

Brainstorm Session

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The goal of the Brainstorm session was to develop the core themes of the Trackster Project. The direction given to me by the lead creative was to emulate some of the magic the portal series.

So, together with the lead creative I first broke-down the themes of PORTAL and then incorporated what I felt would emulate the magic for web series.

What were the themes of PORTAL?

- Nature of AI intelligence and ethics of scientific experiments
- The relationship between machines and humans
- The nature of consciousness and free will
- Ethics of creating and controlling intelligent machines

BRAINSTORMING SESSION (Rough thoughts and Notes)

- When we look at sci-fi through the lens of time, it's clear that the genre is a reflection of the outlook on life during its zeitgeist.
- Sci-fi from the Golden Age often portrayed a hopeful view of the future, but as we entered the Cold War, the genre shifted, shaped by the fear of global annihilation. It became darker and more pessimistic, no longer favoring the future.
- Today, we fear a cyberpunk future, because more and more it seems to be becoming our reality. The pandemic, the rise of AI, and the booming tech industry driven by capitalism all paint a similar picture.
- Companies that are at the forefront of AI development are more focused on profits than on the well-being of people. As soon as it became convenient, they dismissed their ethics departments - the departments that warned us of the risks of unregulated AI.
- One company, originally founded with ideals of open-source transparency, shifted toward a profit-driven model once it recognized the limitless potential of monetizing AI.
- Even companies that advocate for a space-faring future for humanity have ulterior motives. They want only a select few to achieve it, believing themselves to be better than the rest.

- After all, if they truly wanted a space-faring future, they would share their technologies with everyone.
- Instead, they only seek to keep themselves at the top.
- A car marketed as environmentally friendly doesn't actually address the root cause of the problem. In fact, it may contribute even more strain to the environment than traditional internal combustion engine cars. But it sells like hotcakes, because people aren't buying cars, they're buying a feeling. The feeling that they're doing their part to save the planet.
- In the end, it's all about marketing and profit. People know the world is in trouble, but they don't care, they want to milk every last second for profit. They've even co-opted the revolution to sell, feeding their unsustainable growth.
- Even blockchain, a new technology with a lot of potential uses, is used for all the unredeemable reasons one can think of - Gambling, lottery, bribery, drugs, tax evasion, climate change, a tool for rich to become even richer - meths).

Once I had enough thoughts swirling in my brain, I proceeded to form concrete themes to jot down.

Possible Themes for the Trackster Lab Project

- Co-opting popular revolutions to profit from them in the short term, ultimately losing the war for everyone.
- New technology is used to further humanity, but without compassion, it's only meant to further individual gain. AI threatens to replace many jobs. Objectively, that's a good thing because it could mean a more comfortable life for everyone, but those in power don't care to create a plan to take care of those displaced by it.
- What does it mean to be human? Even after being transported into the minds of robots, do they still exhibit the emotions of someone who could have been human? Do those created from nothing, programmed to exhibit and feel the same emotions, feel the same, are they the same, and should they be treated the same?
- Is programmed malice the same as malice driven by anger and fear? Is it worse? The machine doesn't get any pleasure from torture; it just can't imagine doing anything else, so it is stuck doing the same pointless, sisyphian task over and over again for the rest of eternity.
- Megalomaniacs with power and what they can do if that power is not controlled.