

MileHiCon Artificial Intelligence (AI) & Generative Media Policy

1. Core Philosophy

Our convention celebrates human creativity, imagination, and craftsmanship. We recognize that modern digital tools use machine learning to streamline workflows, but we maintain that the **core creative intent, execution, and final output must belong entirely to the human artist**. Fully or substantially machine-generated works diminish the value of our community's artists, authors, and vendors.

2. Art Show Guidelines

All work displayed, juried, or sold in the Art Show must be the original creation of a human artist.

Permitted (Limited Tool Usage)

We welcome digital artists utilizing industry-standard software (e.g., Adobe Creative Cloud, Procreate, Clip Studio Paint). Tools and utilities that conform to the guidelines below are **acceptable**:

- **Standard Digital Workflows:** Digital canvas stabilization, perspective grids, automatic coloring/flatting assistance, and basic blending modes.
- **Editing & Clean-up:** Object removal tools (Content-Aware Fill), background blurring, basic upscaling, and noise reduction applied to original human artwork.
- **Photo Reference Textures:** Using a personal or legally licensed photo texture to apply overlay lighting or noise to a manually drawn piece.

Prohibited (Generative AI)

Works created primarily through textual prompts or algorithmic asset generation are strictly forbidden. This includes:

- **Text-to-Image Generation:** Imagery generated via Midjourney, DALL-E, Stable Diffusion, or similar platforms, even if heavily edited, painted over, or integrated into a collage.
- **Generative Expansion:** Using AI to generate entirely new structural elements, backgrounds, or figures that were not originally drawn by the artist.

- **AI Inpainting/Outpainting:** Substantial visual alterations driven by text prompts or generative filling algorithms rather than manual brushwork.
- **Unlicensed Training:** Art that utilizes data scraped from copyrighted works without explicit creator consent is not eligible for entry or sale.

3. Vendors Room and Authors Row Guidelines

Commercial vendors selling manufactured goods, books, or collectibles must adhere to commercial authenticity standards.

- **Product Inventories:** All merchandise (including apparel, enamel pins, figurines, stickers, and books) must feature art created by human creators. Mass-produced goods utilizing generative AI graphics are prohibited.
- **Written Works & Anthologies:** Books, comic books, and anthologies must be written by human authors. AI-generated text or dialogue is not permitted.
- **Display & Branding:** Vendor booth banners, promotional table skirts, and business logos used at the convention should not utilize generative AI assets.

4. Submission Verification & Art Show Process

For **Art Show applications:**

- **Process Transparency:** The convention reserves the right to request "proof of process" at any time. This includes time-lapse creation videos, layered source files (.PSD, .Procreate), or initial concept sketches.
- **Inability to Verify:** If an applicant cannot provide reasonable proof of human workflow upon request, or if the Art Show Director determines a piece violates the generative AI ban, the application or specific piece will be disqualified.

For **Vendors Room and Authors Row:**

- **Process Transparency:** The convention reserves the right to request "proof of process" at any time. This includes drafts, working notes, contemporaneous snippets shared to social media, initial concept sketches, invoices for cover art from human artists.
- **Inability to Verify:** If an applicant cannot provide reasonable proof of human workflow upon request, or if the Vendors Room Coordinator or Table Coordinator determines a piece violates the generative AI ban, the application or specific piece will be disqualified.

5. Enforcement and Penalties

- **On-Site Inspections:** Convention staff and Art Show Director and Vendors Room Coordinator will monitor the floors during setup and active hours.
- **First Offense:** The vendor/artist will be asked to immediately remove the non-compliant items from their table or display grid.
- **Refusal to Comply:** Failure to remove items, or subsequent violations, will result in immediate eviction from the convention space without a refund, and a potential ban from future events.

6. Incident Reporting & Investigation Process

To ensure fairness, prevent false accusations, and maintain a professional environment, all suspected policy violations must follow this official protocol. **Attendees, vendors, and staff may not publicly confront or harass anyone suspected of violating the AI policy.**

Step 1: Submitting a Report

Reports can be initiated by attendees, fellow creators, or convention staff.

- **In-Person Reports:** Reports can be made directly to the **Art Show Desk** or the **Vendors Room Desk**.
- **Required Information:** To prevent malicious reporting, a valid report must include:
 - The name of the booth, table number, or Art Show panel number.
 - Description of the specific piece(s) or merchandise in question.
 - Objective reasoning or evidence (e.g., known AI artifact patterns, matching an existing online AI generation, missing human artist attribution).

Step 2: Intake and Filtering

All incoming reports are immediately directed to the appropriate coordinator:

- **Art Show Director:** Handles all art show disputes.

- **Vendors Room Coordinator:** Handles all commercial vendor booths and Authors Row tables (with the Tables Coordinator).
- **Pre-Screening:** The coordinator will quickly review the report to filter out obvious false alarms, personal vendettas, or misunderstandings regarding permitted digital tools (like basic digital blending).

Step 3: On-Site Investigation ("Proof of Process")

If a report has merit, the responsible Director or Coordinator (accompanied by a second staff member or security, if necessary) will discreetly visit the booth or display.

- **The Inquiry:** Staff will approach the creator professionally and calmly, away from active customers if possible, stating: *"We received an inquiry regarding the production process of [Piece Name]. As per our convention guidelines, could you show us a brief glimpse of your creation process?"*
- **Acceptable Verification:** The creator can quickly clear the report by providing *one* of the following on a phone, tablet, or laptop:
 - A time-lapse recording of the piece being drawn (standard in Procreate/Clip Studio).
 - A look at the layered digital file (.PSD, .Procreate, .TIFF) showing distinct line art, sketching, and shading layers.
 - Physical or digital progress sketches/concept drafts.
 - A valid invoice or contract proving the commercial rights were purchased from a verified human illustrator.

Step 4: Resolution Tiers

Based on the investigation, the Director or Coordinator will issue a final decision:

- **Tier 1: Verified Compliance.** The artist easily provides proof of human workflow. The report is dismissed, marked confidential, and no further action is taken.
- **Tier 2: Unverifiable / Minor Violation.** The creator cannot provide any proof of process, or a minor product (e.g., a single sticker design) is found to use generative AI elements.
 - *Action:* The creator must immediately pull the item from display and sale for the remainder of the convention.

- **Tier 3: Clear and Intentional Violation.** The booth is found to be primarily or entirely stocked with generative AI art, books, or merchandise, or the vendor actively lied on their juried application.
 - *Action:* Immediate revocation of the badge/table space. The vendor must pack up and vacate the premises without a refund, and will be placed on the future ban list.

Step 5: Appeals and Documentation

- **Final Authority:** Appeals may be taken to the convention Chairs. Their decision, with input from the Art Show Director and Vendors Room Coordinator is final for the duration of the current convention weekend.
- **Incident Log:** Staff will document the vendor's name, table number, specific pieces, and the outcome in the master convention log to prevent "desk shopping" (trying to get a different answer from a different staff member).