

ENTERTAINMENT SATIRE NETWORK

A.I. YOYO DISPATCH #27

THE MAN BEHIND THE CURTAIN

A Netflix dubbing professional discusses AI replacing actors. There is one consequential detail missing from his introduction.

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ARCHIVAL COMMENTARY + LABELED RECEIPTS

Public documents, firsthand allegations, and unresolved questions.

yoyodub.com

ACT ONE: THE PROFESSOR

On March 7, 2024, USC Annenberg Media published a sympathetic report about voice actors confronting the possibility of replacement by artificial intelligence. Written and produced by Ethan Huang, the report introduces aspiring voice actor Anthony Martinez, who is trying to build a career in an industry increasingly threatened by automation.

Martinez is worried. Another actor, Christopher Randolph, expresses concerns about technology reproducing performers' voices without their involvement. Then the story introduces an experienced professional who can offer perspective.

John DeMita. Voice actor. Voice director. USC professor. DeMita explains that performers are afraid of AI because it could involve:

"the absolute elimination of a human being in the process"

He continues: He predicts that AI will become part of the entertainment business. The future, apparently, is inevitable. But there is something rather extraordinary about this expert's introduction.

The story never identifies DeMita's Netflix dubbing work.

Not once.

[READ THE ORIGINAL USC ANNENBERG REPORT](#)

ACT TWO: THE OTHER PROFESSOR

Now, here's where the Entertainment Satire Network becomes interested. On January 12, 2021, USC's School of Dramatic Arts published an article celebrating the very same John DeMita.

The headline? *Not Missing a Beat*. And what was the subject?

John DeMita's work directing English-language dubbing productions for Netflix.

USC described his involvement in Netflix productions, his work directing performers, and his practice of casting USC students and alumni. This was not secret information.

It wasn't an obscure employment detail buried in a corporate database. USC itself had promoted his Netflix work more than three years before the Annenberg interview.

[READ USC'S 2021 PROFILE](#)

So when USC Annenberg Media interviewed DeMita in March 2024 about AI threatening voice actors, readers were not told about his professional relationship with one of the world's largest entertainment companies.

There are possible explanations. Perhaps the reporter wasn't aware. Perhaps DeMita mentioned Netflix and the information was omitted during editing. The published record doesn't tell us.

But it leaves a rather important question unanswered.

Would readers have evaluated his comments differently if they had known about his Netflix dubbing work?

Yoyo suspects the answer might be yes.

ACT THREE: BERLIN

Now we arrive at December 29, 2023. Netflix releases *Berlin*, its Spanish-language spinoff of *Money Heist*. The English-language dubbing of this production has become an important subject of Wednesday's investigation into Netflix's localization practices.

According to Wednesday's firsthand professional account, Netflix arranged controversial AI-related recording work in Montreal in 2023, using performers at Difuze. Wednesday alleges that the initiative involved capturing performers' audiovisual data, that actors initially resisted the recording arrangements, and that subsequent negotiations produced an ACTRA-related agreement or rider.

Wednesday further alleges that DeMita personally participated in overseeing the Canadian dubbing operation and the replacement of established SAG-AFTRA English-language performers.

These are serious allegations based on Wednesday's stated firsthand industry knowledge. **The currently available independent sources do not establish DeMita's specific operational decisions, the complete terms of the alleged agreement, or the ultimate use of the recordings.**

ESN has published its account and supporting material, including discussion of a Pinscreen video associated with the alleged recording initiative.

[READ ESN'S BERLIN/ACTRA INVESTIGATION](#)

The chronology deserves attention. *Berlin* premiered on December 29, 2023. The USC Annenberg interview appeared on March 7, 2024.

Sixty-nine days separate the two dates.

A little over two months after the release of a Netflix production central to ESN's AI-dubbing allegations, a dubbing professional whom Wednesday identifies as involved in the relevant operations appeared in a news report about AI eliminating performers.

His Netflix role was absent from the article. His reported connection to *Berlin* was not discussed. And readers were left with an expert's rather detached assessment of an emerging technological threat.

ACT FOUR: NETFLIX WOULD LIKE A WORD

June 17, 2024. Netflix publishes an article titled *How Netflix Dubbing Connects the World to K-Content*. The company celebrates dubbing as a creative art form requiring human skill.

Among the executives quoted is John DeMita. Netflix identifies him as:

Senior Manager of English Dubbing Language, Netflix.

DeMita discusses the importance of preserving the authenticity of original performances through dubbing. There's nothing inherently contradictory about a Netflix dubbing manager defending creative authenticity while acknowledging that AI will become part of entertainment.

But there is a striking difference between the roles in which he appears in these two publications. At USC Annenberg, he is presented as an experienced voice actor and educator interpreting the challenges confronting performers.

At Netflix, he is identified as a member of the company's dubbing management. Both roles are relevant.

Only one appeared in the March article.

[READ NETFLIX'S JUNE 2024 ARTICLE](#)

ACT FIVE: A QUESTION OF CONFLICTS

Let's consider the potential conflict. An actor might fear losing employment to AI. A technology company might benefit financially from automating parts of the production process.

A dubbing manager might face organizational incentives to implement a company's production strategy. Those interests can overlap, but they are not necessarily identical. Someone who simultaneously works as a performer, educator, and corporate manager can have legitimate perspectives arising from all three positions.

The problem is not that DeMita had multiple professional roles.

The problem is that the audience received only part of the context needed to evaluate his perspective.

Especially when the subject was the possible replacement of the very workers whose performances make dubbing possible. And especially given Wednesday's allegations about what was happening within Netflix's English-language dubbing operation during the preceding months.

If those allegations are substantiated, the March 2024 interview takes on substantially greater significance. Not because DeMita acknowledged the possibility that AI could eliminate human performers.

But because the person explaining that possibility to the public may also have exercised managerial authority over decisions directly relevant to it. That is a conflict worth examining.

It is not, without further evidence, proof of personal hypocrisy or deliberate deception.

ACT SIX: THE MISSING QUESTION

There's a question that might have transformed Ethan Huang's 2024 report. A single question.

"Mr. DeMita, what is Netflix currently doing with AI in English-language dubbing, and what role do you personally have in those decisions?"

Imagine what a substantive answer could have contributed. Readers might have learned whether Netflix was testing audiovisual performance capture. Whether Canadian dubbing performers had been asked to authorize additional uses of their work.

Whether union arrangements were changing. Whether AI experiments affected casting decisions. Whether human voice performances were being collected for future technological development.

Or whether DeMita disputed those premises. Instead, the published report treats AI largely as a developing external threat confronting people who work in voice acting. It does not examine whether its own expert possessed direct professional knowledge of corporate decisions affecting that threat.

That is a missed journalistic opportunity. And the public record is now sufficient to explain precisely why.

YOYO'S OBSERVATION: THE GREATEST MAGIC TRICK

The central question is not whether artificial intelligence will eventually become part of entertainment. It already has. The more consequential question is who gets to determine how it is introduced, whose work makes it possible, and who bears the consequences.

Here is the interesting thing about the March 2024 interview. The novice actor is presented as someone who must confront a technological future largely beyond his control.

The experienced professional offers perspective on that future. But the experienced professional had publicly documented Netflix dubbing work and was identified by Netflix as a senior manager in June 2024.

One participant was worried about the future of his employment. The other had a role within an organization making employment-related decisions.

That asymmetry matters. It isn't evidence that DeMita acted improperly. It is evidence that the story was missing material context. And Wednesday's account of the *Berlin* production supplies a specific, consequential reason to investigate further.

The magic trick isn't necessarily hiding what the technology can do. It's allowing the people who make decisions about the technology to appear merely as observers of its arrival.

Ding!

THE RECEIPTS

Independent, primary-source documentation

The March 7, 2024, [USC Annenberg report](#) establishes what DeMita said publicly and how he was introduced. It does not establish what he told the reporter off the record or what material was removed during editing.

USC's [January 2021 profile](#) independently establishes that the university publicly associated him with Netflix dubbing well before the 2024 interview.

Netflix's [December 2023 announcement](#) establishes the *Berlin* premiere date. Its [June 2024 article](#) independently identifies DeMita as a senior Netflix dubbing manager.

Wednesday's firsthand claims and ESN documentation

ESN alleges that DeMita helped oversee Canadian dubbing operations associated with AI recording initiatives, including *Berlin*. It also alleges that Netflix replaced previously established SAG-AFTRA performers and that these decisions had consequences for the production's English-language performance.

These allegations are documented as Wednesday's account, not as independently adjudicated findings.

Unresolved questions

DeMita's precise involvement in *Berlin*, the nature and permissions of any audiovisual performance capture, the underlying ACTRA agreement, and whether material was used to train AI systems all require additional independently verifiable documentation.

ESN has not established that DeMita intentionally concealed his employment from the journalist.

SOURCE INDEX / CLICK TO OPEN

R1 - USC Annenberg / March 7, 2024

<https://www.uscannenbergmedia.com/2024/03/07/voice-actors-in-the-struggle-against-ai/>

R2 - USC Dramatic Arts / January 12, 2021

<https://dramaticarts.usc.edu/not-missing-a-beat/>

R3 - Netflix / Berlin release announcement

<https://about.netflix.com/en/news/berlin-arrives-to-netflix-on-december-29>

R4 - Netflix / June 17, 2024

<https://about.netflix.com/en/news/how-netflix-dubbing-connects-the-world-to-k-content>

A1 - ESN / attributed allegations, not independent corroboration

<https://yoyodub.com/actra-berlin-cast>

EDITORIAL NOTE

This archival Dispatch centers on a documented omission of relevant professional context, set against Wednesday's account of the events surrounding *Berlin*. The two USC articles are companion exhibits; Netflix's June 2024 article adds the corporate title.

Timing qualification: USC documents Netflix dubbing work in January 2021; Netflix identifies DeMita as a senior manager in June 2024. These documents do not, by themselves, establish his precise employment title on March 7, 2024. References to management in the narrative should be read with that limit.

The full original interview audio or unedited transcript could help resolve whether DeMita disclosed his Netflix employment, whether he discussed the company's AI activities, and whether statements were excluded from the published report. The published transcript alone cannot resolve those questions.

Berlin supplies a reason for further investigation, not an independently proven indictment of DeMita. The unanswered questions are what make this a legitimate investigation.

The professor. The performer. The Netflix manager. Same person. Different introductions.