect of a designer's work, enabling the contextualization of ideas within their socio-political and environmental frameworks. Therefore, every creative project is inherently shaped by a combination of personal and collective knowledge, whether that of an individual or a cultural group. The human element plays a role in delineating agency within this process.

This significance is pertinent in light of ongoing discussions concerning AI-generated imagery, which center on questions of authorship. AI images are fundamentally derivative, drawing from the inputs supplied to the underlying database. The algorithms governing these AI systems function by denoising images in response to written prompts. The generation of these prompts goes beyond the simple selection of input words; it involves a comprehensive process that contextualizes the resulting output in relation to contingent factors.



Figures 13-14: Car traffic adjacent to historic monuments. Rome's piazzas as urban interiors. Source: (Ellyse Town and Douglas Furia 2023)

Creating a prompt necessitates the extraction of information from personal knowledge and existing references. An observation that emerged from the fieldwork conducted in Rome pertains to a distinct entry barrier to the workflow, not stemming from challenges related to software proficiency but rather from what can be termed as "promptus vacuous", a state of uncertainty in generating ideas when confronted with endless possibilities. To address this issue, readings and archival materials were allocated to facilitate the imaginative process, with a specific focus on designated subjects, such as anthropogenic habits in the city, prospects for human-machine coexistence within spaces of labor, or the integration of strange design elements into familiar architectural languages.

Rome's reputation as a destination became an alibi for the deliberate creation of a narratively cohesive tour book, aimed at enhancing the ways in which Rome can be conceptualized. This tour book is not intended in a spectacular way, but rather sharing a daily life, as a tourist might find it. The method is relatable to projective design work in the field, as a plausible fiction produced through design.

The adoption of a design fiction approach was instrumental in generating visual materials intended to support a charette-style fusion of design and speculative elements. Borrowing Julian Bleecker's definition, Design Fiction can be construed as the practice of crafting tangible and evocative artifacts derived from conceivable near-future scenarios, aimed at facilitating the exploration and representation of the repercussions of decision-making processes (Bleecker 2022). With the mindset of designers, the workshop attendees freely exaggerated on-site observations and analyses to see how imaginative entities might exist in the world in an altered past, present, and future.

A week of explorations yielded an extensive collection of images. The project embraced a quick and iterative method, exploring the creation of rich, high-resolution, expressive images through text prompts. Over five hundred images per person were created and curated to compile a sequence of chapters narrating an imagined Rome. All proposals were also sited within the plan of Rome. Such iterations would have been nearly impossible to achieve within the constraints of traditional week-long sketched observations on paper. These images served as the foundation for a curatorial project with the objective of discerning quality as a result of the iterative quantity. This approach viewed the technology employed as a catalyst or accelerant of human capabilities, facilitating a process wherein the intrinsic quality of the images was considered a given, and what gets value is the intellectual substance behind them.

In prior iterations of this workshop, the use of a traditional sketchbook was required and viewed as a learning device. However, the democratization of text-to-image AI image generation this past year has encouraged a shift from analog sketching, which was focused on rudimentary geometry instead, to on-the-fly digital creations for advanced diagrams of ideas situated within the richness of the city. This process produced disciplinary insights into the educational possibilities that extend beyond the limitations of physical sketchbooks, a recurring prop within design disciplines. One of the advantages of this shift is the capacity to embrace chance through the introduction of seed values, a computational entity that injects a degree of unpredictability into the process. When incorporated into the equation alongside field observations, accompanying notes, AI stylization, and parametric variability, the creative potential is expanded at will.

Unlike hand-drawn sketches, AI-generated outcomes exhibit an inherent specificity from the outset, where the first iteration, qualitatively speaking, looks like the last iteration of an exhaustive design process. This characteristic expedites the creative process by offering practical suggestions rooted in realism. This transition also negates the need for prolonged skill development; it is no longer necessary to invest years honing a particular skill, the travel participants learned the AI tools during the trip. Instead, the focus shifts towards leveraging familiarity with the cultural tools inherent to the field of design, thereby opening up an array of limitless possibilities. In fact, AI-generated images are not limited by the artist's technical skill or personal style but result from algorithms trained on a massive dataset of images. As an example, beginning design students need not put off the production of experiential depictions until they achieve the skills that come after many years of drawing.

4.0 EXPERIENCING URBANISM

The Rome travel experience employed Midjourney to produce modified narratives with the objective of fostering a more profound comprehension of the city. These narratives interlinked common or critical themes as an individual diary of the travel and leveraging subjects that emerged collaboratively among the group as a whole. Participants synthesized their observations into vivid images in real time. As an initial guideline, participants were tasked to imagine new episodes of the city in the present and projected into the future. However, occasionally, they reinterpreted iconic monuments extrapolating their nature of "objects in field" as emerged in Piranesi's depiction of Campo Marzio, which was dedicated to reconstructing ancient Rome and exploring the interplay between individual city fragments and the overall urban configuration (Tafari 1979). In this way, attendees tweaked buildings and cultural artifacts' histories to imagine their existence in a different present or suggest an alternative path that brought them into the modern days. These divergences created tension between architecture and the city, as well as a contrast between the desire for episodic formal explorations and greater urban order.

For many of the participants, this workshop marked their first time visiting a city, traveling abroad, and using AI technology. The excitement they felt for the vibrant culture, colors, moods, and overall experience of Rome was palpable in the AI-generated images they produced. The immediacy and photo-quality representation offered by AI technology further fueled their enthusiasm. In addition to face-to-face interactions, the participants embraced Discord as a space for sharing, commenting on, and collaboratively developing their AI-augmented experiences. This digital platform provided a forum for ongoing dialogue and facilitated the growth of ideas and concepts beyond the confines of the site visits. This type of digital meetup is an opportunity to translate the concept of "the derive", a term associated with the Situationist movement, referring to aimless and spontaneous urban exploration, into a new potential model for engaging with a specific place or location. This model or approach may provide insights or strategies for how people can interact with and experience a particular environment in a more meaningful or unique way, possibly emphasizing the idea of exploring and documenting a place from different perspectives or through social interactions.

Attendees immersed themselves in the city, their experiences led to the development of AI proposals centered around various urban rituals, festivals, and activities that transform urban spaces. These experiences expanded the horizons of suburban participants, exposing them to the richness of urban life and sparking their imagination about the potential uses of the city. In previous workshops, participants with limited drawing abilities had hindered their capacity for imagination. However, with the aid of AI technology, their proposals embraced a fantastical vision of the future, where the convergence of people, urbanism, and technology created unprecedented and cross-programmed opportunities (Tschumi 1996).

The exploration undertaken in this study represents a novel approach to the creation of architectural notations. The field of architecture has a historical legacy of detachment from tangible forms, as it relies on the production of notations, which can be understood as sequences of instructions employing drawing conventions to articulate and convey design intentions (Evans 1997). In a parallel manner, artificial intelligence operates in a disembodied fashion, lacking inherent cultural affiliations and immersion within specific cultural reference systems.

The collaborative endeavor sought to imbue meaning into these AI-generated creations, bridging the gap between the outcomes of AI processes and the intellectual discourse that binds them together. This form of literacy is poised to assume fundamental importance in the foreseeable future, as AI increasingly integrates itself into various facets of creative processes at large. This significance also arises from AI's inherent inability to validate its sources, rendering source tracking challenging within these digital workspaces. Consequently, embracing and comprehending AI's role in this context will facilitate the establishment of a novel cultural mandate.

In alignment with Mark Weiser's proposition from 1991, which posits that "the most profound technologies are those that disappear. They weave themselves into the fabric of everyday life until they are indistinguishable from it," (Weiser 1991) the observations made in the evolution of the discipline suggest that AI, in this sense, is destined to dissolve into our accepted practices.

Overall, this one-week experiment provided a transformative experience for the group. Individuals were able to explore the city of Rome, utilizing AI technology as a powerful tool for storytelling and documentation making a unique Grand Tour. By engaging in speculative thinking, blending history with imagination, and harnessing the capabilities of AI, they developed a disciplinary understanding of the cultural significance of the visited sites. Through their AI-augmented experiences, they captured the essence of Rome while also envisioning a future that pushed the boundaries of conventional design. This course served as a catalyst for creativity, innovation, and the exploration of new possibilities in architecture and design.

Quality in the work emerged from the iterative quantity of images produced quickly then through careful curation and selection of the most impactful. The travel experience explored the critical use of AI as a tool for undertaking disciplinary investigations to link histories and educate designers on the importance of experiencing particular sites first hand. Since designers and architects operate in the future through the creation of projective ideas, nothing helps to capture the essence or memory of a place as creating something new that is informed by that experience. This process liberated creativity and fostered a profound learning of the city's historical context and its potential for transformation and reinvention.

5.0 FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Within just a year, the progression of generative AI technology has been strikingly rapid. As part of their preparation and while immersed in Rome's historic ambiance, workshop attendees explored Midjourney's versions 3 and 4. Now, with version 6 available, we anticipate that future iterations of this experiential exploration will enhance the vitality and vividness of the work. As generative AI technology continues to evolve, we are excited about the prospect of integrating more motion-based and animation-based concepts into future workshops. This will allow us to further explore and interrogate the described approach by embracing new technologies.

As we gear up for our third workshop in Rome this year, we're shifting our approach to emphasize site-specific thinking and dynamic, real-time GIS collaborative mapping, moving away from the formatted tour book configuration. This method involves embedding AI-generated images within a shared GIS map of the city, allowing us to visualize not only the locations of the works but also to glean insights from the frequency and intensity of where participants are most active in their creative AI-image production. These insights will be invaluable for refining future workshops, adjusting itineraries, and modifying the cadence and other elements of the experience. This iteration also introduces a significant change in how participants deliver their work. Instead of requiring them to use laptops for documentation after returning from the field, we've established a workflow that supports in situ interactive outcomes. This enables participants to directly map their work onto a digital platform while still on site, fostering a more immersive and immediate sharing of their experiences. This approach not only enhances the workshop experience but also contributes to broader scholarly work in archival practices, digital humanities, storytelling, and mapping projects that create deep narratives of how individuals navigate and experience the city.

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