

24,483 DREAMS OF DEATH

Can an A.I. be creative?

With machine-generated imagery and narration, this experimental film gives us a glimpse into our world as seen by a new intelligence of our own design.



BACKGROUND

During the spring of 2020, a machine intelligence spent six days watching the film *La Maschera del Demonio*. Starting as a blank slate, the A.I. received its entire knowledge of our visual world from this Mario Bava classic.

This film is a record of the machine's neural network forming in real time, not footage in the traditional sense of photographed scenes, but footage of the internal experience of a new intelligence learning about our world for the first time.

Unfortunately, to create the footage it was necessary to sequentially create 24,483 neural networks or “miniature brains” and then, after they had served their purpose, immediately destroy them.

To complete the experiment, a separate A.I. was used to write the poetry heard in the narration. In a single eighteen hour period the machine wrote 1,623,811 words of poetry, nearly 100 books worth. Surprisingly, much of it was on the subject of death and loss.

Why did the machine write so many death themed poems? It is likely the machine was simply creating a pastiche of the nineteenth century poetry it had read during training.

It is frankly impossible that the machine was referring to the destruction of the 24,483 neural networks used to create this film...

FILMMAKER'S STATEMENT

I wrote a computer program that enables a machine intelligence to make its own movie. This is an advance on my work from last year, *Vertigo A.I.*, that won the Peter Wilde Award for Most Technically Innovative Film at the Ann Arbor Film Festival.

The world's most proficient A.I writing engine created the original poetry for the narration. The haunting results were used verbatim, only edited for length.

The visuals come from the machine watching the Mario Bava classic, *La Maschera del Demonio* and recording its neural network forming under the influence.

In 2021, having a machine make a movie is just barely possible, but in a few decades it will be commonplace. By 2041, you will be able to turn on your TV and order the machine to write and render a new show just for you, all within a few seconds time. This future reality may not be high art but you will likely find it entertaining – and you may even save the result.

- *Chris Peters*

CHRIS PETERS - DIRECTOR

Chris Peters is a Los Angeles based painter and filmmaker. His films have screened at numerous Academy Award qualifying festivals, including Slamdance 2021 and winning the Peter Wilde Award at the 2020 Ann Arbor Film Festival.

His formal education began in Seattle where he received bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Washington. Later he trained for three years at the Gage Academy of Art, learning the drawing and painting methods of the 19th-century academic tradition.

His work has been exhibited at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art as part of the private collection of Academy Award winning director Guillermo del Toro. He's had eight previous solo shows at galleries in Santa Monica, Santa Fe, and New York City. His collectors include many members of the music and film industries.



NAOMI PETIT - NARRATOR

Naomi Hélène-Jeanne Petit was born on January 27, 1997 in Stamford, Connecticut. She is the daughter of Jean-Pierre Petit, Artistic Director and Elene Dee, Jazz Vocalist.

She was raised in Paris and performed in her first musicals when she was four, singing, dancing. In high school, her friend pushed her to take drama classes and Naomi developed a passion for acting. She participated in few plays such as *Cabinet of Curiosities*, *Attempts On Her Life*, and *Twelfth Night*.

Naomi moved to New York City when she was eighteen to pursue acting at the Stella Adler Acting Studio.

On September 2018, she moved to Los Angeles and is still based in Los Angeles, working as an actress.

MICHAEL HEBERT - COMPOSER

Michael is an award-winning composer who's instrumental music is written primarily for film and television. His work can be heard in feature films, national broadcast and major cable shows, documentaries and national broadcast commercials. He's also an avid country music fan and songwriter, and has recently been co-writing and cutting demos with some of the many talented writers, singers and musicians in Nashville.

Recent work includes the score for the feature-length comedy *Last Call*, starring Christopher Lloyd and Ryan Hansen, national broadcast ads for the PGA and US Air Force, compositions recorded by the Brno Philharmonic (Czech Republic) under the direction of maestro Mikel Toms and an award-winning experimental film collaboration with the LA pop-surrealist painter Chris Peters.

He was awarded a 2010 Emmy Award for his work on the Emmy-winning PBS documentary *Bloody Thursday*, directed by Jared Cotton and Chris Burke.

THE POEMS

Written by GPT-2 A.I.

1. SAMPLE 9520

Before I laugh tonight,
a war is being waged,
a cosmic war
between light and darkness,
between the myth of creation
and the myth of death.

the darkness of the heavens
is bursting with stars,
they rise and fall,
and the darkness, falling back,
will burst apart again,

Before I laugh tonight,
a world is being built,
a world of symbols, of dream
coming to shape our lives.
and I see them taken
and borne into me,
and borne out again,
and carried into the night,
a long and far night,

2. SAMPLE 2723

Once in a dream I saw King Death,
And from his fingertip men saw flow
Poison, and cold, and plague, and blood.
Myriads of dead forms, of every shape,
Fell by his finger on the ground.
Myriads of strong limbs, of every hue,
Fell by his mace, and hisses and groans.
Now he cast up the corpse of a man,
And flung the ghastly head a long distance,
To strike a dead tree in the forest.
And on the dead arm's Hell-fire shone.
Thunders from the gulfs of hell rolled,
And the leaves were shivered by the wind.
Then came the evening, and his finger,
glided the buried figures, scattered,
And rose like phantoms from the gulf.
They flew through the portals of sleep,
Out of our reach and reach of thought,

3. SAMPLE 8843

I have known a strange death, a mere end of breath,
In swift flocks of white birds swarming down
On little crops unaware

I have known a deadly wound
An end of all, and fresh disillusionment
In the strange, unseeing eyes of God, a God
Who slumbers in the darkness, and will be
watching and waiting there
Till the final moment of all things, when He
Looks down on His children and grants them final rest.

There is no surprise in death, no surprise
In darkness, only a vague sense of distance,
I have known a swift death;
that ends all effort, all desire,
And wakes with a beginning in the heart,
And leaves no memory, no name
I know all this; but my heart breaks in tears

I fear God
Outreaching His hand, but no where present,
As if lost somehow the way
and the fear
Is a strange terror of the unknown time
When the unknown God outreaching His hand
Is a wonder and a shadow of the God
Who always lives and never dies.

4. SAMPLE 5669

I have known the white unfurling universe,
When it was a winding gold of a dream;
I have known the swift unfurling of stars,
When they were the precious, mysterious gems of the sky.

I have known that curious strange bliss,
This silence in the listening ear,
This rapture of scattered lights,
This surging of the planets in the dark;
And in the sense of the earth rolling, darkly, steadily,

I have known this mystery of night.
I have known the sullen haunts of the stars,
I have known the face of the unmoving night.
That have swept like a shadow around me.

and I have seen the monstrous, unknown things
That the night-winds bring me;
I have passed through the clouds on their wind-driven crests
And I have been in the purple night.

The unthinkable, the unspeakable,
The strange beauty of our world, the strange disaster of our world.

5. SAMPLE 7717

I seem to glide on air.
I'm safe and warm
Under these blankets spread about me,
though the night is having its way with me,
and I fear I shall die before I wake.

I can feel a presence
Coming over me.
I shall obey it gently, I will sit quietly,
and soon, sweet friend, you'll know why.
And if you'll only find me
When you're ready,
Ready--there I am!

The stars have a soft and silver light.
Their shadows sweep about the moonlit sky.
Their lights are fading. The moon has turned
to gold.
The last gleam of sunset burns away

Love is a fleeting shadow,
Death is the garment of the Sun,
If we gaze upon each other
Undiscarded, forever,
Like figures on some mountain-side
That wither, molder,--hide and refuse,--
And if they meet we part with laughter,
And if we part with tears, we part with love.

6. SAMPLE 3352

I was alone in the great emptiness--
An immense peace that was spread in the void.
And the white moon moved on slowly, until her full round body
Hovered over the dim horizon like a silver island in a stream.

Then was I alone with my own soul, with no one else
To impose silence or tell me mine own name;
For I had known, in that solitude, my soul's deep loneliness.
And then I was silent, and alone with my soul.
And the moon went down, and the silent sky was disturbed only
By the pale stars gleaming in the outer darkness.

Only the dim eastern mountain spanned the blue
Of that still hour; and I was alone with my soul,
In the infinite silence of the world of the dead,
the world lay in the unquiet grave,
And the foolishness were but ruins,
And only the memory of things that should hold.

In the cold still hour, in the desolate night,
I was but a soul in a body that crumbles
and lay with the stars in the dust

7. SAMPLE 7367

You have no knowledge,
Only an urge
For the endless now,
And a starry mind which pines not for what may be,
But carries you onward
To the place you desire.

This is the end.
The garland of the sun is wrapped
About her loose hair;
Her body is smiling,
Her feet are weaving
The dance of the seasons.

You must be still,
And I say:
He will be here soon.
Let him come.
The breath of the night is soft,
I have known all these things,
But now, I am nothing.

Let us be still.
The future shall come,
And it will not be long

I know it is not wise
To be eager, and ambitious
But to let the years go by
In a kind of hush and haze
Without any trouble,
Or any words said,
To make the dead alive,
To a fairer and a better earth;

8. SAMPLE 7385

The dark of earth is deep as the grave
Where dead stars sleep in the dome of the sky;
And I have walked in darkness for hour on hour,
And I have felt the dark grow colder;
And I have known how dear my life is to me,
And how far, how far from joy and rest.

I have held love and beauty and truth at bay,
And shown the metal and venom where they lay;
I have known the questing eye of the snake,
I have known the sleep of the scorpion's stinger,
And I have stood where the tide runs red.

I have traversed the years in the race of the world,
And I have come, at last, to the final scene,
Where I may compare my stature with the dust that settles.
And there is no motion but is gently measured;
No word spoken, no thought conceived

And I was one of the mysterious.
For the night within the soul is ever dark,
And its light is a shape from the mind's interior.

LINKS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Film:

<http://24483dreamsofdeath.com>

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt13628578/>

The Previous A.I. Film:

<http://chrispeters.com/vertigo-ai-experiment>

<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt12054060/>

Chris Peters:

<http://www.chrispeters.com>

<https://tensordream.ai>

<https://vimeo.com/chrispeters>

Naomi Petit:

<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm10399815/>

Michael Hebert:

<http://michaelhebert.net>