

AI video just took a startling leap in realism. Are we doomed?



Since 2022, we've been using the prompt "a muscular barbarian with weapons beside a CRT television set, cinematic, 8K, studio lighting" to test AI image generators like Midjourney. It's time to bring that barbarian to life.

A muscular barbarian man holding an axe, standing next to a CRT television set. He looks at the TV, then to the camera and literally says, "You've been looking for this for years: a muscular barbarian with weapons beside a CRT television set, cinematic, 8K, studio lighting. Got that, Benj?"

The video above represents significant technical progress in AI media synthesis over the course of only three years. We've gone from a blurry colorful still-image barbarian to a photorealistic guy that talks to us in 720p high definition with audio. Most notably, there's no reason to believe technical capability in AI generation will slow down from

here.

Horror film: A scared woman in a Victorian outfit running through a forest, dolly shot, being chased by a man in a peanut costume screaming, "Wait! You forgot your wallet!"

Trailer for The Haunted Basketball Train: a Tim Burton film where 1990s basketball star is stuck at the end of a haunted passenger train with basketball court cars, and the only way to survive is to make it to the engine by beating different ghosts at basketball in every car

ASMR video of a muscular barbarian man whispering slowly into a microphone, "You love CRTs, don't you? That's OK. It's OK to love CRT televisions and barbarians."

1980s PBS show about a man with a beard talking about how his Apple II computer can "connect to the world through a series of tubes"

A 1980s fitness video with models in leotards wearing werewolf masks

A female therapist looking at the camera, zoom call. She says, "Oh my lord, look at that Atari 800 you have behind you! I can't believe how nice it is!"

With this technology, one can easily imagine a virtual world of AI personalities designed to flatter people. This is a fairly innocent example about a vintage computer, but you can extrapolate, making the fake person talk about any topic at all. There are limits due to Google's filters, but from what we've seen in the past, a future uncensored version of a similarly capable AI video generator is very likely.

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