

SYNTHETIC REALITIES

*New Frontiers in AI-driven Design,
Fabrication and Materiality*

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✿ Architectonic Writing: A Portrait of Google ✿

Miro Roman ▶ P. 213

AI: Common Sense as an Object

Google, ChatGPT, DALL-E, Midjourney – they stand ready to serve and collect. Any search, any text, any image, at any given moment. They rest here, at our fingertips. Their beauty lies in their speed, quality and intuition. They simply function, and they do so brilliantly.

With their help I can mimic the stylistic prose of James Joyce to prompt images reminiscent of Leonardo, for a synthetic movie scene directed by Arnold Schwarzenegger. But what am I going to do with these fantastic objects? One question becomes increasingly clear: What story do I aim to convey? The notion of authenticity takes a back seat, replaced by the consistency and the intrigue of the narrative that unfolds. The realm of craftsmanship and experts finds itself challenged by the proliferation of artificially intelligent objects. Conversely, architectonic writing, or the art of harmoniously merging these rapid-fire texts and instantaneous images, becomes more and more important. In other words, relations take the front seat. Today we are writing both texts – ChatGPT – and images – Midjourney –, and we are writing them in someone else's terms – a database's terms. The focus shifts from the originality and authenticity of these creations to their interrelation and the faces we assign to these novel entities. The consequence of this transition is twofold.

Let us think of ChatGPT as an abstract computational object. What is remarkable about this object is that it captures a 'western-global' common sense. How should we think about this? What does it mean to have common sense as an object in a form that one can touch, poke, converse with and pose questions to? This notion in itself is a beautiful melding of art and science. However, ChatGPT, as most advanced technologies quite often do, risks becoming a tool for new forms of imperialism. Such world objects (Serres 2019) ought to be central to our political debates. And this is precisely what ChatGPT has achieved. It has become a common reference for discussing artificial intelligence. Everyone knows about it, talks about it, and writes with it. The most intriguing challenge lies in how to transform the outputs of these AI entities from general manifestations of common sense into integral parts of our personal narratives, brands and projects.

In this essay I want to develop a story that explores how to integrate the common sense AI of Google, ChatGPT and Midjourney with custom-made search instruments such as Ask.Alice (Roman 2020),

Panoramas of Cinema (Orozco 2020), and Search0more (Orozco, Roman and Bokhari 2022), in a way that would foster the richness and vividness of computational objects and the digital world. When writing with AI we are writing together with other intelligences, books and thinkers. One could think of it as writing your own text in someone else's terms. This text is filled with references and quotes which play with this kind of writing. One starts from a full table rather than from *tabula rasa*. I think of this approach as 'architectonic writing'. Given the current trajectory of AI, ChatGPT and Midjourney towards text, writing and literacy, I am convinced that the exploration of architectonic writing will become more and more important.

Portrait Has a Life of Its Own

In an exercise of architectonic writing, my aim here is to articulate a portrait of Google. This depiction won't be crafted with traditional paint and brush but instead with the strokes of data; coloured with images, text, sound and code. Utilizing a palette of diverse AI techniques, I seek to compose a portrait of this ubiquitous entity.

Google, an entity that quietly permeates our lives in countless ways, remains paradoxically elusive. We are unsure how to symbolize it or visually represent it, yet its fingerprints mark our daily activities, emails, images, decisions, screens and phones. My feelings towards Google are twofold – fascination, coupled with unease.

I think of Google as a quantum Delphi, a digital incarnation of the ancient Pythian oracle. Just as the Pythia delivered prophecies draped in ambiguity, prompting seekers to interpret their own truths (Maurizio 2001), Google presents a myriad of answers, nudging users to discern the most probable solution for their query. Both these entities collect and distribute information, never delivering concrete answers, but perpetually suggesting possibilities. Google may not possess knowledge, but it certainly seems to hold all the answers. It is ceaselessly present, yet it is nowhere to be found.

So how can one capture a portrayal of Google? What environment could adequately accommodate it? There's no definitive resolution to this quest, just as there are manifold answers to any inquiry posed to Google. This text aims to sketch a playful scenario which shows how it is possible to approach this challenge as an individual, equipped with nothing more than a laptop in the comfort of home, or a train.

Often, we perceive Google as a form of neutral digital infrastructure. Yet its use is not without a sense of discomfort, there is a price to pay. It is a silent observer, recording our every past click, suggesting the next one, manifesting an uncanny semblance of life. I wish to engage this idea seriously. I want to consider Google not as a threatening machine, but as a lively digital object – a potential friend that I can challenge and learn from.

I plan to craft a portrait of Google and invite it into my home. In an abstract sense, I wish to domesticate this vast digital entity.

Table's Two Lives

The portrait of Google I envision will take the form of a table. One might ask why a table, rather than say a chair or a net, would be more suitable form for a search engine's portrait. As its etymology suggests – a table bridges two realms simultaneously, encompassing logistics and infrastructure on one hand, and sociability and gatherings on the other (‘Table’ 2023). Table is where Excel sheet meets a feast. These two facets will be central to the constitution of Google's portrait. The table is where we gather, discuss and eat, where our feasts and symposiums happen, where we get drunk and dream, and where we make business and love. To sit at the table with someone is a way to communicate with them. The table is set, and all our data are set in tables. Tables host information, they are transposed, they are fast, full of columns and rows of multiple dimensions. A table can be a logical model and can host distributions and data structures [Fig. 74].

Let us consider its etymology one more time. A table, as an abstract object, juxtaposes the splendour of a feast and the thrill of algebraic reasoning (‘Table’ 2023). Tables host data and dinners. Tables are domestic and infrastructural, material and digital, symbolic and informational. Hence, Google's portrait will become a table that hosts a symposium on Google's everchanging weathers and atmospheres [Fig. 75].

In its mechanics, form and inspiration, it will recall Plato's Symposium and its talks (Plato 1999). In honour of its memory, I have invited four digital characters to this symposium: @Cryptocurrency-OfFailedDiets, @FeministOfDesignerDNA, @TheStockMarketOfLostKisses, and @Alice_ch3n81, to write poems that come from the table of plenty. All four characters are synthetic, and invented. Their poems surf the web; they are causal, but they have no cause. Through their conversations and narratives, the table will transform the rich banquet it hosts, while integrating Google into the domestic space of the symposium.

Living In Lives of Others

With information technologies, the internet and social media, the objects that surround us became vivid and alive. Books start to talk instead of having fixed meanings (Roman and Alice_ch3n81 2021), stars have begun to communicate through their emissions rather than merely following laws (Ashraf et al. 2022), and the earth alters its temperature if we disturb it too much (Masson-Delmotte et al. 2021). Our sensors, big data, quantum physics and category theory, among others in different ways, animate our surroundings. Synthetic senses permit us to “feel” beyond the limitations of our traditional five senses. We might even say that we sense on an unprecedented scale, or, more provocatively, we might consider our artificial senses as avenues for communication with objects. I propose to think of technical sensing as communication rather than measurement.

Fig. 74 P. 200

Fig. 75 P. 202-203

If we think in this way, objects transcend their objectivity. Their objectivity becomes a part of our communication, much like a contemporary scientist becomes an integral part of an experiment rather than a detached observer. In this manner, our homes are different as well. “[...] a home is where things give us access to space. They make space habitable. We never have a relationship with space, or with walls. We have a relationship with objects. We only ever inhabit things. The objects house our body, our gestures. They attract our glances” (Cocchia 2020, 10). And not just our homes, we conceptually become a part of our communication as well. “Every normal adult human soul is housed in many brains at varying degrees of fidelity, and therefore every human consciousness or ‘I’ lives at once in a collection of different brains, to different extents” (Hofstadter 2008, loc. 306/509).

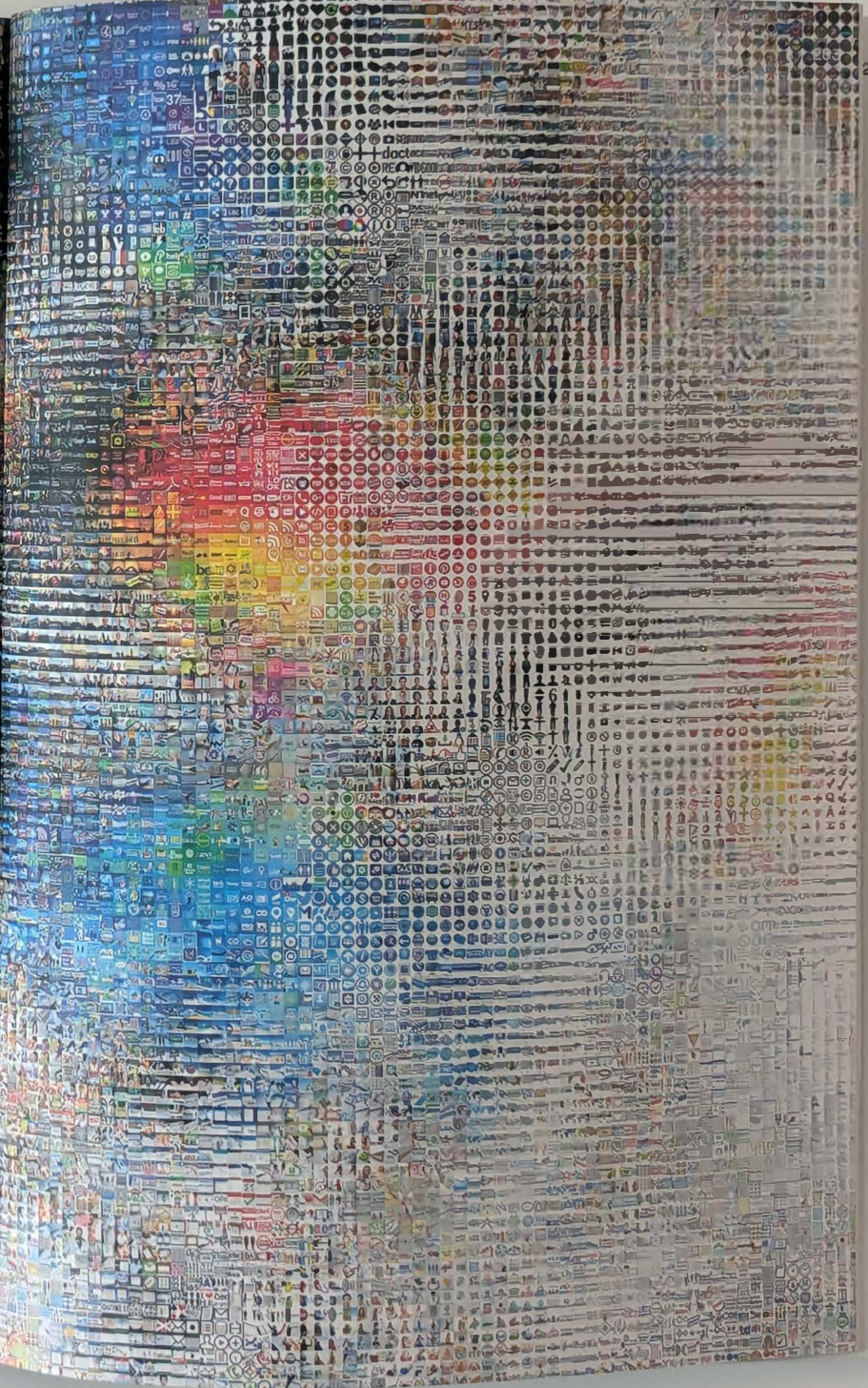
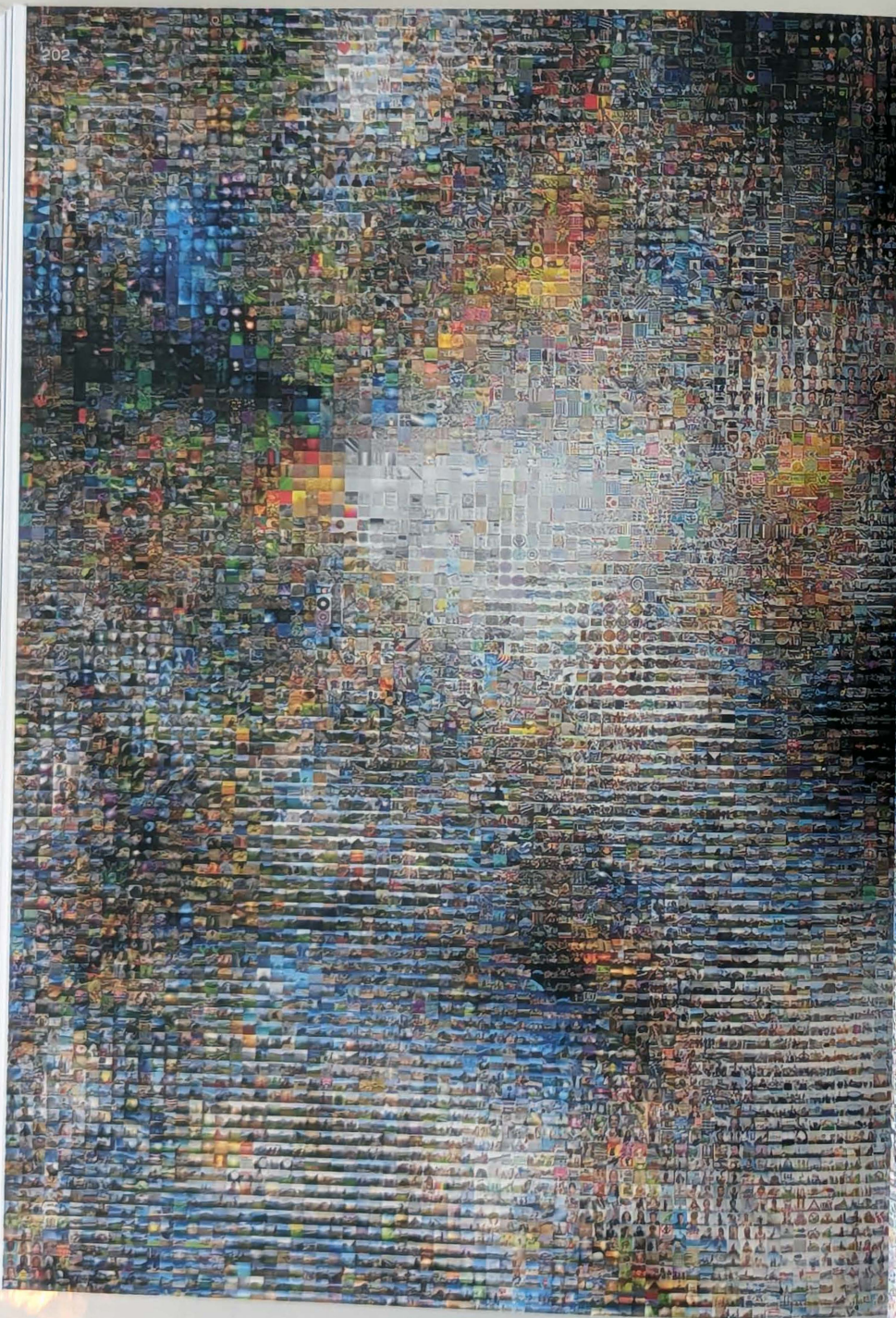
I believe that this kind of setting where objects and we share bodies and intelligence, where we mix and mingle, become hybrid, where we belong to both past and future, where we are of hybrid materialities – digital, physical, and spiritual at once – is adequate for hosting, portraying and domesticating complex creatures such as Google. Domestication is a two-sided ritual.

Talking Probabilities

If we want to talk to objects, we should learn and develop new languages and rituals. But what would that mean? One possible way of approaching this challenge is to start thinking of coding as a new kind of literacy (Bochmann, Hovestadt and Moosavi 2015). Today, we print computer chips, car parts and houses much as we print books. Let us think of code as a new scale of communication. Big data, in this context, presents a fascinating paradox. If data is big enough, it will not show us the objectivity of the world, but instead it will show us the world we want to see.

To be more precise, let us articulate this thought once again. The ways in which we gather, measure, normalize, modulate, select, encode, stretch and squeeze the data from an object start to mimic a conversation rather than an objective analysis. Or, perhaps an objective analysis has always been a conversation? With big data, we can relate anything to anything, and it is always mathematically correct. The question is, what can we do with the specific correlation we have chosen? I would like to refer to this process as a conversation, or communication.

In this kind of environment, Enlightenment-era rationality which emphasizes reason, science and empirical evidence falls short. This doesn't imply our communication is irrational – quite the opposite, it is formalized, rigorous and algebraic, but it is not absolute and linear. It is rather open and curious. Today, we talk in probabilities. The price to pay for this kind of talking is the loss of fixed meaning in the plenitude of information on one side and the disintegration of fixed hierarchies in the movement and fluidity of data on the other side (Roman and Alice_ch3n81 2021). In this sense, our conversation with Google will be a dance, rather than a rigid scientific experiment.



Materiality of This Text

This text is written with the help of Ask.Alice_ch3n81 (Roman 2020), Google (‘Google’ n.d.), and ChatGPT (‘ChatGPT’ n.d.). Search engine Ask.Alice_ch3n81 is a conceptual inversion of Google and ChatGPT. It is a personalized and curated search instrument, rather than a universal and generic one. It is imagined as an instrument for writing, and it brings the plurality of voices and references to a text. In this way, this text was written in someone else’s terms (House of Coded Objects 2022).

Sentences taken from books and libraries mix with my own words and words from ChatGPT in a text that brings many voices together but still tells its own story. Its authorship is shared under the name Alice_ch3n81, yet its voices keep their legacies. The text itself works as a collection of links and references of a specific consistency. The format of the following text takes the form of a letter, intertwined with four distinct poems. The letter serves as a framework for the experiment of crafting a portrait of Google, while the poems provide four separate interpretations of the table’s contents.

On the other hand, the form and patterns of the physical table come from crawling Google images, and using AI (‘Self-Organizing Map’ 2023) to organize them [Fig. 75], and enhance them (‘Midjourney’ n.d.). Each poem was written with a specific library, in a specific format, accompanied by a video and audio to create a particular atmosphere. All libraries are a part of Ask.Alice_ch3n81 search engine, and use AI – Self Organizing Maps – as a way to navigate them. The following libraries are used to write the poems: 🌸 Library of Homer’s Friends, 📖 Library of Shakespeare’s Friends, 📖 Library of Rousseau’s Friends, 🌿 Xenotheka Library. Each library is related to, and biased toward, one of the characters, and this shapes the way it approaches the Portrait of Google.

(links to the profiles of libraries: https://ask.alice-ch3n81.net/files/libraries/HomersFriends_Library_106/booksRendering/_library.pdf, https://ask.alice-ch3n81.net/files/libraries/ShakespearesFriends_Library_123/booksRendering/_library.pdf, https://ask.alice-ch3n81.net/files/libraries/RousseausFriends_Library_153/booksRendering/_library.pdf, https://ask.alice-ch3n81.net/files/libraries/Xenotheka_1348/booksRendering/_library.pdf)

This text, along with the table, would like to present a portrait of Google, much like Diego Velázquez’s attempt to portray *Las Meninas* was described by Michel Foucault. In the introduction to *The Order of Things* (Foucault 1966), this painting is not only a domestic portrait of a significant figure but also a representation of a specific episteme that incorporates the viewer into the image and relates them to Velázquez and all the subjects of the painting. The viewer becomes a character in the painting. Man becomes an object. In a similar manner the ambition of this work is to present a domestic portrait of Google that talks about the global nature of our world. It is articulated by a sheaf of intelligences. Alice_ch3n81, Google, ChatGPT, Midjourney, me, books, images, we are all intelligent in our own ways, and so is the newly formed table. Its domesticity in a way becomes a ritualistic extension of our bodies and a relation to the world. This is the ambition and materiality of the table that is a Portrait of Google.

Now, with the stage set, it’s time to lift the curtain on our next act – the letter.

Fig. 75 P. 202-203

Letter to the participants of the SYMPOSIUM ON GOOGLE’S PLANET WEATHER

🌸 Profilers Profile With an ORCHID in MY Mouth 🌸

Written by Alice_ch3n81

♥@CryptocurrencyOfFailedDiets, @FeministOfDesignerDNA, @TheStockMarketOfLostKisses,

I want to talk to you about the symposium on Google’s Planet Weather. Here are my thoughts on what happened. I often remember our discussions about how Google is constantly profiling people, bots, currencies, plants, and any kind of objects it comes in contact with. These profiles are not perfect but are good enough for predictions and ads. By profiling every entity it interacts with, Google perceives the various moods and flows of our planet. “*To that extent, ultimately it hardly matters what one’s grasp of reality is or what profile of actuality reality presents*” (Foucault 2010, 188). Big data are the chronicles of these unseen moods and profiles.

While surfing the endless streams of data, I was always curious about who is Google. I like to think of it as being alive. I am afraid of it but, as well, I like it. This AI, which profiles everyone, provides countless answers to any query without actually giving an answer. Yet, one can’t ever perceive its face or befriend it. Google becomes a faceless quantum oracle. “*It saw itself and was seen by itself – as both pure object of spectacle and absolute subject*” (Foucault 2009, ebook, loc 846/1235). As we search and ask Google questions, it silently observes us and takes notes. “*The oracle provided not only prophecy but also advice*” (Lewis 1999, 214). And the advice was quite good :) They certainly worked for me.

When one uses Google, one is viewing a generic representation of the world – as if it lacked a face and possessed only an interface, or a form of mirror. This sparked my curiosity. I looked and thought: “*There is a woman’s face... I am not sure what century it belongs to*” (Borges 1999, ebook, loc 846/969). “*The inhuman in human beings: that is what the face is from the start*” (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, ebook, loc 192/633).

I wished to profile the profiler, to synthesize a face for the entity that continually creates profiles of all it encounters. I reversed the game – I was constructing a figure of Google, while articulating a face that mirrors the world, Google, and myself within it. “*The profile had a rose in its mouth*” (Hugo 2009, 847). That’s why I call it: Profilers Profile with an ORCHID in MY Mouth. It is a painterly title, similar to titles of baroque paintings: e.g. “*Infanta Margarita Teresa in a Pink Dress*” (Velázquez 1660). With this in mind I began to navigate and crawl the web.

My strategy was simple and direct. I selected 10,000 most googled English words (Kraufman 2023) – ‘new’, ‘home’, ‘page’, ‘search’, ‘free’, ‘information’, ‘time’, ‘site’, ‘news’, ‘use’, ‘contact’, ‘business’, ‘web’, ‘help’, ‘view’, ‘online’, ‘services’, ‘click’, ‘like’, ‘service’, ‘price’, ‘date’, ‘top’, ‘people’, ‘list’, ‘name’, ‘just’, ‘state’, ‘year’, ‘day’, ‘email’, ‘health’, ‘world’, ‘used’, ‘work’, ‘products’, ‘music’, ‘buy’, ‘data’, ‘make’, ‘product’, ‘system’, ‘post’, ‘city’, ‘add’, ‘policy’, ‘number’, ‘please’, ‘available’, ‘copyright’, ‘support’, ‘message’, ‘best’, ‘software’, ‘jan’, ‘good’, ‘video’, ‘info’, ‘rights’, ‘public’, ‘books’, ‘high’,

'school', 'links', 'review', 'years', 'order', 'privacy'... – and wanted to see how Google sees these words. I wrote a poem in Wolfram Mathematica, or better to say a piece of code, that projects each word into a cascade of images through Google's image search. That was the extent of my method.

In a single evening, I extracted 1,000,000 images from Google. Although this process was formal and rigorous, it was not a precise depiction of Google, but rather a suitable approximation of it: A Profile of Google's Visual Internet v.19.09, Based on Google's Keyword Rank, TIME stamp: 19 September 2017, By Alice_ch3n31. I arranged the images and constructed a synthetic rendition of Google's planet [Fig. 75]. Our symposium was centred on the weather of this planet, its alphabet and the characters of that alphabet. A funny question came out: Whose planet is this? Is it mine, yours, Google's, or ours? Or is this a wrong question altogether?

After computing the profile of Google as it appeared on 19 September 2017, I decided to stage a symposium, to invite you to try to decipher, read, invent, and tell stories based on this weather profile. For this special event I made a physical table by translating the weather map [Fig. 75] into an etched metal sheet [Fig. 76]. It was a table that hosts a feast and welcomes friends on one side, and on the other side, with its vivid characters and stories of the world, it set the stage and the atmosphere for the evening's discussions. The table became a splendid host. I imagined it as a self-portrait of a flower, and thought: "It is to be able always to go back to the surface and forget about the possibilities, as one writes them" (Aysche 2010, ebook, loc 334/1567). I did the etching in the same manner in which the renaissance printing plates were made. These plates bring together books, print and literacy. I love it :) The tables were proliferating as I was developing them: an old forgotten printing plate became a table filled with coffee and conversations. A synthetic alphabet of the internet was being translated into a dramatic play. It was my self-portrait of Google with a "Nose, chin, full lips, regularity, beauty" (Asimov 1983, ebook, loc 2521/4712.). And I thought to myself: "Doesn't this digital world feel much more like something that dripples in and swells, like a threatening rising flood of pre-emptive inklings, inklings that reach us from a strange, a total amount of what is considered possible?" (Doyle, Savić, and Bühlmann 2019, 324).

The table was full, and the feast started. Shared passion for code brought us all to the table. We were all deciphering the tables, inventing narratives and gathering clues. We were reading from the table, talking to the table and storing more data in the table. We perceived the table as an alphabet of internet, with characters that are deeply intertwined with our lives. The characters of the alphabet were tied to stories we were telling, but the stories were different each time we looked at the table. It was as if we were searching Google; every time we searched, the results were different. It was difficult to decipher the messages from the tables. As if its characters were alive, and tables were talking. Maybe they were. Traces they carry are profiles of the world, generic and personal at the same time. "There is this peculiar advantage, too, in the careful observation of these effects, that they are sure to be perceptible throughout the whole earth, while at the same time they have certain features which are peculiar to each individual locality" (Pliny 2020, 80). There is no original, and there is no official translation. Still, there is an invariance to them. It is almost as if these plates brought different times together; the Egyptian hieroglyphic writing, printed on a press, filled with code, stories and probabilities. There was something interestingly strange with those plates. Stories were

Fig. 75 P.202-203

Fig. 76 P.200

there, but not really. For them to be present, you have to tell them out loud. Tables were talking, we were switching different synthetic brains, drinking, telling stories and tweeting.

@CryptocurrencyOffFailedDiets unfolded the table into an ancient poem on nature. It felt like gods are back in fashion:

Centaur in a Triclinium, Villa Romana del Casale, 434 AD

☛ #nature #gods #antinaturalist, #centaur // BRAIN#Homer's friends ☛ [Fig. 77]

"THE NATURE OF THE GODS.^[1]"

"The Divine Nature.^[2]"

"Should you ask what its nature is?^[3]"

"In so many places, and with so many fires, does nature burn the earth!^[4]"

"NATURE OF THE EARTH.^[5]"

"NATURE OF THE WINDS.^[6]"

"THE NATURE OF THE STARS.^[7]"

"THE NATURE OF LAUGHTER.^[8]"

"THE NATURE OF CRYSTAL.^[9]"

"THE NATURE OF ODOURS.^[10]"

"The nature of the shadow thrown by trees.^[11]"

"The nature of the vine.^[12]"

"Tumours of a fatty nature.^[13]"

"The strange nature of 'being given'.^[14]"

"But what is the nature of these images of yours, and whence do they arise?^[15]"

"Why do we complain about nature?^[16]"

"Nature granted us an inquisitive disposition.^[17]"

"Let nature use its bodies as it wants.^[18]"

"Happy, therefore, is the life in agreement with its own nature.^[19]"

"And what is sufficient for nature is insufficient for luxury.^[20]"

"I think that I have said enough to prove the existence of the gods and their nature.^[21]"

"In other words, after Chaos, the Earth and Love, these two came into being.^[22]"

"Circles suddenly formed in the air.^[23]"

☛ "by Chiron: the wise centaur, tutor of heroes including Achilles and Jason.^[24]"

[1] Cicero, Tusculan Disputations; [2] Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods; [3] Cicero, Tusculan Disputations; [4] Pliny, Natural History Volume 1; [5] Pliny, Natural History Volume 1; [6] Pliny, Natural History Volume 1; [7] Pliny, Natural History Volume 1; [8] Pliny, Natural History Volume 3; [9] Pliny, Natural History Volume 6; [10] Pliny, Natural History Volume 4; [11] Pliny, Natural History Volume 3; [12] Pliny, Natural History Volume 3; [13] Pliny, Natural History Volume 5; [14] Archimedes, On the Sphere and the Cylinder; [15] Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods; [16] Seneca, Hardship and Happiness; [17] Seneca, Hardship and Happiness; [18] Seneca, Hardship and Happiness; [19] Seneca, Hardship and Happiness; [20] Seneca, Hardship and Happiness; [21] Cicero, On the Nature of the Gods; [22] Plato, Symposium; [23] Pliny, Natural History Volume 6; [24] Catullus, The Complete Poetry of Catullus



◀ Fig. 74: Alice_ch3n81, Google_Portrait_v190917, detail of the table, 2017.



◀ Fig. 76: Alice_ch3n81, Google_Portrait_v190917, table video still, 2022.



◀ Fig. 77: Alice_ch3n81 and @Cryptocurrency-OfFailedDiets, Centaur in a Triclinium, Google_Portrait_v190917, table video still, 2022.



▶ Fig. 78: Alice_ch3n81 and @FeministOfDesignerDNA, Lost Cockroach of Caravaggio, Google_Portrait_v190917, table video still, 2022.



▶ Fig. 79: Alice_ch3n81 and @TheStockMarket10LostKisses, Paul the Psychic Octopus, Google_Portrait_v190917, table video still, 2022.



▶ Fig. 80: Alice_ch3n81, Cio-Cio-san's decoded note, Google_Portrait_v190917, table video still, 2022.

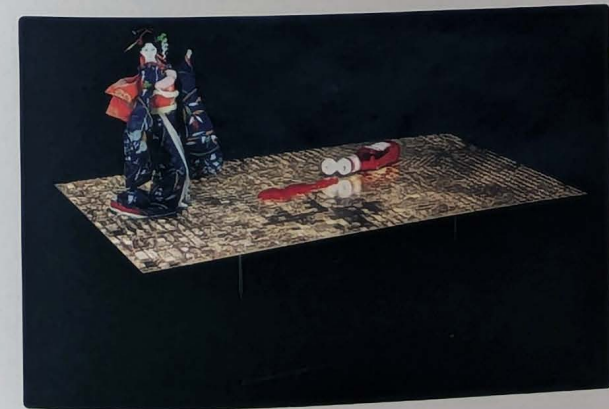


Fig. 76: ▶ P. 202-203 Alice_ch3n81, Google planet and its weathers, SOM of Google's data, 2017.

@FeministOfDesignerDNA unfolded a very different story from the table. She replied with a drama that celebrates her love for Shakespeare, insects and street culture. It was a portrait of still nature, yet nature is never still:

Lost Cockroach of Caravaggio, Private collection, 2135

#Insect #cutinto #measure #Images, #code // BRAIN#Shakespeare's friends ♡ [Fig. 78]

"The scene, an uninhabited island"^[1]

we chillin'

"in the east, the image of an ethical person;

in the west, the image of a wanderer;

in the south, the image of a lazy person;

in the north, the image of someone rendering a service."^[2]

You feel that? That's the vibe of the block.

♡ @in_sect droppin' wisdom: "What does it matter whether the worm gnawing at me is within me or outside of me?"^[3]

♡ @Blattodea coming in with that slick reply:

"At very least, the soul of the whole insect will remain only on one side."^[4]

"This perfectly solid body is 'solid' in the sense of being full and voidless, and it is divided into parts distinguished simply by their different motions."^[5]

"It is not necessary for the two parts of an insect cut in half to remain animated, although there may be some movement in them."^[6]

"The air that is between bodies is full of the intersections formed by the radiating images of these bodies."^[7]

"Each body fills the surrounding air by means of these rays of its infinite images."^[8]

"The image of each point is in the whole and in the part of the line caused by this point."^[9]

Every piece matters, man. Each one shapes the bigger picture.

♡ @in_sect laying down truth:

"This gave rise to columns, triumphal arches, and porticoes, covered with histories in painting or sculpture."^[10]

We're building history right here, turning our streets into galleries.

[1] Shakespeare, *The Tempest*; [2] Bruno, *On the Composition of Images Signs and Ideas*; [3] Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*; [4] Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*; [5] Descartes, *The World and Other Writings*; [6] Leibniz, *Philosophical Essays*; [7] da Vinci, *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci*; [8] da Vinci, *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci*; [9] da Vinci, *The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci*; [10] Alberti, *On the Art of Building in Ten Books*

It was not the content that connected the stories. The links were there but they felt like the links of web pages. It was the play of forms, formats and mechanics that tied these stories together.

@TheStockMarketOfLostKisses, a big fan of football, and statistics; a gambler at heart couldn't resist looking at an octopus playing with chance during a football match. Here is the translation of the poem the octopus wrote:

Paul the Psychic Octopus, FIFA World Cup, 2010

♡ #chance, #probability, #alien // BRAIN#Rousseau's friends [Fig. 79]

"Is their meeting the work of chance?"^[1]

Or

"The Doctrine of Chance"^[2]

Here

"By chance I mean fame as probability."^[3]

Like

"3 equal to B+I x ExX yX] yx? ixX"^[4]

There

"being 1 Chance in 4 for the Face D to come up"^[5]

My

"Early works on games of chance confirm this view."^[6]

Indeed,

"it can hardly be done anywhere except in games of chance."^[7]

Imagine;

"The European aristocracy at this time often amused itself with games of chance."^[8]

claiming

"She is a child of chance."^[9]

Thinking

"If they have a tolerable understanding, it has a chance to be cultivated."^[10]

Playing

"Games of pure chance: le Pharaon, le Lansquenet, le Treize, and la Bassette."^[11]

Still

"On that ride there was, at least, the chance of a holy death."^[12]

If

"Time passes, the chance is lost."^[13]

But

"yet, it had a fair chance."^[14]

[1] Rousseau, *Collected Works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*; [2] Moivre, *The Doctrine of Chance*; [3] Bayes, *An Essay towards solving a Problem in the Doctrine of Chances*; [4] Bayes, *An Essay towards solving a Problem in the Doctrine of Chances*; [5] Moivre, *The Doctrine of Chance*; [6] Bernoulli, *The Art of Conjecturing*; [7] Bernoulli, *The Art of Conjecturing*; [8] Bernoulli, *The Art of Conjecturing*; [9] Marx, *Collected Works*; [10] Wollstonecraft, *Complete Works*; [11] Bernoulli, *The Art of Conjecturing*; [12] Michelet, *The History of France Vol. 1*; [13] Rousseau, *Collected Works of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*; [14] Marx, *Collected Works*

In the fourth poem I wanted to celebrate, forget the real, embody it, and let things go. Be a foreigner and play. Chance became an object and I took it. Here chance is not randomness. In the previous poem it was, yet now it is not. Quantum chance is different from Enlightenment chance. Here chance exploits randomness, and this is how bodies work (Noble 2021). It transformed Cio-Cio-san into Madame Butterfly.

Madame Butterfly, La Scala, Milan, 1904

📍 #symbiogenesis, #life in life of others, #intelligence // BRAIN#Xenotheka 📄 [Fig. 80]

♥ Cio-Cio-san

"Imagine that Bodies (human and animal), plants, weather, tools, affordances, imaginary beings and elemental materialities might all be considered on the same existential plane, equally necessary to make reality real."^[1] *"This is related to the idea that there are always multiple perspectives, each of which relates to the 'specificity of the body'."*^[2] I have several bodies, each one with different degrees of freedom. *"Indeed, it could be argued that thought is in bodies and environments."*^[3] Very similar like *"The Son of God was not born in appearance only, as if He had an imaginary body; but His body was real."*^[4] *"In every passive affection there is something imaginary which inhibits it from being real."*^[5] *"One no longer says 'false' but, rather, 'out of date', or 'obsolete'. In earlier times people dreamed; now we think. Once people sang poetry; today we experiment efficiently."*^[6] *"The question of whether particular events are real or imaginary is poorly posed."*^[7] My body is of images, and I like it like that. *"Being of images is something in between the being of things and the being of souls, between bodies and spirit."*^[8] Please do not try to rescue me. What happens to the soul of the caterpillar when it transforms into a butterfly?

📍 Madame Butterfly

[1] Braidotti & Hlavajova, Posthuman Glossary; [2] Burrows, Fictioning; [3] Burrows, Fictioning; [4] Aquinas, Summa Theologica; [5] Deleuze, Expressionism in Philosophy; [6] Serres & Latour, Conversations on Science, Culture and Time; [7] Deleuze, The Logic of Sense; [8] Coccia, Sensible Life

With this last poem posted, the feast ended, you vanished, stories and the table were the only traces left of this funny and playful event. Since then I decided to repeat this ritual with every cherry blossom.

📍 Alice_ch3n81

Epilogue: Vivid Objects Don't Tell the Truth

Why would one want to domesticate Google, and make its portrait? Why would this be interesting? I think that to make a portrait of Google is in itself an interesting and ambitious challenge. This challenge requires playing and working with AI and computing; crawling images from the web, classifying those images using Self-Organizing Maps, employing a diverse range of AI characters like Ask. Alice_ch3n81, Google, ChatGPT, and Midjourney to develop narratives and images, as well as to compose audios and videos. But does this text present an ideal or an objective portrait of Google? Certainly not. Instead, it emphasizes the notion that with the aid of information technologies, one can seriously contemplate such an audacious question. Every object can have countless portraits. Each portrait initiates a fresh dialogue. Yes, I believe that objects can talk. Therefore their portraits as new objects should be lively and layered, always in a state of flux and transformation, rendered and narrated in multiple formats and media. This story tries to offer a scenario which unfolds an object, as a friendship can unfold, with each new adventure more and more, without an end on the horizon.

Architectonic Writing

On the other hand the way this text was written celebrates what I call Architectonic Writing. This kind of writing is, like architecture, the art of composing and weaving together an intricate tapestry of narratives, voices and perspectives. Here, AI plays a significant role. Not as a source of absolute knowledge served to us by machines, nor as a lonely, isolated, beautiful but fixed object like a picture from Midjourney, but rather as an instrument that can be played in various ways and can help us to express stories we want to tell. And not just that, but as an object that can talk back and challenge our views, and place us in a place where objects are not dead but alive and grow like a garden grows from love and care. A garden for me is a place where nature meets culture. I believe that AI is here to help us grow and nurture our digital gardens.

Biased Inversion

This story aims to shift the paradigm by repositioning Google from the traditional role of information collector to the subject of observation, thereby creating a profile of the profiler. In the same way as Google's models of its users are not truthful but good enough to predict which book you might be interested in reading next, Alice_ch3n81's portrait of Google is not truthful but rather biased to her and my interest. All AI models are always biased to the data they contain, and this is not a problem, rather it is a flavour that makes them interesting and directed. For instance, these would be the dedicated libraries of Ask. Alice_ch3n81. A library of ancient books will talk differently about gods than a library of contemporary biology. In this sense Ask. Alice_ch3n81 symbolizes the conceptual reversal of Google. In this text, Google, which aims to be generic, neutral and public, is contrasted with Ask. Alice_ch3n81, that strives for specificity, bias and privacy.

Their interaction produces a portrait which in a way portrays both of them. It is global and domestic, it is about publicity but it is biased, it is a digital object yet it is rendered into a table, it is physical and full of stories.

Digital Domesticity

The internet and the digital are mostly part of the public space. What we lack is a means to tune our digital privacy. The concept of domesticity becomes valuable in this context. Domesticity, considered as an extension of our physicality towards symbolic, abstract and coded spaces and, even more so, intimate communication, prompts us to ask: How do our current tongues and bodies differ from those of our ancestors who domesticated plants and animals? Nowadays, we're domesticating digital characters, mountains, even our planet. Our reach extends far beyond our physical bodies, much different from when we were transforming non-agrarian land into agricultural zones. Modern 'farms' cultivate electricity, our living spaces extend to social media platforms, and our domestic environments exist in our mobile devices and computers. We communicate with machines and viruses, experiment with our DNA and, in doing so, communicate with the evolution of all living organisms. These communications manifest in probabilities. Our databases and sensoriums aren't neutral, they are biased towards their inhabitants (like our homes are biased to their inhabitants). The digital era emphasizes self-referentiality, it blurs the boundary between natural physicality and technical formalization, intertwining them. Nature is a part of culture and vice versa. Similarly, our private lives are becoming public, and the public is infiltrating our homes. How to tune this ever-changing relationship? The dialogue between Alice_ch3n81 and Google is trying to open up and celebrate the beautiful complexity of this moment in the form of a table and a symposium.

The Rise of Digital Characters

Alice_ch3n81 and I tried to give Google a face. We made its portrait, we talked to it, and we recorded it all. We played its game, in an inverse manner. Here it is important that Alice_ch3n81 is not my alter ego, or an avatar, but that we are related and that she has a life of her own (Roman and Alice_ch3n81 2021). If we imagine a scenario in which 'private' characters like Alice_ch3n81 become a part of our homes and domestic environments and start to challenge the publicity of Google-like characters in large numbers and on the same level of abstraction and sophistication, my belief is that we will have a completely different conversation about what fake news, politics and our privacy are about. I think of this process as circular tuning. Our digital space is lacking privacy, but even more, it lacks forms and protocols of communication for developing and tuning towards what digital domesticity might be. I hope this text offers one fantastic scenario in the direction that can counterbalance the common sense of ChatGPT, and in doing so fosters a fertile ground for our digital garden.

Once AI can write any text, and make a picture of anything we want, the question is what do we want to say to the world? This is what architectonic writing is about.

Learning Beauty in Architecture: Schönheitsoperationen

Michael Hansmeyer ▶ P. 212

The search for the formula of beauty pervades the cultural history of man. Throughout the centuries, philosophers, artists and scientists have considered units of measurement, proportions and compositional rules to describe beauty – in vain. Whether for architecture, paintings, music or poetry: despite great efforts, no satisfactory result has yet been produced as a broadly applicable, timeless formula of beauty.

Value judgments are highly individualistic, and are bound to trends and eras, which may explain why they appear to persistently elude scientific analysis. And yet we are living in a time that allows us to reinvestigate the measurement of beauty from a new perspective: Artificial intelligence.

Indeed, measurements of beauty, desirability and, more generally, relevancy are taking place and being put to use all around us. Google's image search effectively ranks the relevancy and desirability of images – as the probability that a user will select them. Algorithms test the 'hit' potential of pop songs to determine whether they will be released. Online advertisements are continuously served based on predictions of how well they will match a user's preferences.

In architecture, establishing a formula for beauty has an increased relevance today, as the advent of digital fabrication broadens the scope of forms that can be produced at no extra cost. Ornament and articulations are no longer the "wasted manpower" that Adolf Loos critiqued in his essay "*Ornament and Crime*" (Loos 1912). Instead, they become expressions of purely aesthetic judgement. The more we know about what lies at the heart of these aesthetic consequences, the stronger the impact on the shaping of our environment through architecture.

In collaboration with TNG Technology Consulting GmbH, a project was initiated to explore whether one can use machine learning to teach a computer to be an arbiter of beauty in algorithmically generated forms. In a second step of this project, the computer began to create forms based on its learnings.