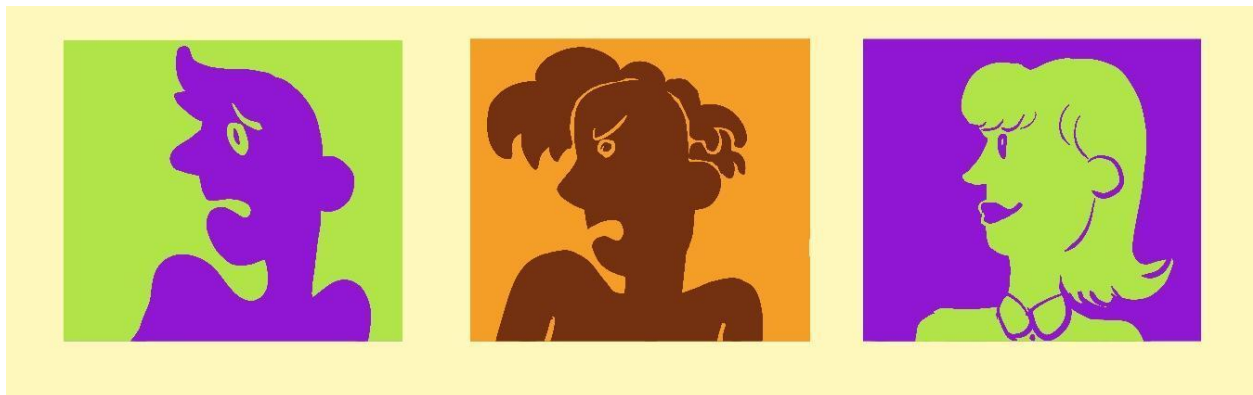


***Title: N.F.Ts Against the Environment***

***Written:*** Susan Chiano

***Photos/Graphics:*** Susan Chiano

Within the past few years, a strange new “art form” has grown in popularity. NFTS has reached new heights in popularity. But like many things, N.F.T.s tend to do more damage than good.



**1. What Are N.F.T.s?**

NFT stands for non-fungible token. If you are still confused about what they are, it's ok. NFTs are weird and confusing. Falling under the realm of cryptocurrency, which is a very odd world of technology. “Non-fungible” basically means that it's unique and can't be replaced with something else. For example, a bitcoin is fungible — trade one for another bitcoin, and you'll have exactly the same thing. A one-of-a-kind trading card, however, is non-fungible. This is where we get NFTs.

From ugly-looking lion icons to weird music, NFTS can be anything digital, but its most popular form is digital art. Many people view purchasing NFTs as a new realm of collecting fine art. This is odd because someone can easily download these NFTs for free by simply right-clicking on their computer instead of paying millions for a single image. This is where it gets awkward and quite comedic, as just about anyone can copy a digital file as often as they want. But NFTs are designed to give you something that can't be copied: ownership of the work. To put it in terms of physical art collecting: anyone can buy a Monet print. But only one person can own the original.

By simply looking at the overview of NFTs they seem fairly harmless, but by looking a bit deeper one can see the negative effects they create.



## 2. *NFT's Carbon Footprint*

A carbon footprint is an estimate of carbon emissions released in the process of creating and consuming a product. Recently the environmental impact of NFTs has been brought into question. The main reason behind this is due to NFTs being bought and sold with Ethereum cryptocurrency. This type of cryptocurrency causes a large number of carbon emissions. An example of this large carbon footprint that NFTs create can be seen in the work “Space Cat.” An NFT that’s basically a GIF of a cat in a rocket heading to the Moon. Space Cat’s carbon footprint is equivalent to an EU resident’s electricity usage for two months.

Maybe it’s just me, but a single purchase of an image should not have the same carbon footprint as a house’s electricity usage. With Corporations using NFTs more often, one can only imagine how large the carbon footprint is for every NFT ever sold.



## 3. *Artists Against NFTs*

This realization of NFT’s carbon footprints has led to much controversy within the digital art communities. Some choose to ignore the damage NFTs can cause, while others fight against it. There is the argument that NFTs are good for digital artists, as they enable them to be paid for their work. As stated earlier, images are easily taken, duplicated, and spread online, often with no credit given to their original creator. NFTs enable us to hold one up as the one truly original,

giving it value and stimulating the arts industry by enabling collectors to collect. Surely this is a good use of cryptocurrency?

To that, I say: If you want unique artwork, then commission an artist. If you want to ensure creators are properly compensated for their labor, then commission an artist. If you're concerned about the viability of the arts industry, then *commission an artist*.

NFTs do not confirm that the artist will be paid properly. It is more common for people to steal an artist's work and resell it as an NFT than for the original artist to sell them personally. Numerous creators are having their content stolen, with artists angrily speaking out and setting their Twitter accounts to private in an attempt to curb the free-for-all.

NFTs, as a whole, are simply a ticket for bragging. No one really needs one. Plus, there are smarter and less environmentally taxing ways to get art. So if you are ever in the market for an original digital piece of work, find an artist you like and simply commission them.