

Family Uses Their Own Faces and AI to Create Original Sci-Fi Feature Film: 'Dimitri's DMT Defense'

Former tech journalist Erika Rawes, alongside a family of techies, transforms short AI-generated clips into an approximately 45-minute courtroom sci-fi film.

NC, UNITED STATES, July 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Former tech writer Erika Rawes and her family have completed [Dimitri's DMT Defense](#), an original courtroom science-fiction film created through a combination of traditional storytelling, family collaboration, and early generative-video technology.



Rather than generating the film from a single prompt, the Rawes family created a 45 minute feature. They designed the characters, created scenes and visual assets, produced individual video clips between eight and twenty seconds long, and assembled them into a complete narrative through extensive editing, audio production, and an original song.

The principal characters were designed using the filmmakers' own faces as visual references, allowing members of the family to appear throughout the animated film in transformed roles.

"To create this movie, we designed characters using our own faces as references, built scenes and visual assets, and used early generative-video technology to produce clips between eight and twenty seconds long," said Rawes. "We then assembled those clips, added dialogue, sound and original music, and edited—then edited again—until we had a film we we're proud of."

Rawes, a former national technology journalist, wrote and directed the film and served as its story editor. Her husband, Robert Rawes, produced the film and worked as its AI audio engineer. Their daughter, Maya "Mack" Rawes, composed and performed the original song entitled "Lost Feelings for a Friend." Their son, Erik Lane, served as AI design engineer and design editor.

Dimitri's DMT Defense follows 21-year-old Dimitri Spirit, who is accused of killing his friend after

a mysterious and seemingly impossible incident. With no conventional weapon and evidence that challenges ordinary explanations, the case unfolds into a courtroom mystery involving altered perception, emerging science and the possibility that the events witnessed by the defendants came from somewhere beyond their known reality.

The project was created during a period when generative-video tools remain highly experimental. Maintaining character consistency, emotional continuity, visual logic and synchronization required the filmmakers to repeatedly regenerate, replace, rearrange and edit individual shots.

“The technology did not independently make the movie,” Rawes said. “It gave us a new kind of raw material. The storytelling, performances, structure, sound, music and final decisions still had to come from people.”

The film also reflects the deeply personal nature of the production. Family members contributed their likenesses, technical skills and creative work, turning Dimitri’s DMT Defense into both a science-fiction experiment and a family-made independent film.

Production Credits

Writer, Director and Story Editor: Erika Rawes

Producer and AI Audio Engineer: Robert Rawes

Original song by: Maya “Mack” Rawes

Generative AI Design Engineer and Visual Editor: Erik Lane

About Dimitri’s Defense

Dimitri’s DMT Defense is an approximately 45-minute courtroom science-fiction film about a young man accused of a murder while using the drug DMT. Created from hundreds of individually generated and edited video clips, the film combines family performances, original music, AI-assisted visual production and traditional narrative filmmaking.

The film Dimitri’s DMT Defense is currently available on YouTube.

Erika Rawes

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