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10

TRENDS

FOR

2025

BALANCING, BLENDING, AND BURROWING IN

DECEMBER 2024
30TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

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10 TRENDS FOR 2025

Has it really been 25 years since Y2K and the start of the new millennium? I suppose I can believe it, given that our generalized societal angst feels very much like a quarter-life crisis.

I began releasing an annual trends report a few years prior to the start of this century, a yearly endeavor that is now very much a team project. (A shout-out to my fellow PMLers Friso Westenberg and Gioia Chiara Uva for their invaluable input.) In last year's [compendium](#), we highlighted a couple of dozen examples of how the world's citizens are pushing back against the destructive forces that threaten to engulf us. In particular, we spotlighted innovative ways in which people are working to heal societal fractures, create human connections, and pull our planet back from the brink of catastrophe. The year prior,

we uncovered **five trends**, including the increasingly ephemeral nature of reality and the new tendency to question “truths” we once took for granted. The year before, I released **The New Megatrends: Seeing Clearly in the Age of Disruption**, an exploration of the trends and technologies that will shape global culture and commerce in the next two decades. It’s a far-ranging book covering topics ranging from the mutability of identity (which has seen my “Everyway People” trendsighting from 2001 taken to the nth degree) to the loss of lifetime linearity and the widespread embrace of a bunker mentality.

As we set our sights on the year ahead, I’m reminded of how often the world surprises us by taking paths no one could predict. And yet, as a multinational team that has experienced a variety of cultures, we can’t help but notice the intersections of global forces and local priorities—offering clues to what’s next. We’ve distilled these clues into 10 shifts that stand out to us for the year ahead.

Onward and upward in 2025!

Marian Salzman



#1. THE FRAGMENTING GLOBAL VILLAGE

10 TRENDS FOR 2025

Globalization was once seen as an unstoppable force—a wave that would unite cultures and economies, seamlessly blending customs, commerce, and characteristics to create a “global village.” For decades, it was championed as not only inevitable but universally desirable. Then it wasn’t, especially since the 2008–2009 financial crisis. In 2025, expect heightened pushback. Globalization has revealed its limits as a one-size-fits-all solution to trade, manufacturing, media, and governance. Instead of a cohesive village, we are witnessing intentional fragmentation as local geographies reassert their identities and interests.

Some people perceive anti-globalization as a largely economic and political movement aligned with localized supply chains and national sovereignty. This trend is about both of those things, but cultural sovereignty and pride and a desire to retreat to the comfort of “local” and times past are more potent motivators for the average citizen. (See China’s [Guochao movement](#) or the rise of [Indian designers](#) embracing traditional chikankari and zardozi embroidery.) People feel their worlds spinning quickly into a vortex of “sameness” and are pulling the emergency brake. Preserving cultural diversity is the new focus.

#1. THE FRAGMENTING GLOBAL VILLAGE



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IN OUR SIGHTS

LANGUAGE PRESERVATION

In our globalized society, it's not just species on the verge of extinction. The nonprofit group Derivation **estimates** that 43 percent of the more than 7,000 living languages today are endangered, with one language dying off every 40 days. Most of these come from Indigenous communities, putting their unique cultures and knowledge at risk. To the rescue: groups such as the **Endangered Language Fund** and **7000 Languages**, dedicated to keeping languages alive, including via online instruction.

CULTURE GUARDIANS

People are also getting serious about preserving ancient craft traditions, ranging from antler carving in North America to ancient Chinese bamboo weaving. We'll call out this organization for the name alone: **The Worshipful Company of Turners**, based in London, holds woodturning competitions and exhibitions and funds school programs that train the next generation on lathes and other tools of the craft.

ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

In 2018, freelance journalist Oriana Schwindt penned an **article** in *New York* magazine bemoaning what she calls "the unbearable sameness of cities." As more cities get serious about preserving their historical structures, AI is coming into play as a so-called "**digital guardian**." Increasingly, algorithms are used to analyze images from high-resolution cameras and laser scanners to detect problems (e.g., water damage, erosion) early so they can be addressed. The technology has been pivotal in **the reconstruction of Notre-Dame de Paris** following the devastating 2019 fire.

#2.

BURROWING IN



10 TRENDS FOR 2025

In 2025, the home will cement its position as the ultimate fail-safe and object of desire. This isn't a throwback to Faith Popcorn's 1990 cocooning trendsighting or about TikTok-era ostentation; it's about security, plain and simple. Whether a luxury penthouse, a tiny house, or a cozy suburban ranch with energy-efficient features, a home of one's own is a retreat from chaos and uncertainty. Its value—sentimental and financial—will grow exponentially as demand continues to outpace supply and climate migrants (even in wealthier nations) search far and wide for a secure place to settle.

Burrowing in is about finding sanctuary. Owning a well-designed, **well-stocked**, and fully insured home in a place deemed a safe harbor from the ravages of climate change—though Hurricane Helene in the U.S. **proved** no place is immune from Mother Nature's wrath—is the ultimate in well-being. Think of this as an extension of our 2020 "To the Bunkers" trend but with more climate concern.

#2. BURROWING IN



10 TRENDS FOR 2025

IN OUR SIGHTS

THREAT ASSESSMENTS

In September, real estate site Zillow announced it is adding a new element to its home listings: a “**climate risk threat score**.” Reflecting the new reality that more than 80 percent of buyers now **consider climate risk** when purchasing a home, the score considers a range of factors, including the threat of floods, wildfires, extreme heat, and air quality.

FORTRESS INNOVATION

As the southeastern U.S.—still reeling from Helene—braced for Hurricane Milton in early October, homeowners got creative with their destruction-prevention efforts. Some—including a DIY **home tethering system**—sparked real interest. Don't be surprised to see a whole bunch of entrepreneurial start-ups step in with promises to save the day. Rumor has it that, post-Milton, a Florida company has already begun offering a plastic wrap protection service for EVs, which reportedly can **catch on fire** if their batteries are submerged in salt water.

BIOMETRICS

AI will take home security to the next level, enabling systems to analyze usage patterns (e.g., walking gait), facial and voice recognition, fingerprints, and more to create an added layer of security that is more difficult to breach.

#3. CLIMATE ACTION GETS PERSONAL



10 TRENDS FOR 2025

Among the many disturbing images of 2024, the flash floods and mudslides that ravaged the wealthy Swiss resort of **Zermatt** may not have been the most shocking, but they were shockingly symbolic. The sight of luxury chalets submerged in mud and luxury cars being washed away in a country known for its meticulous planning and preparedness was a stark reminder that no one is immune from the accelerating impacts of climate change. If super-organized, ultra-prepared, and affluent Switzerland can be rocked by nature's fury, what does that portend for the rest of the world? (Nothing good, judging by the recent devastation in **Valencia, Spain**.)

For decades, we looked to governments, international organizations, and NGOs to lead the charge on climate action. We hoped sweeping policies and global agreements would steer us away from the precipice if we weren't ignoring it entirely. In 2025, we'll see the shift toward personal responsibility and action strengthen—and more in-your-face protests by the likes of **Extinction Rebellion**.

In every corner of the world, individuals are making changes to reduce waste, cut CO₂ emissions, and prepare homes and properties to withstand environmental threats. We're rethinking our habits and reimagining how we live, not just for the planet's sake but to protect ourselves and our communities from the intensifying consequences of a warming world. It's about preparing for torrid heat waves, torrential downpours, flash floods, and prolonged droughts. It's about finding ways to adapt to a future when "thousand-year" weather events are commonplace.

#3. CLIMATE ACTION GETS PERSONAL



10 TRENDS FOR 2025

IN OUR SIGHTS

ECO-COLLABS

We'll see innovative crowdsourcing efforts to combat climate change and environmental destruction. Through Ecobee's **Donate Your Data** program, users of its smart home technology can automatically upload their energy use data for analysis by scientists working to improve energy conservation practices. Through the **Eye on the Reef** program, travelers Down Under help the Australian government monitor the state of the Great Barrier Reef by collecting and sharing information about the organism and local marine life during their visits.

RECLAMATION

Reclaimed wood has been all the rage for a while now—as much for a sense of authenticity and history as for sustainability. Next up: **recycled metal** and **glass**, used in everything from home décor to jewelry.

SIGNAL-FREE ZONES

It's not just flooding and wildfires we fear. A small but growing number of people are convinced that electromagnetic radiation from cellphone towers and other sources is harming their health. The solution for some: **Wi-Fi-free zones for so-called "electrosensitives"**—communities where people move to escape the broadband revolution.

#4. THE DEATH OF HUSTLE CULTURE



10 TRENDS FOR 2025

What have you achieved today? Have you mapped out your goals and strategies for success? These were the mantras of hustle culture, which dominated the 2010s. Now, these questions feel stale, even suffocating. They carry the sour whiff of life lived on a treadmill—with progress measured only in how fast and far you can run rather than in the depth or meaning of your journey.

There's no denying that accomplishing goals and making an impact are still important (see Trend 5), but the enforced pause of the pandemic—and our heightened proximity to death—prompted people worldwide to ask different, more profound questions: *Am I living a life aligned with my values? Am I happy?* The pandemic served as a global wake-up call, forcing us to reevaluate not just what we do but why we do it—and at what cost.

Most of us have figured out by now that the relentless drive for productivity leads to burnout, anxiety, and, ultimately, a disconnect from the very things that make life worthwhile—e.g., relationships, creativity, personal growth. Countries such as Sweden have long recognized this.

Now, the rest of the world is catching up. Across industries and borders, workers are reclaiming their right to rest, reflection, and recovery—acknowledging that life is more than a series of tasks to be completed. The future of work is no longer about maximizing every minute—it's about creating space for what matters most and breaking free of the 9–5 mandate to construct bespoke schedules.

#4. THE DEATH OF HUSTLE CULTURE



10 TRENDS FOR 2025

IN OUR SIGHTS

SLOW TRAVEL

Not everyone wants to get there yesterday. Australia's NRMA Insurance has launched the **Sloways** network, a collection of slow-drive routes for RVers and other travelers who wish to bypass fast-paced highways and savor less explored parts of the country. **Walking tourism** is also enjoying a moment.

TEA TIME

Tea is going to infuse 2025 in a big way. From **tea flights** to **tea cocktails** and **tea tourism**, more people will ditch their amped-up Frappuccinos in favor of an ancient beverage renowned for its health benefits and old-world associations.

COZY ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Enough with "move fast and break things." YouTuber **Deya Aliaga** exemplifies a new approach to business that emphasizes life over work and includes a "zero shaming" policy for actions like sleeping in and taking time off.

#5. IN DEFENSE OF PRAGMATISM

SMALL STEPS
ARE STILL
PROGRESS

10 TRENDS FOR 2025

For much of the 20th century, global conversations—and conflicts—were dominated by grand ideals and competing ideologies. Lofty aspirations of freedom, solidarity, equality, and fairness inspired revolutions, movements, and policies. These ideals still resonate in our turbulent world, motivating many to clamor for transformative change. But alongside these ambitions, a quieter, more urgent question has emerged: *What actually works?*

In 2025, we'll witness the rebirth of pragmatism—a shift toward solutions that prioritize effectiveness over ideology. Think of it as slow progress that cuts through the noise—or, as the saying goes, eating an elephant one bite at a time. In our increasingly complex world, people are turning to practical, grounded approaches that deal with the realities in front of them. This movement doesn't dismiss the value of ideals but recognizes that lofty goals must be matched with tangible, actionable steps, even at the price of compromise. Climate change, economic inequality, and demographic shifts require real-world solutions that deliver measurable results today, not in some distant future.

#5. IN DEFENSE OF PRAGMATISM



10 TRENDS FOR 2025

IN OUR SIGHTS

ADVICE COLUMNS

Celebrities and hype will never be entirely out of fashion, but signs point to people seeking more useful fodder. Among the most popular magazines in the U.S. these days are [AARP: The Magazine](#) and [Costco Connection](#)—both filled with straightforward advice on such things as low-cost meal prep, how to treat common afflictions, and tips for getting the most out of your digital tablet.

FINDING A BALANCE

With partisanship and extremism at historic levels, we'll see more apps and platforms dedicated to providing balanced reporting and reliable information. Popular platforms include [AllSides](#) (which includes a bias checker) and [Ground News](#) (offering a range of perspectives).

END OF THE FOUR-YEAR DEGREE?

Pushback against traditional approaches to college is intensifying, and a movement is afoot to scale back some bachelor's degrees to [three years](#)—saving time and money for the recipient.

#6. THE RETURN OF "SLOW FAME"



10 TRENDS FOR 2025

The early 2020s were dominated by viral moments. With the omnipresence of smartphones and the speed of social media algorithms, short-form videos, whether shot on phones, clipped from TV shows, or hastily produced for platforms, reached millions in an instant. Fame became something to be achieved overnight, with platforms like TikTok and Instagram creating influencers seemingly out of thin air.

This culture of instant fame has been—still is—exhilarating in its immediacy, but it's fleeting by design. Moments of viral fame are quickly eclipsed by the next sensation, leaving little room for depth or lasting impact. Creators who briefly enjoyed skyrocketing visibility find themselves struggling to maintain relevance. Fame has become disposable—quick to arrive, quick to fade.

In 2025, we'll see a turning away from this fast-paced, ephemeral culture. There's a growing appetite for "slow fame," a return to the idea that authenticity, depth, and substance matter more than instant gratification. People are no longer as impressed by fleeting moments of viral success, and both creators and audiences are beginning to value the long game. From digital influencers in Brazil to creators in China, and through the resurgence of long-form content like podcasts, we're seeing a shift toward a more deliberate, meaningful form of fame—one earned over time rather than engineered for immediate impact.

This trend is part of a broader global shift wherein patience and substance are being reevaluated. For those who can navigate the tension between depth and immediacy, there is an opportunity to carve out a new kind of success rooted in genuine connection, meaningful impact, and a commitment to long-term growth.

A woman with dark hair, wearing a green corduroy jacket, is shown from the chest up, reading an open book. She is outdoors, with a green plant visible in the background. The book is held open with both hands, and the pages are filled with text. A pink banner with white text is overlaid on the top part of the image.

#6. THE RETURN OF "SLOW FAME"

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IN OUR SIGHTS

STEALTH STARS

It used to be that celebrities seeking anonymity would don enormous sunglasses and hats to go about their days incognito. That script has flipped. Sia, celebrated singer and author of "[My Anti-Fame Manifesto](#)," embodies what promises to be an increasingly popular approach to fame management: donning disguises during performances and appearances to preserve anonymity in "real life." Similarly, internet icon Derek Guy (aka the "menswear guy") allows his voice to be heard in interviews but uses an avatar as a stand-in on [vodcasts](#).

EXTENDED BREAKS

In industries ranging from entertainment to business, more high-fliers are taking self-imposed downtime.

FOSTERING FANDOM

Fame is fleeting. [Fandom](#) can last forever. We'll see more stars and influencers cultivate relationships with their most loyal fans from the start rather than rely on staying in the spotlight via album releases, starring roles, and scandal.



#7. LIFECARE

10 TRENDS FOR 2025

In recent years, healthcare has shifted from a reactive model focused on treating illness to a more proactive, comprehensive approach emphasizing continuous care and prevention. It's about maintaining well-being, monitoring health in real time, and addressing potential issues before they escalate. Wearable technology that tracks vital health metrics (e.g., heart rate, oxygen saturation, blood sugar) has democratized health monitoring, making it easier and more affordable for people to manage their health from the comfort of their homes.

In this new paradigm, healthcare isn't something you seek from a third party when you're sick—it's integrated into everyday life, and the responsibility is shared by the patient. It's a service that is with you rather than something you go to. And it will only grow more essential as the world's populations age, further stretching the resources of healthcare institutions. Vitality, it's not just about medical monitoring and intervention. It's about holistic well-being, with "treatments" extending to such things as joining social clubs. As expressed in Harvard political scientist Robert Putnam's new documentary: "[Join or Die.](#)"

#7. LIFECARE



10 TRENDS FOR 2025

IN OUR SIGHTS

AI-ENHANCED WEARABLES

The capabilities of smartwatches, smart rings, and other wearable health trackers promise to explode as these devices integrate advanced AI. In 2025, we'll see more sensors that perform tasks such as **detecting sleep apnea**. Smart glasses will also increasingly be part of the mix, used, for instance, to monitor the gait of **Parkinson's patients** or blood oxygen and glucose levels.

SMART TEXTILES

After years of promises, high-tech fabrics finally **appear poised** to move out of laboratories and into homes and offices. Among the products in development are **smart office chairs** that address poor posture, **clothing** that regulates body temperature, and **fitted caps** that monitor brain activity to assist with sleep disorders, epilepsy, and other conditions.

HEALTHCARE ON AISLE 3

Care clinics at supermarkets are nothing new, but we'll see more innovative approaches thanks to advances in AI. Last year, university researchers teamed with a U.K. supermarket to fit **grocery cart handles** with ECG sensors. It allowed them to test shoppers for atrial fibrillation. Meanwhile, grocery store loyalty card data is being used to spot undiagnosed ailments such as **ovarian cancer**.

#8. SLOWING TECH'S ROLL



10 TRENDS FOR 2025

In the early days of the digital revolution, we saw fierce competition to bring the shiniest technology to market. Virtually every new gadget promised faster speeds, more bells and whistles, and increased efficiency, fueling a culture of constant upgrading. In 2025, the landscape will look quite different. The once frenzied rush for the latest and fastest is slowing, and many people are opting out of the race entirely. As the price of each upgrade climbs higher, consumers are starting to ask whether new is always better. Increasingly, the answer is *no*.

This shift isn't just about people deciding they don't need the latest, fastest phone or computer. It reflects a deeper questioning of whether the incessant push for more speed and connectivity is healthy or wise. The media are full of stories that reinforce these doubts: rising tech addiction, social alienation, and landfills teeming with e-waste. People are beginning to realize that faster often comes at the expense of their well-being—and that of the planet.

Enter the “slow tech” movement. This isn't about adopting retro products or resisting progress (though **flip phones** and **disposable cameras** are enjoying a comeback); it's about approaching technology more thoughtfully. Slow tech promotes the idea that technology should serve, not enslave. It's about prioritizing digital boundaries, well-being, and sustainability over the rush for rapid and not-quite-necessary innovation and endless consumption.

#8. SLOWING TECH'S ROLL



10 TRENDS FOR 2025

IN OUR SIGHTS

RETRO RENAISSANCE

We've all seen social media users lamenting the difficulty of buying appliances that haven't been overcomplicated with "smart" features. We can expect more consumers to get back to basics with hand-built, repairable kitchen goods such as the U.K.'s [Dualit toasters](#) and sustainably manufactured, consumer-repairable electronics such as the Netherlands-produced [Fairphone](#). And don't overlook the 1950s-inspired [vintage revival](#).

RECALCULATING ...

With concerns growing over the [vulnerability of global positioning satellites](#)—whose loss could plunge our increasingly GPS-dependent world into chaos (Y2K redux?)—expect a rise in basic [map-reading courses](#).

SLOW AND STEADY

The days when Apple created massive hoopla over its annual product launches [may be over](#). The company has been opting for quieter releases throughout the year. This more iterative approach makes sense, given the breakneck speed of tech evolution and the company's history of releasing products that are not quite ready just so they can hit self-imposed deadlines.

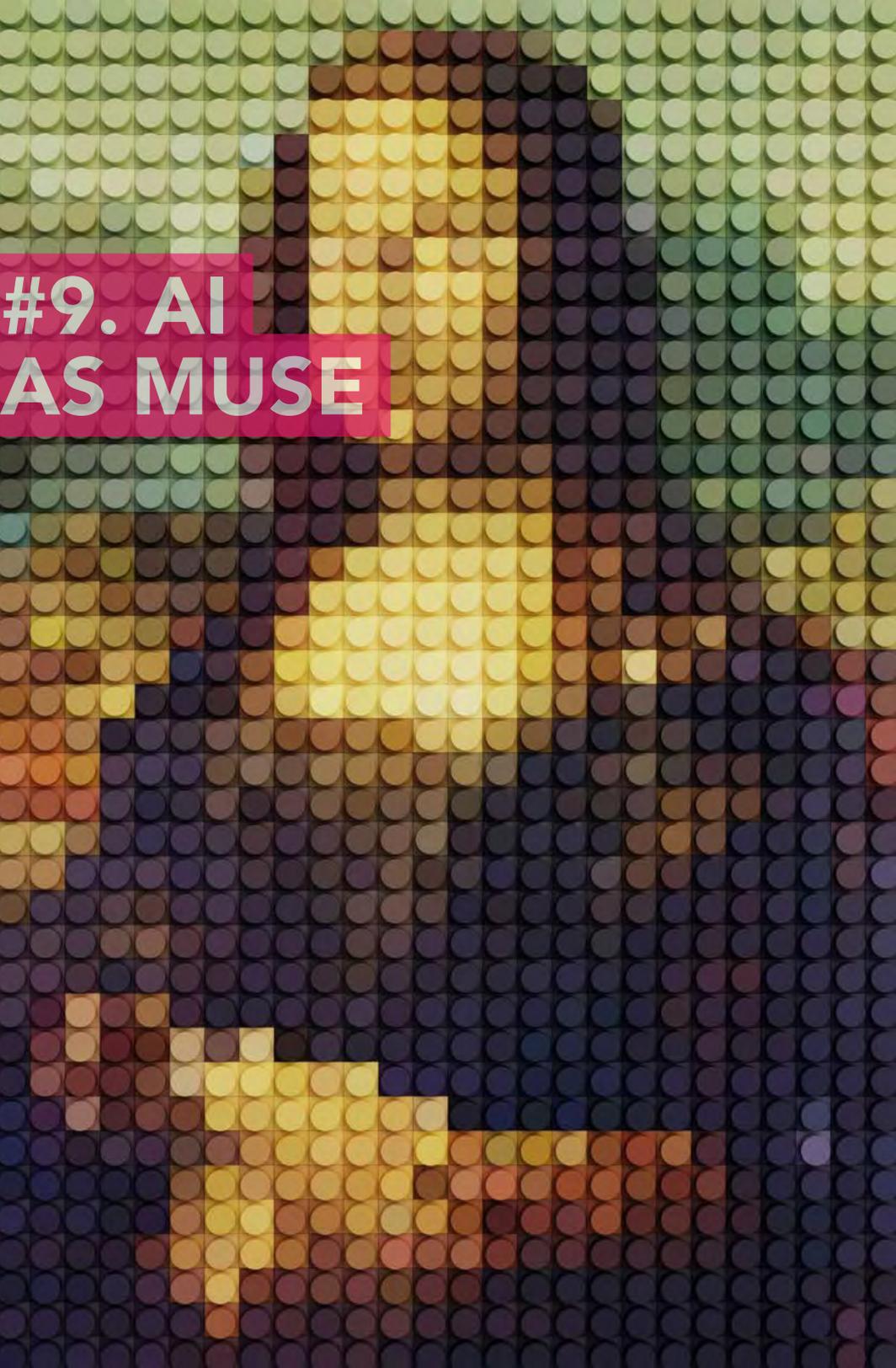
#9. AI AS MUSE



10 TRENDS FOR 2025

In 2013, Carl Benedikt Frey and Michael A. Osborne of the University of Oxford **predicted** that AI and robotics might automate as much as 47 percent of jobs. Initially, this stark projection resonated mostly within academic circles as a theoretical concern. By late 2022, however, the conversation around AI shifted dramatically due to widespread personal and commercial experimentation with generative AI tools such as ChatGPT and Midjourney. These innovations turned AI from a theoretical topic into a practical tool—and toy.

As we move into 2025, we will see a lot more experimentation with AI as a tool not just for automation but for enhancing creativity. It's an emerging extension and catalyst of human innovation—another medium alongside the pen, printing press, synthesizer, and internet. Notably, media platforms—including podcast episodes such as Tyler Cowen's "**interview**" with an AI version of 18th-century writer Jonathan Swift—have highlighted artificial intelligence's playful and experimental potential. Among the more optimistic, we're seeing a shift from fear of worker obsolescence to an embrace of AI as a source of empowerment and the next wave of human artistry.



**#9. AI
AS MUSE**

10 TRENDS FOR 2025

IN OUR SIGHTS

ENHANCING ARTISTIC EXPRESSION

The debate still rages over whether AI-generated works are “real art,” but that isn’t stopping creators from embracing the early lineup of tools. Among them, **LyricStudio** positions itself as a song co-writer, while **Deep Dream Generator** helps artists “unlock their creative potential” by using a “convolutional neural network” to find and enhance patterns in images, generating a dreamlike piece of art.

THINKING OPTIONAL

With its new “**Inspiration**” tab, YouTube Studio is sucking the pain points out of video creation. The AI-powered tool provides ideas for videos, titles and thumbnails, and content outlines. It will even suggest the first few lines of the video.

MOOD MELDING

Pinterest is working to engage users with a “**remix**” feature that lets people add images, text, drawings, and more to their photo collages. You can even “borrow” another user’s collage as a starting point to jumpstart your mood board and share a video version of it on external platforms.

#10. PURSUING DELIGHT



10 TRENDS FOR 2025

At the tail end of a quarter century marked by terrorism and military conflict, climate change and extreme weather events, heightened polarization and extremism, a global pandemic, economic instability, mass migration, and tech-driven social alienation, people are hungry for pinpricks of light to cut through the miasma of angst that has blanketed much of the globe.

Joyfulness has been a focus for several years now (our trends for 2024 included the rise of “joyfulness coaches”), and that hasn’t receded. However, we’re now seeing an emphasis on something shorter-lived but more immediate: sparks of delight. Cultivating joy can feel like a big ask because it involves a sustained, deep emotional state. Delight, on the other hand, is more accessible. It can be sparked by small, everyday pleasures—a stunning sunset, a well-turned phrase, an unexpected kindness. Because delight does not require a broad foundation of life satisfaction, it can be experienced more frequently and spontaneously. This makes it a more readily available resource for lifting spirits.

Delight can also be self-actualized by the **practice of gratitude**, another trend that has gathered strength in recent years. In a world that too often seems to be spinning beyond our control, we can choose to be grateful—an act of empowerment and even rebellion.

#10. PURSUING DELIGHT



10 TRENDS FOR 2025

IN OUR SIGHTS

CHIRP UP, CHARLIE

Birdwatching took wing during the pandemic, but now it's birdsong that's causing hearts to go all aflutter. Whether tapping into a streaming service that offers [bird sounds 24/7](#) or identifying local warblers via an app such as [Merlin](#) or [BirdNET](#), more of us will be making our days more melodic, courtesy of our avian friends. And why not? Researchers have found that listening to birds' chirps, trills, and hoots is good for our [mental health](#).

BROWN PAPER PACKAGES TIED UP IN STRING ...

Subscription boxes are all the rage, combining the convenience of online shopping with the delight of surprise. For many, the pop of dopamine that comes from unboxing the unknown is equally, if not more, important than the items themselves. Among the options these days: [Universal Yums](#), a monthly box featuring snack cakes, confectionaries, and other sweet and savory delights from a particular country, and [TheraBox](#), a therapist-curated subscription box filled with items that "inspire self-care and joy." For the preppers among us, there's CrateJoy's monthly [EDC Survival & Outdoor Gear Box](#) (think hunting knives, Zippo lighters, LED flashlights, and line cutters).

MOOD BOOSTERS

Though the technology is bound to improve, we're already seeing a spate of wearables designed to stimulate dopamine and enhance the brain's pleasure and motivation centers using [light therapy](#), [electrical stimulation](#), [magnetic fields](#), [neurofeedback](#), and other techniques.



10 TRENDS FOR 2025

Our main takeaway for 2025: We'll lean heavily into the yang to the yin of knee-jerk clickbait culture, filtering for meaningful signals amid the din of digital life. It's all about the quest for equilibrium, with balance as the modern-day holy grail.

Our 2018 trends report centered on "D" words: *disturbance, destruction, depression, deception, defiance, discontent, despair, and death*. In 2025, we'll lean into "S": *signals, security, sanctuary, self-monitoring, satisfaction, soulfulness, social, and sensibility*.

Less cynicism and resignation. More optimism and moments of delight.

We've earned it.

