

Ken Cardwell on Identity, AI, and Who Gets to Represent You: TEDxBeverlyGrove 2026

Founder and Systems Architect Delivers TEDxBeverlyGrove Talk on Identity, AI, and Who Gets to Represent You

WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA, UNITED STATES, June 21, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- For most people, a deepfake is a distant threat. For [Ken Cardwell](#), it is a symptom of a structural problem that has already arrived.

On March 14, 2026, at the historic Marilyn Monroe Theatre in West Hollywood, Cardwell delivered "Identity Comes Before Output" to a full house at [TEDxBeverlyGrove](#) 2026. His talk opened with a scenario most people recognize but have not fully reckoned with: a synthetic version of yourself, built from digital fragments you left online, moving through the world without your knowledge or consent.

The deepfake, Cardwell argued, is not the real problem. The real problem is what made it possible: a world in which identity has become programmable, and no framework yet governs who is authorized to use it.

"Delegation without identity is power without authorship."
— Ken Cardwell at TEDxBeverlyGrove 2026

Cardwell is the founder of ActorForge and the Virtual Actors Guild, where he is building early infrastructure for governed synthetic performers, digital entities designed to operate with defined identity, consent, authorship, and lifecycle control. He has filed multiple provisional patents in synthetic identity binding and delegated presence.

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*Ken Cardwell at
TEDxBeverlyGrove 2026*

At TEDxBeverlyGrove, he argued that the shift from content generation to presence generation changes the



Ken Cardwell, Founder and Systems Architect

category of what is being built. It is no longer content. It is entities. And when what you create can act, creation becomes delegation, an appointment of something to go be something on your behalf.

His framework was direct:

1. Identity before output.
2. Governance before scale.
3. Authorship before automation.

The talk closed on what Cardwell called the most important question of the century. Not what our systems can do. But who they are allowed to be.

“The next generation is not just going to inherit our technology. They are going to inherit our proxies.”

— Ken Cardwell at TEDxBeverlyGrove 2026

Ken Cardwell’s talk will be released online in the coming months as part of the TEDxBeverlyGrove 2026 speaker series.

About Ken Cardwell

Ken Cardwell is a founder and systems architect working at the intersection of identity, artificial intelligence, and human representation. He is the founder of ActorForge and the Virtual Actors Guild, where he is building early infrastructures for governed synthetic performers, digital entities designed to operate with defined identity, consent, authorship, and lifecycle control. He has filed multiple provisional patents spanning synthetic identity binding, delegated presence, lifecycle management, and platform authorization frameworks, focused on making digital representation accountable in an age of programmable identity.

About TEDxBeverlyGrove

TEDxBeverlyGrove 2026, “Reimagining the Possible,” was held March 14, 2026, at the Marilyn Monroe Theatre in West Hollywood, California. Organized and produced by Marvin V. Acuna, the event brought together twelve speakers, sponsors, brand partners, and volunteers for a full day devoted to ideas worth spreading. Speaker talks will be released online in the coming months.

[About Marvin V. Acuna](#)

Marvin V. Acuna is a TEDx Organizer and Producer. In that role, he curates speakers, ideas, and the architecture of a high-trust live stage. Separate from his work as a TEDx producer, Acuna advises leaders, founders, attorneys, and public figures as a speaking coach and talk architect. He helps clients uncover the idea inside their story, sharpen their message, and deliver it with

clarity, authority, and impact. He also serves as Head of Business Strategy for The Lawyers Roundtable and is the founder of MoBal Systems.

About TED

TED is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to discovering, debating and spreading ideas that spark conversation, deepen understanding and drive meaningful change. Our organization is devoted to curiosity, reason, wonder and the pursuit of knowledge without an agenda. We welcome people from every discipline and culture who seek a deeper understanding of the world and connection with others, and we invite everyone to engage with ideas and activate them in your community.

TED began in 1984 as a conference where Technology, Entertainment and Design converged, but today it spans a multitude of worldwide communities and initiatives exploring everything from science and business to education, arts and global issues. In addition to the TED Talks curated from our annual conferences and published on TED.com, we produce original podcasts, short video series, animated educational lessons (TED-Ed) and TV programs that are translated into more than 100 languages and distributed via partnerships around the world. Each year, thousands of independently run TEDx events bring people together to share ideas and bridge divides in communities on every continent. Through The Audacious Project, TED has helped catalyze \$6.6 billion in funding for projects that support bold solutions to the world's most urgent challenges, working to make the world more beautiful, sustainable and just. In 2020, TED launched Countdown, an initiative to accelerate solutions to the climate crisis and mobilize a movement for a net-zero future, and in 2023 TED launched TED Democracy to spark a new kind of conversation focused on realistic pathways towards a more vibrant and equitable future. View a full list of TED's many programs and initiatives.

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About TEDx, x = independently organized event

In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx is a program of local, self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience. At a TEDx event, TED Talks video and live speakers combine to spark deep discussion and connection. These local, self-organized events are branded TEDx, where x = independently organized TED event. The TED Conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program, but individual TEDx events are self-organized. (Subject to certain rules and regulations.)

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