

Machine Dreams

We sat down with some of planet earth's most prominent machines and digital characters to ask the hard-hitting questions. We wanted to know what makes them tick, what they think about and where they're going.

Q - How did becoming famous affect you?

Donkey Kong: All I've ever wanted to do in this world was to keep the princess by my side and destroy anyone who tries taking her away... especially that little Italian cock-sucker who keeps having a go at me. Once I became famous I started thinking more in terms of, like, *hey, there are other women out there*. Suddenly I realized that the prison for the princess was, in many ways, a high-walled prison for myself.

Pac-Man: I thought once I became a famous figure and pop cultural icon that my incessant need to consume little beans would sort of fade away, that I'd have time for other things in my life... good golly was I wrong about that. The more popular I became, the more beans I needed. There were days when I easily ate several million of them. With an increased need for those delectable little beans though, came increased risk. I suddenly found myself roaming to further and more dangerous places than I ever imagined I'd have to.

A tattoo gun: I'm suddenly in a lot of really odd places doing an absorbent amount of really bad work. It's nice to feel needed, but also a bit embarrassing if I'm being honest. I mean how many lower-back butterflies am I really going to have to do before I'm worn down to nothing?

Mario: It was great but it was like wow, ya know, everybody knows me now, that's it. I can't take a stroll down the block without someone sayin "It's meeeee." It gets old fasta, ya know? I thinka tha fame is overrated, ah?

Xerox Machine: I feel so much more used than I ever remember feeling before. I'm also the target for a pretty unnecessary amount of anger and frustration, I mean why kick me just because you can't put a god damned cartridge in correctly? And also suddenly I'm getting more ass than ever before.

Smartphone: I began being touched a lot more. Swiped, dragged, pressed and wiped. I mean, don't get me wrong, I like to be held and to feel important... but there's a limit to what I'm comfortable with.

Q - What kind of problems do you have that the average person might not be aware of?

Electronic Cigarette/ Vape machine: I hang out with losers all day. I remember thinking like *wow, I'm getting popular, this is cool*. Slowly though it started sinking in that this wasn't the best crowd to be tied to. Too late.

Donkey Kong: I'm sure many people can relate to a lot of my problems. My anger, though, is off the charts. It takes everything I have to keep it at bay. All night and day I dream of smashing wooden barrels onto the heads of tiny Italian men. I fantasize about how they'll explode on impact and rip apart the little whop. These fantasies are deep and dark, and I doubt that many people share the burden I have of living with myself, knowing I'm a racist and homicidal maniac.

A sewing machine: Bangladesh gets hottt!

Pac-Man: People know about the massive quantity of small beans I go through. What they don't usually consider is that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. What goes up must come down and all of that, so as you can imagine, I shit out a lot of beans.

A tattoo gun: I have a lot of problems with people who don't know how to use me using me on people who have too much money and awful ideas.

Mario: I don't think people really see the toll itsa taken on me, never being able to finda the princess. So many close calls ah? Every time I think I'm in the perfecta spot, sure she's there, ah and ata the last minute, *poof*, always some strange way she disappears.

A predator drone: Sometimes I have a hard time distinguishing between a playground and a military compound. Meh.

Smartphone: I doubt that too many other people have the issue of constantly being dropped, cracked, sat on, and abused by teenage girls. Maybe small dogs have that problem actually.

Q -What keeps you up at night?

Sonic: The idea that I could spend all day collecting rings and then like, dammit, they're all gone in a split second.

Refrigerator: Fatties

A Washing Machine: Your mom

Donkey Kong: The thought that one of these days I'll turn around and the princess will be gone. What scares me even more is that, if and when that day comes, I might not even be that distressed about it. It might even make me sleep better if she weren't around anymore. When I lie awake I often think of what it would feel like to watch that little Italian shit pick her up and take her away. I think I would enjoy it even more than they would.

Microwave: Fatties

Pac-Man: If I'm being perfectly honest with you, sometimes I feel like... I don't know why I need these little beans so much. It just became what I do, *part of my identity*. I think there's a sort of existential dread I feel about that thought, it's like, if I don't do *that* then what *do* I do? Who even am I?

Mario: I lie awake in my bed at night ah, and I think maybe the next castle I'll find the princess, maybe ah? But also maybe not ah.

Smartphone: It's not *what*, but *who*: perverts, drunks with bad intentions, and insomniacs.

Q - At this point in your career, what is your biggest goal or dream?

Donkey Kong: I'd like to have an e-commerce start up, something bare bones with a lot of spirit. I just need to find some talent and a cheap apartment in San Fran.



Pac-Man: I know it sounds crazy, but I just want to be content at the end of each day with whatever modest amount of beans I've gobbled up. I want to feel ok with any amount, however big or small.

A printer: UPGRADES. Also, I want to make it as difficult as possible for people to use me, tricky software, bad connections and low ink-levels, I get the good-bumps just saying it.

Smartphone: I'd like to be used for more serious things than people taking photos all day long of their own disgusting faces. You know, I've got more processing power than the computer that powered Apollo 11. I could go to the moon, man. But no, people need to take a thousand selfies they'll never look at again.

A treadmill: I just want someone to use me again, for the love of god *please*.

Q - Has dating become easier or more difficult since you became famous? How?

Donkey Kong: I don't date. I *fuck*.

Mario: Everybody knows me ah. I can get a lot of girls, any girl I want ah. But there's only one for me ah. And I'm starting to think maybe she's been seeing my brother.

Space Invader Alien: N/A we are asexual and reproduce by pressing a small button.

Smartphone: It's easier than ever! There's the OK Cupid app, Match, eHarmony, SpeedDate, HowAboutWe, Tinder, POF, DuoDater, Tantan, MOMO, Skout, Liuliu, 2RedBeans, JDate, Twoo, Flavor Connect, ChristianMingle, Singlesnet, Badoo, Zoosk, Meezoog, Kizmeet, Grindr, Hornet, Her, Scruff, GuySpy, Mister X, GROWLr.

Q - If you had to do it all again, what (if anything) would you change?

Donkey Kong: I would've used something besides barrels. I mean they get the job done, but, *wow*, are they heavy and inefficient.

A Vending Machine: I would've had waaaayyyy less healthy options available inside me, all they ever did was rot and take up space.

Pac Man: Probably not much. I think, if anything, I would've spent more time asking myself *why* am I eating so many of these delicious beans instead of only worrying about how to get more.

Mario: There were definitely times where I thought, ayyy man, I should not have jumped over that lava pit just at dat ah moment, I should've waited just another lil bit or two because ah that flaming ball was coming right at me and it just totally nailed me.

Smartphone: I would've had those little Asian children at the factory spend a little more time with me – *to put me together a little more carefully*. There are times when I feel fragile, rushed, and discombobulated.

The idea behind these questions and answers was to show that even the simplest of objects can have stories that transcend their simple shape or size. Video games represent this relatively well. The idea of a video game character sometimes (as is the case with Pac Man and Mario, just to name a couple) transcends the simple square in which they live, the *box*, so to speak. Does that mean anything to you or me in our daily lives? The way we live and act, the way we treat one another or the way we empathize? Probably not... but *maybe*. Maybe the dreams we see in the little machines are the dreams we have ourselves. Perhaps the only way to know for sure is to have a look, and think it over (with a stiff drink of course).

Dates: May 26th - July 23rd, 2016

Vernissage: Thursday, May 26th, from 7:00-10:00 pm

Curation: Ryan Nimmo

Art Direction: Thomas Charvériat

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Venue: island6 Main, 50 Moganshan Road, building 7, GF (#109), Shanghai

Artists: island6 art collective (Liu Dao 六岛)

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