

Creative Repute: Imperfect Imagery Is Becoming a Brand Trust Signal

Philadelphia creative agency examines why audiences increasingly trust raw, imperfect imagery over polished stock and AI-generated photos.

PHILADELPHIA, PA, UNITED STATES, September 24, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Creative Repute, an award-winning Philadelphia-based branding and creative agency, is examining a shift in how audiences respond to brand imagery, as years of polished stock photography and a recent flood of AI-generated content have made visual perfection easier to produce and harder to trust.

Adobe found that 74% of consumers have questioned the authenticity of photos or videos they encountered, even on reputable news websites, and 93% said understanding how content was created or edited mattered to them. Gartner surveyed 1,539 U.S. consumers and found that 68% frequently wonder whether the content they encounter is real, while half said they would rather do business with brands that avoid generative AI in consumer-facing content.

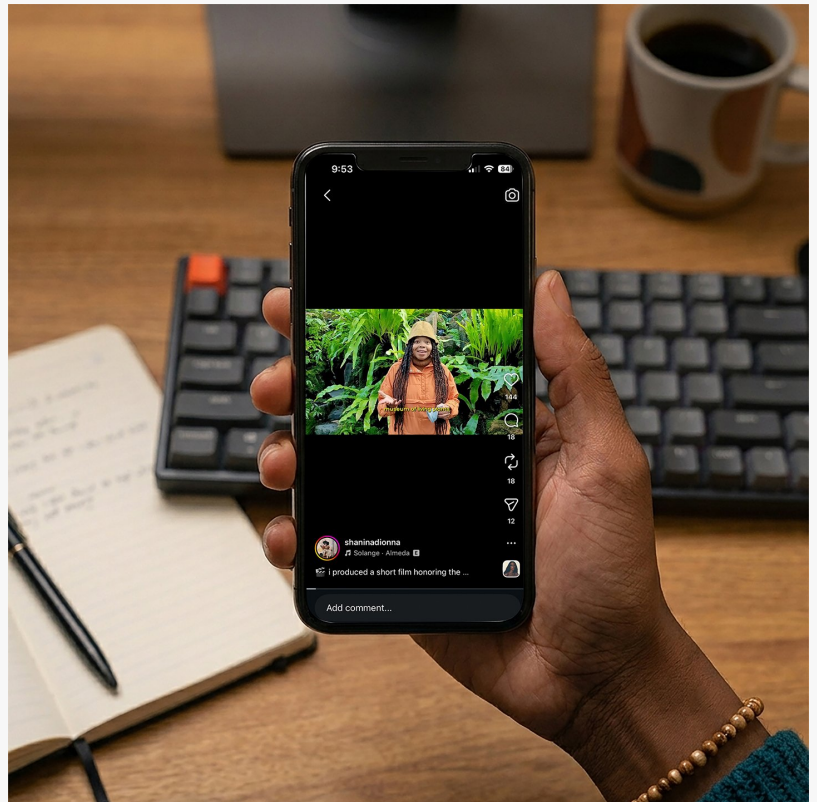
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The moment an image feels manufactured, it stops doing its job”

Tina Armstead

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Creative Repute's latest blog post, [Trending: We Are Entering an Era of Visual Skepticism](#), explains why imagery is one of the first trust decisions a brand makes and why generic, overly polished visuals can undercut that trust



The Instagram preview for the Pillars trailer, produced with visual artist shanina dionna using footage she shot on her own cellphone.

rather than build it. The agency points to a growing client preference for real environments, natural lighting, and cellphone-camera texture over imagery that feels too polished to be believable.

The post traces the problem back to stock photography, arguing that AI didn't create visual skepticism so much as accelerate it, since audiences had already learned to recognize manufactured authenticity. It also points to a gap between AI adoption and AI trust: Pew Research found that 49% of U.S. adults now use AI chatbots, up from 33% in 2024, while Gartner found 49% of U.S. consumers believe generative AI has made the quality of available content worse, rising to 57% among Gen Z and Millennials.

The piece also details Creative Repute's recent work on the trailer for Pillars with visual artist shanina dionna, built largely from footage shanina captured on her own cellphone, as an example of production value coming from believability rather than polish.

Brands rethinking their visual strategy in light of this shift can explore Creative Repute's [photography and videography services](#) or request a [free quote](#) to start the conversation.

About Creative Repute

Creative Repute is an award-winning Philadelphia-based branding and creative agency offering photography, videography, web development, and marketing services to organizations of all sizes. The agency helps clients build visual strategies that hold up to a more skeptical, discerning audience.

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