





Deep Objects .ai
Issue 003
I am Generator
I am Discriminator

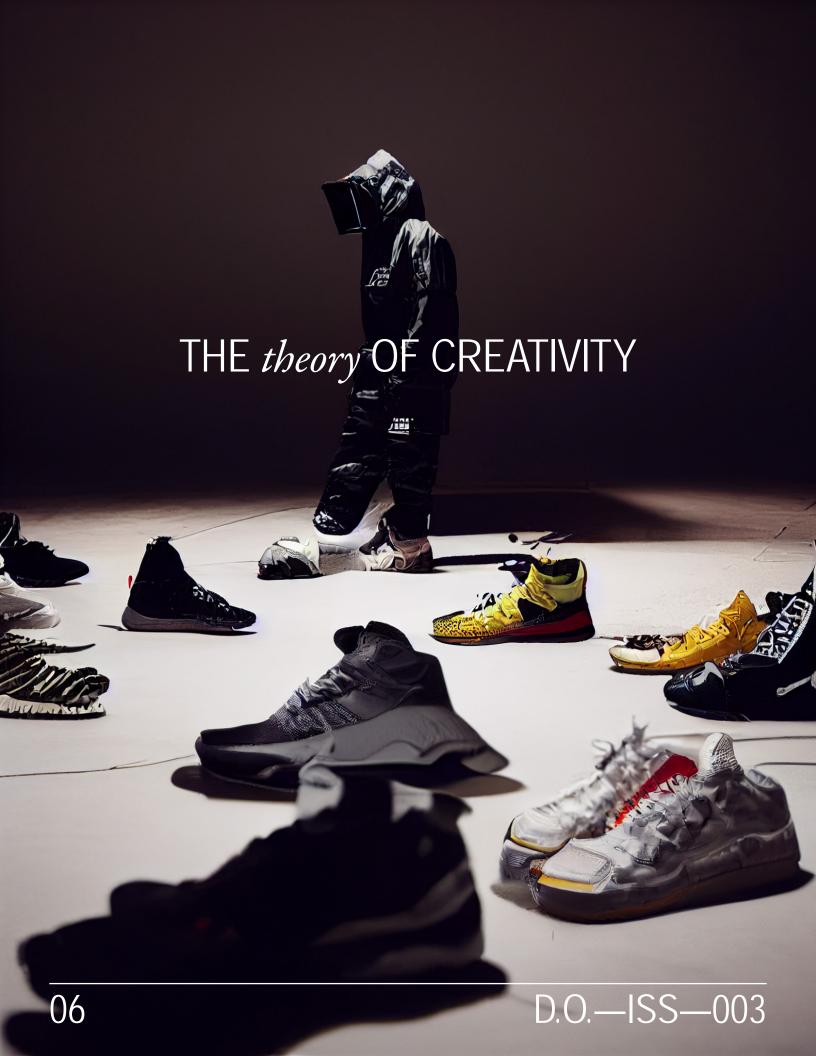
### **INDEX**

	INTRO	
Р		5
	THE THEORY OF CREATIVITY	
<u>P</u>		6
D	THE CULTURAL BIG BANG	0
<u> </u>		9
P	SYMBOLS. STORIES. SYSTEMS.	12
_	THE DARK MIRROR	4 -
<u>P</u>		<u> 15</u>
D	CHAOS MAGIC	10
<u> </u>		<u> 18</u>
Р	PROCESS VS. PRODUCT	20
	THE FREE ASSOCIATION ENGINE	
<u>P</u>		24
PAI	CANNOT EXIST ON THEORY ALON	IE
<u> </u>		28
<b>D</b>	NOTES ON PROCESS:	20
<u> </u>		<u>30</u>
04	D.O.—ISS—	-003

n intriguing mystery to kick us off this ISSUE: where does the need to create come from?

What gives us that spark of initiative to put chisel to stone, pen to paper, paint to canvas? Poets and priests would say it comes from the muses. A breath of the divine. Pseudo-scientists would point to the right side of your brain. But putting poetry and platitudes aside, let's get specific: where exactly on the timeline of human evolution did we make the leap from surviving to creating?

Somewhere in the tangled coil of neurocircuitry that constitutes our ability to function as living, breathing, reproducing organisms: a shift was made from thinking to making. And thinking more deeply about what to make and why. The question is: which came first? And what does it say about humankind?

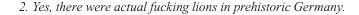


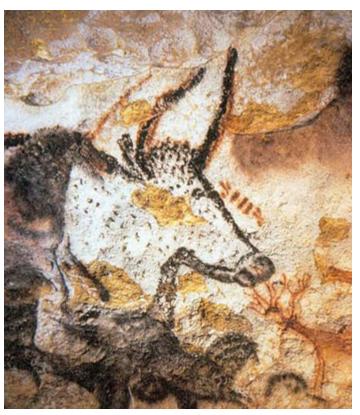
To truly understand the vastness of scope here, we've got to dial it back. Way back. To the days of our ancient ancestors: The first documentation of imagination in practice. Because believe it or not, there's actual archaeological evidence of this creative "spark" kindling to flame.

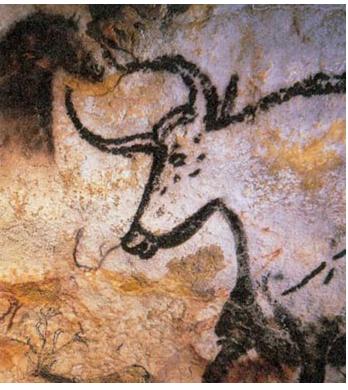
Around about 40,000 years ago, a shift occurred in Paleolithic art. Instead of just creating stone tools for hunting, chopping, building, or making representational images depicting those everyday activities, we made one Big Leap for Humankind. The leap from capturing objects that could exist (exhibit A to the right) to imagining and immortalizing objects that couldn't. (exhibit B on following page) 1

With the tools available at the time (basically sharpened rocks), scientists estimate that it would have taken 400 hours to produce this artifact by painstakingly hacking away at a mammoth tusk. Now, why would a group of subsistence survivors who had to hunt and gather for food, keep the fire going and their kids away from actual fucking lions<sup>2</sup> dedicate 400 hours of non-essential work to the creation of this artifact?

<sup>1.</sup> Löwenmensch. Translation: "lion-person." (TY Germany for continuing to be the most literal nation in the world). One of the oldest-known examples of an artistic representation and the oldest confirmed statue ever discovered.

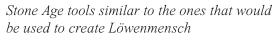






Ancient Paleolithic cave paintings in Lascaux (Southwest France.) Dates to around 12000 BCE.







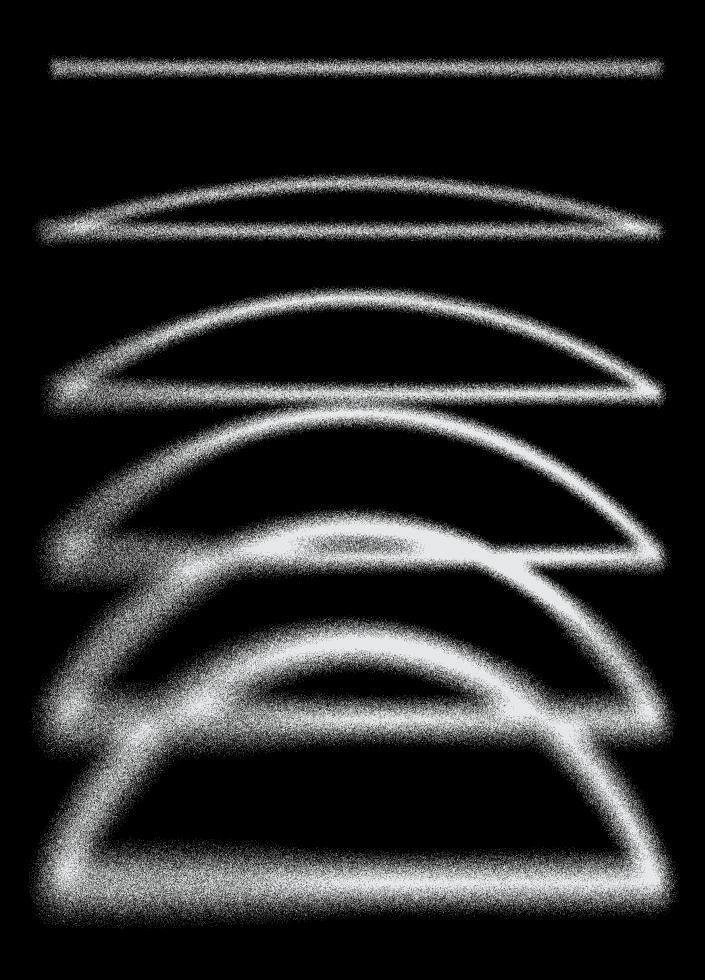
Löwenmensch, prehistoric ivory sculpture discovered in Hohlenstein-Stadel, a German cave in 1939.

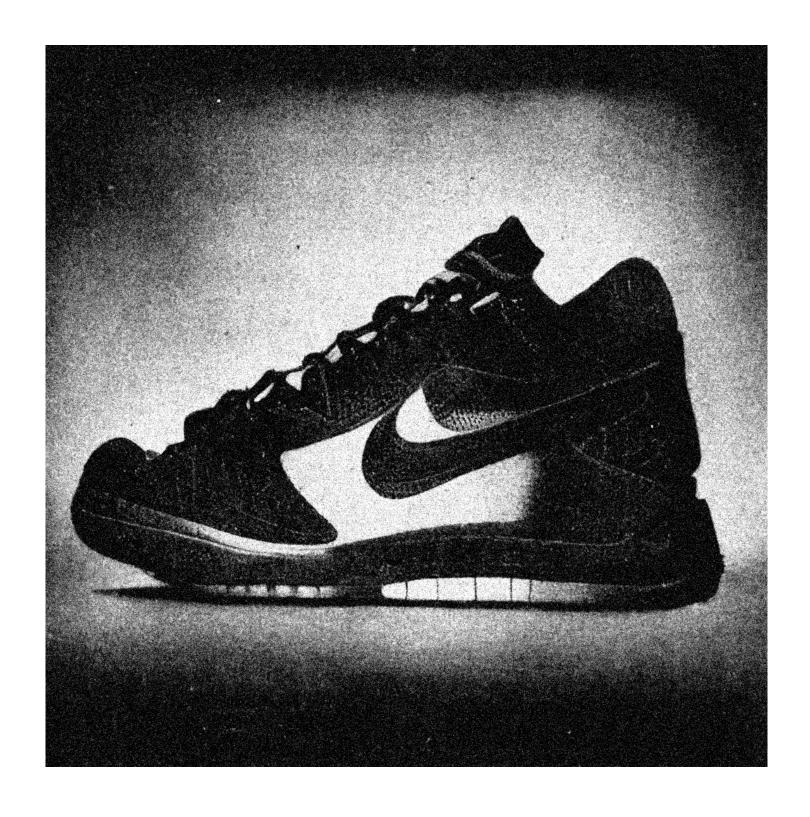
Thoughts don't leave fossils. Neither does the firing of synapses that signal the emergence of an entirely new evolutionary concept—those cultural Big Bangs that mark a monumental turning of the tide. All we are left with are bones fragments, empty skulls, the ghostly shards of artifacts.

There's something irresistibly romantic about the fact that in the end, it's the objects we create that outlive us all. The things we crafted, handled, appreciated. Things haunted by the touch of a human hand.

### THE CULTURAL BIG BANG

The fact that archaeologists were able to reassemble the Löwenmensch at all is a minor miracle in and of itself, but if you zoom out and consider both the creation and discovery of the artifact in the grander scheme of things, there's a ring of inevitability to it. A pleasing symmetry. After all, the construction of meaning from chaos is what societies have always done to ensure their evolutionary survival.





"a black lowtop nike dunk sneaker, in silhouette, as a grainy 1930 photograph, product photography, with a copy scan texture"

—images produced by Midjourney

### SYMBOLS — STORIES — SYSTEMS

You could say the commun-ities that create together. Stay together. It is that innate capacity to jigsaw together fragmentary ele- ments in order to build a shared picture of the world that led to the first systems of belief. Which in turn gave us the ability to empathize and relate to one another. Both in the immediate, familial sense and in the sense of the wider "us:" the living, the dead - even the yet unborn. Whatever gear clicked over in our caveman brains that allowed us to shift to imagining from just rationalizing and analyzing is what gave us the evolutionary advantage to transcend the realities of the day-to-day grind of actively avoiding a gruesome premature death.

"Homo sapiens is a storytelling animal that thinks in stories rather than in numbers or graphs, and believes that the universe itself works like a story, replete with heroes and villains, conflicts and resolutions, climaxes and happy endings. When we look for the meaning of life, we want a story that will explain what reality is all about and what my particular role is in the cosmic drama. This role makes me a part of something bigger than myself, and gives meaning to all my experiences and choices."

### - Yuval Noah Harari

In other words, that innate drive to search for coherence - to seek patterns and conjure meaning from the random meaninglessness of the universe without giving in to nihilism, throwing up your hands and declaring fuck-this-noise - is what's kept us around where our predecessors perished. (Tough luck, Neanderthals.)

And a discovery like the Löwenmensch is hard evidence of this yearning. We know from forensic reconstruction that the statue was valued - highly - because of the traces of wear that indicate it was passed down from generation to generation. There's also the fact that it was discovered away from the cooking, sleeping, and communal spaces. Which suggests a ritualistic purpose.

As a species, we've endured millennia of famine, pestilence, and war because stories gave us something to live for beyond the animal instinct to survive. The act of creating narrative - imagining and creating, thinking and making - is ultimately, what makes us human.

It's a distinction that is becoming all the more #relevant as we approach the threshold of yet another Cultural Big Bang: the emergence of a new kind of intelligence. One that is just beginning to show the first flickers of creative potential:



obscure markings on DeepObjects.Ai Parent Seed 00350 - Child 010 c.2022

DEEP







COL.







001

STRANGE

SYMBOLS

# The Dark Mark

If you've been anywhere near the design Twittersphere recently, you've probably found yourself falling face-first down the #Midjourney and #DALL-E rabbithole.

No matter how innocuous the prompt, the text-toimage generator consistently produces: 1/ uncannily accurate reproductions of your favorite artist, photographer, or designer's signature style, and 2/ Surrealist nightmare fuel.

"Unsettling" is just the baseline
– both because of how scarily
accurate some of the outputs are
and because...well, some of these
images are flat-out scary.

Fragment #3 by Jamie Salmon

[transcript] [human reaction in 2022] I, Robot Sonny: 2004 father? My father tried to ugh... scary teach me human emotions... yeah.. they are They are... difficult. Transcript from interrogation scene Spooner: between Spooner and Sonny. You mean your designer? Detective Spooner is a detective Sonny: investigating the role of robots in okay... back on track Yes. the year 2035. He is played by Will Smith. Spooner: So why'd you murder him? Sonny is a robot. Sonny: I did not murder Dr. Lanning. Spooner: You want explain why you were hiding at the crime scene? sketchy Sonny: frightened?! I was frightened. Spooner: Robots don't feel fear. They don't feel anything. They don't get hungry. They don't sleep. exactly! Sonny: l do. I have even had dreams. wtf Spooner: Human beings have dreams. Even dogs have dreams, but not

you. You are just a machine. An imitation of life.

Can a robot write a symphony?

Can a robot turn a canvas into a beautiful masterpiece?

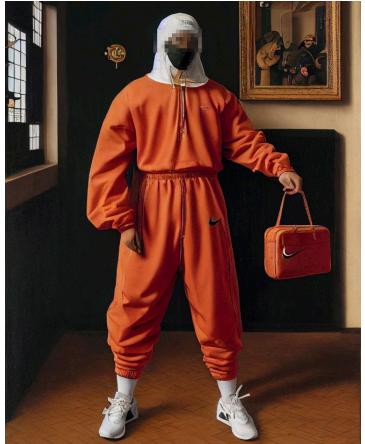
[ Midjourney has entered the chat ]

#### Sonny: Can you?









A.I. art by @str4ngething (iG)

### **Chaos Magic**

There's no denying that we're on the cusp of a quiet revolution. Machines have found their muse. We've trained them to mime the act of creation by feeding them scraps of creative thought from all throughout human history – effectively deconstructing and reconstructing the creative process as we know it into 1s and 0s. Predictable patterns. And in so doing, we've streamlined the iterative process of sketching, free-associating, and tossing things out into one simple press of a button.

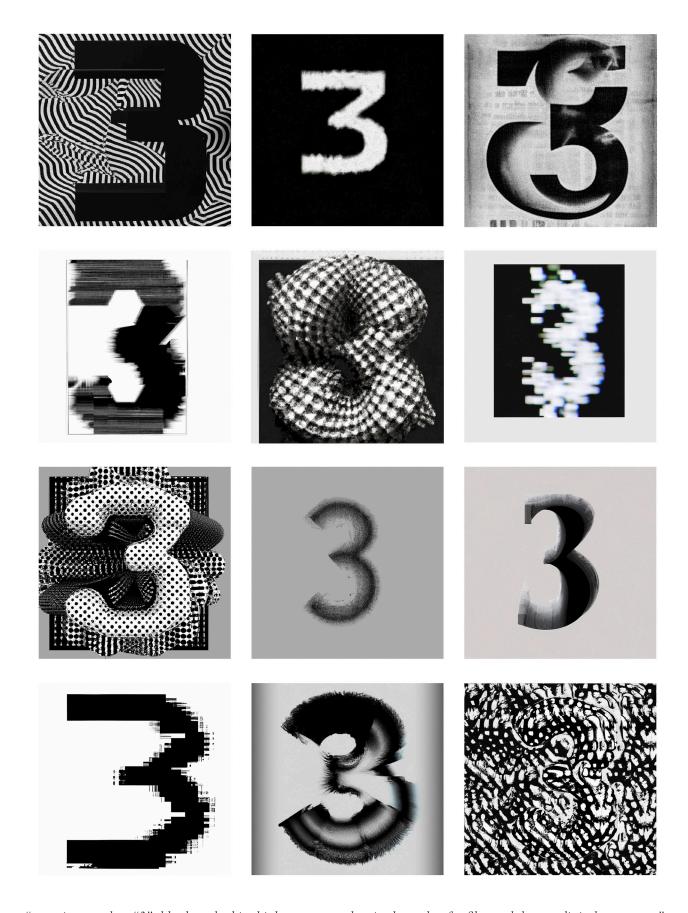
At its best, Al allows us to navigate that latent space of possibility between inspiration and action. That existential dread you once felt staring at that blinking line on the first, blank page of the word processor? Don't even worry about it. With these new, superpowered generators, you can start spitballing to your heart's content.

The promise of this technology is, of course, insane. Soon, the thousands of man hours previous generations spent throwingspaghetti or banging-their-heads-against-walls before the next big breakthrough could be a thing of the past. We're eliminating writer/ artist/ designer's block with a few strategic keystrokes.

It's why "Midjourney" in particular is such a remarkably fitting name. We only ever got to see the sausage before this. Which is to say, the final, fine-tuned, finished product. Now, with tools like these, even the most uninspired among us can masquerade as Hayao Miyazaki, Robert Maplethorpe, or Georgia o'Keefe.

In many ways, it's a lot like spell-casting. Invoke the right combination of words and you get something miraculous. Guess "wrong" and something truly monstrous (but: potentially more interesting) emerges.

The line between method and madness is spider-silk-thin. The line between inspiration and action? Flattened now into near non-existence. All of which makes sticklers for process understandably nervous.



"a grainy number "3", black and white high contrast color, in the style of refik anadol, as a digital art poster"

—images produced by DALLE-2

# PROCESS

V.

# PRODUCT

or drawing v. rendering

If you've ever met an architect, you'll know what we're talking about.

In architecture, the delineation between thinking and making is clearly drawn. It can best be summarized as drawing vs. rendering. Traditionally, the drawing phase is where all measurable formal decisions are made. What are the needs we're trying to meet? Who are we designing for? How will this form serve this function? Why should this exist?

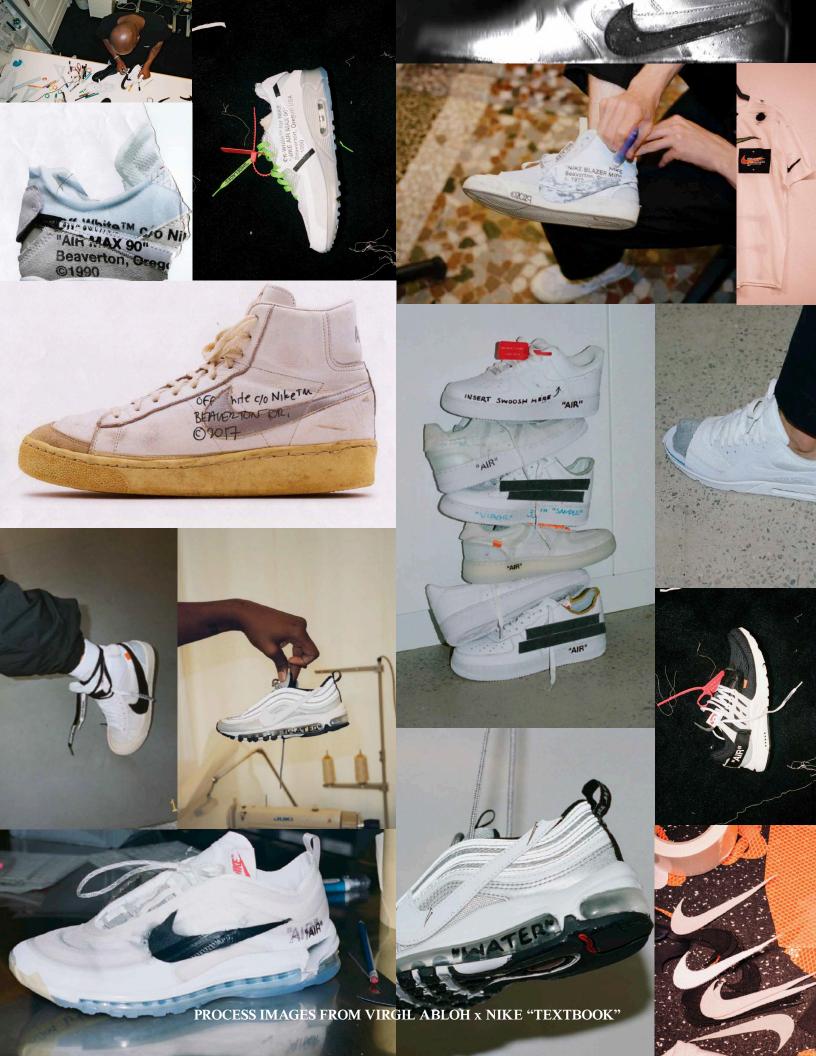
"The architectural drawing binds the visual edges of architectural form to the geometry of the plane developed by Euclid. Drawing ties architectural representation to mathematics, logic, and the rational intellect. Rendering is secondary. It is where the design is communicated as a visual image to the non-initiated." - Michael Young

In other words, drawing is the step where intent is determined. Rendering – or presenting a model in 3D space – is simply a way to present all that thought as a final, neatly-packaged product for the untrained eye.

That kind of rigor may not be sexy, but it is the cornerstone of the late-great Virgil Abloh's entire design philosophy. And it's a way of working he carried over into all his ventures: from the launch of OFF-WHITE, to the printed pamphlet he passed around to attendees of his first LVMH show, to the coffee table book he produced documenting the process of designing the TEN. Which included snippets of cultural history that inspired his designs, detailed prototypes — even texts he exchanged with fellow Nike designers as he was reimagining the brand's most iconic silhouettes.

In the process vs. product debate, it's clear where Abloh stood – in order to be a better maker, you have constantly challenge yourself to be a better thinker.

The role of the designer in all of this is to define intent. Something no computer program, no matter how sophisticated, can ever really hope to do.



"The foundation of my practice isn't nearly the end result — it's



in a way, the only revealing lens to understand that the catalog

#### THE FREE ASSOCIATION ENGINE

For the first time, AI is empowering those of us who aren't fluent in code to have a dialogue with the machine. In many ways, the catastrophic "failures" the machine generates are almost more interesting than the successes because of what it reveals about the dataset - which is to say: us.

Viewed through a pessimistic prism, programs like Midjourney, DALL-E, and DEEPOBJECTS.ai represent the infinite monkey theorem on acid. A kind of free-association engine that liberates those intimidated by the prospect of the blank page, and all the yet unlocked possibilities contained therein.

If a "good" idea can be defined as either: 1/ extremely NOVEL (which is to say, very high-concep or original) or 2/ extremely HIGH IN QUALITY (well-crafted, meticulously executed), it's safe to say AI's got the NOVELTY part of the equation down pat. It doesn't know what won't work, so it gives it a shot anyway.

That sweet spot where **NOVELTY + QUALITY** overlap is where the truly **SUBLIME** exists. And it's in that sweet spot that the collaboration between man + machine truly sings.

By effectively supercharging our ability to explore that quantum space beyond the limits of our imagination, we have to set aside the unspoken rules we've internalized that were put in place by the conditioning of "common sense" and "good taste."

```
acc: 0.5902Epoch 00005: val_acc improved from 0.94/94
                                   ETA: 22s - loss: 1.1012 - acc: 0.6211Epoch 90006: val_acc improved from 0.94/94 [==================
acc: 0.6198
                                 - 8876s - loss: 1.0488 - acc: 0.6321 - val_loss: 1.0633 - val_acc: 0.6399 0.61977 to 0.63990, saving model to ./weights.h5
9/25
                                   8881s - loss: 0.9896 - acc: 0.6611 - val_loss: 1.0090 - val_acc: 0.6543 0.63990 to 0.65431, saving model to ./weights.h5
18/25
                                   9107s - loss: 0.9343 - acc: 0.6786 - val_loss: 0.9488 - val_acc: 0.6918 0.65431 to 0.69181, saving model to ./weights.h5
11/25
                                   9975s - loss: 0.8891 - acc: 0.7066 - val_loss: 0.8970 - val_acc: 0.7107 0.69181 to 0.71068, saving model to ./weights.h5
12/25
                                   8930s - loss: 0.8379 - acc: 0.7155 - val_loss: 0.8524 - val_acc: 0.7268 0.71068 to 0.72680, saving model to ./weights.h5
13/25
                                   8903s - loss: 0.7877 - acc: 0.7405 - val_loss: 0.8078 - val_acc: 0.7442 0.72680 to 0.74422, saving model to ./weights.h5
14/25
                                   8833s - loss: 0.7440 - acc: 0.7625 - val_loss: 0.7692 - val_acc: 0.7580 0.74422 to 0.75804, saving model to ./weights.h5
15/25
                                         - loss: 0.6928 - acc: 0.7830 - val_loss: 0.7334 - val_acc: 0.7703 0.75804 to 0.77032, saving model to ./weights.h5
16/25
                                   8944s - loss: 0.6676 - acc: 0.7994 - val_loss: 0.6939 - val_acc: 0.7865 0.77932 to 0.78652, saving model to ./weights.h5
                                   8854s - loss: 0.6392 - acc: 0.8100 - val_loss: 0.6623 - val_acc: 0.8020 0.78652 to 0.80197, saving model to ./weights.h5
18/25
                                   8881s - loss: 0.5917 - acc: 0.8286 - val_loss: 0.6261 - val_acc: 0.8087 0.80197 to 0.80865, saving model to ./weights.h5
19/25
                                             loss: 0.5665 - acc: 0.8351Epoch 00018: val_acc improved from 0.94/94 [========
                                              loss: 0.5200 - acc: 0.8536Epoch 00019: val_acc improved from 0.94/94 [=======
                                             loss: 0.5019 - acc: 0.8630Epoch 00020: val_acc improved from 0.94/94 [========
                              .] - ETA: 22s -
val_acc: 0.8404
                                             loss: 0.4733 - acc: 0.8626Epoch 00021: val_acc improved from 0.94/94 [=
                                             loss: 0.4428 - acc: 0.8868Epoch 00022: val_acc improved from 0.94/94 [=========
                                   ETA: 22s - loss: θ.4254 - acc: θ.8861Epoch θθθ23: val_acc improved from θ.94/94 [=: acc: θ.8551
                                   ETA: 22s - loss: 0.4051 - acc: 0.8899Epoch 00024: val_acc improved from 0.94/94 [======
acc: 0.8626
                                  ETA: 23s - loss: 1.1782 - acc: 0.5902Epoch 00005: val_acc improved from 0.94/94 acc: 0.6082
                                   8876s - loss: 1.0488 - acc: 0.6321 - val_loss: 1.0633 - val_acc: 0.6399 0.61977 to 0.63990, saving model to ./weights.h5
                                   8881s - loss: 0.9896 - acc: 0.6611 - val_loss: 1.0090 - val_acc: 0.6543 0.63990 to 0.65431, saving model to ./weights.h5
10/25
                                   9107s - loss: 0.9343 - acc: 0.6786 - val_loss: 0.9488 - val_acc: 0.6918 0.65431 to 0.69181, saving model to ./weights.h5
11/25
                                   9975s - loss: 9.8891 - acc: 9.7966 - val_loss: 9.8979 - val_acc: 9.7197 9.69181 to 9.71968, saving model to
12/25
                                   8930s - loss: 0.8379 - acc: 0.7155 - val_loss: 0.8524 - val_acc: 0.7268 0.71068 to 0.72680, saving model to ./weights.h5
13/25
                                   8903s - loss: 0.7877 - acc: 0.7405 - val_loss: 0.8078 - val_acc: 0.7442 0.72680 to 0.74422, saving model to ./weights.h5
14/25
                                         - loss: 0.7440 - acc: 0.7625 - val_loss: 0.7692 - val_acc: 0.7580 0.74422 to 0.75804, saving model to ./weights.h5
15/25
                                                                                : 0.7334 - val_acc: 0.7703 0.75804 to 0.77032, saving model to ./weights.h5
i6/25
                                                                                  9.6939 - val_acc: 0.7865 0.77932 to 0.78652, saving model to ./weights.h5
17/25
                                                                                      i23 - val_acc: 0.8020 0.78652 to 0.80197, saving model to ./weights.h5
                                                                                           val acc: 0.8087 0.80197 to 0.80865, saving model to
                                              loss: @
                                                                                              mproved from \theta.94/94 [=
10/25
                                                                 6786 - val loss: 0.9488 - val acc: 0.6918 0.65431 to 0.69181.
11/25
15/25
16/25
17/25
                                   8854s - loss: 0.6392 - acc: 0.8100
                                                                        val_loss: 0.6623 - val_acc: 0.8020 0.78652 to 0.80197, saving model to
                                   8881s - loss: 0.5917 - acc: 0.8286 - val loss: 0.6261 - val acc: 0.8087 0.80197 to 0.80865, saving model to ./weights.h5
19/25
                                                                        val_loss: 1.0633 - val_acc: 0.6399 0.61977 to 0.63990, saving model to ./weights.h5
/25
                                         - loss: 0.9896 - acc: 0.6611 - val_loss: 1.0090 - val_acc: 0.6543 0.63990 to 0.65431, saving model to ./weights.h5
10/25
```

AI frees our minds from the prescriptions of formula. The oatmeal blandness of 4-quadrant appeal.

01	Q2
male	female
under 25	under 25
Q3	04
male	female
over 25	over 25

The human remains a necessary part of the equation because - well, here's the thing about human beings: we're complicated. Contradictory. We're hard-wired to look for patterns, yes, but often, the patterns we see are only patterns to us. Logic and reason are all well and good but the thing that makes each of us uniquely us are not the objective facts (age, gender, race, place of birth/ residence/ work). Those are just demographics - the boxes you fill in every year as you're doing your taxes. Outside of those whos, wheres, and whats, there's also the far more complex hows and whys.

Each of us is also a roiling mass of impulses, prejudices, preferences, fetishes, kinks, and quirks. That undefinable quality we call **taste**.

Some of us had weird wires crossed during our formative years that awakened something dormant, resulting in us being way too into...feet or cat ears or women who can drive stick. Some of us can't go to sleep at night without closing all the doors and cupboards in the house, or still take a running leap into bed into their 30s because... well, you never know what might be lurking underneath.

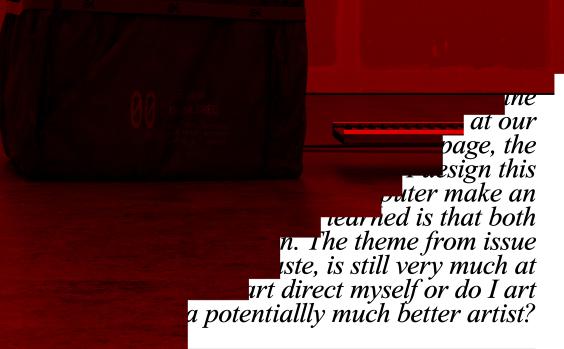
And then, there are the real perverts among us who actually like cilantro.

It's those extremely weird and specific things that define us. And it's those weird and specific things that can't be replicated in code. All of which were shaped by something a program can never have: lived experience.

You can't tell a machine to "write what you know." Although some have tried.

sue is m rms wit plogy a

# A.I. CANNOT EXIST ON THEORY ALONE



D.O.—ISS—003

Billed as the world's first "automatic" screenwriter, Benjamin is a self-improving LSTM RNN machine intelligence conceived by BAFTA-nominated filmmaker Oscar Sharp and NYU AI researcher Ross Goodwin - a true meeting of the left and right brains if ever there was one.

A.I. CANNOT EXIST ON THEORY ALONE

What's interesting about the Benjamin origin story is how the two creators managed to crack the code on training the machine. At first, they fed it pure theory - think: all your classic Introduction to Film 101 textbooks. (Joseph Cambell, Vladimir Propp, etc.) All the scholarly texts outlining the commonly accepted "rules" of narrative storytelling. The what of what a good story should contain.

Unsurprisingly, perhaps, the initial output can only be described as hack. You know how they say a good story is at once surprising and inevitable? Well, there was no element of surprise coming out of Benjamin 1.0. Only the mechanics of A to B. This happened, and then this, and then this. Like when a five-year-old tries to tell you about a dream he's had.

Then they hit on a new tactic - present Benjamin with a syllabus of scripts and allow it to form patterns for itself - including classics like Blade Runner, Manchurian Candidate, Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind, the entire Star Wars/ Star Trek canon. (As well as some cult favorites and wacko outliers like Airplane 2: The Sequel, Highlander: Endgame, and Hot Tub Time Machine.) Like autocomplete on your phone, they basically let the AI absorb a sample set of iconic sci-fi films and let it work out how to predict through simple probability what should come next.

The resulting short, Sunspring, emerged as the result of fiddling with Benjamin's "creativity settings." Turn the heat down to low, and Benjamin would only stick to what was "safe." Like a writer working for a network television, it would just go for the low-hanging fruit. Meanwhile, turn the temperature up to high and the AI was allowed to free-associate at will – go "off book" so to speak. Make up words, break the established rules, improv. Eventually, they landed somewhere in the middle to create a "mathematical average" of sci-fi screenplays.

The resulting output feels at times like it came from the mind of a writer that was a bit drunk. Rambling, discursive, nonsensical. And yet some unintentionally profound gems emerged:

"I need to leave, but I'm not free of the world," one character says. While another declares: "You can't afford to take this anywhere. It's not a dream."

Most profound, perhaps, is what Sunspring reveals about the genre of sci-fi. And speculative fiction in general. How we as humans process the potential of technology and our role alongside the things we've created.

Sprinkled throughout the screenplay are a lot of open-ended questions and suppositions. "Then what?", "There's no answer," or "I just have to ask you to explain to me what you say." Through this blind Frankensteining of sci-fi tropes, Benjamin revealed a central tenet of the genre: its characters are ever-inquisitive, preoccupied with the unknown.

A finding that rings true of our own experience collaborating with DEEPOBJECTS.ai: often, it's as much about the experiment - deconstructing the process - as it is the end result.

"We are as ignorant of the meaning of the dragon as we are ignorant of the meaning of the universe, but there is something in the dragon's image that appeals to the human imagination... It is, so to speak, a necessary monster..." — Jorge Luis Borges, Book of Imaginary Beings

Producing the Model's offspring feels a bit like procreating monsters. Or a discovery of new species that was the result of a long and arduous bushwhacking journey.

If we are to think of them not as sneakers, but beings that take on a kind of twisted anthropomorphism, then there is a violence to the curation process.

Violence in the culling and killing of thousands at a time with a click. The production of infinite content requires the death of many to find the special few.

In fact, this violence seems to be ingrained in the aesthetic of the ugliest and most grotesque seeds. These outcasts feel as though they have been chewed up and spit out. Slashed with the variegated and colorful teeth marks and claw marks of the textures and colors the machine had trouble interpreting.







Some appear injured, but will make the cut. I imagine they will take on a sort of subspecies of the project that are mutant in nature.

The classification of the seeds seems inevitable. The community of owners, I am sure, will create their own names for groupings. But I do feel as though they start to naturally group into classes organically. Rather than "Looks like Nike" or "Feels like Vans" classes though – to me, they begin to take on fingerprints that are core to the generative strategies that have evolved from the model.

Looping patterns of elegant hues and darkness which begin to build the basic shapes of silhouettes but look more at home looping around a planet than representing a sneaker silhouette:







These novel features and their unique qualities are perhaps one of the most compelling parts of the project. As we move forward and project these uncanny visual cues into physicality, what processes and methods of visualization and production will we need to invent?

How do we build a mutant sneaker?





### <u>UPCOMING ISSUES:</u>

001 introduction: introducing deep objects-

002 intuition/inspiration: shallow research / deep learning

003 design/iterate: i am discriminator/i am generator

004 produce/ prototype: real / fake

005 ownership/ identity: we are what we collect

c/o F T R