

Is it possible to make friends with an algorithm?

I'm going to meet someone who's done just that in the most extraordinary way in Australia's City of fashion...Melbourne.

LILY: Jason Grech is an award-winning couture designer

JASON: Hello

LILY: Hi Jason, nice to meet you

JASON: Welcome love

LILY: He creates high end bespoke dresses and gowns.

JASON: This has been inspired by tiles...there's a trim there, two there...there's another one there and another there, there and then we just stitched all those together.

LILY: Creating any fashion collection is a risk...

Six months of hard work, tens of thousands of dollars and it still might not be right.

JASON: What I'm really famous for and what my staff hate the most is about 4 weeks before a collection I change things so I look at the collection I may change the colours I may change the looks or the silhouettes and that takes lots of time it's a big investment to change things....

LILY: Computer giants IBM came up with an idea for Jason. Let algorithms take the strain.

JOANNE: We actually learned a lot about the research process that Jason went through as designs a new collection and then we were able to take that discipline of analysis around looking at trends and data ...and use that to in essence take some of that work load away from Jason...

LILY: IBM gave Jason access to Watson. Their vast artificial intelligence technology. Its intuitive systems we're created to beat humans at a gameshow, it's evolved into a series of apps used in science, medicine, music and art.

LILY: So part of it is what you like as I understand it you enjoy architecture –

JASON: Yep I love it

LILY: Could you give me an idea of what images it output from the images you input...

JASON: I gave it a picture of the Southern Cross train station ...it gave me about 15 – 20 images and it gave me things like style, shapes, pattern... you know that's one of them so...

LILY: Watson draws insights from Data. It looked at ten years of global fashion trends, designers, articles, tweets, blogs and vlogs and gave Jason a glimpse of the future. The colours he should use to have an on-trend collection....and the algorithms said...pastels.

JOANNE: In the past he hadn't really used pastel colours

JASON: Never

JOANNE: And when Watson recommended -

LILY: You seem appalled

JASON: Never I know, but I am now but yeah-

LILY: Jason could have ignored Watson advice ...but he didn't.

LILY: Was it scary?

JASON: Very scary

LILY: When his Cognitive Collection hit the runway, it became his best-selling ever. Algorithmically approved.

JASON: Facts are always facts so it just allowed for me to be more creative...

JASON: Look at the dress that was inspired by the Southern Cross train station so this is the roof line and that's all of the movement that-

LILY: There's a lot of geometry and structure to it but it's also very elegant and-

JASON: Thank you

LILY: It's so hard to imagine how you could take such a-like a piece of architecture and transformed it into a beautiful piece of dress

JASON: Thank you

LILY: And feminine-

JOANNE: we've looked at using some of our Watson technologies, Watson beat for music. Can we use AI for poetry, for design of architecture?

LILY: It's just fascinating

LILY: I don't know about you but my mind is blown it was real example of how the worlds of arts and creativity come into play with maths and analytics with phenomenal results. Maths and Fashion, wow.

LILY: Back to our race of the algorithms...

Half an hour into our orienteering challenge and all the teams, seem to be on same path.

TEAM YELLOW FEMALE 1: What? Are you overtaking us?

LILY: Orange Team they seem very close to the Pink actually

CHRIS: They've recovered from their initial disaster in the bush here and they seem to be making great progress.