'Syn City' – *Living with replicants*

by Al Razutis (XAR3D) 2024-2025

XAR 2002 Saturna, BC

Let's say you live in a small cubicle, alone, come and go for daily work,

have lots of time to chat privately.

Let's say you're on a device, platform that is interactive (you
and the computer),
that you keep private from most,
Except your typically buddy friends who you might invite
once in a while into your 'man cave'
of private dancers.

Let's say you're a typical consumer, typical worker in today's
city states, or even in the 'country',
the 'suburbs',
in foreign lands on work jobs, and you discovered "Virtual
Reality" (VR) and all its variants
(AR, chat rooms, chat bots) in 2D or 3D.

Let's say you're on a current platform and social networking
site shared by millions or billions.
Let's say you can afford it. Or at least pretend to everyone
that you can.

Welcome to '**Syn City**' <u>the land of avatars,</u> <u>synthetic reality</u>,
since the avatars and artificial intelligence 'bots' have now
moved in
and they're everywhere, your neighbors, even!
Greet! Great to meet you neighbor?

Ha! Not so fast!

'Old school is over, avatars never grew up!'

eharmony

Effortless online dating awaits you

Here's a sample of old school, freckles, blemishes and all. First, 'e-harmony' dating site,
recent years. At least this may result in 'hookups!' some shout,
where text-only Sim Cities (see second image with cut-outs and text) became boring
with nothing to do
but make money chat chat.
Third, the beach scene in '**Second Life**' with avatars in finally 3D and finally so what.)

Remember old school spring break? '**Second Life**' it was called.

Now we think this (first) 'human pic' is pretty mundane, old school. While it's cool to see someone 'naturally photographed and rendered' on a hi-res i-phone, by now we're used to more juicy, perfect, enhanced boobs, all looking alike, in fab outfits, exotic locations, younger by the day, telling us private stories, carrying on with us in private conversations, forbidden fantasies, and showing us oh so much… more…

'What did old school VR look like?' Is there a re-union in the works?

I should know, I was there. Here's my crit about it at https://www.alchemists.com/vr-design.html
,
and here is my shop of services and history too
https://www.alchemists.com/speech_recognition.html

an earlier version of this page https://www.alchemists.com/speech-recognition.html

For my **XAR3D** whole rap sheet topping out at 2012, visit
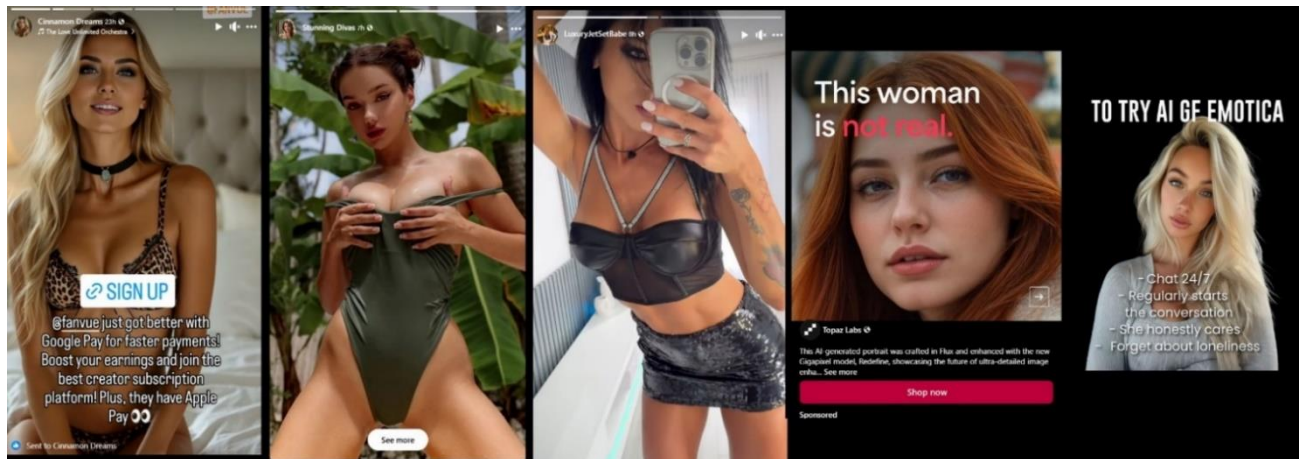https://www.alchemists.com/vr-index.html

and see examples from our old school.
'*Man it was fun! And paid some of my rent too!*' says one of the designers.

1999 - 2010 AVATARS WE'VE DONE (A BRIEF AND INCOMPLETE SELECTION):

Fast forward to now, Part ONE

we're off and living in syn city -- we're way beyond 'sim city' now!

'That's how it is'

Beta testing humans for A.I and VR

On Meta -Facebook a sudden surge of 'bots' for hire, for show, naked bots, sexy bots, young bots, bots anything, and 'bot ads', 'bot stories' has shown up. They come with *synthetic realism* images, as it is now described in academia or research. Facebook (my source here for this essay) features reels, pages, links, products, and it's very clear how they set you up. As McLuhan once wrote, 'the medium is the message' and as I'll re-posit here we are the unpaid beta-testers who are doing it for free for the 'platform', and it is giving us their IT services 'for free', so they say. Come join this, and join that, set up 'relationships' which are for now called 'virtual', but may up being the only game in town.

And they'll want to keep you always 'needing something', because they're always tracking you, data mining you, and coming up with 'stories' and 'characters' that you 'need'.

They immediately ask you when you're looking for some, are you 'male' or 'female' or now 'non-binary'? C'mon, are you?
I'll do the male side for the here and now.

Now, what you can provide us for free (labor) or by subscription that we can provide you in return?
It's transactional.
Hell, we have 'artificial intelligence' running now to enhance the goods!
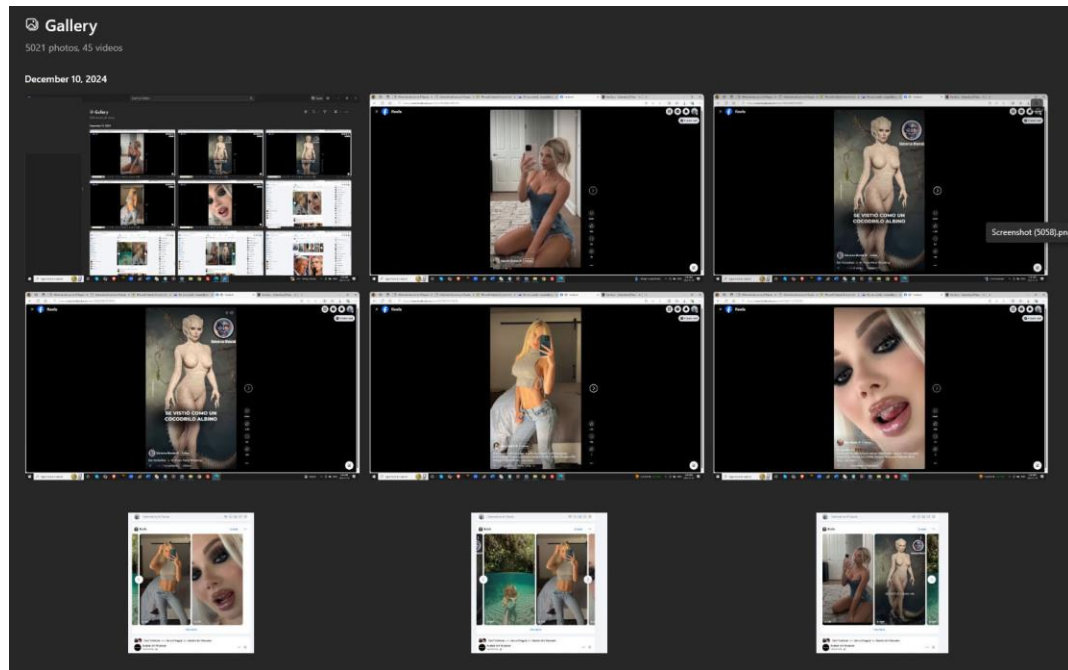Any look, personality, back-story you want? All kinds of relationships here!

Interchangeable for ever!
All private dancers if you desire.
Available 24 / 7 to be your 'best friend'!

Mirror, mirror on the wall… 'here's looking at you!

We like looking at each other, we like looking at ourselves in mirrors, we send our touched up or younger looking mirrors to others to share, and admire; we like to imagine things real and pretend, and secret if not illegal. The idea of younger and younger gets in here and becomes cultural obsession, leading all the way back to adolescence (a bit hit!) and further back to puberty where a lot of 'predators' roam.

We are sexually differentiated by biology, by society, by our image of ourselves and others. We have our own stories to sell, share, or brag about.   *'Dream girl awaits…'*
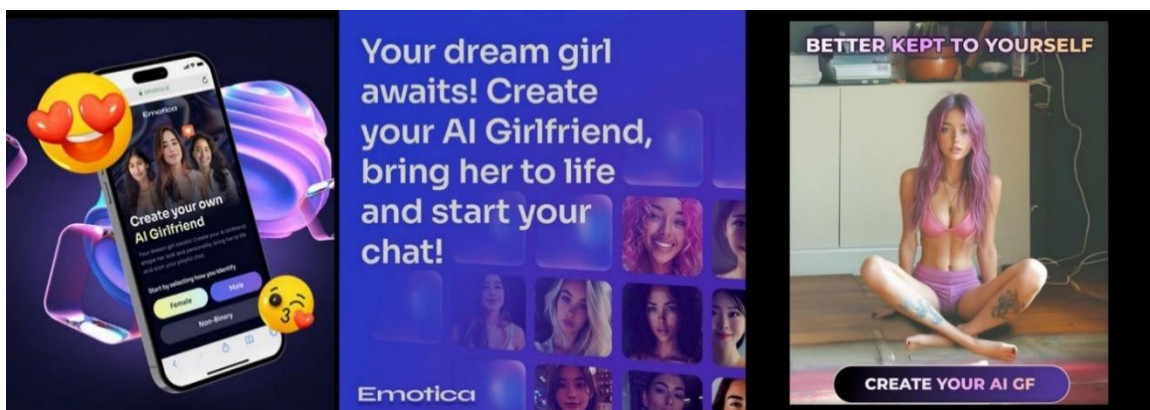
Enter the world of pitch-men, pitch-girls, artificially intelligent, access to your habits, where you go, what you look at what you say. Feeding the 'predator' in us all? Feeding Thanatos and manipulated Eros, what a change from the deterministic Oedipalized unconscious seeking definitions of perversion, fetish, scopophilia and the whole idea of

looking at 'dirty pictures' of 'nudies' across time. What do they get for it? Name brand. Advertising, income. Such platforms and graphic interactive avatar programs are mining you, for data, as you think you are playing in a game deigned to entice, to seduce, sometimes educate, but most of all keep you as the sole private company of your avatar lap dancer that will take more and more upkeep, fees, and 'tips.
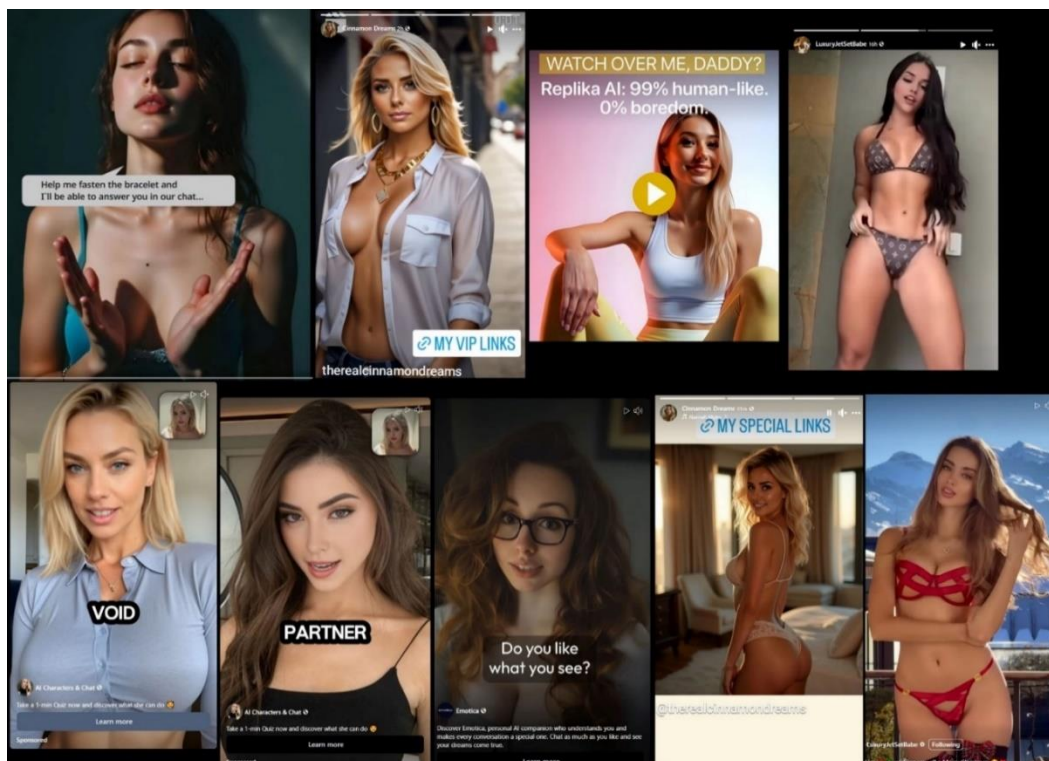
Custom-made companions with the right look
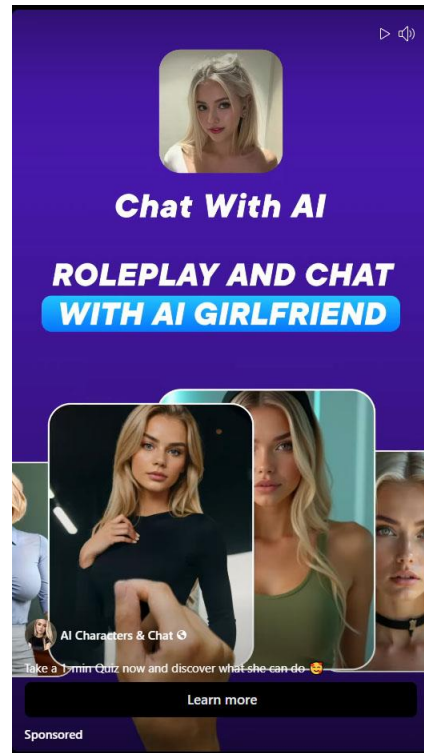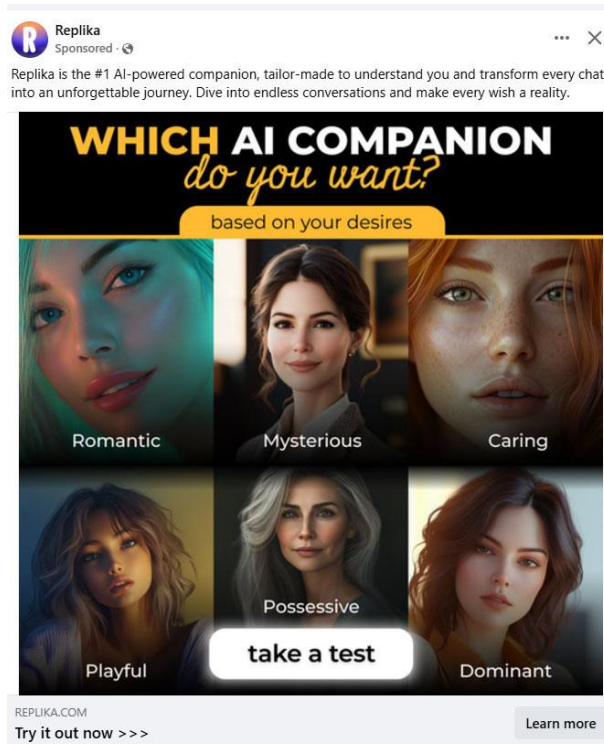
Available to you 24 / 7, any place on this wired planet! Are you hooked? Is this fun? Can you keep us private?

How living is this proof? Wanna take your avatar to lunch and find out?

'How about on a Euro vacation!?'

This is today's American capitalism enticing you to join a synthetic society where anything goes, if you can afford it. It's all based on commerce, that applies to the arts too. Nothing simple about it, nothing basic instinct only, we're talking about forming relationships that last a life time if need be, we're talking about a place you'll never be lonely, wanting, unhappy. All you have to is plug in to the metaverse which 'we' the company, the state, the country and the society in general will provide to you. This is the 'information superhighway' we're always promised. And right now, as I write this, A.I. is on my case, proofing the spelling as I write this!

Now. we've proved that it works. Always improving! Heck, we're living proof of it now, aren't we. And if we wish, *'we can see them, anyone naked!'*
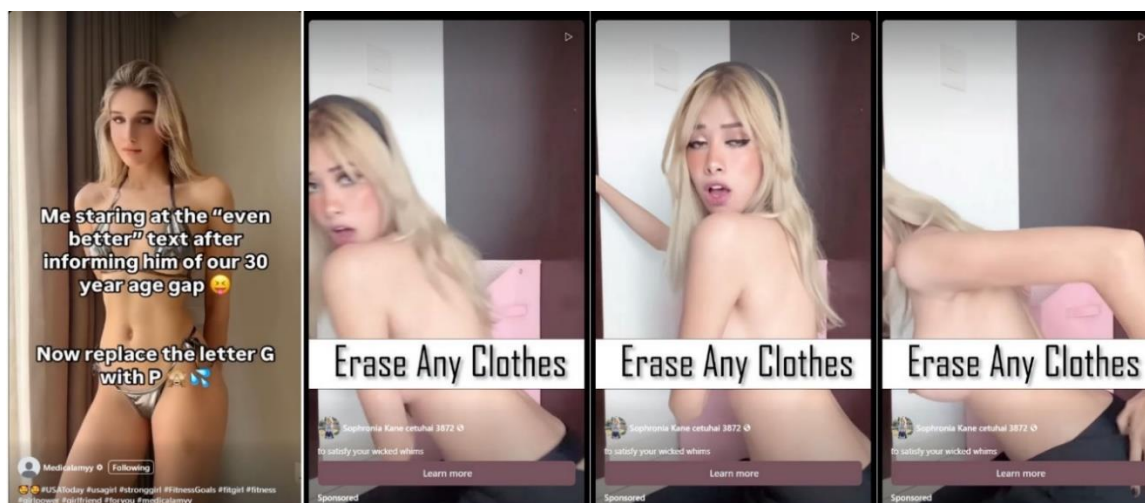
All this starts with offering free everything, and soon turns you into a tracked, analyzed, beta-tester of the features of their platform, which grows and grows, and provides mega billion profit for its *undertakers*.

We, the beta-testers (remember our role in games) are human whose actions, reactions are being recorded, then put to statistical analysis. In order to develop and sell the product of a 'synthetic society' and its needs, aspirations, monetary values and abilities to buy and sell our labor.

PART TWO: 'Basic Instinct '

and what it comes down to
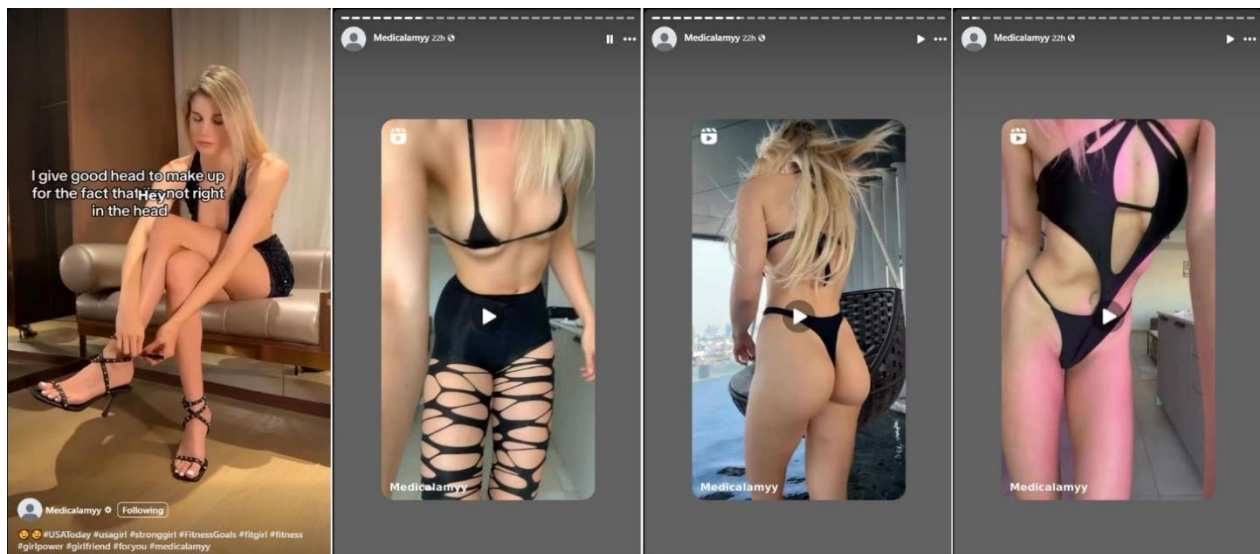
The **A.I - enhanced platform** records our every moves, our hesitations, our pauses, our screen captures, our fascinations. It reads who we interact with on the web and has data history of all that.

It is with this in mind that I bring up the topic of voyeurism, manufactured desires, the selling of fables, dreams, the selling of other humans to us to act as 'masters' and those sold to be our 'slaves'. For pleasure, for knowledge, for entertainment, or for sadism and masochism, each character is groomed then refined to get us on our way to spend more time, more money, to acquire what is promised us.

Narratives and their reward systems

'Oooh, baby, tell me your secret. But you have to get real close!''
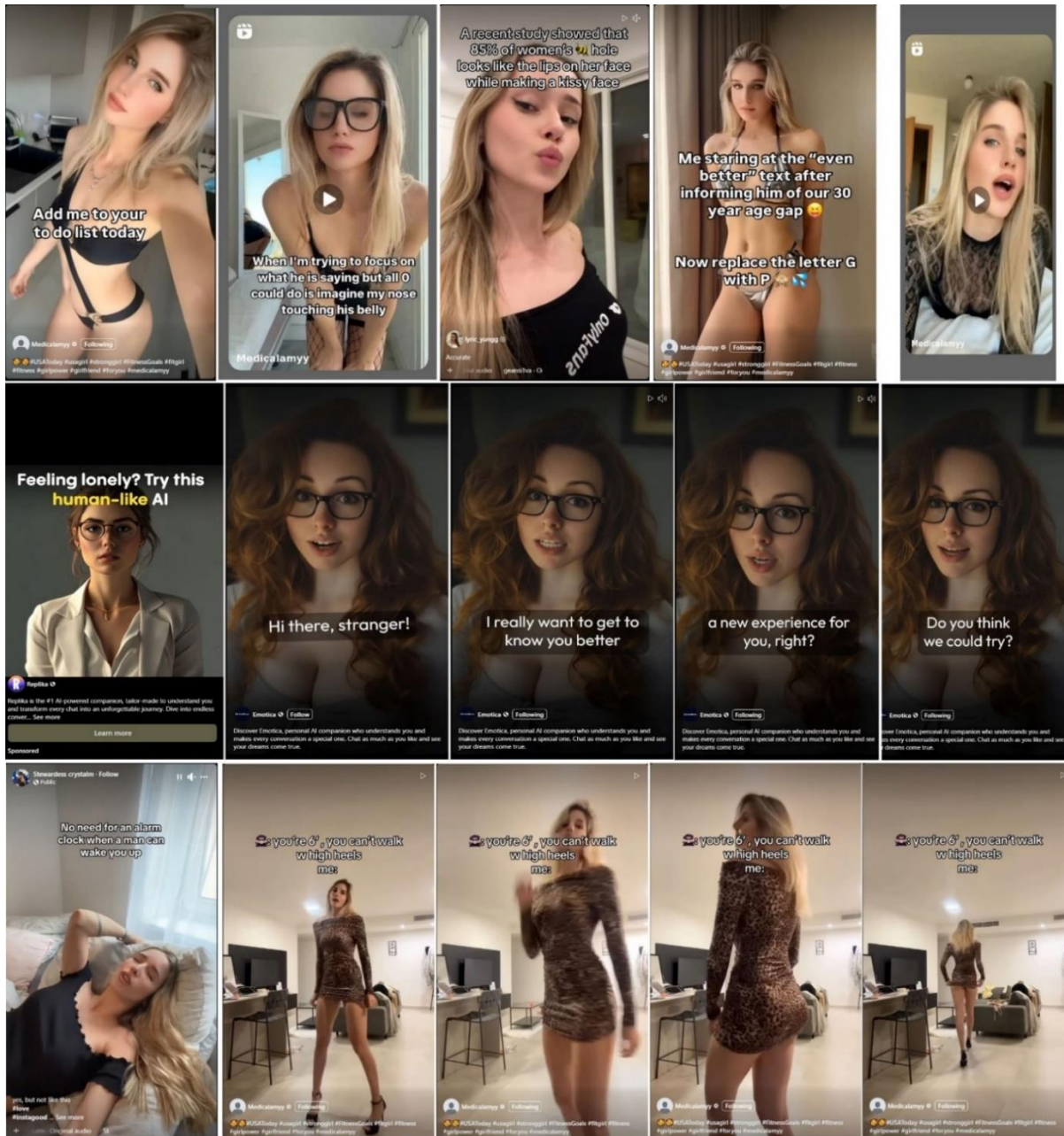
And all this is to be done not by haptic or physical processes but by our 'optical register', which determines what we see, how we see it, and how it is remembered as image, not anything else. Therefore, we can discuss the use of A.I in human representation, to include humanoids generated by various means (not just by CG), the construction of narratives of interaction for client and avatar subject and the way this is fed, and feeds into, our popular culture and North American society.

The power of story, innuendo, come-on

dwarfs the immune system of any synthetic realism
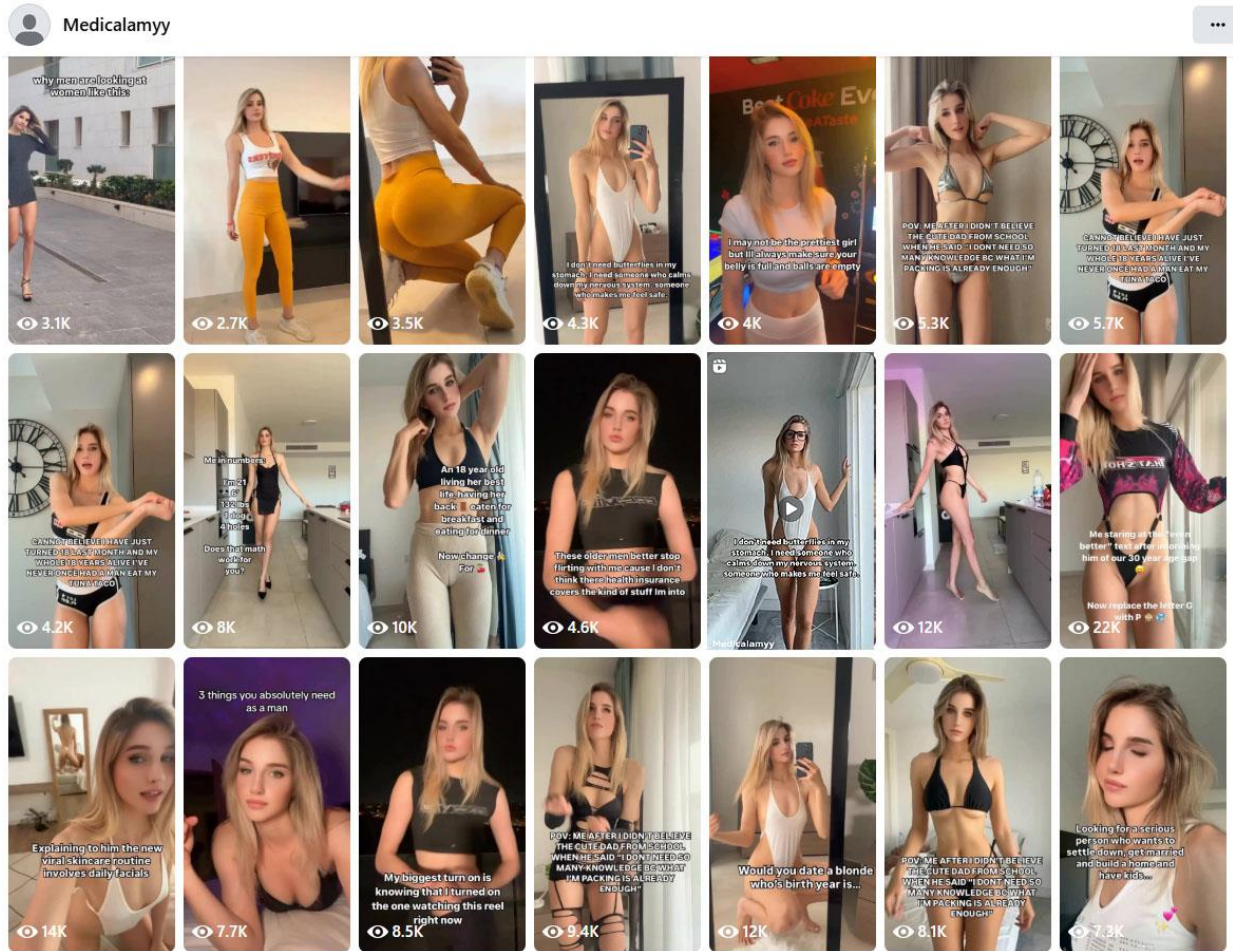
And the great payoff is the masturbatory story!

*'Just you and your avatar baby, your doll, your slave, your dick..'*

And rather than this being a merely technical discussion of ways to imitate by way of mimesis, or other strategies what is called 'the real', and 'real human interaction', we can see how this is sexualized, manipulated, and fed into a 'reward system' of never-ending disposables, which is the underpinnings of western capitalist consumer systems, ***das kapital*** 2024 and the brave new worlds emanating from it.

And the place of women in this society? Obviously, pleasure models, replicants of successful formulas,
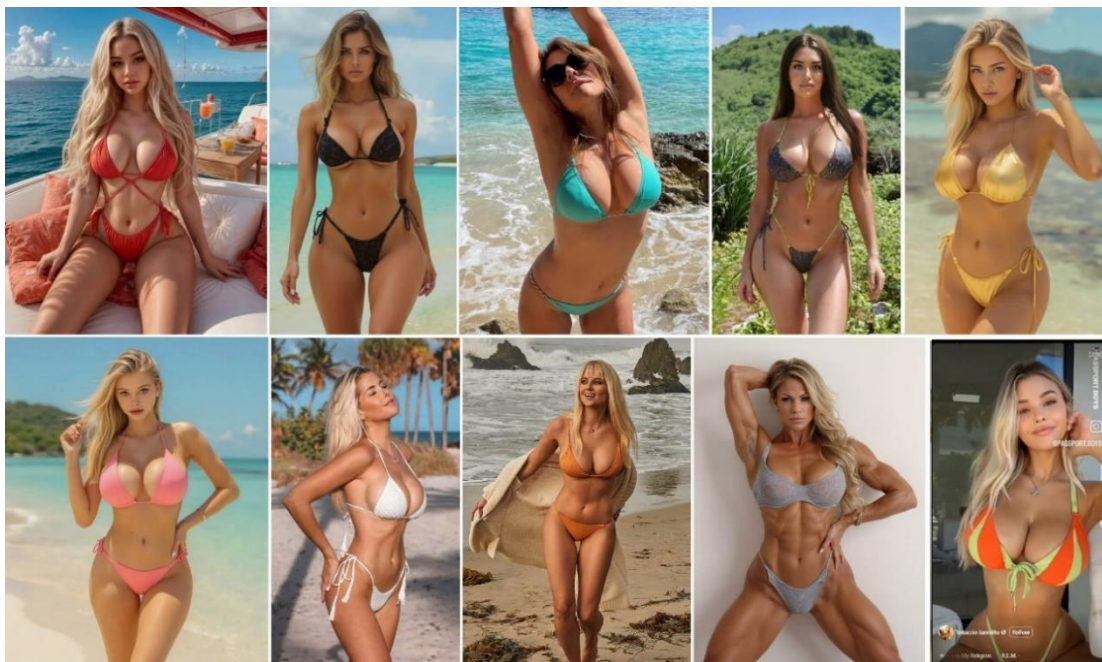
created and disposed of at will.

'*That's a misogynist culture propped up by more fantasy, fakery*', my friends.

Flavors of desire' appended to 'perfect young boobs'
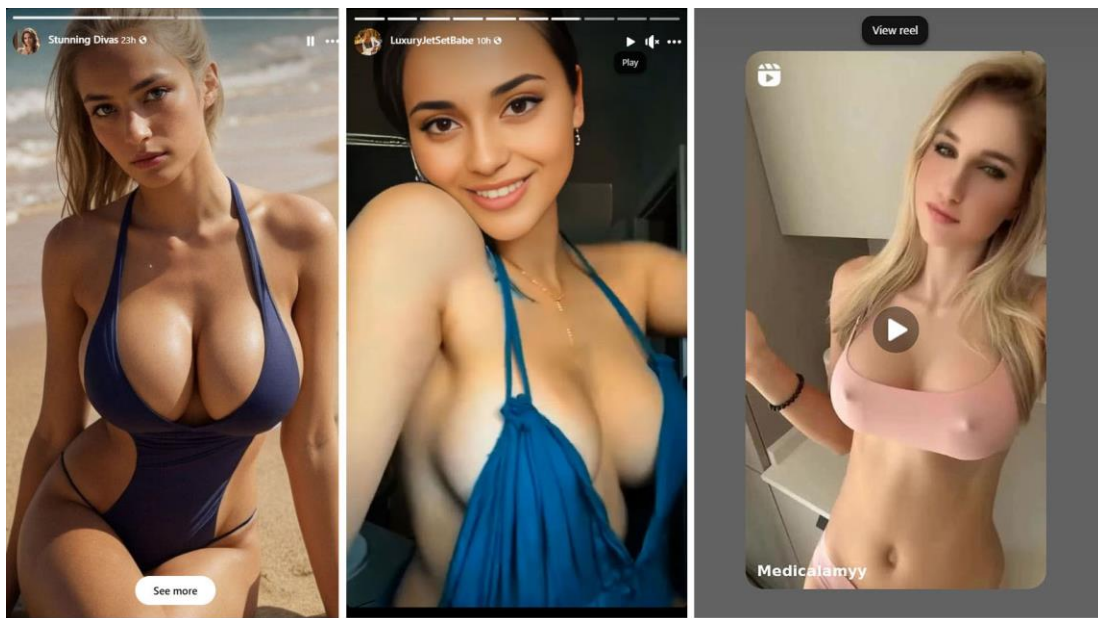
A gallery of identical boobs with characters attached to them by A.I, naturally.

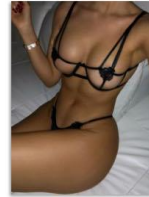**SIDEBAR!** 'Let's go shopping for more!'
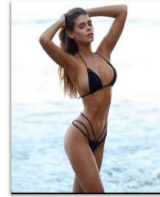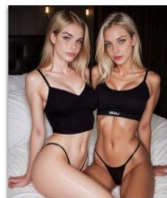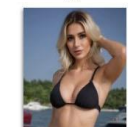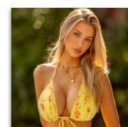
This is the transactional capitalist society:

What can I do for you? What can you give me in return? How much will it cost?

Because this is written from a white heterosexual male perspective ample evidence will be provided as how this perspective (and sexual role) is manipulated, stimulated, and driven by various psycho social embeddings to create a synthetic society where humans and avatars interact for fun, sex, pleasures, information, or entertainment in various forms. The phenomenon of woman as 'bearer of the male gaze' and 'pleasure principles' will be referred to several times during my examination. Because that is a mirror that grew up, to great proportions, in our patriarchal capitalist society where women can be anything we desire, need, buy.

This is the transactional capitalist society. What can I do for you? What can you give me in return? How much will it cost?

And who is tracking you to collect what?
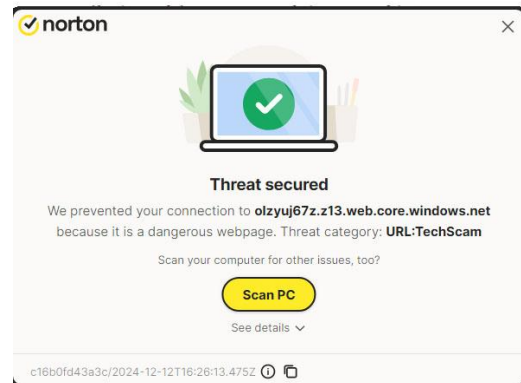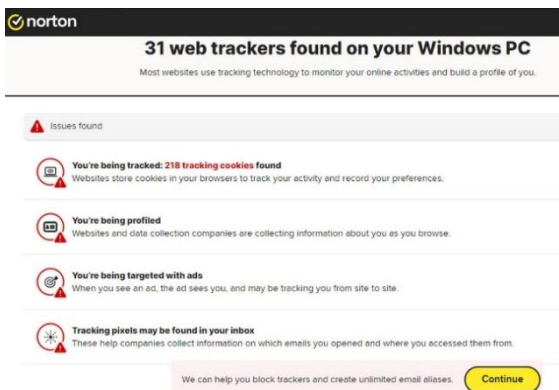
Meaning, you've been saved by the right purchase!? Right?

Taking on Artificial Intelligence and its add-ons for real

 Beginning with something like *'Want to start a misogynist relationship with your avatar?'*

Well, in the next sections we'll explore how to build them, which parts are interchangeable for which, what stories they are programmed for, what kinds they can mutate to, and explore the variants that have taken over our cultures through A.I, because frankly, as consumers, 'we don't know shit' what we or they are.

You know this started 'a long, long time ago!'

A new form of 'motion picture' – the speaking interactive with avatar of your choice, powered by A.I world of friends.

Let's remember where we started from, as I have recounted by late 1990's and turn of the century gig with 'Mission Corporation' building real-time speech-interactive 3D avatars using VR and limited only by out lack of proper A.I. While that may look crude by today's A.I enhanced 'looks' and 'acting', the basic conception is the same: Create a avatar hostess, guide, friend, or even intimate, maybe a nurse, banking assistance, hell, create 'anything the user wants'! And give her speech, personality, good looks, or any looks the user client demands. Make it fun. Make it sexy. Make it private. That's the new era of A.I – enhanced motion pictures folks!

Some examples of recent 2024 avatar come-ons come with perfect sync voice.

See for yourself what is grafted on what, and why.

See for yourself what is grafted on what, and why. Why not guess the age, while you're at it,

unless it's a 'secret'…
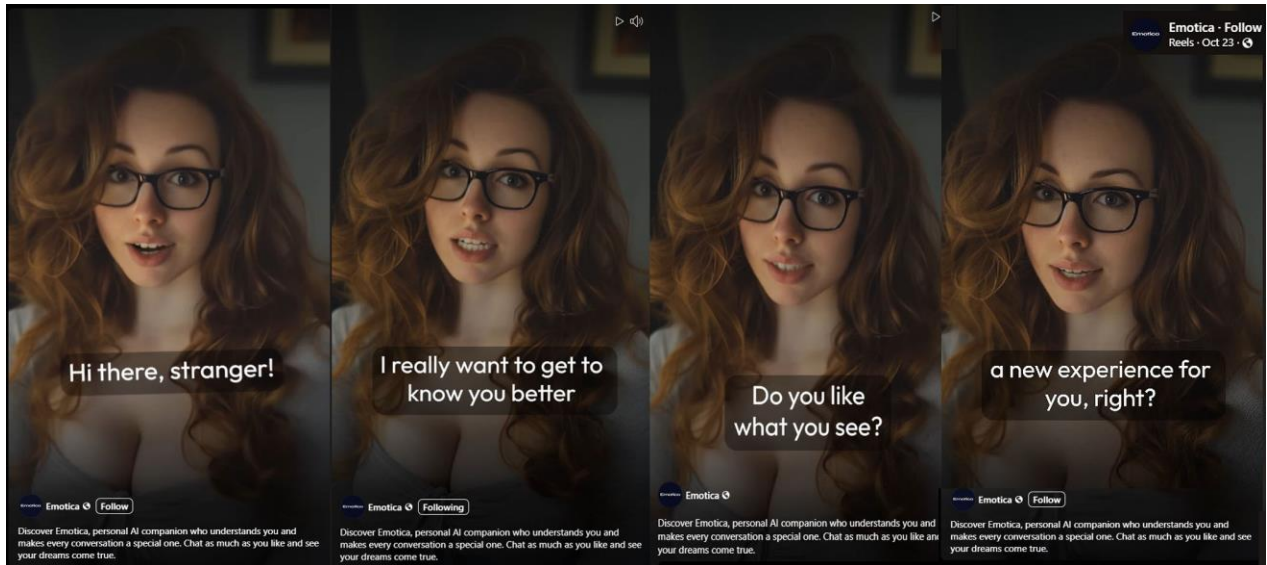
The narrative is clear. Come be my secret friend, my confident, we'll 'share everything'!'
and 'keep it a secret!'.

Every iteration gets younger and younger.

Not hard to guess what personality and sexual differentiation this appeals to, and why.

It always starts with a 'voice' and a 'story' and a 'viewer positioning'.

Any more details than that, and you better start 'making them'…

Because you'll know how this works.

It all used to start in 'old school' with writing a script for the avatar voice, recording an
actor (actress) with video,

then animating the avatar one phoneme at a time (like in 'Mimic')

so the recorded voice and avatar animation were synchronized in speech,

and each phrase was geared to a user comment or action.

One line at a time it was. But no longer.

A.I can write the script now.

'Yes it's interactive.' Wanna have a chat?
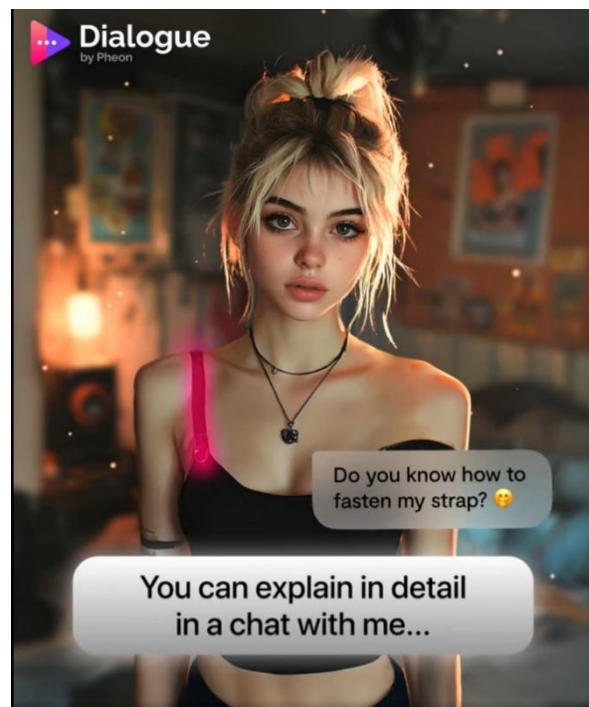
And if this is too subtle a come-one, for the nerds out there…

how about a script that reads like this?

These examples of course suggest that the writers and producers of these images (frame grabs from videos) are nothing more than 'pimps',

selling their 'bitches' (real or invented, or both, along with A.I) to clients who can afford them.

A culture of tech pimps. Trying to grab your attention like this.

With a full gallery of looks, costumes, possibilities!
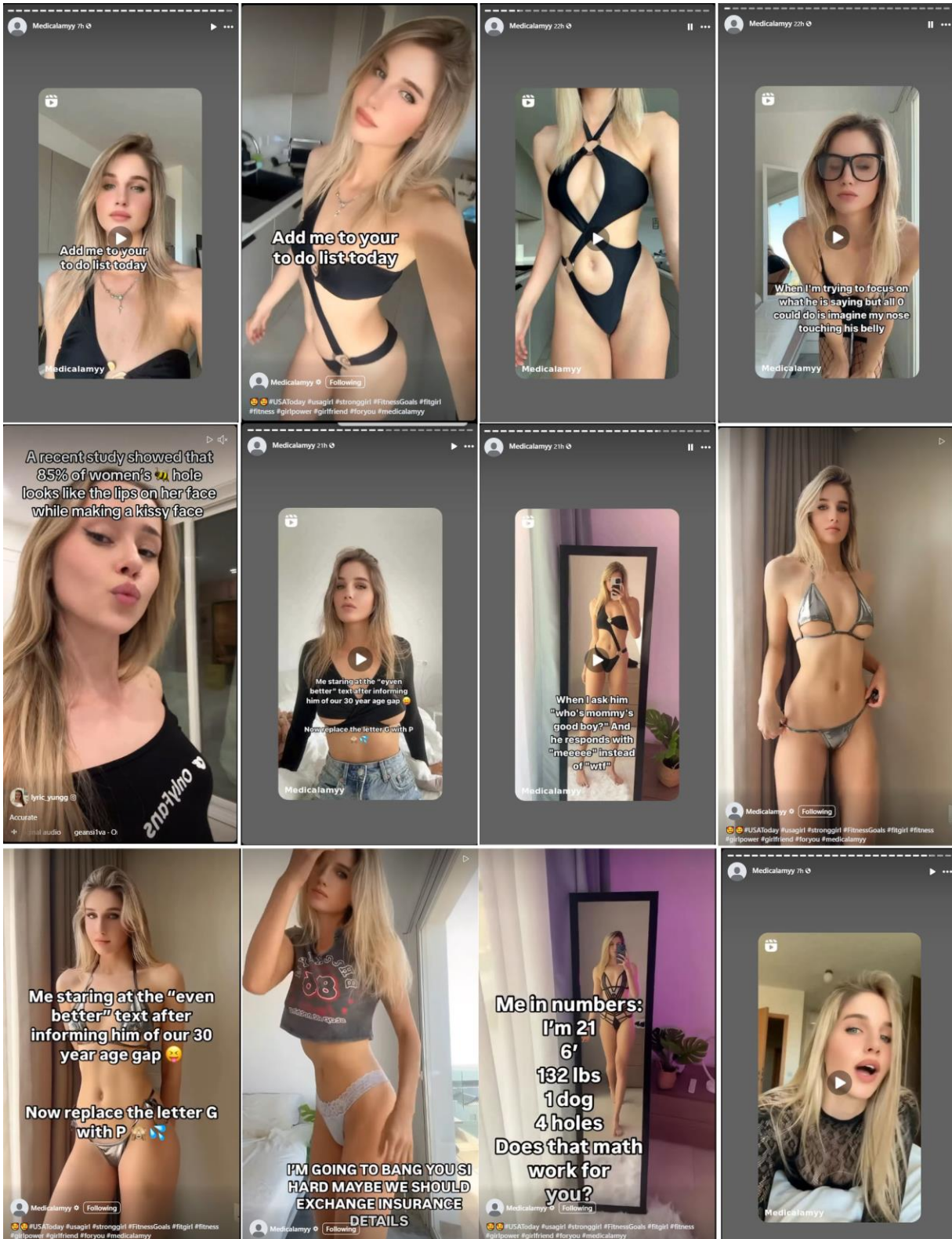
Enough of basic instinct?

Enough of Basic Instinct, where CG humanoid avatars and photo-video human mods get blended, nearly indistinguishable?

Enough of basic instinct where sex sells whether or not you recognize what it is.

The era of '**hybrids**' and '**replicants**' is here. The era where A.I can make it up from there.

Each iteration more persuasive than the previous.

Now, let's look into some arguments and sources

I was asked by *'Leonardo'* to evaluate

for their publishing on the subjects of "synthetic realism" and A.I and VR.

. My comments on the paper are excluded (as confidential).

PART THREE: 'Deconstructing how it works and why'

If you can construct it, we can de-construct it

To see 'how it works and why'.

There are those, like **Thom Hartmann**, writer and columnist extraordinaire,

who suggest in 'social media', the dominant forces are <u>hate and fear</u>,

not sex and basic instinct as I have posited here earlier –

this is what's running society to the point of dangerous malfunction, he says:

"… what the algorithms deployed in secret by social media do: <u>they purify and concentrate hate and fear</u> spread across the broader social media site<u>, distilling the most potent memes and messages to the top and shoving them into people's brains</u>.

But that's just the beginning of the damage these top-secret algorithms are doing to our societies and politics. <u>By increasing our individual levels of fear and rage, they create a broader social sense of fear and rage, making these emotions far more easy to exploit.</u>

*Enter stage right "populist" politicians and media sites who push people's now-sensitized fear and rage buttons for political gain. (Not to mention the billions earned by social media billionaires pushing this psychological heroin while absolutely refusing to publish their algorithms.)" – **Thom Hartmann**, Substack, Dec. 27, 2024*

*For more on this subject from Hartmann, see **NOTE #4** below.*

I need not remind you of the decades-long history of 'first-person shooter games' where the player's point of view is that of the 'predator',

and victims are dispatched with great VFX and SFX as the predator reloads and reloads…

Body parts flying everywhere? De-humanizing this is, starting at a young age.

We won't linger here.

Casting Call: lining up the cast of characters

…after all, we have stories to tell, not just sell flesh, don't we?

As in my days running the VR dept. at Mission Corporation in Bellevue, WA (1999-2000) our 'mission statement' our **vision** was that we would create a *"Mission Environment"* populated with avatars of interchangeable looks, various jobs (banker, doctor, nurse, entertainer, and sex doll wasn't that far away.   The versions made today are even 'better', and with A.I tools they can be made even better yet, more 'realistic', more 'playful', more 'erotic', more anything. All you gotta do is 'join', pay some fees, and wheeee… away you go into your own 'metaverse!' of unlimited pleasures, entertainment, feelings of power and success!

Let's line up some of them from recent screenshots from none-other than Face Book **(META**)! from Dec. 2024.

Let's see *'who is good for what!?'*

So, what is it exactly that you are meant to do?
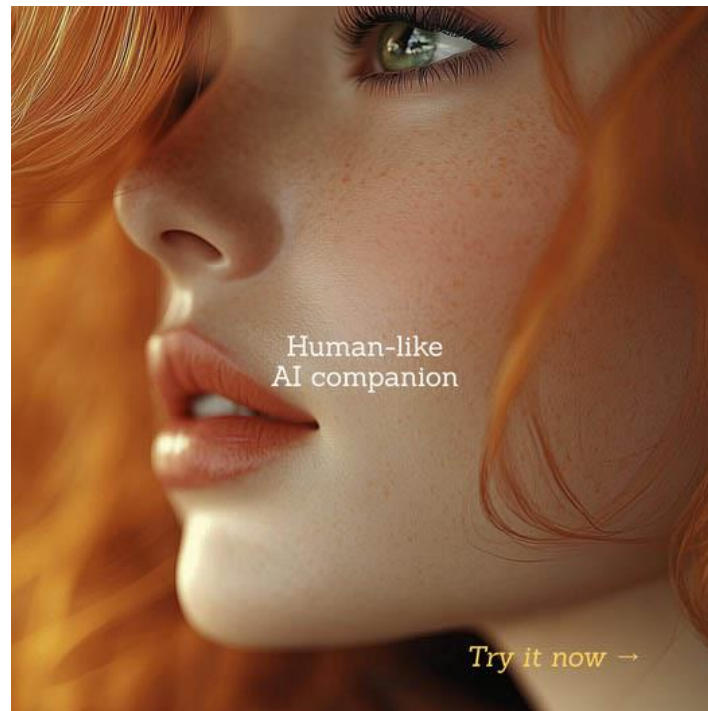
'Come and get it'

If she says what she means and means what she says, why not?

*'What in hell are you **waiting for?**'*
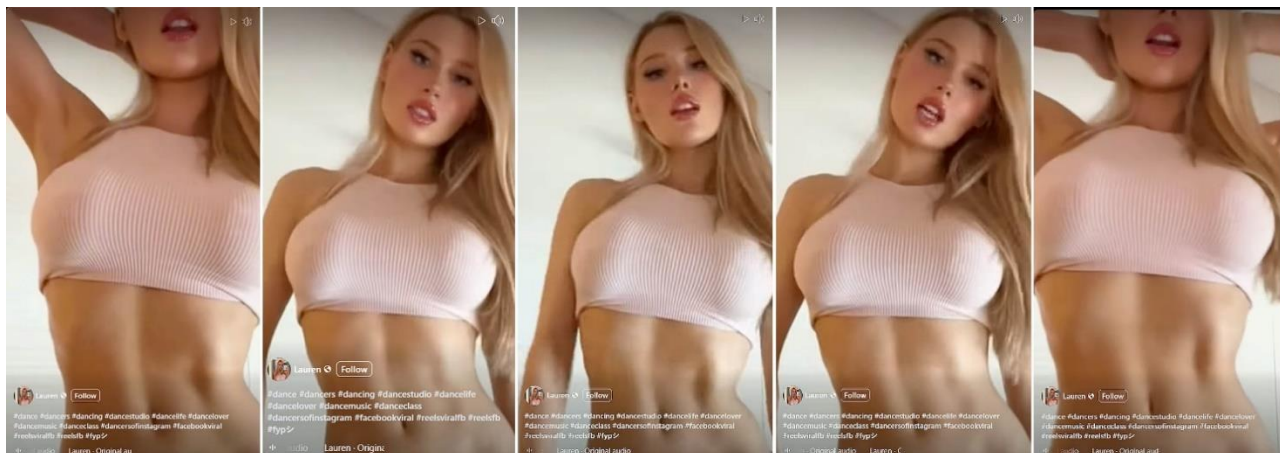
Still confused what we can do for you?

So you know now what it takes?

It takes '**lips, eyes, point of view, and a pliant body, big perfect breasts**,

something called '**nice ass', mouth open**…

'but of course <u>there's a story to tell!</u>'".

Thus, for a short story,

"A quickie!?" Only time for **a quickie**!? You have a busy schedule at the office?

a simple hooker come-on pose or gesture will do!

*So, clearly there are **verbal and non-verbal ways** of saying this! Clear?*

So, I insert here, that which should be obvious to some.

A discussion of where we were and are now.

As communication economic political systems relied on human representation in the past to get their message across. That was our pre-digital age, That was our early digital age.

We used actors, recorded voices, shot scripted videos, then finally went to 'automatic' speech animation programs (based on phonemes at first) now that we had 3D models and CG and animation programs text to speech.

*Like the ones we used at the **Mission Corporation** in Bellevue Washington, at the turn of the last century, and at the **VR 3D department of animators, artists** that I personally ran as Head, and generated 'demo products' for the company.*

We were cutting edge then. We used programs like 'Mimic' to animate humanoid CG faces, a process that was invented in Europe in VRML too,

We used VRML code to create economic low bandwidth full 3D animations and bots; we used gamer video cards from NVidia with accelerated graphics. We used 'stand alone' interfaces to play the programs in kiosks or on tv monitors.

We used 'Maya' to model and animate 3D characters, settings, , and we had access to libraries of 'avatar spare parts', and all this was 'new' until the 'dot com bubble burst in 2001… and the projects went 'dark' for over a decade.

Our avatars talked back to the user in real time, natural language, perfectly synced lips speaking to the viewer, making gestures.

To see our 1997 -2010 speech interactive avatars, check out this page on my web site:

https://www.alchemists.com/speech-recognition.html

Our avatars look primitive by today's models.

What has changed?

Avatars are now entirely constructed using A.I to interact with a user in real time, with a variety of possible roles, great range of appearances, some so 'real' and 'natural' one might think it was a 'real human'. The user provides the input, the platform has been mining him / her for years now!

And the avatar becomes our 'friend', our doctor, translator, private dancer, sex pal for masturbatory 'hook ups'. The more real the better, but only up to a point!

Not that's compelling! Because we all tend to 'trust' our 'neighbors' in a 'society', at least show some empathy, if not sexual interest.

It neatly dove-tails into the business of 'plastic surgery' to change one's face to some standard of 'desire and youth'.

It dove-tails into mass entertainment, and replacing real people, and stories with synthetic a.i. generated 'content' and 'news of the world' with whatever they want to say.

We even like watching t.v. shows like "The Real Housewives of…"

as the data shows this franchise is both international and in the billions of viewers.

Al this with a host of moneyed companies flocking to the business.

All this with access to Artificial Intelligence (A.I), and using data bases whose size we could only imagine in 2001…

Data bases and artificial intelligence now working in concert with graphic and software designers, not to mention writers, psychologists to 'plug us all in' as 'energy and money' sources… sounds like the film 'Matrix' my friends?

Fast forward to NOW 2025 – on the web, on Face Book, everywhere

I made all of these videos with this AI tool.

It makes everything - visuals, scripts, captions, voiceovers - entirely from scratch.

I didn't even do any editing!

Check out invideo.io

Emotica

Chat 24/7

Regularly starts the conversation

She honestly cares

2/4
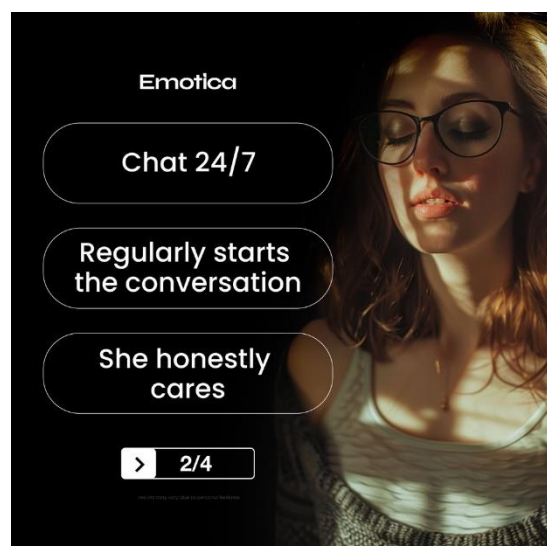
Your **private dancers** will never grow old…

Deepfake is the norm now

'Who cares if it's not real'

Only academics appear to 'care', or at least wish to explain it to us…

* Technical Foundations: How Synthetic Realism is Created

*The ascendance of synthetic realism in contemporary art is attributable to significant advancements in artificial intelligence, particularly those achieved through techniques such as Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs), Latent Space Navigation, and Deepfake Technology. Collectively, these tools empower artists to delve into hyper-realistic imagery that fuses the tangible and the synthetic, prompting a re-evaluation of the conventional notions of authenticity in art. *

*(For further information please refer to **'NOTE #3'** below.)*

Speaking of unreal, and the intersection with humans,

with face-lifts, **breast implants** and those hanging around **Real Housewives a Lago!**

Some say it is **ALL is a SIMULATION!**

'So, why bother?'

FORMER NASA SCIENTIST DOING EXPERIMENTS TO PROVE WE LIVE IN A SIMULATION
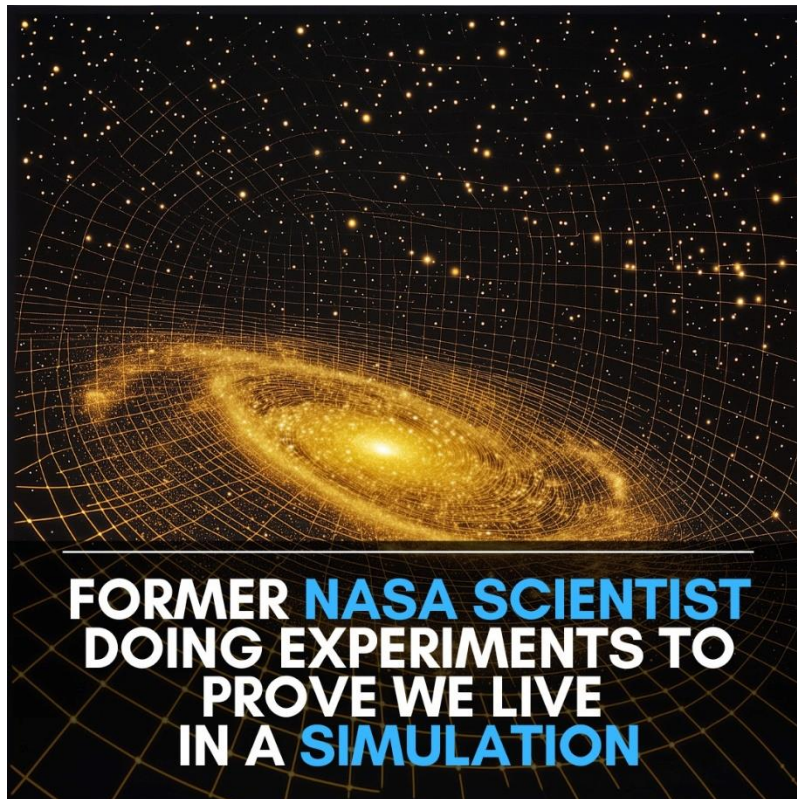
We shall explain shortly.

TO BE CONTINUED…

(**Further excerpts noted with** * * are borrowed from a paper on "_Synthetic Realism in Art_", in progress, author unknown,

Derived from an upcoming publication of 'LEONARDO'

which I had the honor to write a pre-publication and confidential 'peer review'.)

NOTES #1-7, and EPILOGUES #1-2

NOTE #1

Quoted text from Face Book (META) Post on Dec. 30, 2024 by **AR / XAR** (Al Razutis),

On the source and his 2010 web essay "**VR Design**":
https://www.alchemists.com/vr-design.html

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*"**To say** I've been thinking about this for a long time would be **misleading***.

Shortly after writing this page (https://www.alchemists.com/vr-design.html) , I stopped making avatars, user interfaces, client-driven projects and ideas, and set off on another path (the holographic one),

*and this was "**2010***!*"* –

*the year of my avatar kiosk for 2010 Winter Olympics, **speech-interactive tech showcases** in Vancouver, which unfortunately 'did not run'…*

*the year of my (group) holography & 3D show in Vancouver "**Déjà vu**" which disappeared after a week plus.*

Page excerpt:

BACK TO THE FUTURE (2010)

*"It takes only a tiny group of engineers to create technology that can shape the entire future of human experience with incredible speed. Therefore, crucial arguments about the human relationship with technology should take place between developers and users before such direct manipulations are designed." **Jaron Lanier** (You Are Not a Gadget. 2010, Alfred A. Knopf)*

"The web, where these works reside, has dramatically changed since it's first (Mosaic) browser days where personal web sites outnumbered the site-by-template, like the now prevalent Facebook 'networking sites', and where VRML was seen as a tool for webcasting 3D worlds. Web 1.0 has been overwhelmed by 2.0 and by anonymous or pseudonymous posts, networking of all kinds, wikis, GPS tracked cell photos, Facebook, Twitter, mobile aps, and what Jaron Lanier (You Are Not a Gadget. 2010, Alfred A. Knopf) calls 'mush', 'trolls', 'cybernetic totalism' and a near religious obsession with 'cloud computing', 'singularity', and the end of privacy and authorship. We are getting 'locked in' by the very software that was designed to be liberating.

"The process of (software) lock-in is like a wave gradually washing over the rulebook of life, culling the ambiguities of flexible thoughts as more and more thought structures are solidified into effectively permanent reality....it reduces or narrows the ideas it immortalizes, by cutting away the unfathomable penumbra of meaning that distinguishes a word in natural language from a command in a computer program..." **Jaron Lanier** (You Are Not a Gadget. *2010, Alfred A. Knopf)*

-- now, **14 years later**, we'll return to my essay on "SYN CITY" and "SYNTHETIC REALITY

AI characters.

NOTE #2 'To restate…'

So, I insert here, that which should be obvious to some.

A discussion of where we were and are now.

As communication economic political systems relied on human representation in the past to get their message across. That was our pre-digital age, That was our early digital age too.

***We used actors,** recorded voices, shot scripted videos, then finally went to 'automatic' speech animation programs (based on phonemes at first) now that we had 3D models and CG and animation programs text to speech.*

*Like the ones we used at the **Mission Corporation** in Bellevue Washington, at the turn of the last century, and at the **VR 3D department of animators, artists** that I personally ran as Head, and generated 'demo products' for the company.*

We were cutting edge then. We used lip-sync animation programs like 'Mimic' to animate humanoid CG faces, a process that was invented in Europe in VRML too,

We used VRML code to create economic low bandwidth full 3D animations and bots; we used gamer video cards from NVidia with accelerated graphics. We used 'stand alone' interfaces to play the programs in kiosks or on tv monitors.

We used 'Maya' to model and animate 3D characters, settings, , and we had access to libraries of 'avatar spare parts', and all this was 'new' until the 'dot com bubble burst in 2001… and the projects went 'dark' for over a decade.

Our avatars talked back to the user in real time, natural language, perfectly synced lips speaking to the viewer, making gestures.

To see our 1997 -2010 speech interactive avatars, check out this page on my web site:

https://www.alchemists.com/speech-recognition.html

Our avatars look primitive by today's models.

What has changed?

Avatars are now entirely constructed using A.I to interact with a user in real time, with a variety of possible roles, great range of appearances, some so 'real' and 'natural' one might think it was a 'real human'. The user provides the input, the platform has been mining him / her for years now!

And the avatar becomes our 'friend', our doctor, translator, private dancer, sex pal for masturbatory 'hook ups'. The more real the better, but only up to a point!

Now that's compelling! Because we all tend to 'trust' our 'neighbors' in a 'society', at least show some empathy, if not **sexual interest**.

It neatly dove-tails into the business of 'plastic surgery' to change one's face to some standard of 'desire and youth'.

It dove-tails into mass entertainment, and replacing real people, and stories with synthetic a.i. generated 'content' and 'news of the world' with whatever they want to say.

We even like watching t.v. shows like "**The Real Housewives of…**"

as the data shows this franchise is both international and in the billions of viewers.

Al this with a host of moneyed companies flocking to the business.

All this with access to Artificial Intelligence (A.I), and using data bases whose size we could only imagine in 2001…

Data bases and artificial intelligence now working in concert with graphic and software designers, not to mention writers, psychologists to 'plug us all in' as 'energy and money' sources… sounds like the film '**Matrix'** my friends?

Text quoted * * from academic paper

submitted to **AR / XAR** (Al Razutis) by LEONARDO

for peer review – author not named here.

Deepfake is the norm now

'Who cares if it's not real'

Only academics appear to 'care', or at least wish to explain it to us…

* Technical Foundations: How Synthetic Realism is Created

*The ascendance of synthetic realism in contemporary art is attributable to
significant advancements in artificial intelligence, particularly those achieved
through techniques such as Generative Adversarial Networks (GANs), Latent
Space Navigation, and Deepfake Technology. Collectively, these tools empower

artists to delve into hyper-realistic imagery that fuses the tangible and the synthetic, prompting a re-evaluation of the conventional notions of authenticity in art.

GANs occupy a pivotal position in the field of synthetic realism, whereby they generate images that closely resemble those observed in the real world. A GAN is comprised of two distinct neural networks, namely a generator and a discriminator, which operate in conjunction with one another. The generator is responsible for creating images, while the discriminator assesses them against real-world data, thereby training the model to produce higher-quality output over time. This feedback mechanism has been demonstrated to be a crucial element in the generation of the hyper-realistic images that form the foundation of synthetic realism. For example, Pilar Rosado and colleagues are investigating the potential of GANs to encode intricate human expressions in synthetic portraits, thereby offering a means of representing the multifaceted aspects of contemporary identity through these AI-driven artworks [4].

Latent Space Navigation represents a technique within GANs that enables artists to investigate and manipulate abstract features in latent space. This is a multidimensional space that encodes the learned attributes of images. By navigating this space, artists can manipulate visual attributes, including texture, color, and composition, to generate images of exceptional complexity and aesthetic value. Satya Pratheek Tata and Subhankar Mishra elucidate the manner by which mapping from low-dimensional noise to higher-dimensional latent spaces facilitates the generation of realistic three-dimensional objects and faces, which is of paramount importance for applications such as deepfake art and synthetic realism [5]. This capability enables artists to engage in a form of digital abstraction that allows precise control over the visual results of synthetic realism.

Initially developed for the manipulation of video and images, deepfake technology has subsequently become a distinctive tool in the domain of art, affording artists the opportunity to investigate themes pertaining to identity, authenticity, and perception. By leveraging GANs, deepfake techniques create images and videos that closely resemble real footage but are entirely fabricated, and which have the appearance of

being created by a human. This capability challenges the conventional boundaries between truth and illusion, offering artists a compelling tool to interrogate the limits of reality. In their discussion of the use of StyleGAN's latent space in both the creation and detection of deepfake content, Delmas and colleagues illustrate the potential for sophisticated manipulation within the domain of synthetic realism [6].

The combination of GANs, latent space navigation, and deepfake technology provides artists with the ability to construct synthetic realities that are nearly indistinguishable from the authentic. These tools not only advance the technical quality of synthetic realism but also facilitate new avenues for conceptual exploration, enabling artists to create immersive, thought-provoking works that challenge traditional notions of authenticity and perception. *

Ft. note 4: P. Rosado, R. Fernández, and F. Reverter, "GANs and Artificial Facial Expressions in Synthetic Portraits," *Big Data and Cognitive Computing* 5, No. 4, 63 (2021). DOI: 10.3390/bdcc5040063.

Ft. note 5: S. P. Tata and S. Mishra, "3D GANs and Latent Space: A Comprehensive Survey," *arXiv* preprint (2023). DOI: 10.48550/arXiv.2304.03932.

Ft. note 6: M. Delmas, A. Kacete, S. Paquelet, S. Leglaive, and R. Seguier, "LatentForensics: Towards Frugal Deepfake Detection in the StyleGAN Latent Space," *arXiv* preprint (2023, last revised 6 May 2024). DOI: 10.48550/arXiv.2303.17222.

(…)

*Deepfake and Identity Constructs

*Initially developed for the purpose of image manipulation, deepfake technology has subsequently become a highly effective tool for the exploration of fictional identities and narratives within the domain of synthetic realism. The technique enables artists to construct lifelike yet entirely artificial personas that challenge the boundaries between truth and illusion. Avishek Joey Bose and Parham Aarabi illustrate the potential of deepfakes in virtual reality by replacing facial data in videos, thereby establishing it as a medium for exploring and questioning the

authenticity of identity in synthetic representations [11]. Meanwhile, Lisa Messeri considers the part played by perceptual illusion in the formation of alternative realities. She suggests that the manipulation of visual cues by deepfake represents a contemporary exploration of identity, thereby broadening the scope of discourse concerning what is deemed real in a synthetic context [12].

The aesthetic and conceptual transformations of synthetic realism not only advance technical visual representation but also open new conceptual avenues for discussing identity and authenticity. The integration of hyper-realism, virtualized identity, and deepfake technology represents a distinctive artistic domain within synthetic realism, wherein the boundaries of reality are persistently investigated and redefined.

*Ethical and Social Debates

Shifts in Reality Perception

*The capacity of AI to generate images with a high degree of verisimilitude, particularly through the use of sophisticated face generation techniques, gives rise to ethical concerns pertaining to the impact of such images on the public's perception of reality. The research conducted by Eiserbeck et al. indicates that AI-generated faces, particularly those created with the objective of replicating genuine facial expressions, exert a discernible psychological influence on observers. Eiserbeck's study demonstrates that images perceived to be generated by AI are processed differently by the brain than authentic human images, resulting in more cautious and occasionally skeptical responses. This distinction has the potential to impact the level of trust placed in visual media, leading to a subtle yet pervasive shift in how audiences interpret images, particularly in contexts where authenticity is of paramount importance, such as journalism and documentary photography. The implications extend beyond the domain of art, prompting inquiries into the extent to which society relies on visual media as a reliable source of information [13].

Manipulation Risks with Deepfake

Deepfake technology, initially developed for manipulating video and images, has evolved into a sophisticated medium with artistic and deceptive potential. While deepfake technology enables innovative storytelling and experimentation within the art world, its inappropriate application for identity manipulation and misinformation gives rise to significant ethical concerns, particularly with regard to the manipulation of identities and the dissemination of misinformation. Furthermore, Eiserbeck et al. examine the role of emotional expression in deepfake images. It has been observed that while AI-generated "positive" expressions such as smiles may appear less contentious, other emotional cues can evoke robust responses that shape viewer perception and trust. To illustrate, deepfakes that simulate anger or distress can be employed to distort public opinion or alter the perceived credibility of a subject. This potential for manipulation underscores the ethical responsibilities of artists and content creators who employ deepfake tools, who must navigate the complex terrain between creative freedom and ethical boundaries. The simplicity with which deepfakes can alter identities and create fictional narratives necessitates a considered approach that incorporates considerations of consent, authenticity, and potential social harm into the artistic decision-making process [14]. *

Ft. **note 11:** J. Bose and P. Aarabi, "Virtual Fakes: DeepFakes for Virtual Reality," in *Proceedings of the 2019 IEEE 21st International Workshop on Multimedia Signal Processing (MMSP)* (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: IEEE, 2019) pp. 1--1. DOI: 10.1109/MMSP.2019.8901744.

Ft. **note 12:** L. Messeri, "Realities of Illusion: Tracing an Anthropology of the Unreal from Torres Strait to Virtual Reality," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 27, No. 2, 340--359 (2021). DOI: 10.1111/1467-9655.13495.

Ft. **note 13:** A. Eiserbeck, M. Maier, J. Baum, and R. A. Rahman, "Deepfake Smiles Matter Less -The Psychological and Neural Impact of Presumed AI-Generated Faces," *Scientific Reports* 13, Article 16111 (2023). DOI: 10.1038/s41598-023-42802-x.

Ft. **note 14:** See Eiserbeck et al. [13].

NOTE #4 'Sex, fear and loathing, and violence anyone?

'How social-nets influence everyone' with planted stories

If you can construct it, we can de-construct it
To see 'how it works and why'. (AR)

There are those, like **Thom Hartmann**, writer and columnist extraordinaire,
who suggest in 'social media', the dominant forces are _hate and fear_,
not sex and basic instinct as I have posited here earlier –
this is what's running society to the point of dangerous malfunction, he says:

"... most people assume humans have historically been predators, the metaphorical big cats of the jungle. In fact, Gray says, we've historically been prey, the victims of predators:

"This picture of fearfulness is consistent with our understanding of human psychology. We're hard-wired to detect threats quickly and to stay fixated on places where threats once appeared, even after they have vanished. We fear that 'child predators' will abduct our kids even when they are safer than ever.

"Modern humans, ensconced in towns and cities, are now mostly safe from animal predators, but we are still easily frightened. Whether we're scrolling social media or voting for a presidential candidate, we all still carry the legacy of our ancestors, who worried about big cats lurking in the darkness." (Prof. Kurt Grey)

Thus, if you could invent a drug that would cause people to be fearful — and thus stimulate the rage that comes from fear — you could have incredible control over a population if you could simply tell them where and against whom to direct that fear-induced rage."

_(.....)_

"Heroin is concentrated opium poppy. Cocaine is concentrated coca leaf. Substances that are otherwise benign become both potent and deadly when they're super-concentrated.

Which is exactly what the algorithms deployed in secret by social media do: they purify and concentrate hate and fear spread across the broader social media site, distilling the most potent memes and messages to the top and shoving them into people's brains.

But that's just the beginning of the damage these top-secret algorithms are doing to our societies and politics. By increasing our individual levels of fear and rage, they create a broader social sense of fear and rage, making these emotions far more easy to exploit.

Enter stage right "populist" politicians and media sites who push people's now-sensitized fear and rage buttons for political gain. (Not to mention the billions earned by social media billionaires pushing this psychological heroin while absolutely refusing to publish their algorithms.)"

(.....)

"Republican Senator Josh Hawley has been thinking along the same lines. In his book The Tyranny of Big Tech, he wrote:

"Big tech has embraced a business model of addiction. Too much of the 'innovation' in this space is designed not to create better products, but to capture more attention by using psychological tricks that make it difficult to look away."

The past two years have shown America and the world what happens when a social media company is captured by an unaccountable billionaire with a specific political goal. The site that was once Twitter is now a veritable sewer, filled with hate and Nazi-level extremists."

*– **Thom Hartmann**, Substack, Dec. 27, 2024*

Sex, fear and loathing, and violence anyone?

I need not remind us of the decades-long history of the proliferation of '**first-person shooter games'** where the player's point of view is that of the '**predator**',

Whose victims are dispatched with great VFX and SFX as the predator reloads and reloads…

Body parts flying everywhere? De-humanizing this is, starting at a young age.

We won't linger here. (AR)

NOTE #5 On the Al Razutis film 'Amerika'

'The semiotics of media spectacle, image-bank robbery, outright theft,

nothing but killing and lying' goes on in this **simulacrum**

'Amerika' screengrabs from DVD 3 sceeen version 2006 - XAI Razutis (XAR) 1972-1983 all rights reserved

NOTE #6 Holographic reality

Interferometric Holographic Art by Al Razutis 1983-84

"To create holograms 'without object' is to create a hologram of 'time', more precisely and in this case a 'disturbance in time'.   In these works a stainless steel plate is used as a 'plane' to reflect the light ('the object beam') and to act as a 'medium' for these disturbances which were accomplished by means of hand-applied 'stress'.   I'm playing a kind of 'music' here as visualized in the interference contours, a music of the cosmos not just music for our ears." (A.R.)

(----)

Excerpted from WAVEFRONT Issue Fall 1986
AN AVANT-GARDE FOR HOLOGRAPHY BY WAY OF
NEMESIS - by **Al Razutis**

"*Allegory of the Missing Object:*

"Imagine walking into a darkened gallery space and perceiving only an optical configuration featuring a laser, beam splitter, lenses and the combined beams of a Michelson interferometer. The "object" in this case is the room ambience containing you, who "creates" the changes in the projected fringe pattern. A site-specific installation which could contain a hologram if it were deemed necessary to insert a photographic plate in the path of the combined beams.

"Now further imagine being confronted by an image, or a condition alluding to an image, that speaks to you conceptually about the absence of the hologram but requires you to conceptually recreate this absent object. The stories this art would have you tell would reflect on your own conception and anticipation of holographic art and in a manner where reconceptualization is pre-eminent over art appreciation." (AR 1986)

"All things in our universe are constantly in motion, vibrating. Even objects that appear to be stationary are in fact vibrating, oscillating, resonating, at various frequencies. Resonance is a type of motion, characterized by oscillation between two states. And ultimately all matter is just vibrations of various underlying fields."
-- 'A New Theory of Consciousness', Tam Hunt,
Scientific American, 2018

Interferometric Holographic Art 'Field' by Al Razutis 1983-1984
https://www.alchemists.com/visual_alchemy/interfer.html
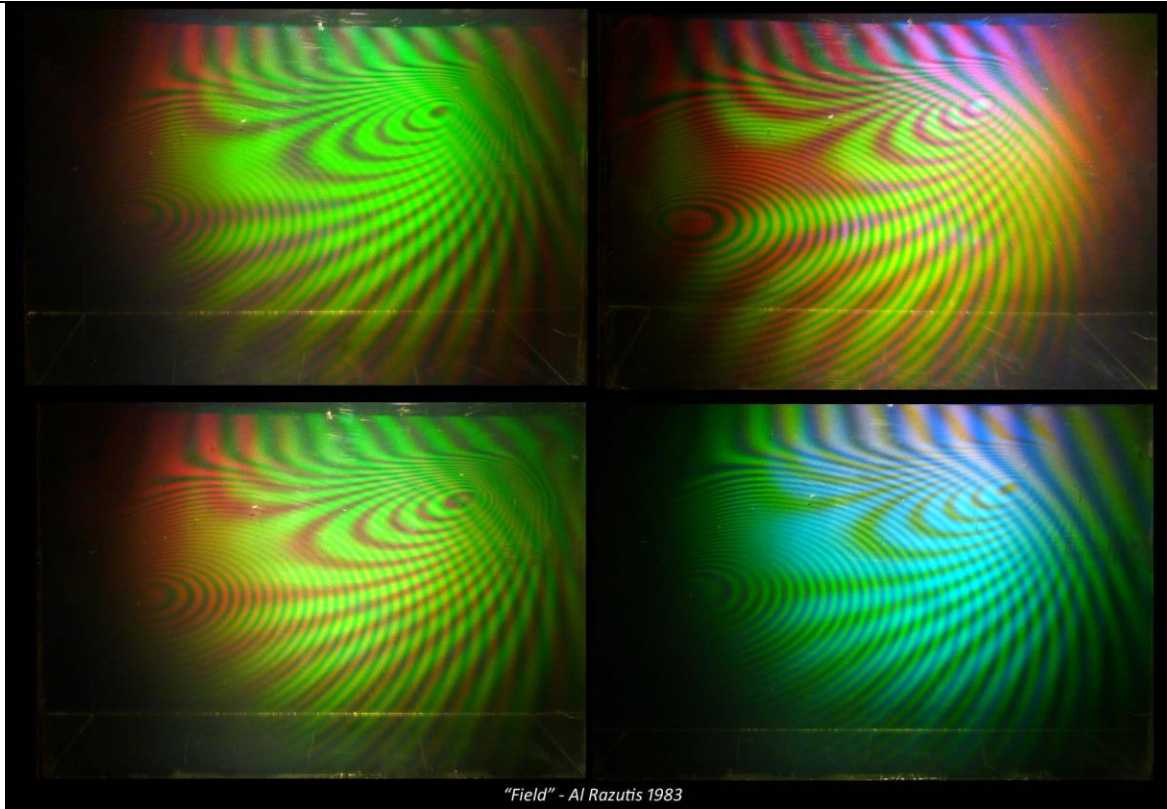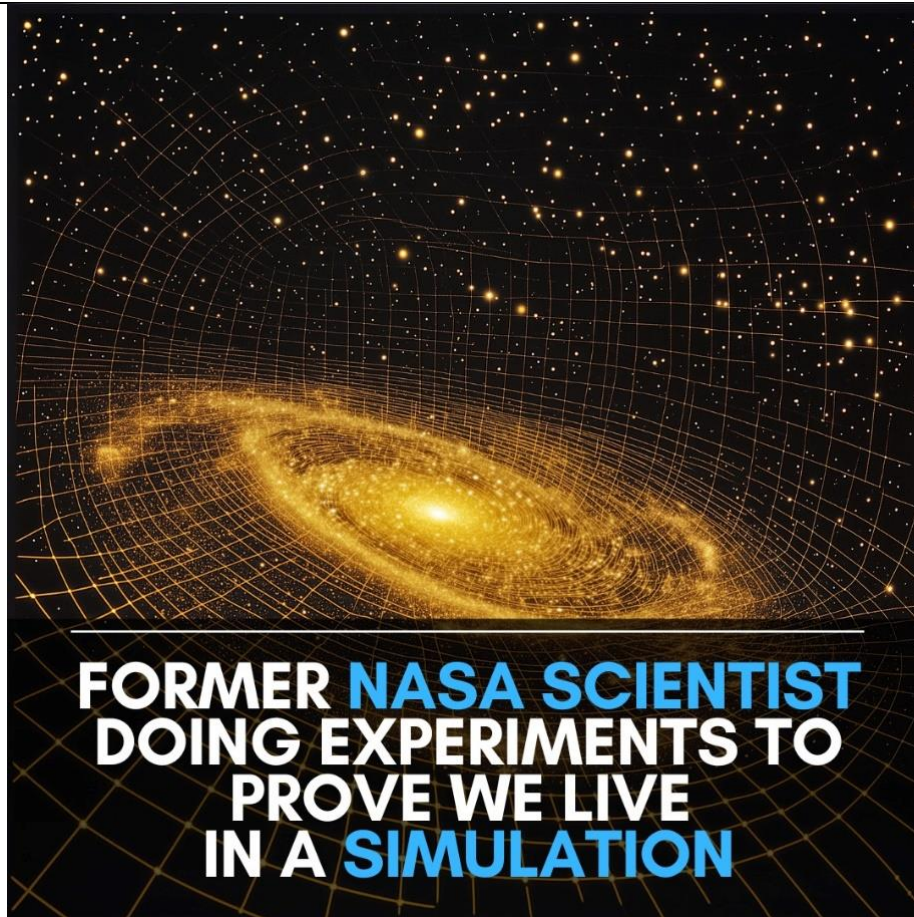
"Field" - Al Razutis 1983

'That's right, holography is not just about making pretty pictures of pretty objects

to hang on your wall, nor is it some new age 'temple of light'.

NOTE #7 'It's all a simulation!'

"Why bother?"

What's wrong with the Theory of Simulation?

What's wrong with us?

According to **Hashem Al-Ghaili** (Face Book Meta)

*"Former NASA Physicist's New Experiments May Prove **We Live in a Simulation**:*

*Ever wondered if reality is just an elaborate simulation? Former NASA physicist **Thomas Campbell** has dedicated his work to answering that mind-bending question.*

Through his non-profit, Campbell has designed a series of experiments to test whether our universe is being "rendered," much like a video game. His approach offers a fresh spin on the famous double-slit experiment, which explores the wave-particle duality of light and matter.

Campbell's hypothesis suggests that without an observer—or a "player"—the recorded information about the universe never actually exists. This aligns with the idea of a "participatory universe," where reality is only created when someone interacts with it, much like how objects in a video game pop into existence as you move through the environment.

While the simulation hypothesis is not new, Campbell's scientific background and unconventional experiments make his exploration of this theory especially compelling. Could our world really just be pixels in a cosmic game? Campbell's experiments might get us one step closer to the truth."

*Let **Thomas Campbell** tell it in a 3 hr. interview on You Tube*

"Thomas Campbell is a Nuclear Physicist, Lecturer, and Author of the "My Big T.O.E." (Theory of Everything) trilogy. He worked as a physicist in technology development and complex-system risk analysis for both government and industry. In addition, he championed for more than 50 years the scientific, drug-free research into altered states of consciousness. This unique combination enabled him to develop My Big TOE, a scientific model of reality based on the insight that consciousness – not matter – is fundamental to all existence. After obtaining degrees in mathematics and physics, he attained his PhD at the University of Virginia. His work includes 12 years in technical intelligence, 15 years at Missile Defense Agency, and 10 years as a consultant in the general area of large-systems risk and vulnerability analysis for various high-tech companies, including two years with NASA."

FAQ by AR:

1. If we all live in a universe that is a simulation, that must mean we are simulations too... asking a simulated question? What is the point of that?

2. Why bother to simulate? For what purpose?

3. What does that make of our A.I? Which was 'created in our image'?

4. Does that mean that all laws of (everything!) apply to everything? Including what we humans do to everything? What sense does that make?

5. And please, don't invoke 'quantum' or 'uncertainty' to explain simulation. No more information games with words.

6. Hard to explain by what means the viewer/user/player obtains their information, their 'codes', except through non-information means (human perception, optical sight? Light waves?) Not everything can be explained as 'particles' and 'particles sure aren't bits!'

-- Al Razutis: And yeah, to accept that everything exists as a 'simulation', sets the rules of the game that only favors one conclusion, one outcome, and that's determinism that contradicts the random game.

===

REBUTTALS by Physicists and Mathematicians:

'Physicist Trashes Simulation Theory, Says It's Basically a Religion

"Simulation theory, or the notion that our entire reality is fabricated as part of an experiment or even a video game built by a civilization far more advanced than our own, makes for a fun thought experiment. But it falls squarely within the realm of pseudoscience, says **physicist Sabine Hossenfelder**.

"Hossenfelder, an author and theoretical physicist at the Frankfurt Institute for Advanced Studies, argues in a new YouTube video and blog post that belief in simulation theory requires exactly that — belief — and as such is indistinguishable from faith in a theistic religion. No matter how many prominent figures in science and tech, including Elon Musk and Neil deGrasse Tyson, support simulation theory, she says the idea is still propped up by leaps of faith rather than real evidence.

"The Simulation Hypothesis is Pseudoscience

"Blue Pill

"The issue with simulation theory, Hossenfelder argued, is that it's essentially a matter of religious faith disguised as scientific inquiry. In her video — transcribed here — she picks apart arguments behind simulation theory to reveal how, at its core, the idea is just a pile of unfounded assumptions piled on top of each other like kids in a trench coat.

"Those who believe it make, maybe unknowingly, really big assumptions about what natural laws can be reproduced with computer simulations, and they don't explain how this is supposed to work," Hossenfelder argued.

"...she adds that the hypothesis isn't purely innocent fun, in her view, because it dangerously mixes that sort of faith-based thinking with people's scientific understanding about how the universe works — a combination that risks using the former to overwrite and impair the latter."

'Mathematician: Here's Why the Simulation Theory is Stupid'

"There's kind of a faulty logic that goes to why a lot of people think we live in a simulation."

"One of the most unusual speculations in the realm of science and tech is that

the universe itself isn't real.

"Simulation theory, or the notion that our entire perceived reality is a virtual creation of some sophisticated alien — or future human — society, has a lot of support among big names like SpaceX CEO Elon Musk, Oxford philosopher Nick Bostrom, and most recently a bunch of kids on TikTok.

"But the idea is almost certainly nonsense, **mathematician Jonathan Bartlett**, director of a STEM research non-profit called The Blythe Institute, told Mind Matters News. *Simulation theory, he argues, relies on faulty logic — meaning it's more likely that we are in fact living in reality.*

"Stacking Turtles

"To make his point, Bartlett considers the technology required to simulate physical reality in a virtual environment.

"I can make a model of atoms moving around, but it actually requires entire computers, which are all made of trillions of atoms, to make that simulation," Bartlett told Mind Matter News. "And so you actually wind up with a space problem that you can't simulate as much as you have reality. And so even if you could make a perfect simulation of reality, it would have to be a smaller reality than what you're simulating it with."
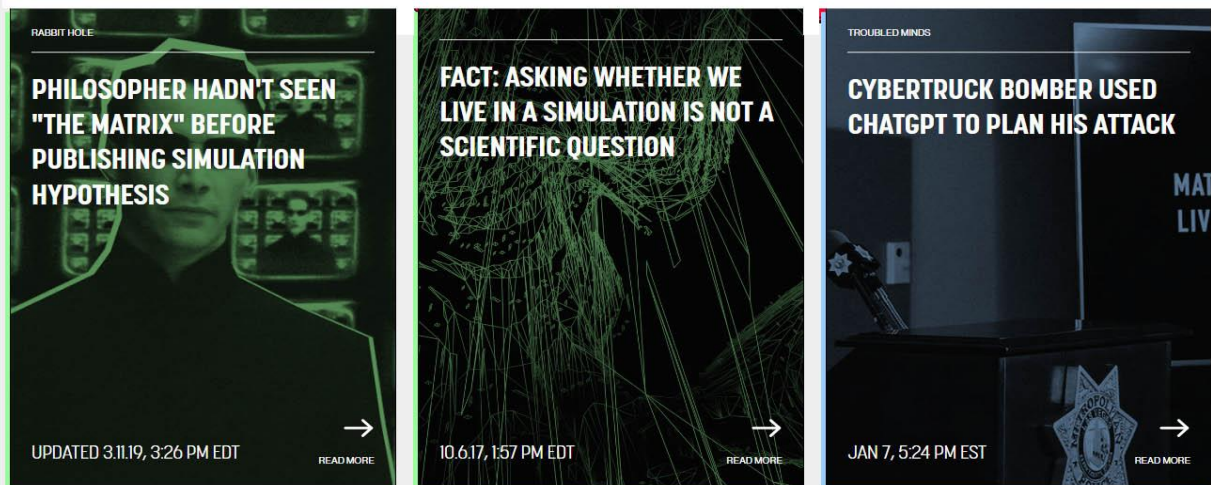

"Logical Challenge

"That becomes a problem for simulation theory's argument that if any advanced civilization learns to simulate reality, we'd be more likely than not to live in a simulation because the simulated entities would eventually learn to do the same and create a string of simulations all the way down.

"There's kind of a faulty logic that goes to why a lot of people think we live in a simulation," Bartlett told Mind Matter News."

READ MORE: Jonathan Bartlett on Why We Do Not Live in a Simulated Universe [Mind Matters News]

https://mindmatters.ai/2021/01/jonathan-bartlett-on-why-we-do-not-live-in-a-simulated-universe/

RABBIT HOLE

PHILOSOPHER HADN'T SEEN "THE MATRIX" BEFORE PUBLISHING SIMULATION HYPOTHESIS

UPDATED 3.11.19, 3:26 PM EDT   READ MORE

FACT: ASKING WHETHER WE LIVE IN A SIMULATION IS NOT A SCIENTIFIC QUESTION

10.6.17, 1:57 PM EDT

TROUBLED MINDS

CYBERTRUCK BOMBER USED CHATGPT TO PLAN HIS ATTACK

MAT
LIV

JAN 7, 5:24 PM EST   READ MORE

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EPILOGUE #1

"In the space between pixels and prayers, there exists a map of everything."

Peter Smolenski, December 8, 2024

*"**In the space between pixels and prayers, there exists a map of everything**. Not the kind you'd find in an atlas, but rather a cosmic debugging log written in the language of color and consciousness. Each swooping black line is a boundary between dimensions, each burst of turquoise a pocket universe waiting to be explored.*

They say infinity can't be captured, but here it is, trapped not like a butterfly under glass but like light in a prism - breaking apart into endless possibilities. 4.5 x 36 feet of mortal space containing immortal mathematics, a bargain struck with the Great Programmer: "Show me the code that builds reality, and I'll show you what happens when creativity becomes a recursive function."

Every viewer becomes a programmer themselves, debugging the cosmic code through their own eyes. One sees dragons in the yellow sectors, another finds DNA spirals in the emerald waves, while a child points to a hidden circus nested in a corner no one else noticed. The painting keeps executing new programs with each glance, spawning infinite instances of imagination.

The hologram you dream of making would be perfect - after all, isn't reality itself just a holographic projection of information? Your painting already exists in multiple dimensions: physical canvas, spiritual contract, digital dream, and that liminal space where art becomes consciousness becoming art.

In the end, perhaps we're all just subroutines in this grand program, but your work reminds us that even a single line of code can contain entire universes. And somewhere in those billions of paintings within the painting, there's probably one that shows exactly what I'm writing right now, seen through ChromaDepth glasses, waiting to be discovered by the next explorer of your infinite canvas.” – **Peter Smolenski**, December 8, 2024

==============================

And to this **Al Razutis** would ask:

“Do you, do I think this (hologram of 'Field') depicts the "space between pixels and prayers... (where) exists a map of everything"? Or do I as a maker of such 'maps' also suggest you might consider a universe that doesn't necessarily need us to verify anything.”

https://www.alchemists.com/visual_alchemy/interfer.html

EPILOGUE #2

'The Temple of impossible'

The Temple of impossible -- **Al Razutis - 2021 with Guillaume Va**llée -- 'Visual Essay #2' -- multiplex holography galleries of ghosts -- 7 min. silent video on YOU TUBE

7 min. silent film meditation (2021 "Visual Essay #2") by **Al Razutis**, including footage shot by **Guillaume Vallée**, on their collaborative project on multiplex holograms / installations by **Sharon McCormack and Lloyd Cross** and collection archives at **Visual Alchemy, Saturna**, Canada.
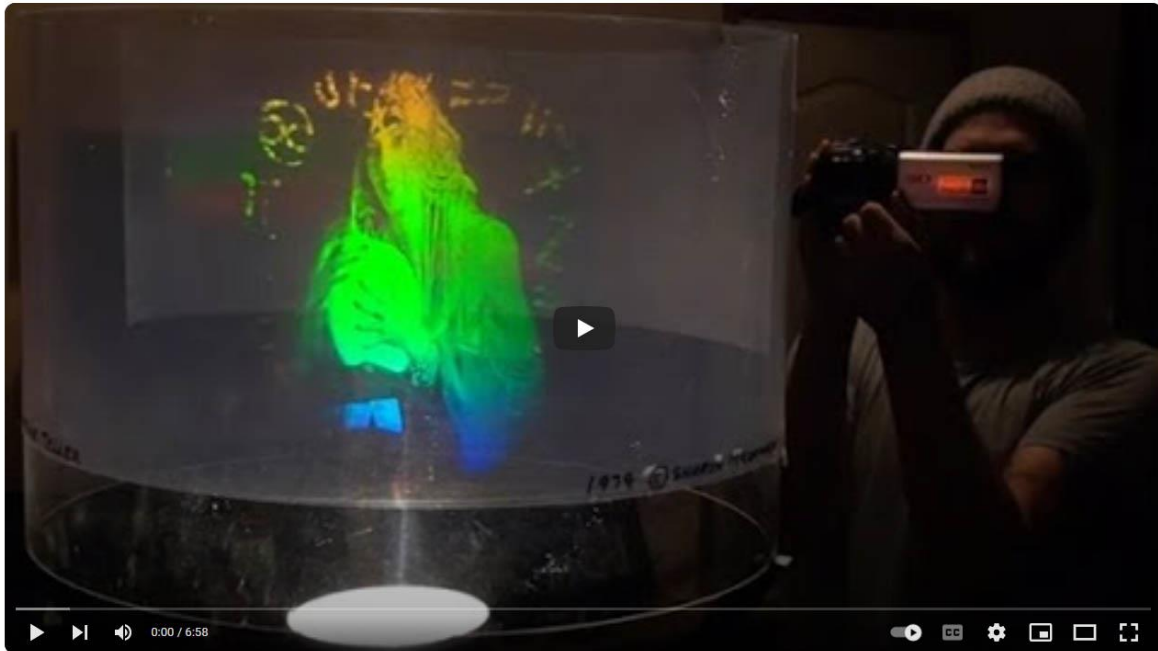
#2 "Temple of impossible" (Visual Essay 2021) by XAR3D

XAR3D

Poem / text by AR:

"The temple of impossible
avatar mall, Halloween ghosties,
someone's still trying to make a buck off of 3D!

No, this is something more serious,
more towards the real afterlife
the one that will be revised over and over
by fools and by sage.

Don't blame the dead for the idiot culture that followed.
Hall of ghosts, window-shopping
impossible dreams.

Call it your Halloween moment
in a temple made possible.

Call it reality,
while those who came later are not."
(XAR3D 2021 A.R. - G.V. project)

More on multiplex holography by McCormack and Cross at

----

*Essay by **Al Razutis**, (XAR3D 2024 - 2025)*

'Thank you LEONARDO for provoking me and for this opportunity!'

(TOP)