

M E G A N

WHAT IF SHE WAS REAL?

By Aanya Gupta

The world of cinematic horror has had its fair share of popular, creepy dolls...except that they're all carbon copies of each other. Meet M3GAN, an artificially programmed robot which would resemble the love child of Chucky, an American Girl Doll, and the Terminator. M3GAN is designed to be a child's greatest companion and a parent's greatest ally. With her extensive informational database, M3GAN can become a friend, teacher, playmate, and protector for the child she is bonded to. She's an engineering marvel, except when she turns into a homicidal killing machine.

An aspect of this movie that was particularly interesting to me was the fluidity of the movements of M3GAN's face; I assumed that it was the product of CGI; however, I was intrigued when I found out that her skin was actually moving. According to the animatronic character designer, Adrien Morot, M3GAN had dozens and dozens of servo motors inside her head which moved the real-life robot's eyes, eyelids, brows, cheeks, lips, neck, and more. If that is feasible on the screen, would the development of a "M3GAN" be possible in real life too?

The autonomous robots that exist today have extremely large encyclopedias with a wide range of random information, some of which they use to perform a series of limited actions that they cannot actually comprehend, certainly not with any emotion, awareness, or consciousness. As a result, we don't currently have a way to build the morality of a human into a robot.

Most striking is her ability to comprehend and process information emotionally from the outside world and her database. If we were to create a robot that mimicked M3GAN, we would have to include the ability to perform her iconic TikTok dance moves. To be frank, creating a robot with even a remotely close level of fluidity in its movement to humans would not be possible. At the moment, robots have a limited degree of freedom in their joints which is nowhere close to ours, resulting in their famous jerky movements. Then again, M3GAN's level of sassiness in her aeriels is just unbeatable.

Even if M3GAN could be created today, there is also the question of whether society would want to create such a powerful doll. Are there any companies that would be willing to spend billions, if not trillions, of dollars on creating one small doll? Also, after watching *M3GAN*, would there be anyone willing to buy a doll that could kill them if not programmed properly? If the answer to these questions is yes, would those consumers be willing to buy it for a price, which is probably higher than that of an electric car?

The short answer is no; it is not currently possible to develop a "M3GAN" in real life because of the complexity M3GAN holds and the fears people would have about her becoming more powerful than humanity itself. For now, we can settle on watching something like *M3GAN* on a screen. Thankfully, we won't have to wait too long to see *M3GAN* again. After an incredible \$170 million run at the global box office, Blumhouse has confirmed that *M3GAN 2.0* is in the works and will release in 2025.

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