





y

The y in Linney.

Welcome to y, a quarterly publication that asks ‘why?’, or perhaps ‘why not?’

Working creatively at Linney means being innovative, inquisitive and challenging, whether that’s on a commissioned project, or simply when we feel the urge to be experimental. We believe any subject can be explored in this way and this publication helps us to share some of our creative investigations and thoughts with you.

Curiosity keeps us asking why. You could say it puts the y in Linney.

Art is a way for humans to communicate with one another.

Dreams, in particular, are a way for human beings to explore and internalise their emotions. Dreams can illustrate knowledge that an individual may not be aware of during the waking state. In turn, machines can be used to help humans access specific information in their dreams, or explore dream concepts in greater detail.

What role do dreams play in the relationship between man and machine? Are they a source of wonder and inspiration, or are they a source of ominous darkness?

Is there a connection between the way we use technology and the way we dream? The answers to these questions are just starting to be explored.

— ChatGPT

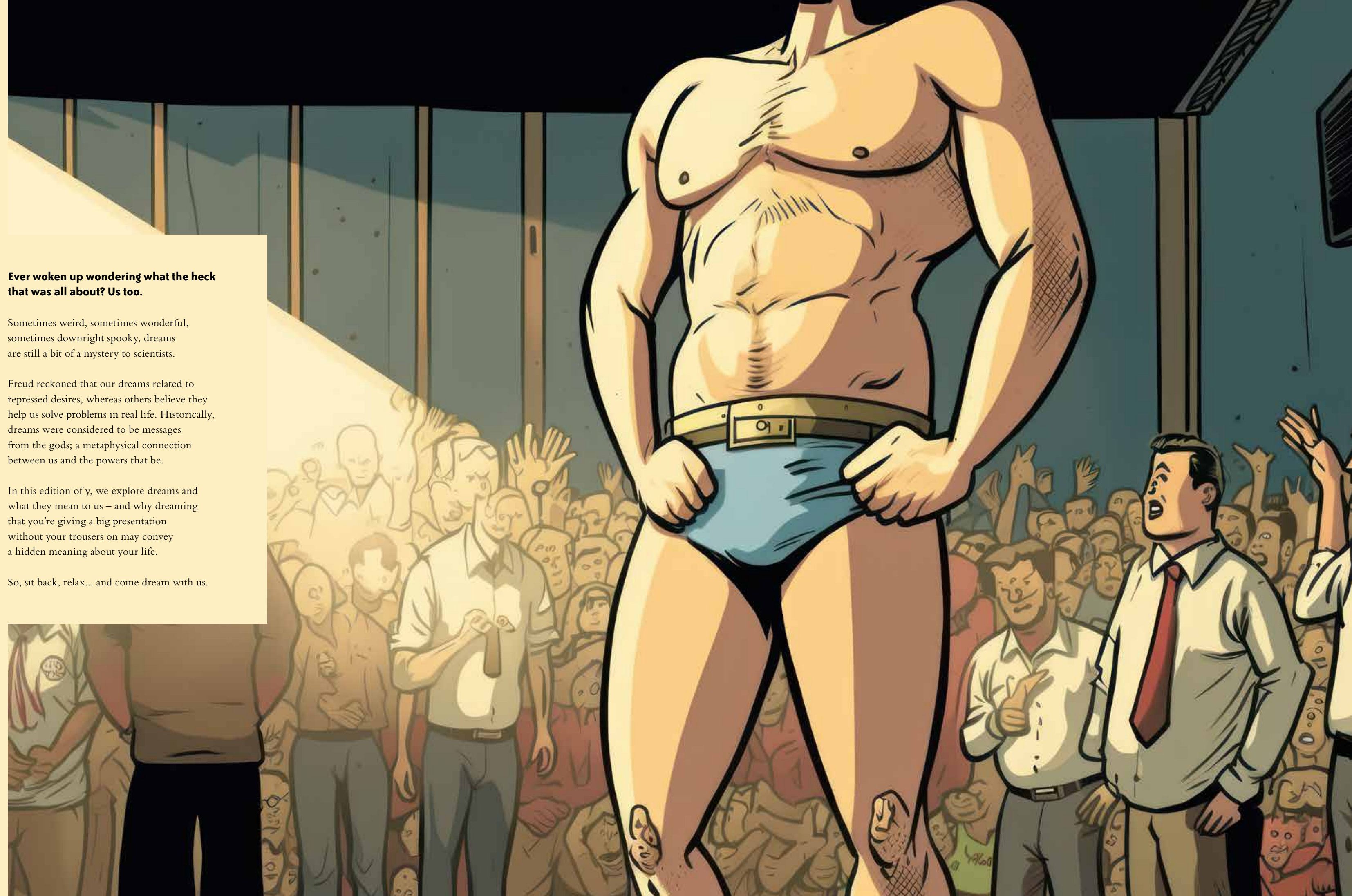
Ever woken up wondering what the heck that was all about? Us too.

Sometimes weird, sometimes wonderful, sometimes downright spooky, dreams are still a bit of a mystery to scientists.

Freud reckoned that our dreams related to repressed desires, whereas others believe they help us solve problems in real life. Historically, dreams were considered to be messages from the gods; a metaphysical connection between us and the powers that be.

In this edition of y, we explore dreams and what they mean to us – and why dreaming that you're giving a big presentation without your trousers on may convey a hidden meaning about your life.

So, sit back, relax... and come dream with us.





DO ANDROIDS *dream of* ELECTRIC *sheep?*

This edition of *y* began purely as an exploration of dreams; that weird sub-reality we all experience from time to time – a fascinating subject in and of itself.

As I spent more time pondering the theme, I began to think more and more about the human mind from two sides: the sentient, emotional, feeling side; and the biological, chemical, functioning side.


I thought about how frighteningly alike the human brain and computers are. Real intelligence and artificial intelligence.

That clear line between man and machine is rapidly becoming more obscure, and more interesting.

Some of what you'll experience in this edition is man-made. Some is the output of artificial intelligence – human dreams interpreted by a heartless algorithm. It's a fascinating exploration into the relationship between *us* and *them*, questioning where one ends and the other begins.

So... do androids dream of electric sheep?

We are *such stuff*
As *dreams*
are made *on*,
and our *little life* **IS**
rounded with a
sleep



FABULOUS. FASCINATING. FRIGHTENING.

The theory of dreaming

Although undeniably magical, we know that dreams are in fact part neurological, part psychological.

We dream during REM (rapid eye movement) sleep, a state in which the brain is active – almost as much as when we are awake. So, it's no wonder that we create imaginary scenarios. However, there is debate in scientific circles about the function and purpose of dreams that has raged on for decades.

Various theories exist about why dreams occur.

The activation-synthesis theory suggests that dreams occur when the pons (control of sleep cycles + relaying sensory information) and the limbic system (emotional motor system) are activated during REM sleep.

Conversely, the threat-simulation theory assumes that dreaming is preparation for real-life scenarios that could pose a threat... a scary thought indeed.

Other experts believe that dreams are all about consolidation, that is, dreaming is the opportunity for the brain to solve problems, make decisions and organise memories.

Dream or reality?

Historically, dreams were interpreted as being messages from the gods; a metaphysical connection between us and the 'powers that be'. More recently, Sigmund Freud popularised the idea that dreams demonstrated more repressed desires.

For the most part, there are correspondences between dream content and waking life, i.e. dream concerns belie waking concerns. So, if you're worried about that big presentation coming up, you might dream that you are presenting without any trousers on!

What's interesting is that there tends to be a coherence and regularity in the dreams of specific groups such as men, children, or members of hunter/gatherer societies. However, some dreams can even transcend groups and geographical locations.

Dreaming as healing

Another function of dreams could be to recover from difficult emotional episodes experienced during the day, as our brains are completely devoid of noradrenaline, the anxiety-triggering molecule. This means we are free to reprocess painful memories in a safer, calmer environment.

To illustrate this, in a significant psychological study, two groups of people were shown distressing stimuli. Both groups were then presented the same footage 12 hours later – the one difference being that the first group were shown their footage after an evening of sleep.

Those who had slept in between showings had greatly reduced activity in the amygdala (fear centre) upon viewing the footage a second time.
(Walker & van der Helm, 2009).





ART. SHORT FOR ARTIFICE

Last night I dreamt that my dream dinner party guests had accepted my invitation. Author George Orwell, playwright Joe Orton and journalist Hunter S Thompson tucked in and talked about dreams as artist Salvador Dali captured the moment.

“The dream world is a place where the impossible is not only possible, but it is also expected,” proclaimed Hunter, firing up a doobie. “In dreams, we can fly, we can breathe underwater and we can communicate with the dead. The mind is truly free in the dream world and the possibilities are limited only by our imagination.

“But dreams are not always sunshine and rainbows,” he added, from somewhere behind a cannabis cloud. “Sometimes they are dark, foreboding and downright terrifying. Dreams can be a reflection of our deepest fears, our most profound desires, our most significant anxieties. They can be a warning, a message, a premonition. They can be a glimpse into our own souls, a reflection of the state of our being.”

George, an irritable contrarian, brushed fag ash from the lapel of his sharkskin weave and shook his head.

“There are those who argue that dreams are a purely physiological phenomenon, a result of the brain’s electrical activity during sleep,” he declared. “Others claim that dreams are a manifestation of the soul, a glimpse into the afterlife, or a connection to a higher power.

“In many ways, dreams are a reflection of the world we inhabit,” added George, grumpily stubbing out his Capstan. “In the end, the true meaning of dreams remains elusive, but their value as a source of insight and inspiration cannot be denied.”

Joe giggled, drained his Double Diamond and stood to deliver a typically faux-grand monologue. “Dreams,” he announced. “Those fanciful illusions that taunt us in the night like a pack of cackling hyenas. They whisper sweet nothings in our ear and then vanish like a puff of smoke when the morning sun peeks through the curtains. They’re like a cheap bottle of whisky that you can’t resist, promising you the world but leaving you with nothing but a headache in the morning.”

As Joe slumped back into his chair, I pondered the power of dreams and reflected on my guests’ theories. They were spouting shallow platitudes, I concluded. Synthetic, contrived. Spurious facsimiles of notions from artists I admired. Inauthentic, superficial, artificial intelligence.

George, Joe and Hunter sloped off as I closed the ChatGPT window on my laptop. I logged out of Midjourney as Salvador twizzled his waxed moustache and melted into the floorboards.

Like pulling teeth.

I feel a *strange sensation* in my mouth.
I raise my hand to discover a SINGLE LOOSE TOOTH.
I anxiously claw around as more teeth loosen.
I look in the mirror and try to press them back into place,
BUT THAT JUST MAKES THINGS WORSE.
I'm overwhelmed with panic. I scream.
I'm surrounded by *the people I love most*;
I plead to them for help,
but they go about their business,
unaware, uninterested.

*Dreams of teeth falling out are typically related
to a fear of how others perceive you or communication
problems you may be experiencing*

**/Imagine: A scared 40-year-old man sees himself in a mirror,
his teeth are falling out. He is surrounded by friends who don't care.**
Dall-E AI response



Moondiving

I WAS ACTUALLY ON THE MOON. IT WAS CRAZY.
It felt *small* and had a *really weird texture*.
I was TAKING PHOTOS of the Earth.
Then I decided to jump off the moon
as it was floating over the sea,
But I had that *awful feeling*
when you fall in a dream
and was just HOPING I COULD WAKE UP.

*Flying and falling can indicate
a fear that something in your
life isn't going well, perhaps at
work or in a relationship.*

A waking dream

I'M ASLEEP IN BED AND I START TO STIR.
AS MY EYES OPEN, I REALISE I'M
HALF HOVERING OUT OF BED.

MY WHOLE BODY is stuck in this position
with my arms (what felt like) restrained
to my body. Suddenly I feel this HUGE
WEIGHT *pushing down* on me as I try
to pull myself back up. I'm convinced
someone is PUSHING ME DOWN.

I'M STUCK in this awake/asleep
nightmare for, I think, 10 minutes
feeling *fully aware* of what's happening.
I'm looking round my room trying to
see *what's holding me* in this position.

THEN SUDDENLY I'M AWAKE, laid in
the middle of my bed, very comfy,
very confused but very *scared*.

I will go to sleep as normal as any other evening, sometimes with a scroll of Instagram or TikTok as a 'treat' before sleep. It could be minutes or hours into my sleep, I will wake up, jump up, and shriek with absolute panic as I start to 'bat off' and avoid the spider that I cannot seem to find in the darkness. I never actually see the so-called spider, but each time I convince myself that one is falling down towards me or is entwined within my bedsheets. Sometimes I become frozen and cannot move from my bed whilst shielding myself with my hands as I scream out for help. Within seconds I realise what has happened (probably for the third time this week, and it's only Thursday), turn the light on, and just to be safe, double check behind the pillows for any creepy crawlies before returning to sleep, not knowing if this will reoccur throughout the night.



I picked a LITTLE MUSHROOM
That *grew* upon my back
Gobbled it down,
And then...

A SWARM OF DOVES in white
Pecked out my eyes and sight
I wandered out
INTO THE NIGHT I wonder if those *little doves*
Were more than FEATHERED FOES
I saw too much,
And then...

As if I woke *upon the plains*
Of places dreams are made
I stretched *my wings*.
I LIFTED GROUND.



A man with RABBIT TEETH and CAT WHISKERS is lying to me.



24—25

IMAGINE THE CHEESIEST OF SCENES. Like the TREE THING in *Avatar*. The WHEATFIELD in *Gladiator*. A bit of *300*. Mixed in with a bit of *VR chill-out*. The colours are mainly morning. PASTEL PINKS and YELLOWS and BLUES. You walk into this space where *I'm already expecting you*. You actually WALK in. This is a DREAM right? You walk in and it's all classic art, little fireflies, green glade and wavy grass. The place is so chill it's literally HEAVEN. And I'm cynical, inside this. EVEN HERE - I know where I am and still... And I'm thinking the resolution is way, way over 4K.

This is some next-level HDR DREAM,
and NONE OF THIS FLEETING.



24—25

I'M IN A HALLWAY. A TERRACED HOUSE. ROOMS LEAD OFF IT AND THERE'S NO DIRECT LIGHT. Behind me: *"Would you like a cigarette in the garden?"* Me: *"Yes sir, that would be very pleasant indeed, thank you Robert"*. *"Down here is where she grew up, you'll like it"*, he says. We walk outside, light a cigarette and walk through an overgrown garden and out into the street. His cute child is bobbling along, walking quickly, confidently, too close to the street edge. THE VIEW IS LOW, THE TODDLER'S HEIGHT, I'M BEHIND HER. She veers across a side street into the back legs of a horse that accidentally stops her wandering across the road. The horse tries to nip and its speed and intention reminds me of a dog. THE SCENE SLOWS TO A STANDSTILL. The child is mid-fall into the road, out from under the horse. THE SCENE CHANGES. IN AN UPSTAIRS ROOM. WOODEN FLOORBOARDS. OLD WORN PAINTED WALLS. A WASH BASIN. What looks like Brad Pitt is gazing out the window and talking. This reminds me of a scene from INTERVIEW WITH A VAMPIRE. Noir backlit Pitt is being miserable and complaining. *"You sound more like me than you, you daft sod"*, I say. My friend (a woman) who's also in the room is watching us both. I'm trying to impress her because I KNOW BRAD PITT.

"Brad - everything's f---ed, seel!"

I laugh. He doesn't.





“*My house* is my REAL HOUSE
but also *not* my real house
in a lot of ways.”

“I think it’s weird how much
my mind accepts the strange
logic of dreams. Sometimes
I’ve realised I’m dreaming and
woken up immediately but
mostly I’ll just go along with
the rapidly changing scene.

“I remember almost all my dreams
but struggle to recount them, I
can see them but can’t explain
them because there’s no link
to the changing colours and
patterns – but in dream world
they made perfect sense.”

I CAN'T picture the EXTERIOR
but I've *explored* the ATTICS many times.
As a *child* I look down
through the *ornate balustrade*
to a LARGE OPEN ROOM.
A party of people
in *elegant clothes* are *dancing*.





I'm *playing* on the LOCAL TENNIS COURTS with my friends. It's a *hot summer's day*. The sky is blue, the COLOURS ARE VIVID. I run, *faster* and *faster*. My feet leave the ground. The tennis courts drop away below me. My friends are *tiny* in the distance. *The sensation is new*, and it takes a moment for me to realise I'M FLYING. *Not like a bird* — I don't need to *flap my arms*. No, *flying* isn't right; I'M SOARING. I control my body up here just as I do on the ground. *A thought is all it takes* to rise, bank, swoop and dive. I'm over the hills now and the town is far behind me. *I've never felt freedom like it*. And I HAVEN'T HAD THIS DREAM SINCE I WAS EIGHT YEARS OLD.



I HAVE A
DREAM.

Martin Luther King Jr.

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