



MACHINE OF HUMAN DREAMS

What kind of man would dedicate his life to building a perfect machine?



DIRECTOR: ROY COHEN

FORMAT: HD, 16:9

LENGTH: 75 MINUTES AND 52 MINUTES

PICTURE LOCK DATE (END OF OFFLINE EDIT): 6/11/2015

MASTER CUT DATE: 15/12/2015

Logline

Artificial Intelligence maverick Ben Goertzel is trying to build the first thinking machine in Hong Kong. But, as he tries to overcome personal and technological hurdles, stories from his past cast doubt over the work that has consumed his life.

Synopsis

A.I. guru Ben Goertzel grew up in a hippie community during the Vietnam War. Inspired by science fiction, he imagined a perfect rational world that would transcend the violence of 1970s' America. Since then, Ben has dedicated his life to developing OpenCog, a software that models the human mind. If Ben's design works, OpenCog will become a human-like general intelligence. But for OpenCog to work, it needs a body.

Shot over the course of 2 years, this film follows Ben's attempts to create an OpenCog prototype in Hong Kong. But pursuing a dream of this scale is an arduous task. As difficulties pile up, people from Ben's past cast doubt over his ability to deliver the dream.

Can Ben build the first thinking machine?

Do you want him to?

Director's Statement

I have interviewed dozens of transhumanists in the years preceding to making this film and while making it. My natural inclination has always been to be doubtful of anyone who believes in the promise of technology as a vehicle of good without reservations. Making this film has been my attempt to understand why, and how, the people behind transhumanist technologies are hoping to change humanity. Or, as Ben told his son, "Roy is making a film about why this mad scientist has decided to make humanity obsolete."

What I've learned, and what this film will convey, is that the story of a radical new technology like A.G.I. is the story of human passion, human obsession. This obsession is what makes Ben push forward the development of OpenCog when the government evaluations of the project are unsatisfactory, when people around him doubt that he can carry out his grand vision. Using interviews and archival footage, we also explore his early influences and the cultural context that gave rise to his ambitions. Here is a story about a man with a dream.

And what an influential dream it is. We live in a time in which visionary technologists have more influence over our lives than ever. This film is a unique opportunity to witness up close one of the most radical, intelligent and colorful technology gurus alive today.

Link: 12 minute work-in-progress trailer

<https://vimeo.com/142298543>

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