

Obvious presents

_FACETS OF AGI



2020

<History>

= In this fictional Africa, experts have finally managed to find a common ancestor to all african masks, in opposition with the common theory of those masks being born independently. A disturbing discovery, which changes the whole perception of how the different societies and ethnies of Africa interact between each other. This theory describes that all of them are part of a unique secret society, and seem connected to a unique ideal, even though each of them has a very specific way of addressing this ideal.

< All of these groups are tied to the same spirit, called AGI. They wear his mask only in very special occasions. AGI represents intelligence in its pure form. It represents the greatest advancement in terms of efficiency and optimization. More than that, AGI is also the incarnation of intelligence in emotional and social interactions. It represents the core and ideal intelligence, one we common folks can only deam of. />

Each branch of the secret society worships a different way of reaching AGI, and sees a different priority in the use of its powers. It seems the society is divided into five branches, and 16 underlying schools. Here is a representation of the hierarchy within this secret society.

AGI* Secret Society

* AGI = artificial_general_intelligence



Creativity

Beauty
Usefulness
Originality

Existence

Movement
Protection
Reaction
Sensitivity

Logic

Analysis
Automation
Deduction

Interaction

Anticipation
Assistance
Decision
Manipulation

Knowledge

Information
Connection
Conceptualization

Our Approach_

= { Most of the misconceptions around artificial intelligence are born from a simple distinction between AI and AGI. Artificial Intelligence (AI) describes the notion of being able to replicate human behaviour in an automated way. As an example, Machine Learning automates the behaviour of learning. The notion of Artificial General Intelligence represents a whole human-like intelligence, one that combines all these human behaviours, and replicates (and outmatches) human intelligence.

}

With this series, we propose an observation of beliefs around Artificial Intelligence. We aim at showing the public a new look on what intelligence is made of, and an overview of what is being done in a common effort of research to reach AGI. The idea behind those masks is to represent different orders, each of them being facet of what makes intelligence. A glance at how we are working towards re-creating intelligence, and our use of AI today gives us a hint as to how intelligence is seen in our society.



While great efforts are made in research in the field of knowledge, with text analysis and generation, we are still unable to make an AI conceptualize a notion. In the creative field, we know how to create something new and unique, but the concept of beauty is still something we humans have trouble grasping. We are much more advanced in the field of logic, with very efficient analysis and deduction algorithms. We are also using algorithms at an increased pace in our interactions and decision processes, and we are combining it with robotics in order to make it evolve and better interact with our reality.

< We also use artificial intelligence at an increasing pace in our processes and interactions, and we are yet to discover its many applications. For example, in the legal field AI is expected to render a judgement influenced by all data on previous cases. In medicine, systems work with AI to diagnose illnesses using a simple eye scan. AI is also used in some countries to ensure mass surveillance and control. Good or bad, these applications are increasingly numerous around us, and their impact on our lives will continue to grow, which is why we believe we should be aware that they exist. />



_The Artworks

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The series is composed of 22 artworks. All of these  
artworks have been invented using Generative Adver-  
sarial Networks (GANs), which are algorithms capable  
of creating new and unique visuals based on a large  
number of examples. We trained those models on a da-  
tabase of thousands of african masks. The algorithms  
understood the similarities and nuances between all  
those models, and managed to create new pieces.  
}
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After studying the subject and meeting with different experts, we gathered a database of 12 000 of african masks. We curated this database in order to facilitate the learning of the algorithms. After completing this step, we coded the algorithms in order to treat the subject at hands. Starts a fine-tuning process of the algorithms to get to the most satisfactory results.^

()We then selected the masks that best represent the dataset we selected. We wanted this collection to display a large range of masks, while keeping an accent on colours, so that we fully use the creative potential of the algorithms we have at hand.

During our search for information, we also had the pleasure to connect with Abdul Aziz Muhamadu, a Ghanaian artist who accepted to give life to the visuals generated with our AI. Based on the creations of the algorithms, he carved, sculpted and painted wooden masks. He used ofoton wood as a basis, and bust chako and white glue to create the details on the piece. After washing them, he applied different layers of paint, and harmonized them by sanding down the piece, in a way that matches the algorithms' creation. We were astonished by his skills as a craftsman and as an artist.

We were supposed to visit Abdul Aziz Mohamadu in his workshop in Accra, but due to the COVID-19 we weren't able to make it there. We will have to wait a little for the chance to discover his work, and the local culture.

Above everything, we are glad that this artistic project brings us to connect with new talented people. The idea of algorithms bringing us together instead of inferring in our interactions is a comforting thought.



Abdul Aziz Mohamadu, our craftsman and friend in his workshop in Accra, Ghana



<Kupunguzwa>

Deduction

{

"Kupunguzwa is a representation of the enlightenment necessary for taking the right decision. Wearing the mask usually makes oneself accepted as the power of decision, as its properties force the bearer to take selfless decisions."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

40*38*8_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



ai_generated_artwork



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<Maarifa>

Knowledge

{

"Without Maarifa, any decision taken has the same probability as any other to lead to success. Wisdom is a core component of intelligence. Only a few people have the strength and experience of watching through Maarifa's eyes, as the weight of knowledge can crush the simple-minded."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

50*40*12_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



ai_generated_artwork



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<Uchambuzi>

Analysis

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"Uchambuzi represents the power of separating the relevant from the irrelevant, and the detection of patterns and trends. The mask is also known for providing a competitive advantage for its holder as it allows to spot danger as well as opportunity."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

55*17*9_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



ai_generated_artwork



<Mantiki>

Logic

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"No matter the difficulty of the problem, if there is an optimal solution to it, it can be observed through the eyes of Mantiki. Strange effects have been observed on its bearers, the most notable being the inability to dream."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

43*29*8_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



ai_generated_artwork



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<Uhusiano>

Connection

{

"Uhusiano represents the power of distinguishing a patent from the mess. It is mostly used during justice procedures, to properly identify the cause of a problem, or to discern the true implications a divergent action."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

45*25*11_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



ai_generated_artwork



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<Dhana>

Concept

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"Wearing the mask of Dhana grants the ability to see the bigger picture, and by doing so to understand the underlying. The story says anyone who wears this mask for too long will forget basic considerations and eventually die from thirst."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

43*12*7_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



ai_generated_artwork



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<Ulinzi>

Protection

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"Ulinzi grants us the most primary and to an extent the most essential feature of all, survival. It is also known as being the most effective barrier against physical threats such as diseases."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

50*22*10_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



ai_generated_artwork



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<Muingiliano>

Interaction

{

"Muingiliano grants the power of connexion, which is the ability to reduce understanding bias with a said interlocutor. This mask is often used during negotiations, although it is considered an unfair advantage."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

45*20*7_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



ai_generated_artwork

<Matarajio>

Anticipation

{

"Wearing the mask of Matarajio allows to foresee fragments of the future. Although unstable, it constitutes a strong tool for decision making. This is one of the rare masks used in combat, as it allows to predict some of the enemy's moves."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

38*35*12_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



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<Usikivu>

Sensitivityp

{

"Feeling our surroundings is a most essential thing. One who has worn Usikivu knows this to be a truth. This mask has always been coveted by its devouts, and its carriage is known as being very addictive."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

36*17*8_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



ai_generated_artwork



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<Uamuzi>

Decision

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"Whenever facing a dilemma, Uamuzi systematically guides its bearer towards the best choice. Whether it is the right one depends on other factors such as the level of information available. Uamuzi's devouts are often seen as great counselors, and have built a reputation of being very open to collaboration."
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GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

50*15*9_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



ai_generated_artwork



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<Majibu>

Reaction

{

"Whenever in need, Majibu helps us to answer with the correct action. Its power protects its bearer from suffering others' choices. The followers of Majibu are known for their susceptibility, and it is considered dangerous to deal with them without the power of another mask."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

43*21*10_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



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<Uwepo>

Existence

{

"Its followers value the body as more than a host for the mind. Uwepo represents the most inherent and the most primal sense of intelligence. The mask is known for granting strong physical capacities to anyone who holds it, and is therefore used in combat, although wearing it for too long makes oneself forget the purpose of the fight."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

55*26*9_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



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<Uhalisi>

Originality

{

"The mask of Uhalisi represents the advantage of being different. Wearing it allows to see the world from another angle, and to find creative alternatives. The followers of Uhalisi are considered odd, and their ways often take a long time being broadly adopted."

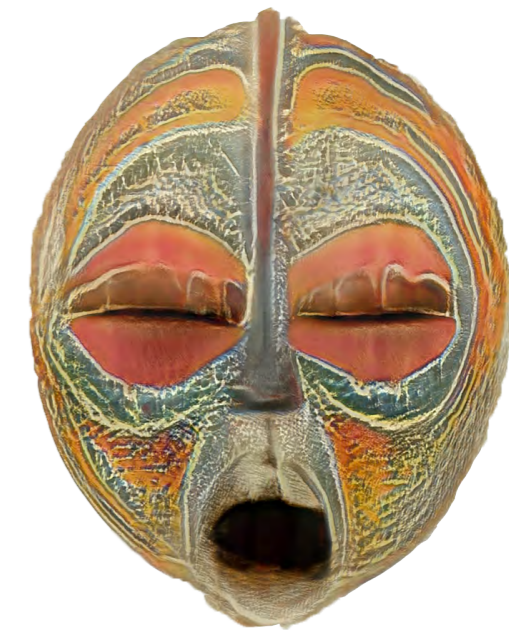
}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

33*27*9_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



ai_generated_artwork



<Urembo>

Beauty

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"The advocates of Urembo see the ability to determine and assert aesthetic value as being the purest capacity. According to them, Urembo allows more than merely judging beauty: it provides a guidance to distinguish light from darkness."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

44*20*9_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



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<Umuhimu>

Usefulness

{

"Choosing to follow Umuhimu is a choice made by people who believe its powers will lead us to choose the most effective path of development for our society. The power of the mask is often used in a deviant way, in order to judge secret society members on their contribution to the cause."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

41*21*8_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



ai_generated_artwork



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<Harakati>

Movement

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"The followers of Harakati chose this school for its tendency to rush decisions. According to them, the road keeps the society safe, and the mask ensures their survival. According to tradition, the mask shouldn't stay at a given place for more than a few days."

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GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

48*21*8_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



ai-generated_artwork



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<Usaidizi>

Assistance

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"The mask of Usaidizi grants anyone who wears it with the ability to help and support another. Often used for earning favours, many believers still use it for self-satisfaction as well."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

36*14*9_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



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<Habari>

Information

{

"Habari allows the collection of relevant data when in need of addressing an issue. The mask is also known for allowing the transmission of information gathered by all ancient generations to the new one."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

30*30*11_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



ai_generated_artwork



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<Udanganyifu>

Manipulation

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"The mask of Udanganyifu allows its bearer to control the mind of others. Historically, its powers have been used to enforce convergence around an idea, and therefore ensuring its efficient development. Its virtues depend greatly on the idea itself, and therefore the mask bearer."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

36*30*9_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



ai_generated_artwork



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<Ubunifu>

Creativity

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"According to Ubunifu's followers, the ability to design novelty is not a feature, it's a must have. Ubunifu represents the most fascinating part of progress, the unexpected one. Although some don't consider them essential, followers of Ubunifu often try to provide reasons for being admired."

}

GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

50*31*12_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



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<Otomatiki>

Automation

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"Otomatiki provides the ability to perform anything which has been done in the past with at least the same efficiency. It is said that wearing the mask and transmitting it to the next generation allows never to forget. Therefore, this mask is considered a great component of progress."
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}
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GANs Algorithms, beech & paint, Computed in France, built in Ghana

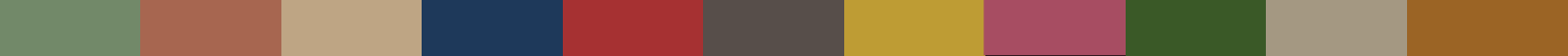
40*45_cm

2020

= 10_000_€



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