This work deals with death and its iteration in the future. The probability of its evolution, due to our evolving technology, is the main focus. With these ideas in mind, this animation depicts someone dying in an alternate timeline under strange circumstances. I shaped a character, Todd, facing death with no memory of his own demise; I also designed an A.I. that is programmed to push people through to another life or back to their old one.

This work is a critique about how we use technology, as evidenced by the interactions between a machine simply doing its job and a person used to getting things in the way he wants. We expect everything to be delivered at maximum output and top quality. Every standard we have about technology is relative to the way we use devices (our cell-phones, for example). Because of this, we expect the world to operate in the same way. Todd represents this expectation. He is aggressive, short-sighted, and self-centered—the major attributes of an angry iPhone user.

The animation reflects the lack of connection between people and their technology, thus forcing the process of death to evolve. Will this be the downfall of generations to come? Will we adjust to a world where everything is handed to us and nothing is earned? Will death be simplified?

Baker

DEATH HAS A FACE

Death is manifested in culture and religion as the end of existence and the beginning of centuries of curiosity. Humanity is at arms, searching endlessly for the answers to questions of impossibility. What happens after we die? What existence can be had when our bodies rot in the ground? For many ancient cultures and modern religions, there exists the belief that death is transcendent. This "transcendence" reflects the idea that death omits our consciousness from the physical world and transmits it to a metaphysical plane of infinite existence. This existence, while infinite, lacked interaction with the physical world to create a gap between the living and the dead.

In Japanese culture, the infusion of Buddhist religion provoked depth regarding the bodies and burials of their ancestors. Where once bodies would be buried in shallow communal graves or thrown onto a riverbank, now were cherished as guardians of the family still living. Egyptian mummification was used to ease passing into the afterlife of a highly complex society where the ideology of afterlife was written as iron law. Even in Western culture, where Christianity has taken a firm grasp, the dead are considered empty vessels, once filled with souls—the equivalent of a consciousness. These rituals and rites are human attempts to fight the rationale of emptiness in the universe and the eventual death of all civilization. Even as poet Edgar Allen Poe writes in his most famous piece, "The Raven," symbolism of death has steadily been drawing more heavily on civilization as it advances:

> "But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour. Nothing farther then he uttered—not a feather then he fluttered— Till I scarcely more than muttered "Other friends have flown before— On the morrow he will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before." Then the bird said "Nevermore."

Death to prior eras of humanity seems unavoidable and constant. To most, there appears no escape, only a delay of the inevitable light that takes the mind to a place unfathomable…both terrifying and exhilarating, the mind of humanity.

A SOCIETY UNCHAINED

In physics, the event horizon is a boundary in time and space, where the observer cannot be affected by any events following. Much like human curiosity, death is an event horizon that is only overcome through leaving the physical body for a new supposed plane of existence. At the same time, human sentiment and an underlying connection to the physical creates a sudden rush to prevent the event horizon from approaching. The constant of death becomes a race to conquer death within 80 years, or die trying. In order to overcome this ever approaching constant, civilization must remove the constant entirely from the equation that humanity refers to as "Life." Transcendence to that metaphysical plane grants infinite existence; in other words, immortality. This power is achieved with technology and the advancements brought on by the selfish nature of man.

The egotistical attitude people carry is the driving force behind most technological advancements. Humanity seeks out an easier path to most issues that plague them. The expansive division of people across the world brought on new forms of communication, making it easier to reach people; but as these advancements increased, people's appreciation and gratitude towards them began to dwindle. If there is something humanity truly wants as a civilization, they achieve it by any means, not to make the

world a better place but to make the individual's life easier. This sense of convenience is what humanity strives for the most, thus the inconvenience of death is the constant humanity seeks to overcome. The oversight of simplifying life hides what parts of society still struggle and find lack of support. This leads to major technological aspects of society failing at random moments in time, but it also leads the further advancement of prior technologies, aiding in the productions of their successors.

The social disconnect of society is onset by the technological greed of innovation. People's inability to cope with the everchanging technology creates a gap between can be done and what is done. The use of the smartphone, originally intended to make communication and social interaction easier, has become a social barrier. Attention is drawn so heavily to these devices that man loses sight of the physical world and, instead, focuses on a digital world, oblivious to one's surroundings. This focus draws people away from the development of new ideas, and even hinders social contact. The concern goes from research on cancer cures and treatments to concerns about what's going to be on the new iPhone. This disconnect causes lack of appreciation for what society has developed so far, instead looking to the future as an expectation of entertainment to further divide social standards into an array of data easily accessed by the starving masses of technology addiction. The cost of addiction comes with a society whose expectations fuel the collective. As a collective, with the expectations for furthering technology and furthering every aspect of the advanced world, a vicious cycle of invention, innovation, and recycling arises. Advancement brings new ideas, new products, and continually improves the lives of every person in the world.

MEET YOUR MECHA

In the current state of technology, the application of removing mortality is more than a simple science fiction piece. Even now, amputees are outfitted with mechanical limbs, bionic replacements for accidents and birth defects. As a whole, humanity has begun the evolution towards total replacement of biological components. Humanity is starting to realize that the only true way to cheat death is to remove the component of humans that can die, the flesh. But with these augmentations, humanity will continue to exchange part for part, becoming more advanced with increased capacity for all activities, physically, and socially. However, the onset of a mechanical age will be overshadowed by the next, perhaps most immediate of situations in which humanity takes the last and most definite stage of evolution to completely eradicate life as it is known.

This is the next phase of human evolution, as defined by a rapidly advancing and rapidly dying society; it is to remove the mortal body through transcendence. The most radical and extreme advancement that can be made for humanity is to shed human weakness and convert the conscious mind, or soul, into data. This change will bring revolution on a global scale, with diverse groups fighting either for total consumption by the collective minds of digital data, or against the destruction of the fundamental nature of humanity. Against this battle also comes a separate threat, "the Singularity."

The Singularity, a radical change where artificial general intelligence, or strong AI, becomes so advanced that humanity begins to merge with it. Through transcendence, humanity would become unified, but against the intelligence of a collective that was built. As Isaac Asimov wrote his laws of robotics, the paradoxical separations of these laws will create another division between sentient species: "A robot may not injure a

human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm. A robot must obey orders given it by human beings except where such orders would conflict with the First Law. A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Law." Within this idea, humanity itself is seen as harmful; the fundamental laws create failure in any and all mechanical creation. The conflict between AI and the new digital humanity will exist as a veritable struggle of the superior digital race.

THE END OF AN ERA

Death comes to humanity in a number of ways. It is the responsibility of humans to gauge their ability to assess and address the problems that come with a continuously advancing world. With the collective of distinguished people all formed around a barrier of social communication will find a world that is unable to cope with the ravaging of natural resources and supplies. The inevitability of the self-centered nature of humanity will lead to conflicts about these dwindling resources. With the paradoxical laws that exist to stop humans from harming one another, the end game would be all humans "dying" at the hands of the singularity and being assimilated to stop the needless violence in order to uphold these laws.

Humanity is ill equipped to handle the rapid developments our technology will take. Those deeply rooted in their technology are the ones getting the social technology funded. They are bringing an inevitable singularity with their want for more connection and more sharing. "Bigger, Better, and Simpler!" is what the disconnected want…a life full of convenience and technology they aren't ready for. The transcendence is coming in the not so far off future, and it will be on a grand scale. Humanity's desire for everlasting life will be the end of an era of human and flesh, and the dawn of one of metal and machine. The cyborg will become the norm and human's minds will be one with a computer. The singularity will occur almost immediately after the transcendence and, from then on, our existence will be infinite, but our ability to handle it will still be in question. People are focused on themselves, and what needs to be done for them to make themselves happy; the technology is just what makes it easier to find that materialistic happiness.