



body>data>space

PRESS RELEASE

'Robots and Avatars – UK Selection'

19th – 28th September 2012 - 12 Star Gallery / London

Produced and curated by **body>data>space**, 'Robots and Avatars – UK Selection' showcases a vivid and topical selection of artworks from UK based artists and innovators exploring the merging of digital technologies with our human body. The Showcase brings together pioneering examples of digital creativity in the field of robotics, virtual environments, motion capture, telepresence, architecture and body technologies.

All the works, completed and conceptual, share an obsession with the body, portraying new representation of ourselves and others within the context of a world in which virtual and physical are increasingly blended:

-How do we envisage our future relationships with robotic and avatar colleagues and playmates, and what point does this evolution cross our personal boundaries of what it is to be a human being?

-How are our physical bodies and senses complemented and enhanced by digital technologies?

'Robots and Avatars – UK Selection' enlightens the creative process from artists recently commissioned through body>data>space: Alex Haw (atmos) with Mauritius Seeger (dr.mo) 'Outreach', Joseph Hyde 'me and my shadow' and Michael Takeo Magruder 'Visions of our Communal Dreams' showing alongside other top-level UK-based creators' artworks.

Showcased artists and collectives:

Alex Haw (atmos) with Mauritius Seeger (dr. mo) 'Outreach' / Concept documentation of an architectural/kinetic work immersing the participants within a responsive motion capture sculpture. This offers them the opportunity to crystallise their movements, amplify their every gesture, and magnify their reach.

Joseph Hyde with Phill Tew 'me and my shadow' / Production documentation of the premiere. Telepresence/motion capture portals which were simultaneously active in 4 cities, enabling participants to interact with each other, project their full bodies into a joint virtual world and sculpt 3D shapes.

Michael Takeo Magruder (with Drew Baker, Erik Fleming & David Steele) 'Visions of our Communal Dreams' / Interactive screenwork of a mixed-reality art installation which blends virtual, physical and networked space, exploring issues of hybridity, embodiment and collective creativity in the Avatar Age.

Anna Dumitriu and Alex May 'My Robot Companion' / A social robot inviting visitors to react to the idea of having robots as companions, exploring personal relativities and new identities.

Alastair Eilbeck and James Bailey 'MeYouandUs' / An interactive screen encouraging passers-by to play with their representation and to look at their identity in a new light.

Tobias Klein 'Soft Immortality' / Taking slices of a full-body human MRI scan, this architectural sculpture questions the common representations of the body in the digital realm as a series of surfaces and layers, creating a second avatar like state in a solid form.

Shadow Robot Company 'The 2-Finger Shadow Dexterous Hand' / A simplified version of the most advanced robotic Dexterous Hand available in the world, this 2-Finger Robot hand invites us to explore the future of sensing and intelligent systems in robotics.

Two performances will be presented as part of the Launch Event:

Marco Donnarumma 'Music for Flesh II' / A live sound performance in which the artist creates music by using the sounds emitted by his body muscular tissues.

L.J Rich 'Music for Robots'. Live composition inspired by the showcased artists and collectives.

UK based digital content creators are recognised worldwide as leaders in interactivity across many sectors, receiving high commendation and praise for their advanced and visionary use of new medias and social medias to reach a wide public and social engagement.

For **body>data>space** the body's integration into responsive technologies and interactive interfaces has been a key field of fascination and expertise for over 20 years, sharing future virtual/physical scenarios to widen the debate around body-centred technologies.

'Robots and Avatars – UK Selection' is produced and curated by body>data>space in association with the 12 Star Gallery and the National Theatre, supported by the Culture programme of the European Union, and using public funding by the Arts Council England. In association with EU Culture Projects' 'RACIF' and 'MADE', FACT (Foundation for Arts and Creative Technologies) and Knowledge Transfer Network / Creative Industries.

(Ends)

Full information can be found here: www.robotsandavatars.net

For interviews, images and further information please contact:

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Notes to editors

• **'Robots and Avatars – UK Selection' is open to the public from 19th to 28th September 2012, at 12 Star Gallery.** The gallery is located at Europe House, [32 Smith Square, London SW1P 3EU](http://www.12star.com). Opening times: open from 10am-6pm, on **weekdays only**. **More info** [here](http://www.12star.com).

• The 12 Star Gallery specialises in showing work which celebrates the creativity and cultural diversity that is the hallmark of the European Union. Europe House is home to both the European Parliament Information Office and the European Commission Representation in the United Kingdom. **More info** [here](http://www.12star.com).

• body>data>space is an East London design collective creating innovative connections between performance, architecture, virtual worlds and new media. They work to share and extend future scenarios of virtual/physical blended space and produce international action-research projects, commissions, exhibitions, debates, conferences, learning experiences and websites with a wide range of sectors. www.bodydataspace.net

• On the invitation of 12 Star Gallery, body>data>space is showcasing 'Robots and Avatars - UK Selection' and 'Collectively Engaged', a two-day Forum dedicated to digital co-productions and content development. Exploring digital innovation and creation, this series of events is designed specifically to help create a sharing for arts and creative industries professionals from throughout the UK and the EU. *Please note that these events are by invitation only. Get in touch with us if you are interested in participating: interested@bodydataspace.net*