The Feast of the Gods
By Giovanni Bellini (with modifications by Titian and Dosso Dossi)
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Giovanni Bellini signed and completed Feast of the Gods in 1514. It has since undergone changes and restorations by Titian and Dosso Dossi.

The image is based on a text by Ovid, the Roman poet.

"The painting shows the incident of the attempted rape of Lotis. She was a nymph mentioned by Ovid, the daughter of Neptune or Nereus. During a festival in honor of Liber that she attended, Priapus tried to rape her while she was asleep, but she was awakened by a sudden cry of Silenus's ass and ran off, leaving Priapus in embarrassment as everyone else woke up too and became aware of his intentions.[5] The story is shown at the edges of the composition, in a somewhat undramatic fashion presumably showing a moment shortly before the key incident, with Silenus and his ass at left and Priapus and Lotis at right (and everyone but Lotis still wide awake).[12] The subject had been depicted in the first illustrated edition of Ovid in Italian, published in Venice in 1497.

Another depiction of this rare subject in a Venetian print of 1510 has a very similar pose for Lotis but places much greater emphasis on the erotic nature of the story, including Priapus's
outsize penis, here only a hint under the drapery."––Wikipedia

Bellini's image is beautiful but the attempted rape of Lotis by Priapus adds a very dark current to it. Beauty by itself is not enough. The Feast of the Gods needs this dark current to make the beauty stand out. This painting is a very modern work.

I made this version of The Feast of the Gods by taking a digital photo of the painting and then processing it using Polycam software. It uses Lidar and AI to supply unseen faces of a 2–dimensional image to create a 3D pictuire. Since the painting by Bellini is on a flat surface, I was curious to see what would happen. I was surprised by the result. Polycam software made a series of cubic faces and projected parts of the image on them: download the PDF, then click below to play the image:

The initial decision to begin the work was my contribution to this

project. I also made the choice of The Feast of the Gods by Giovanni Bellini. Almost all of the image manipulation in this work was done by artificial intelligence housed in the Polycam software. Many in the arts community are horrified by machines making something aesthetically pleasing, but this won't help. As in the case of the camera, the machine will produce something equal in quality or better than an unaided human.

This is just how it is.

One of the amazing features of living at the end of the 20th century on to the early 21st is how integrated in our lives machines have become. Often, this integration is medical in nature. I have an artificial knee and use hearing aids. The titanium and cobalt of my knee replacement will outlive me by decades, if not centuries. I am, to borrow terminology from a popular TV series, a bionic man. I am not alone. Every year, about 790,000 total knee replacement surgeries are performed in the US.

Considering this fact, the insistence that art must be produced by"anatomically correct" human beings is ridiculous.

From FRIEZE:
Marcel Duchamp and Constantin Brancusi were browsing the 1912 Paris Aviation Show when they happened upon the display of an aeroplane propeller. Prompted by the carved-wood form, Duchamp said to Brancusi, 'Painting's washed up. Who'll do anything better than that propeller? Tell me, can you do that?'
The huge advantage of incorporating machine assistance is that it places the emphasis of the work on a conceptual base from the beginning. Decisions made by the artist control the work including an end-goal for the mechanical partner. The machine usually can process the picture to a degree of perfection that an unaided artist cannot. In sum, the decision to begin this project was mine. I picked Bellini's painting, The Feast of the Gods. Then came the machine and its application of image manipulation.

Duchamp, Eve Babitz & Giorgione or Titian

Here is another famous painting more or less from the Renaissance,

Fete Champetre.
I say "more or less" because I clearly altered the painting. In the bottom half of the image Duchamp and Eve Babitz are playing chess (photograph by Julian Wasser from 1963), with Duchamp's Large Glass as a background. All this is super-imposed on Giorgione (or Titian's) painting. To create this image, I used my Analog Engine software, which takes two unlike images and creates a new, third image from

them.The upper half of the work shows the painting in its unaltered state.

As before, I used Polycam software to convert this base image from 2D to 3D.

You can see that the image is repeated, left and right. The repetition of the image is a mirror pair. Download the PDF, then click the space below to put it in motion.

In the original painting, the musicians are not aware of the nymphs. That characteristic is also present in the Wasser photo, which is why the synthetic image works. The original painting presents a more perplexing issue: who painted it?
Currently, Titian is listed as the sole painter of this beguiling image. I disagree. I think it is a double self-portrait. Titian is the lutenist and Giorgione is the singer. They both painted it, in the manner of Braque and Picasso. The decision to award authorship to one artist over another is a how things work out when a culture is wrangling between autocracy and democracy. I have no hard evidence supporting my position but I do have experience. In particular compare the singer in the Concert Champetre painting to Giorgione's self-portrait.

Finally, the manner in which I used the Polycam software echoes the ideas of William Burroughs and Brion Gysin. Cutups, a form of collage pioneered by Gysin and brought to the awareness of others by Burroughs is an effective way of introducing Surrealism and the eruption of sex in an apparently placid image from long ago.