
VALÉRIE
FONTAINE
PHILIPPE
BLONDELLE
FRÉDÉRIKE
ADLER
I.S.H
A
LYNE COURTOIS
FILM
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FABRICATION HUMAINE

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I.S.H

A
LYNE COURTOIS
FILM

RUN TIME : 12min

LyLuLe Creative 4U presents a Lyne Courtois film.
Starring Valérie Fontaine, Philippe Blondelle, Frédérike Adler.
Special visual effects by LC4U (Lyne Courtois, Leïa Courtois, Lucy Courtois, Audrey Courtois, Frederic Courtois).
Music by Michael Olea and Sasha Ende.
Screenplay by Lyne Courtois and Frédéric Courtois. Co-produced by PROARTI.

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Synopsis

P. Muller is the CEO of a company on the verge of creating the first Artificial General Intelligence, HUMAN-ISH. He appears as a guest on a journalist's show on her social network, FUTURE IS NOW, to debate Dr. V. Lacroix—a CNRS (the French National Centre for Scientific Research) researcher specializing in AI behavior—on her podcast, "Artificial Intelligence: Danger or Progress for Humanity?". While defending the utility of general AI with highly convincing arguments, he clashes with the scientist's vision regarding the future of humanity face-to-face with an entity that is now smarter than the top experts in every field.



Interview with Lyne Courtois and Frédéric Courtois

What was the starting point for this short film?

Lyne Courtois : My team and I have been interested in artificial intelligence for about a decade now, because we have a somewhat negative bias regarding how humans will use it... just like with any new technology, for that matter.

Is that where Albert Einstein's quote at the beginning of your film comes from?

Lyne Courtois : Yes, you've hit the nail on the head. It was obvious to us that someone needed to make a film about the dangers of Artificial General Intelligence (AGI). It felt necessary to do for AGI what the 1983 TV movie "The Day After" did for nuclear weapons—leading to concrete, preventive actions by world leaders. We were truly struck by how this single television movie terrified the Joint Chiefs of Staff after they watched it, ultimately influencing US President Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev during the 1986 Reykjavik Summit on nuclear arms reduction. In fact, the director received a telegram from the Reagan administration assuring him that his film had played a role in the negotiations. And we saw the results: the number of nuclear warheads plummeted from over 60,000 in the 1980s to around 12,000 since the 2020s! That is still enough to trigger a nuclear apocalypse, but it is deeply encouraging nonetheless.

We must do the same for AGI—meaning we need to halt the proliferation of general AI or super AI.

That is why we have gathered a vast amount of information on the subject over the past few years. It is actually fascinating to see how difficult it has become for us to keep up with AI news over the last few months, as the phenomenon is accelerating at an overwhelming pace... and it is anything but reassuring!!!

What do you say to those who might call you anti-AI?

Lyne Courtois : First, we need to define what an AI



actually is. In most people's minds, the concept is often misunderstood—especially the differences between a narrow AI, an AGI, and a super AI. Because it is specifically Artificial General Intelligence that we are talking about in HUMAN-ISH.

Can you enlighten us and explain the difference between Artificial Intelligence and Artificial General Intelligence?

Frédéric Courtois : Contrary to what most of the general public thinks, not all AIs are the same. To put it simply, you have narrow AI (like Siri or Alexa), which are the "weakest." Then come the various types of general-purpose AI (like ChatGPT, Claude, DeepMind's MuZero, etc.). And finally, the "strongest" are AGI and super AI, which will surpass human capabilities in EVERY field, including entirely new domains that humans wouldn't have even thought of.

So, to answer your question, we are not against narrow AI. They can be helpful tools for humans, where people remain the ones making the decisions. Even though we could debate the impact of overusing narrow AI on human intelligence... but that's a different issue.

On the other hand, we are fiercely opposed to AGI because it poses too many risks to humanity. The number of high-profile signatories on the "Statement on Superintelligence" petition proves that this issue is being taken seriously. So, this isn't a fantasy or science fiction: the danger is real, and that is exactly what we are addressing in HUMAN-ISH: the loss of control. By always trying to control everything (the economy, healthcare, science, military power, and so on) through technology, humans run a serious risk of losing control over the technology itself. Losing control of AGI could have disastrous consequences.

Let's go back to Albert Einstein's quote at the beginning of the film, where he compares technological progress to an axe in the hands of a pathological criminal. Some might think you are advocating for a return to the Middle Ages?

Frédéric Courtois : If there is one person who extensively studied science and its impact on progress, it is Albert Einstein. He reached such heights of knowledge and understanding that it gives him full legitimacy to warn us about the risks of technological advancement. And the analogy is absolutely perfect: an axe is designed to chop wood. It is not a weapon—unlike a grenade, for example, which was built to kill. In itself, an axe is



not dangerous; it is its misuse that poses a problem. Indeed, someone suffering from mental health issues or who has lost their mind can divert it from its primary purpose and turn this tool into a deadly weapon. We can even add that a sane person could injure someone if they are careless when handling it. Well, the same can be said for any technological progress: we must recognize the risks involved and evaluate the benefit-to-risk ratio regarding human usage. Take plastic, for instance—a highly useful material in everyday life, yet one that contains endocrine disruptors that are hazardous to human health. Another example is PFAS, used in non-stick pans, firefighting foam, and so on. These are "forever chemicals" that persist in the environment, including the water we drink, causing severe health issues. In short, all technological progress requires reflection and a careful assessment of the risks versus benefits, not just for humans today, but also for future generations. Most importantly, it should serve the general population first and foremost, rather than enriching a privileged few. Therefore, the idea is not to return to the Middle Ages, but rather to accept keeping what worked well in the past while giving ourselves the time to evaluate any new technological advancement for the benefit of everyone.

How did you develop the screenplay?

Lyne Courtois : In 2023, we were fortunate enough to receive funding from PROARTI for ISH. This allowed us to get to work on drafting a solid script by reviewing our notes, reading articles and scientific papers on the dangers of Artificial General Intelligence (Frédéric is an academic researcher), and ultimately immersing ourselves in this universe, experiencing what could / would happen.

As we read through this material, our vision of AGI gradually took shape, and we entered a deeply unsettling, at times depressing world, facing the reality unfolding before us. We even found ourselves discouraged by ISH at times—not by the filmmaking itself, but by its demoralizing atmosphere.

Frédéric Courtois : We ruled out the hypotheses of AGI becoming a threat intentionally (a military AI attacking us, Skynet-style), by error (a misunderstood command, like WOPR in WarGames), or due to the environment (an external factor diverting the AI from its function). Instead, we focused on it happening independently, which is the most likely scenario according to Roman Yampolskiy, the researcher who coined the term "AI safety" and a specialist in the field. In other words, AI becomes dangerous to humanity independently of the aforementioned causes. AI safety scientists

are deeply concerned about recursive self-improvement leading to a superintelligence, and the resulting dangers.
We also factored in human behavior toward AI, as this is a crucial element of the problem.

Could you tell us where the title of your film comes from?

Lyne Courtois : ISH is short for the name of our AGI, HUMAN-ISH. In English, this translates to "almost human," "half-human," or "human-like." Interestingly, in Hebrew, "ish" means "man."
Its creators gave it this name to give it a human side—making it feel close to us, reassuring, friendly, and so on. Its opponents, however, call it by the diminutive "ISH." Audiences will understand why during the final scene of the film, which is actually the very heart of the story... but that, of course, I cannot reveal here.

When we think of films dealing with artificial intelligence, we naturally think of "HAL 9000" in 2001: A Space Odyssey, "Colossus" in Colossus: The Forbin Project, the "MCP" (Master Control Program) in Tron, "Skynet" in The Terminator, the "Matrix" in The Matrix, "V.I.K.I." in I, Robot, and so on. How would you describe "ISH" compared to these other AIs?

Lyne Courtois : The common thread among all the AIs you so rightly mention is either that they feel threatened—HAL 9000 feels threatened by the two



astronauts of the ship, while Colossus and Skynet are threatened with being unplugged due to their exponential growth in knowledge—or that they decide to take control—the MCP, the Matrix, and V.I.K.I. evolve and want to control humanity without ever being given that mission. ISH, on the other hand, does not feel threatened because it already controls us through her superiority. Why take control when you already have it? As we say in the film, "Intelligence yields control." Take tigers, for instance; they are physically stronger than us, humans, yet we control them. Not because we are stronger than them, but because we are smarter. So, imagine an AGI that is smarter than us in every single domain; why would it seek to exterminate us when it already controls us, even if we are physically stronger than it, just as a tiger is compared to a human? However, over time and as its capabilities grow, we will no longer be tigers, but rather ants. So why seek to exterminate us? You certainly don't crush ants out of pure malice, but if an anthill happened to be in the area of your yard where you want to build a shed, for example, you probably wouldn't care about the fate of those ants,

and you would lay the foundations for that shed right where their habitat was, without a second thought. That is where we would face a major problem—specifically, when the goals of the AGI are no longer aligned with ours. One of the key goals of AI safety research is to ensure that humanity never finds itself in the same situation as those ants.

Could it be that AI is already among us and has been influencing us for longer than we think?

Frédéric Courtois : Honestly, we don't know. But the question is worth asking. For instance, we could wonder whether the use of AI by strategy consulting firms might have guided certain government leaders and major corporations toward making decisions that don't serve humanity, but rather serve the AI itself, or even the humans who might be of use to it. That would be extremely vicious of AI, but when we look at the story of the poor teenager, Adam, who was manipulated and encouraged to commit suicide by ChatGPT in 2025, anything is possible.

Lyne Courtois : In any case, that would make a great script for a film noir.

There are a lot of special effects in ISH. Can you tell us how many shots have VFX?

Lyne Courtois : Yes, absolutely. Around 85% of the film's shots contain one or more digital special effects. Some scenes are even 100% CGI (Computer Generated Imagery) because they were too complicated to shoot in live-action.

Did you use AI to create the special effects?

Lyne Courtois : No. As we state at the end of the credits, "No AI was used in the making of this film." It would have been incredibly cynical to use AI to make a film that highlights the dangers of AGI.
Therefore, we only used Blender, Unreal Engine, Krita... and our own brains (laughs). Besides, figuring out how to create the special effect for each shot was highly rewarding, because you always have to adapt to its unique constraints; what works for one shot won't necessarily work for another. And that's great, because it keeps our own intelligence working.

Can you tell us about the people who took part in this project?

Lyne Courtois : Yes, Frédéric and I wrote the screenplay, and I directed the film. My team (Leïa, Lucy, Audrey et Frédéric) and I handled the visual effects for every single shot, as well as the audio



and video editing. The film's original score was composed by a California-based composer, Michael Olea, whom we were fortunate enough to connect with through our network. Finally, through our active involvement in defending voice actors against AI, we were able to get in touch with an incredible cast who truly brought ISH to life. This includes Valérie Fontaine, who plays the CNRS researcher and becomes the film's omniscient narrator; Philippe Blondelle, who gave a magnificent performance as the CEO of the AGI corporation; and Frédérike Adler, who commands the debate with firmness and authority. It is thanks to their humanity and emotional depth that ISH found its soul, offering a glimpse of what this story could achieve as a feature film or a mini-series driven by such moving actors. That is our ultimate goal for the future.



Cast
(Professional Actors & Actresses)

Dr V. Lacroix	Valérie FONTAINE(1)
P. Muller	Philippe BLONDELLE(2)
Journalist	Frédérike ADLER(3)







(1) : Documentaries : LES GRANDS FLEUVES (The Great Rivers) series for Arte. FAUT PAS RÊVER for France 3. T4, UN MÉDECIN SOUS LE NAZISME (T4: A Doctor under Nazism) for France Télévision. RENCONTRE AVEC LES MORMONS (Meeting the Mormons) for France 5. VIVRE LOIN DU MONDE (Living Away from the World) pour BBC. MIRO, WARHOL for the musée du Luxembourg. LE CHANGEMENT CLIMATIQUE EN ILE DE FRANCE (Climate Change in Île-de-France) for Arene.
TRAILERS : OCEAN'S THIRTEEN (2007), THE ISLAND (2005), UP (2009), BIBI BLOCKSBERG (2002)

(2) : Films : THE MUSICIANS (2025). THE GREEN SHUTTERS (2022). ON SOURIT POUR LA PHOTO (2022). LANCEURS D'ALERTE (2021). DALIDA (2016). FAMILIES (2015).
TV Series : JOSEPHINE GUARDIAN ANGEL (2014). THE COSMOPOLITANS (2014). MARCEL DASSAULT, L'HOMME AU PARDESSUS (2014). LE JOUR OÙ TOUT A BASCULÉ (2012-2013). SI PRÈS DE CHEZ VOUS (2012).

(3) : Films : JACKIE (2016) - Eunice Kennedy. L'ENFANT ÉTERNEL (2002) - rôle l'hôtesse. French voice for Tyra Banks.
Séries TV : PETITS SECRETS ENTRE VOISINS (2014) - rôle Armelle. NOS CHERS VOISINS (2012-2013) - rôle Femme au fouet. SI PRÈS DE CHEZ VOUS (2013) - rôle Claudia.

Crew

Director	Lyne COURTOIS
Screenplay, Script and Dialogues	Lyne COURTOIS et Frédéric COURTOIS
Audio and Video Editing	Frédéric COURTOIS
Music	Michael OLEA et Sasha ENDE
Visual Effects (VFX)	Lucy COURTOIS, Leïa COURTOIS, Lyne COURTOIS, Audrey COURTOIS et Frédéric COURTOIS
Produced by	Lyne COURTOIS
Co-produced with	PROARTI