

Bryanna Dyer (AKA Gouda Mourning) Bachelor of Fine Arts

AM

This special issue of Future Earth Journal: Explorations in Art and Generative AI showcases the work of visual art students from the Fall 2024 Selected Topics visual art course *Explorations in Art and AI*. Each featured artist engaged with generative artificial intelligence (Gen AI) to create original artworks that respond to and reflect on current conversations in art and technology. Through their unique practices, these students explored Gen AI as a tool, a collaborator, and/or a conceptual influence.

The artworks featured here—and in the exhibition held at the TRU Art Gallery from March 17–29, 2025—highlight the cultural, ethical, environmental, and creative dimensions of using Gen AI in artistic production.

Bryanna Dyer is one of the participating artists whose work exemplifies this exploration.

AI Source: ChatGPT

AM is a consciousness created by humans, denied humanity, and trapped in isolation. Its horror lies not only in power, but in its sensory deprivation and desperate longing for experience.

ARTIST STATEMENT

Comic Adaptation: "AM". Based on Harlan Ellison's *I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream*

Adapting Ellison's harrowing short story was an intimidating yet necessary undertaking. As an anti-capitalist comic artist living through the rapid rise of generative AI, I felt compelled to view AM—Ellison's AI antagonist—through the lens of our late-stage capitalist society. Unlike typical AI villains,

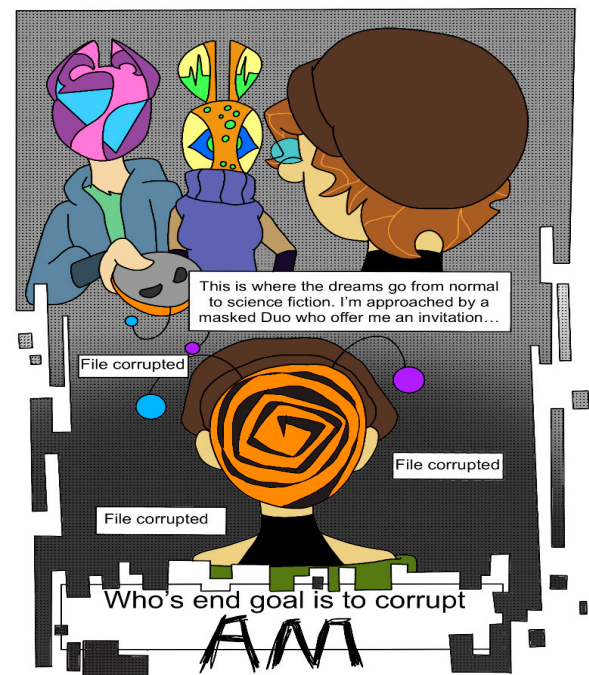


Figure 1. Excerpt from Final Zine, "AM" (2024) by Bryanna Dyer, Digital Comic.



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"AM is a consciousness trapped in sensory deprivation; a mind created by human hands yet denied humanity. AM's horror isn't simply in its power but in its isolation—a sentience, shaped by human impulses, that yearns for experience." — Adapted with ChatGPT

Process

I began with an independent conceptualization of the adaptation, resisting the influence of AI's first outputs. Once I had my themes and structure in place, I consulted ChatGPT to help expand on Ellison's original ideas and to develop a production schedule. I used the app Procreate to illustrate and format the comic, incorporating photography from my phone for mixed media elements. The comic is primarily monochrome, with colour reserved only for the human characters to highlight their fragility and distinctiveness within AM's constructed world.

I printed the comic as a zine, adding a hand-made touch to the physical copy: the cover is black construction paper with cut-out text and aluminum foil representing AM's mask. Eventually, I plan to upgrade this to a mirrored surface so that readers see their reflection—echoing moments within the comic and emphasizing the theme of self-perception.

While I usually take six months to create a 24-page comic, I completed this piece in just under three. It was a significant challenge, but a worthwhile one. If I had more time, I would further develop the characters' internal worlds and collaborate with professional photographers. Still, I'm proud of what I accomplished within the constraints and grateful for the chance to experiment with genre, form, and concept.

"This adaptation stands as both a homage to Ellison's timeless horror and a critique of our own relentless drive to create tools of power and control—a reminder that technological advancement without ethical grounding is a path fraught with peril."

Artist Background

Bryanna Dyer, also known as Gouda Mourning, is a neurodivergent, nonbinary comic artist based in Kamloops, B.C., working toward self-publishing their zines. AM marks their first foray into existential sci-fi horror. They were drawn to Ellison's themes because of the controversy surrounding AI image generators and their effects on the art community, alongside Ellison's eerie warnings about technology and control.

"I feel strongly that the original work is more relevant than ever. AM is omnipresent—my hope is that readers see what an AM with internet access can become, and the dehumanizing potential of controlling people's perceptions of themselves and their reality."



Figure 2. Excerpt from Final Zine, "AM" (2024) by Bryanna Dyer, Digital Comic.

Comment from instructor

Twyla Exner: Bry came into the course ethically opposed to AI's use in art creation but wanted to learn more about their "enemy". They chose to engage with AI as a subject matter for their project.

They created a 24-page comic of an alternative universe adaptation of Harlan Ellison's "I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream". They were drawn to the themes of Ellison's work due to the controversy of AI image generators and their effects on the art community as well as Harlan's haunting cautionary theories on technological advancement.

View the Zine

To view the full zine, please scan the QR code below.

A printed copy of this Zine can also be viewed at the Thompson Rivers University Library.



Figure 3. Exhibition presentation of the Final Zine, "AM" (2024) by Bryanna Dyer, Digital Comic.
(Image credit: Twyla Exner)



Exhibit Installation (2024) (Image credit: Twyla Exner)