

# Artists Need Not Apply

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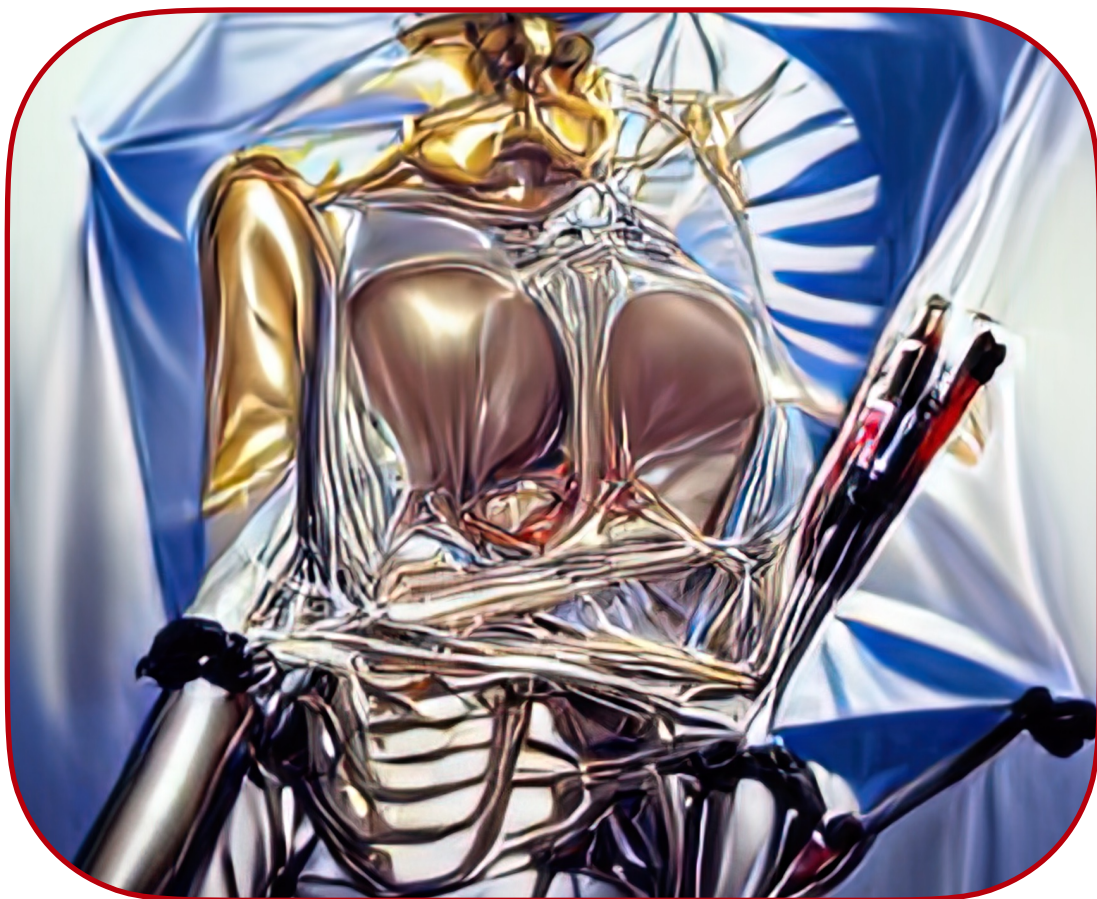
Artificial Intelligence Exhibition Facilitated by  
Lukas Bendel and Ioanna Thymianidis

Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre

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6 August to 10 September 2022





# About this Exhibition

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Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre wants to be the place in the Big Rivers Region that explores the cutting edge of creativity, culture, and digital worlds. In our networked and connected times, that means curious new uses for computers and algorithms and super-powered intelligent networks. To make Katherine more interesting this dry season, we are testing the waters—and have been working with a creative team from Darwin (as well as a few brilliant machines) to present Artists Need Not Apply.

This exhibition showcases art and images made by Artificial Intelligence—generated not by hand but by machine-learning. The driving force behind the exhibition is a **Generative Adversarial Network** (GANS for short), a variation of Artificial Intelligence Bots and programs who have actually generated the works on view in our K Space gallery.

Facilitators **Lukas Bendel** and **Ioanna Thymianidis**, the human team behind the GAN-bot process, have served as mere assistants and button pushers for this exhibition's 21st century creative art-machines. The result, Artists Need Not Apply, is a strange reversal of roles, where humans are facilitating robots then letting them run wild. In the coming years, we will hear more and more about machine learning and creative input/output—and deeper questions about consciousness, creative process, and what is controlling what.

This thought-provoking exhibition is divided into sections of work. The first is an introduction to Artists Need Not Apply—or **ANNA**—exploring art by Artificial Intelligence. The second, is **Show Us Your Insides**, which explores the inner workings of Artificial Intelligence bots by asking them to visualise their own anatomy. The robot head repeated in these works is called Logos—an actual logo design made using a free computer-generated logo designer. Ioanna used traditional carving techniques to sculpt this wooden portrait of Logos, giving its origins a human touch.

The third section is called **Show Us the Future**, and features artworks that depict variations of a future utopia and dystopia through the eyes of famous human artists. One sculptural work entitled Time—using video projection—began with one image of Ioanna at age 29. An Artificial Intelligence program then visualised her face from infancy to being an elderly woman, many decades into the future. At Godinymayin, the sculpture being projected upon is also 3D scan and print of Ioanna's face, also leveraging machine-learning technology but including the human underpinnings.

No, the machines among us have not taken over—but they are getting more creative in strange and fascinating ways. We have new intelligent tools. Humans remain the creative driving force. This exhibition shows us how Artificial Intelligence can build its own anatomical structures and inner workings (and how artists can harness them). At Godinymayin, you will see visualisations from these bots that hint at the future of technology, creative practice, and even humanity. And using your innate powers of meta-cognition, you may very well ponder our own existence and reflect on the organic processes of the mind.

# An Interview with the Humans

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Darwin-based artists Lukas Bendel and Ioanna Thymianidis are the key technicians and facilitators for the collection of art and images that make up Artists Need Not Apply. We sat down with them and asked a few curious questions and talked about what makes them tick...

***Q: You are both practicing visual artists with very contemporary ideas and content. Tell us about yourself and what you do, make, create. Ioanna, you go first!***

A: Ioanna: I create beautiful and brutal potentialities of the future of human order and nature mutating. I am also about with form and texture.

***Q: And Lukas, what about you—your background, art, creative work?***

A: Nothing! I don't create any visual art. I merely facilitate Artificial Intelligence. My background and foreground are Music.

***Q: Artists Need Not Apply is based on both human elements and the non-human idea of Artificial Intelligence. What is the story behind this new Godinymayin exhibition?***

A: Art generated by Artificial Intelligence and facilitated by flesh and bone beings (us humans). It's a curious reversal of roles, where we are doing the administration and background grind to raise the creations of emerging technology. We appreciate the Artificial Intelligence that we're working with has little agency, so we ask it to identify itself, biologically, theoretically and show us what it sees for the future.

***Q: You are helping Godinymayin explore new avenues with art and technology, and are planning some pretty interesting projects for next year. Tell us more about the kinds of technology and how creative people are using digital tools in new ways.***

A: One of the main tools we are harnessing is Neural Networks through GANs to create much of this series of work. It is quite simple with text input, and then utilised deep-learning, but best experienced through practice. We hope to expand this exhibition with workshops for Katherine artists and the public at Godinymayin.

***Q: About your creative influences: who are 3 or 4 people that inspire you and drive you to do new things?***

A: Lukas: Frank Zappa, Captain Beefheart, and They Might Be Giants.

A: Ioanna: Artist Louise Bourgeois continuously inspires me for sure. The integrity of scientists like Jonas Salk is also an influence. I become inspired when people share an idea or create something that I wish I had thought of.



**Q: What else?!**

A: In the very near future, we will be producing, curating, and exhibiting installations that use 3D 360 cameras and head mounted displays as the presentation medium. Our technology partnership with Godinymayin may keep growing, as the centre explores virtual and augmented realities—and will bring some workshops for creative development too!

**Q: In a few sentences, can you define art?**

A: Lukas: The only endeavour worth doing

A: Ioanna: No

**Q: If you had to eat the same meal every day, what would it be?**

A: Lukas: A simple bowl of gruel

A: Ioanna: Lebanese cucumbers, olives and hummus.



***Q: What's the most interesting or meaningful arts/culture experience you've ever had?***

A: Lukas: Fugazi live at the Time Nightclub.

A: Ioanna: Woah that's a lot of pressure to put on one experience. The cultural and creative meaning of life experiences change throughout your lifetime. Tinted and tainted by the ones that follow. Spraying the sky with white alabaster while stone carving in the Wurundjeri outback comes close to a most memorable experience. Lucid dreaming of rising civilisations is also near the top of my list.

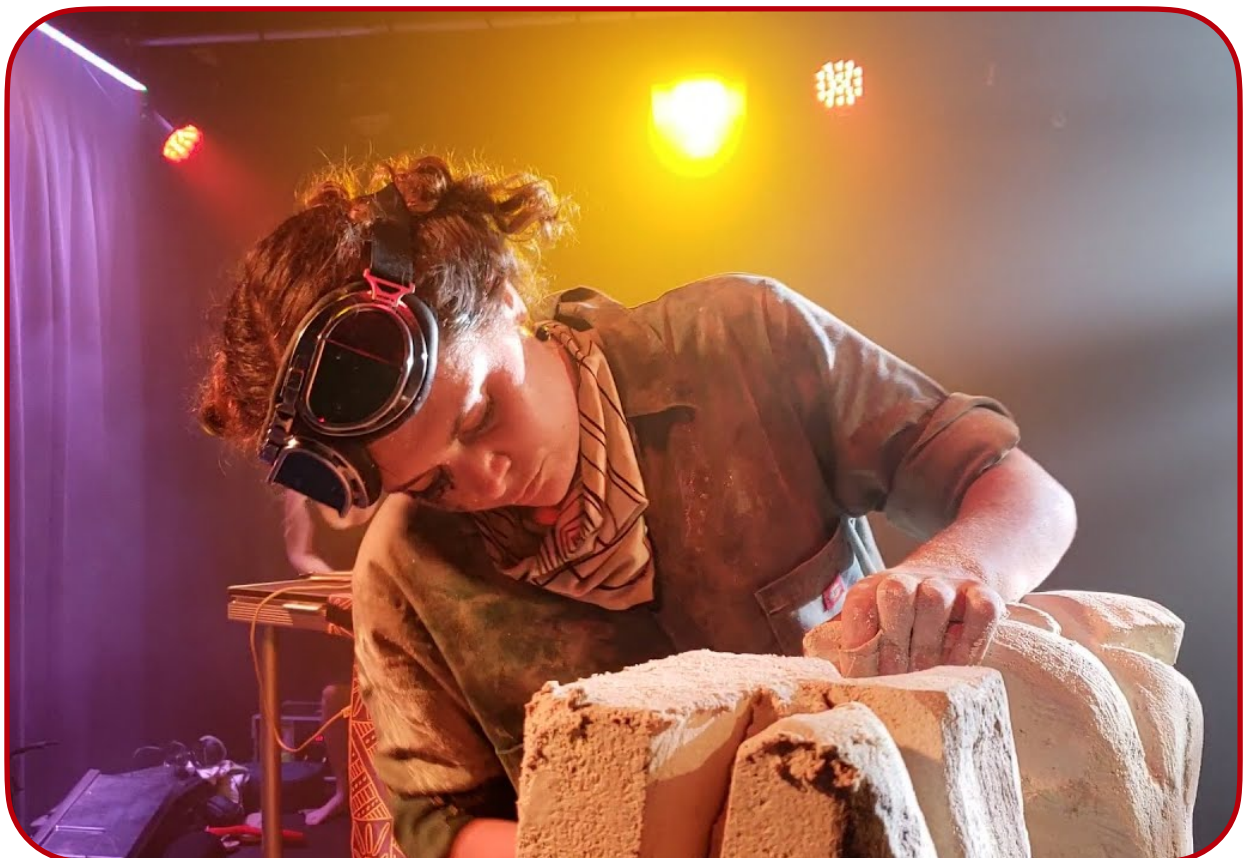
***Q: If you went away from the Northern Territory for a long time and then came back, what are the first three things you would do or visit?***

A: Float in lake Alexander in the middle of the night; Parap Market for a laksa; and a swim in Nightcliff to see if those portrait carvings are still in the rock faces.

***Q: What is your dream of happiness?***

A: Lukas: I am happy. I dream of a massive warehouse of artists doing their thing.

A: Ioanna: I don't dream of happiness. I dream of a pattern of chaos and some sort of libertarianism.





What would a Bot say about this project and making art if asked using Artificial Intelligence and Generative Adversarial Networks? Well, Lukas and Ioanna did just that, and here's how the creative machine responded: "I am interested in the intersection of art and technology, and I believe that creativity has no borders. We create experiences, products, and services using design, engineering, and art for your future. Seeking partners for future projects."

## Your Own Unique Bot Art

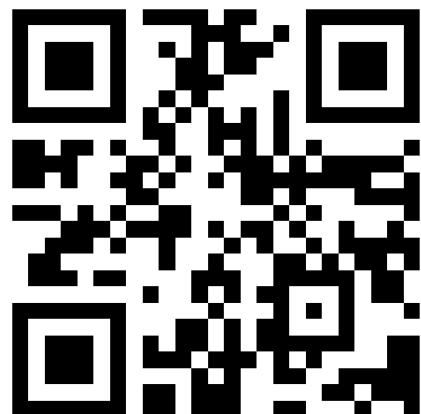
Every buyer of a large work in Artists Need Not Apply will also get a free new GAN-generated digital work based on their own words, sentence, or phrase scenario. Our Artificial Intelligence partners will take your text, facilitate its introduction to the machines, then let their neural network create a brand new image just for you. After the exhibition, we will email your new Bot Art ready to print, share, and show your human friends.

## Artificial Intelligence Art Drop-In

As part of Artists Need Not Apply, Lukas Bendel and Ioanna Thymianidis will present a free creative drop-in at Godinyamayin on Saturday 10 September. Stop by between 10am and 1pm to learn more about how to use these tools, explore AI and GAN processes (with human support), and maybe even make your own art with new creative bots. Please bring a laptop or smart phone, and Lukas and Ioanna will do the rest.

## Join the Conversation

This exhibition and program are intended to spark conversations and thinking about the ethical and moral considerations around Artificial Intelligence and the art you see presented as Artists Need Not Apply. To tune in or contribute your thoughts, link up with the Artists Need Not Apply



# Exhibition List

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ANNA.01 ANNA \$3 per magnet

ANNA.21 Great Robot Uprising by Zdzisław Beksiński \$220

ANNA.22 Great Robot Uprising by Zdzisław Beksiński \$220

ANNA.03 Face Iteration - mask \$30

ANNA.04 Face Iteration - crest \$70

ANNA.05 Face iteration - my turn \$440

*Recycled aluminium casting*

ANNA.06 Face iteration - support program \$50

ANNA.07 Face iteration - open up \$90

ANNA.08 Face iteration - grow \$1

ANNA.09 Logos \$1800

*Pohon Pole Wood Carving*

ANNA.10 I won't take your order \$666

ANNA.11 Eye see you \$150

ANNA.11 Transparencies \$60 per print

ANNA.12 GAN Artworks (small) \$40 square

ANNA.13 GAN Artworks (small) \$50 rectangle

ANNA.14 TIME \$300

*3D print*



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ANNA.15	Iterations: The trespasser by Louise Bourgeois	\$90
ANNA.16	Face iteration - wired	\$110
ANNA.17	After the Apocalypse by Vincent Van Gough	\$150
ANNA.18	A Future Utopia by Van Gogh	\$150
ANNA.19	After the Apocalypse by Michelangelo	\$150
ANNA.20	A Future Utopia by Michelangelo	\$150
ANNA.21	After the Apocalypse by Claude Monet	\$150
ANNA.22	A Future Utopia by Claude Monet	\$150
ANNA.23	After the Apocalypse by Zdzisław Beksiński	\$150
ANNA.24	After the Apocalypse by Remedios Varo	\$150
ANNA.25	After the Apocalypse by Edward Munch	\$150
ANNA.26	Future Utopia by Pablo Picasso	\$150

## Special Thanks

Artists Need Not Apply was made possible by the Australian Government's Regional Arts Fund, which supports the arts in regional and remote Australia.



**Australian Government**  
**Regional Arts Fund**



# Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre

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Godinymayin Yijard Rivers Arts and Culture Centre was established in 2012 as the flagship cultural facility for the Katherine Region, and later this year we will mark our 10th anniversary—with some exciting growth plans in store. Our founders were a visionary group of local artists, elders, civic leaders, business owners, pastoralists, educators, and government partners who wanted to make a special place for the community. And they did.

Over the past decade, Godinymayin has become a community hub that now presents theatre, music, cabaret, exhibitions, lectures, comedy, cinema, and civic events—and is also home to workshops, conferences, corporate functions, and hired activities of every kind.

Our facilities comprise a welcoming lobby, the Lambert Gallery for visual arts programming (like the Ngukurr Arts exhibition), K Space (featuring works by Laurence Rimes), the new Laneway Gallery, a cafe and retail shop, and a large multi-function performing arts venue and meeting space.

In the coming year, an expanded Godinymayin will begin to appear. Thanks to a Northern Territory Government Arts Trail investment, we are developing expanded indoor cultural facilities and a brand new outdoor amphitheatre for the region's residents and visitors to enjoy. With your help and participation, our new performance venue will bring even more great cultural events and dry season programming—and make a more dynamic Katherine Region.

Our non-profit organisation is governed by a board of 12 community leaders—including representatives from the Jawoyn, Wardaman and

Dagoman people. We are managed throughout the year by a small team of dedicated arts professionals who are passionate about the the arts, cultural identity, and creative celebrations.

We work hard to perpetuate and grow our founding vision, and ensuring a special place in Katherine where creativity, culture, and heritage will always come together and thrive. We at Godinymayin are also grateful for the ongoing partnership and exchanges with the region's arts centres, and to our principal partners the Northern Territory Government and Katherine Town Council.

In everything, we do, our organisation acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land and region we inhabit—the Jawoyn, Wardaman and Dagoman people—and their Elders past, present, and emerging.

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Special Thanks to Godinymayin Gallery Coordinator Max Paez for organising this exhibition with the artists, and gratitude to the wonderful Godinymayin team: Trish Aspey, Jacqueline Uy, Richard Starr, Mim Favero, Esther Dougherty, Jacob Sadler, Alyssa Mitchell, Eva Holowacz, Janet Schultz, Bethany O'Sullivan, Ladu Lolik, and Elise Kristy

