

Tim Ra • Lovelab Berlin

AI Experiment



TR
2019

What if?

AI Experiment

***Thanks for so much artistic inspiration:
Your work is stellar! Congratulations on
truly turning the new technology into
spectacular art!***

Mark Batson (4xGrammy Producer, Dr. Dre,
Eminem, Alicia Keys, Beyoncé, JayZ, Nas,
LeannRimes, 50cent)

Typing my initial words into the text-to-image-AI Dall-E 2 on September 9, 2022, little did I know how empowering artificial intelligence would be for my life - a fundamental transformation much like the birth of my son two years prior.

My first phrase read: "Silk screen portraying a blonde two year old boy with blue eyes wearing headphones" - loosely based on an idea by street artist Txsu Parras, who had introduced me to silk screen printing during my time at Kunsthaus Tacheles, a few years before I held my first exhibitions of contemporary visual and video art at Defcon Labs in Berlin.

When I saw the first images generated by Dall-E, I was overwhelmed. Instantly, I realized that we are witnessing a technological revolution that will radically change all areas of human productivity. A powerful, indeed, a dangerous technology. For a year, I decided, I would experiment with the new tools.

On the net, I searched and found the first specialized communities, which now mushroomed and grew from a few hundred to hundreds of

thousands of members within months - and produced the first stars of the new genre. Soon, our postings reached millions, while AI art paved its way into private collections, galleries and museums.

The new AI systems, Dall-E, Midjourney, Stable Diffusion and ChatGPT, became my daily companions. In the mornings, after daycare began, I used them to interpret and visualize the dreams, the traumas flushed to the surface, and visions of the night. The evenings, when my little one drowsily fell asleep after playtime together, I spent in my playground in parallel worlds and the dystopian and utopian scenarios of "What If".

Soon enough, AI was under heavy fire. A wave of bitter criticism swept through the AI forums and led to harsh controversies, at times toxic. To be sure, the critics were right about many things: Overnight, a clique of tech feudalists had appropriated humanity's collective creative heritage - without paying a cent for it or even thinking for a moment about the disruptive consequences of the new technology.

Artificial intelligence undoubtedly has the potential to make people's lives easier, more beautiful, yes, better. But left unchecked, it can also have disastrous consequences. Not only by wiping out millions of jobs. The use of AI in politics, in warfare, in surveillance and in biotech increases the destructive capacity of human technology as only the nuclear bomb otherwise did in 1945.



A year into my experiment, one outcome is clear: with creative possibilities increasing almost by the hour, the first year will be followed by another year of AI-infused work. This will be accompanied by AI workshops, tribal gatherings, and exhibitions, manifesting the transformative nature of AI in physical space - and introducing the public to key positions of the new global art movement.

As I am writing these lines, my son's laughter melds with the digital motifs dancing across the screen, reminding me of the beautiful juxtaposition of the organic and the artificial. The advent of AI has flung open the doors to a realm brimming with endless possibilities, and it's upon us to navigate this domain with responsibility, harnessing its potential for the greater good of future generations.

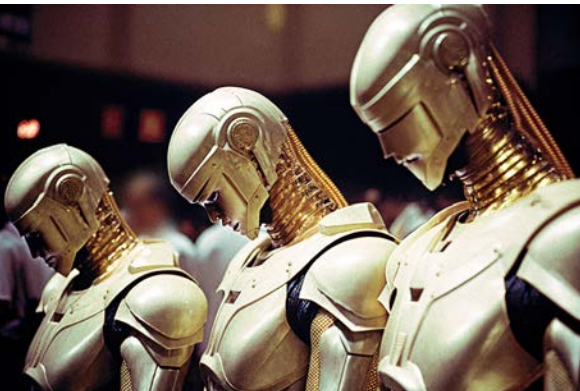
With Love,

Tim Ra

lovelab.berlin



Four-part narrative series with 133 images



Mumbai

Emergence

Humanity awakens to a brave new world where the boundaries between the organic and the artificial have blurred. Some, with a sense of curious fascination, welcome the technological revolution, even sanctifying the bonds of marriage between the sentient and the synthetic. Yet, others resist with militant assaults on the hightech cathedrals of the digital gods.

Increasingly, AI and its android offspring morphs from a mere tool of convenience to an instrument of population control. Human labor is gradually supplanted, leading to the impoverishment of vast segments of society, now finding themselves bereft of purpose and means.

Then disaster strikes. A life form, a monstrous aberration birthed from the sterile womb of artificial intelligence, extinguishes life from planet Earth. Liberated from the constraints of their tangible duties, the surviving androids wander aimlessly, their actions a haunting mimicry of the human endeavors they had once learned from their erstwhile masters.

Black Lotus Warriors



The Black Lotus Warriors are on the move, sharpening their blades guarding the streets of Tokyo. Descendants of Yasuke, the first black Samurai, they patrol the city with acute alertness - and deadly force when necessary. No one messes with the Black Lotus Warriors and lives to tell the tale. They are protectors, always ready to strike.

**While Yasuke, who lived in 16th century Japan, is a documented historical figure, the Black Lotus Warriors are a work of fiction.*



Two-part narrative series with 56 images



Six-part narrative series with 60 images



Onna-Oyabun

Bury the excuses and go for the gold

The tale of the Onna-Oyabun, or the Yakuza godmother, is deeply ingrained in Japanese mainstream consciousness, thanks in large part to pop cultural influences such as the "Yakuza Wives" series and the character of O-ren Ishii from Kill Bill. This myth, however, isn't entirely fictional. Rie Alkemade's research reveals the existence of genuine Onna-Oyabuns, a fact she documents in her book "Outsiders Amongst Outsiders".

Beyond the divide



"We are not above nature, but rather a part of it".



Series with 32 images



Psychonauts

On the brink of nuclear war, a group of seasoned psychonauts embarks on a bizarre mission to change the fabric of reality itself - cutting through the mysterious depths of the underwater world in a gleaming glass vessel. Shamans, biotechnologists, and visionary pasajeros, human beings from all corners of the globe are united by a singular purpose: to save humanity from its own imminent self-destruction.

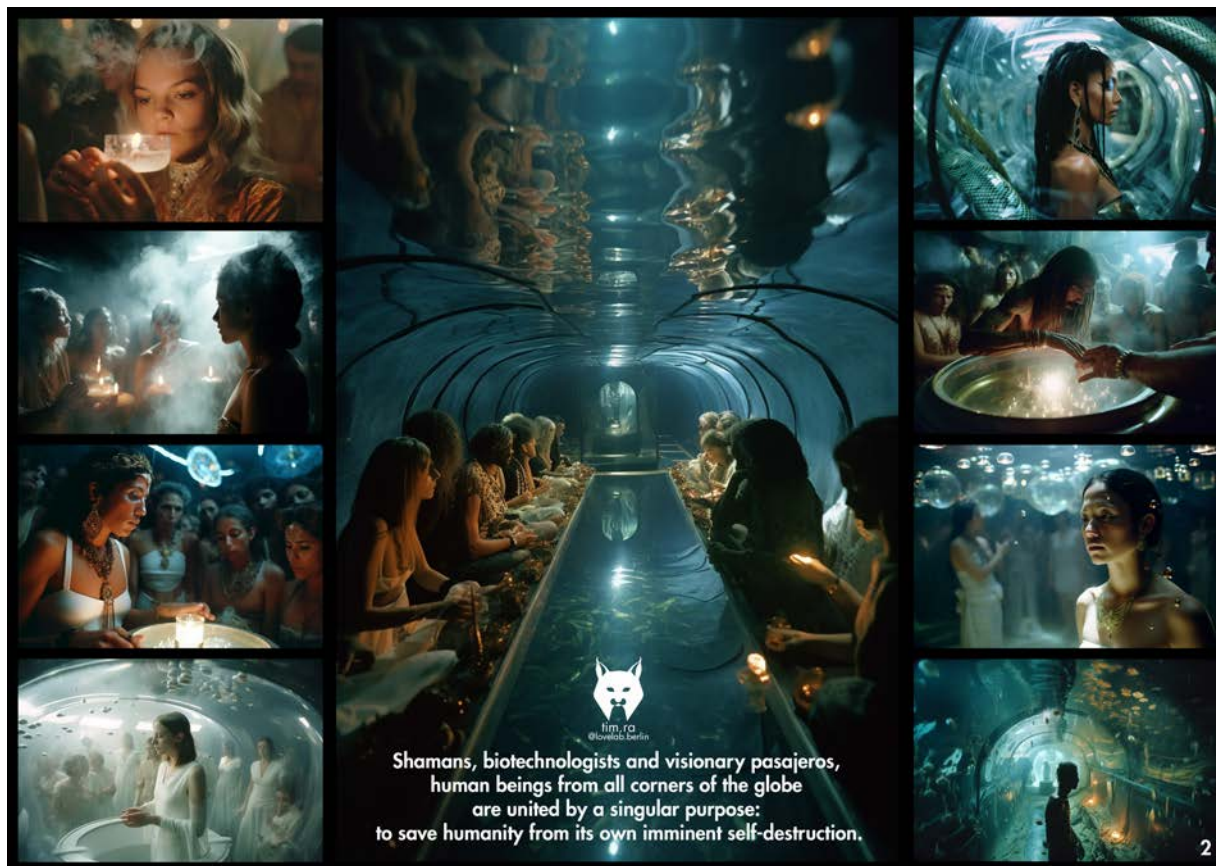
Years of unwavering dedication to shamanic practices have honed their minds and bodies for this awe-inspiring task. Equipped with cutting-edge biotechnology fueled by the potent power of plant medicine they possess the means, the skills and the wisdom to achieve the seemingly impossible: opening an interdimensional vortex fusing our reality with a parallel dimension.

Under the guidance of the shamans, the psychonauts delve into a collective trance, their senses heightened as they journey into the deepest recesses of the human psyche. They confront the rawest traumas that have plagued the human race, bearing witness to the darkest aspects of humanity's past and present.

Amidst the darkness, a breathtaking vision of a new beginning unfolds before their eyes. With hearts brimming with hope and purpose, the psychonauts step into the interdimensional vortex, unleashing a force akin to a thousand suns.

This storyboard is based on an intense dream about nuclear war that I had some months ago, probably fueled by fears of the war in Eastern Europe spiraling out of control. While my dream was both more intricate and darker than the resulting visualisation, I found it immensely satisfying to distill the plot down to its bare essentials, experimenting with countless prompts and images along the way - developing a visual style and drawing on some of my favorite music and film icons to create a sense of cohesion.

Narrative series with 64 images





Angela Davis Fertility Space Clinic

For an unforgettable womens only fertility retreat in outer space, book a room at the Angela Davis Clinic! Designed by leading spa experts, this intimate resort is just an hour's flight from Cape Canaveral. With Feng Shui in mind, the retreat was built in a high vibrational triangle boasting views stretching into the vastness of outer space.

Narrative series with 108 images





Solaris



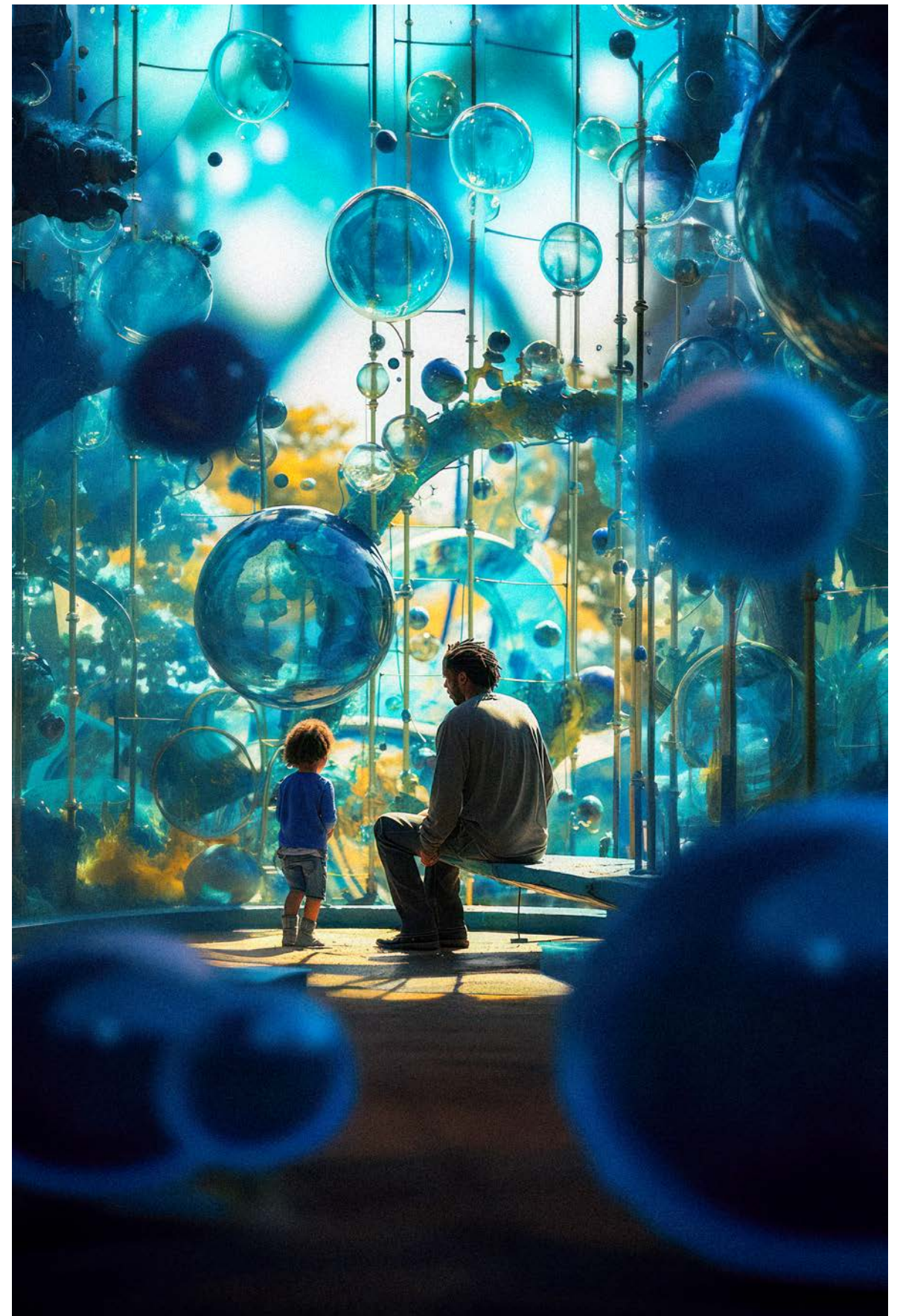
Continually producing bizarre and multicolored formations, the ocean on the planet Solaris has the ability to create deceptively real copies of humans. Circumstantial evidence suggests that it is an intelligent being and may possess some form of consciousness, but even after about a hundred years of intensive research, humanity is little closer to understanding it.

Stanislaw Lem's genre-defining novel "Solaris" raises questions that take on a new, tangible relevance in the era of AI.



It's a Kids' World

/imagine child friendly spaces





Multi-part series with 96+ images



A Sad Day in Paradise

Children are connected to life's flow in ways many of us have forgotten. And yet they are haunted by the demons of the past, by the unresolved issues, toils and traumas of their parents, grandparents and the societies and situations they grow up in. This is part of series of images investigating childhood trauma, both political and personal. It is us that have to heal for our children to thrive.

Eyes in the Dark

In the hushed stillness of the night, Ayumi found herself threading through the rainy streets. An uncanny sensation prickled at her senses, a whispering dread that she was not alone, that someone or something was watching her...

This series is a tribute to the photography of Daidō Moriyama. It is an exploration of the dance between light and darkness, fear and courage, vulnerability and power.

Narrative series with 20 images





Feminine Devine

Nuliayuk



The Nuliayuk believe that old age is a time of transition into the spirit world.

While the Nuliayuk, native to the Siberian tundra, are a fictional people, in Inuit mythology the word means "she who gives life" and represents the fertility of the land and the wealth it provides. This series was created shortly before my father's passing and is dedicated to his memory.

Series with 44 images

When I Was a Child



In Dreams



I am looking for strength that whispers, not roars, that doesn't dominate, but sparks growth, that builds, not destroys, that loves and trusts - not fears. This is the strength I want to embody in my life and reflect in my creative work.

Tim Ra

