

# Machine Stories:

finding meaning in unpredictable outcomes

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Machine Stories are fragments of stories created using ambiguous watercolour drawings of artefacts [1] and machine learning platforms (Stable Diffusion and DALL-E) that replicated their visual features, whilst experimenting using various or no word prompts. Text was created using sentences generated by Chat GPT that were modified.

Machine Stories attends to the unfamiliar and ambiguous and is a reflection on my experiences collaborating with humans from different disciplinary perspectives and on experimenting with artificially intelligent systems that replicate dominant features [2]. Whilst not always being able to understand how other humans or systems operate, I was nevertheless able to assign meaning to what I saw, recognising patterns and creating associations based on my particular experiences or imaginaries.

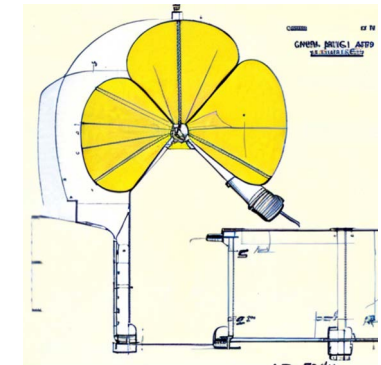
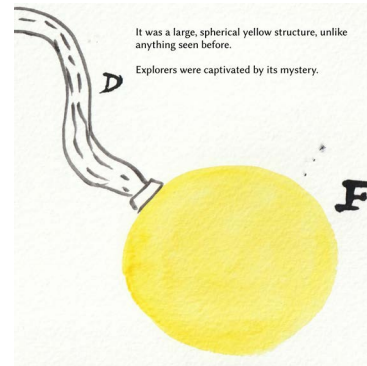
As humans, we cannot escape giving meaning to what we see, even when we do not understand it. AI does not understand ambiguous drawings created by humans. It merely identifies and reproduces patterns.

Not understanding can be a source of creativity.

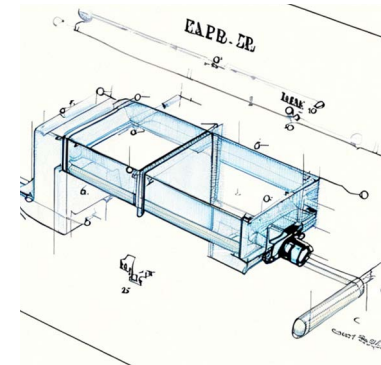
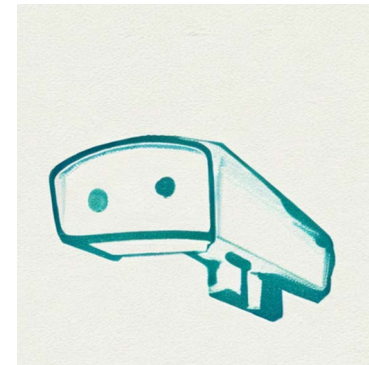
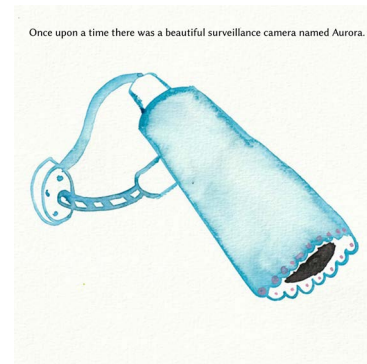
The full video of Machine Stories can be seen here:  
<https://vimeo.com/835771900>

## References:

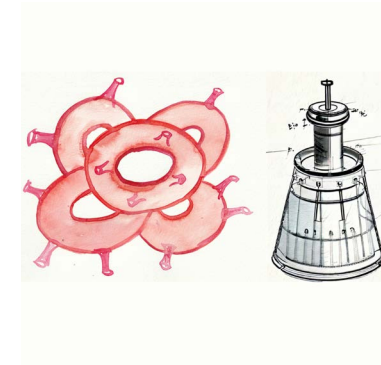
1. Paulina Yurman. 2021. Fluid Speculations: Drawing Artefacts in Watercolour as Experimentation in Research Through Design. In *Creativity and Cognition (C&C '21)*. Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, Article 38, 1. DOI:<https://doi.org/10.1145/3450741.3466777>
2. Paulina Yurman and Anuradha Venugopal Reddy. 2022. Drawing Conversations Mediated by AI. In *Creativity and Cognition (C&C '22)*. Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, 56–70. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3527927.3531448>
3. Paulina Yurman, Marie Louise Juul Søndergaard, James Pierce, Nadia Campo Woytuk, Anuradha Venugopal Reddy, and Matt Malpass. 2022. Venetian Drawing Conversations. In *Creativity and Cognition (C&C '22)*. Association for Computing Machinery, New York, NY, USA, 457–461. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3527927.3531207>



**Machine Story 1:** a series of ambiguous watercolour drawings of a yellow artefact were interpreted using Stable Diffusion, experimenting with various text prompts. The text in the story was created with sentences generated by Chat GPT, using the prompt 'write a story about a mysterious artefact'.



**Machine Story 2:** various watercolour drawings of surveillance cameras were created and read by Stable Diffusion or DALL-E to generate new images that replicated their features, limited by various word prompts or by no prompts. Text was created with Chat GPT using the prompt 'write a story about a beautiful surveillance camera'.



**Machine Story 3:** informed by a Drawing Conversation [1, 3] held with a quantum physicist in which concrete drawings of artefacts were merged with abstract drawings of particle movements, this story used the prompt 'write a story about a collaboration between a female South American industrial designer and a quantum physicist'. The AI generated text, which named the designer María and the physicist Dr Rodriguez (reproducing dominant representations about South American names) was modified to relate more closely to the drawings and ideas that emerged from the Drawing Conversation.