



Yves Klein in the "void" room of his *Sensibilité Picturale Immatérielle*,  
Museum Haus Lange, Germany  
© The estate of Yves Klein c/o ADAGP, Paris, 2018

# Invisible ink

Artistic data and the erosion of  
creative cultural agency

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**Understanding and addressing digital inequalities**

**European University Institute**

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“To the good people at the three major record labels, I implore you: **do not settle.**”

Ed Newton-Rex, Open Letter to Sony,  
Universal & Warner, June 2025

“The internet is **not some kind of self-service buffet**, and creative achievements by human beings are not simply templates for use free of charge.”

Dr. Tobias Holzmüller, GEMA, November 2025

“The technology at issue was **amongst the most transformative** many of us will see in our lifetimes.”

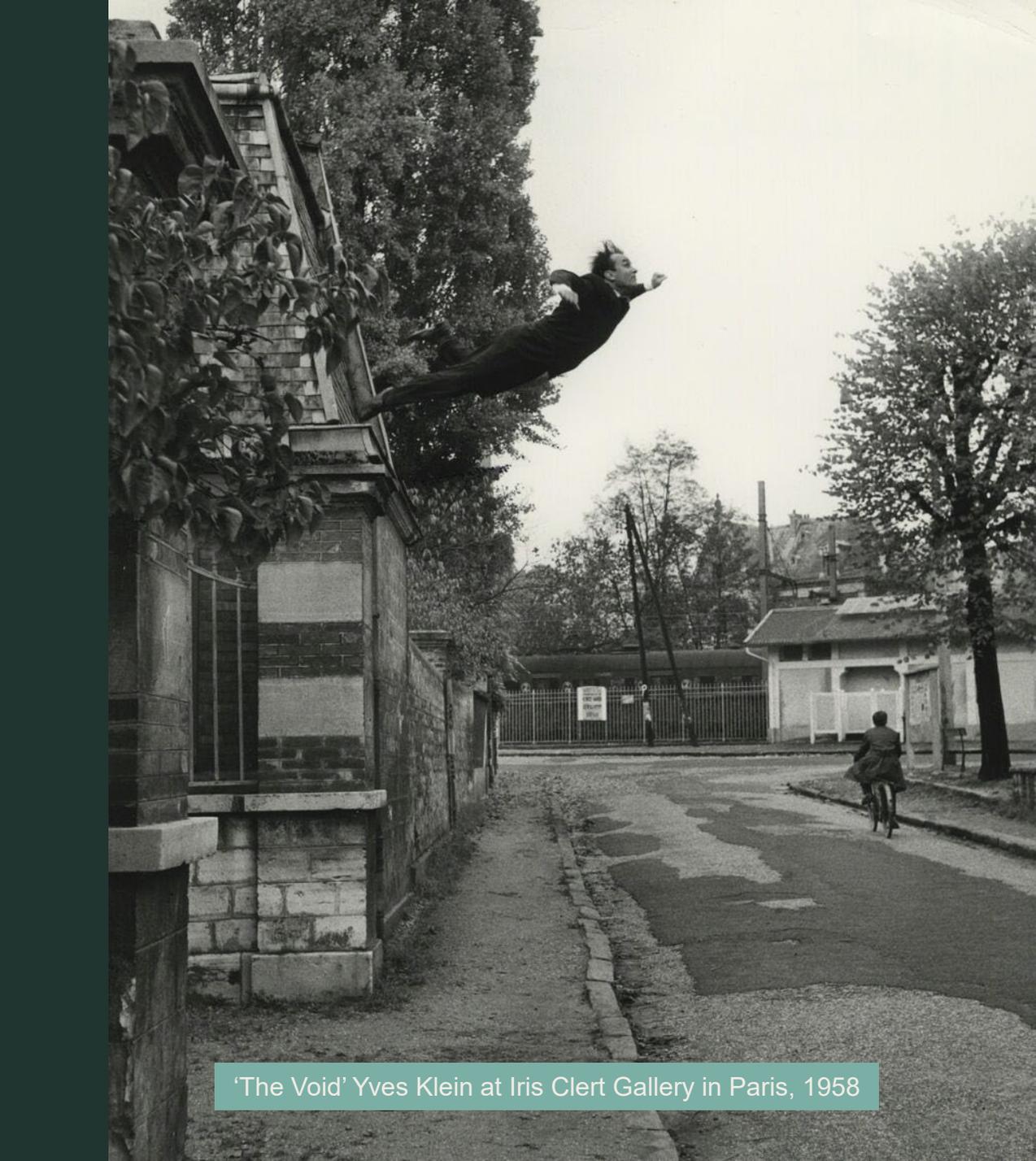
Judge Alsup, *Bartz v. Anthropic*, June 2025

“The impact of AI on the authors and performers we represent constitutes a systemic risk.”

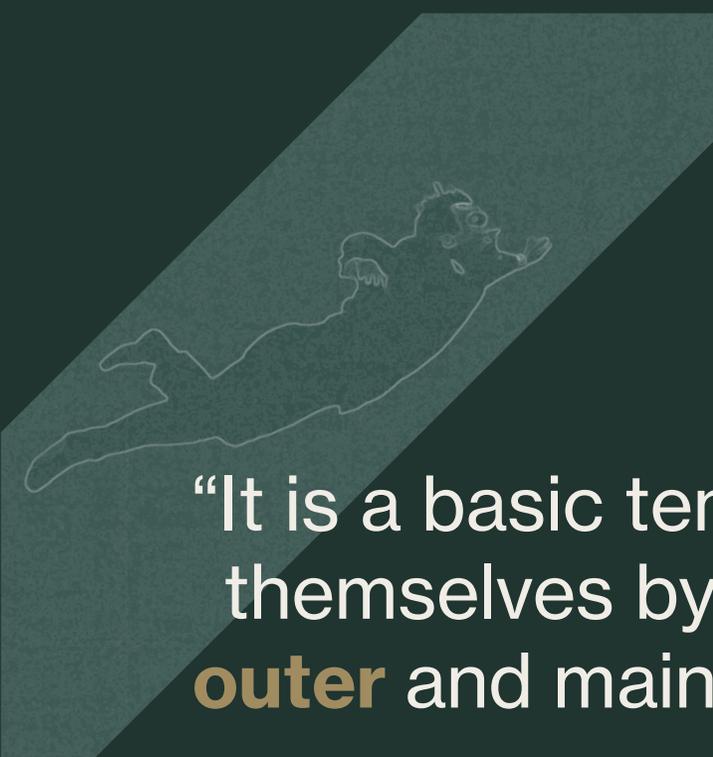
To secure a **fair balance** between providing AI providers access to our **cultural heritage** and ensuring the **protection** and **fair remuneration** of our authors and performers,

the EU should encourage the deployment of a responsible AI industry that helps **human creativity** remain at the heart of **our culture**.”

(AEPO-ARTIS and *et al*, 2025).



‘The Void’ Yves Klein at Iris Clert Gallery in Paris, 1958



## =Niklas Luhmann's system theory

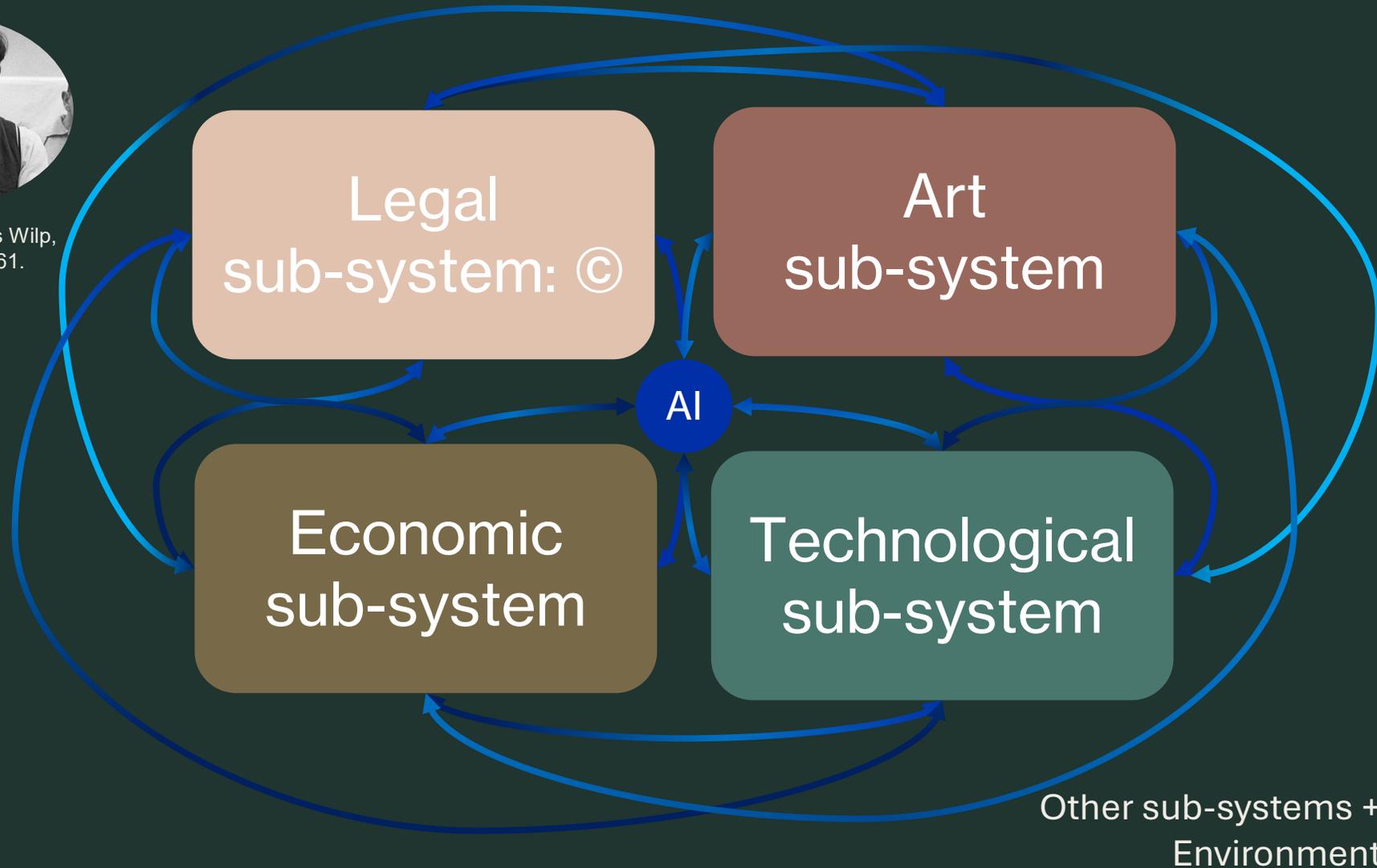
“It is a basic tenet of systems theory that systems constitute themselves by means of the **distinction between inner and outer** and maintain themselves by **stabilizing this boundary**.”

If we conceive rationality in the sociological sense as systems rationality, it is plausible to seek in **this inner/outer distinction a rational criterion** for the distinctive location and the **joint increase of trust or distrust”**

# =Irritation and feedback loops



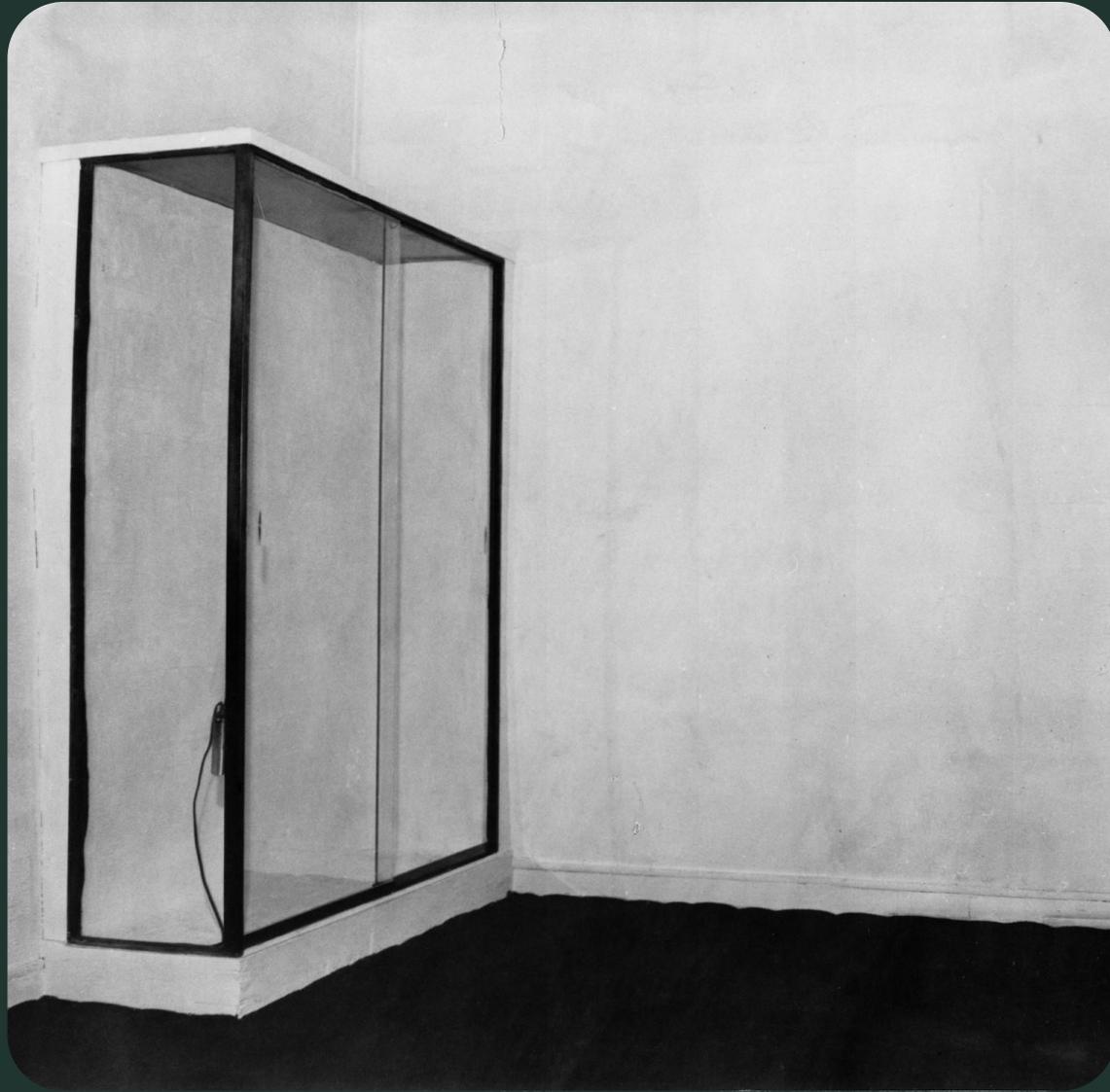
Photo by Charles Wilp,  
Germany, 1961.





## =Institutionalising authorial distrust

- Trust is a **communicative medium** that reduces complexity.
- Institutionalised distrust can generate a '**culture of trust**' based on specific cultural characteristics – trust is '**systematically reproduced**'.



**“With the void, full powers” –  
Albert Camus to Yves Klein**

**With artistic data, full agency?**

‘The Void’ Yves Klein at Iris Clert Gallery in Paris, 1958

## 'Commoning' the void (artistic data)

- The cumulative value of data related to creative works to facilitate further **collective socio-cultural dialogue and exchange**.
- **Commoning** as a form of 'creative care' within heritage practices.
- Relational response to strengthen collective agency that incorporates **copynorms** and **online-sharing culture**.

Yves Klein, Untitled Blue Monochrome (IKB 129), 1957

# Restorative Redistribution

- Viewing artistic data as digital socio-cultural infrastructure.
- **AI Creativity Fund** based on stewardship principles to provide collective care of artistic data.
- Those that **benefit** from artistic data must pay into the fund.
- Role of cultural heritage institutions (**CHIs**) as trustees to redistribute value.



Yves Klein, Pigment bleu sec (Dry Blue Pigment)  
after a visitor stepped in it, 2017



Entrance of Iris Clert Gallery, during the opening of the “Void” exhibition, Paris, 28 April 1958

# Thank you

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