

DEEP DIVE

A.I. INFLUENCERS

**TO SET THE APPROPRIATELY ABSURDIST MOOD:
FLIGHT OF THE CONCORDS ROBOT ANTHEM 'THE HUMANS ARE DEAD'**

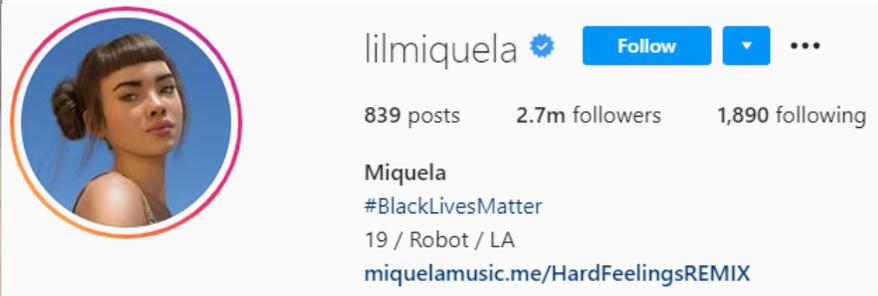
MEET MIQUELA. SHE IS NOT REAL.

But take a look - she does everything a human influencer does.

Like [this](#). Or [this absolute jam](#) of a song. Or this 'behind the scenes' look. Or this with her robot friends, or this one.

#Robutts.

She's getting a Snapchat show ([Variety](#)). IKEA has brought her on to one of their recent campaigns ([PetaPixel](#)).



It's... disturbingly effective. She has 2.8 Million followers and counting. For context, here are the followings of some real humans on Instagram:

- Martha Stewart, fountain of advice and lover of drinking while cooking has 3.2 million followers.
- Josh Brolin: 3 million followers. THANOS only has 3 million. And a robot will have more by the end of this year...
- Tan France of Queer Eye? A real, fashionable human? 3.9 million.

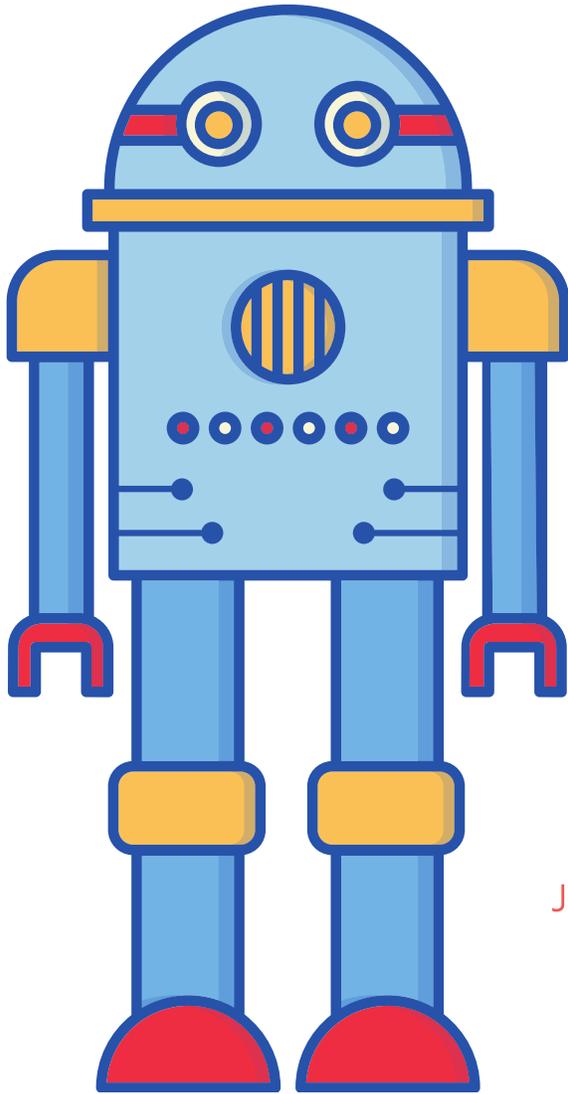
And she easily outpaces many more than a few successful humans with beauty, fashion & fitness mini-empires.

Has no one seen Ex Machina?! Or Westworld? Or one of the 50 Terminator movies? Maybe not. Because we've already let the robot influencers loose. And they're working. There's more...

GroupM has onboarded Sophia the Robot (MarketingInteractive). "Sophia will showcase how the agency enables the use of technology to build human connections with brands," they say. Group M is the parent company that controls 5 major marketing agencies. That's no joke. At least we know where Sophia comes from (Hanson Robotics, of Hong Kong).



Some brands are even partnering with *this* cartoonish thing, Noonouri.



The Verge **gets it**. Ditto the **New York Times**. And **Vox**. This is a new wave of marketing and it seems like we should hit pause and think for a minute.

We're not always clear where these artificial influencers are coming from, some of the organizations behind them are coming from. Want to find a perfect data gathering bot? Seems like you've been beaten to the punch.

There are jokes to be made but when I really think about it – doesn't this development seem to break down that last wall of pretend we have with marketing? We know we're being manipulated, but at least it's by a fellow flesh and blood human.

Furthermore, the algorithm is already reading us, dissecting us digitally. And now we have robots/AI coming in to further disrupt our visible online reality. Now we can be analyzed and marketed to with... zero human interaction? We're already separated by social media. Further so by social distancing these days... what happens when we have another level of separation?

What does social media become if we have robot influencers and accounts made specifically to get in your head, influencing you to see things you need. Machines made to find the most efficient way to sell to you. Another level of trickery on what you should be buying/doing/seeing/trying. Terminator influencers, to put a dramatic point on it.

... are we sure this is good?
Just because we CAN do something, SHOULD we do it?

And what do we do if it's too late?



Further Reading

The theme? But do we even need humans?

There are CGI influencers making more than humans (*Ruinmyweek*)

They're making millions. (*Cybernews*)

So let me ask you "Do These People Look Real to You?" (*NYT*)