



## **'Robots and Avatars – UK Selection'**

**19<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> September 2012**

12 Star Gallery / London

Europe House, 32 Smith Square, London SW1P 3EU.

(10am-6pm, week days only)

'Robots and Avatars – UK Selection' showcases a vivid and topical selection of works from UK based artists and innovators exploring the merge between digital technologies and our human bodies. It brings together pioneering examples of 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 representations of ourselves and others within the context of a world in which the virtual and physical are increasingly blended. These content creators and developers are producing interactive pieces where technology and the body co-join to enhance our senses and expand our perceptions. 'Robots and Avatars – UK Selection' indicates the new identity culture emerging through the inclusion of the living body at the centre of digital interconnectivity.

### **Commissions**

#### **Alex Haw (atmos) with Mauritius Seeger (dr. mo) 'Outreach' / Concept documentation**

An architectural / kinetic work immersing the participants within a responsive motion capture sculpture, offering 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 installation**

A mixed-reality art installation which blends virtual, physical and networked space, exploring issues of hybridity, embodiment and collective creativity in the Avatar Age.

**HOW TO INTERACT.** From the reception desk's computer you can control and fly one of the avatars. Visitors will be able to see your avatar flying from the 2<sup>nd</sup> screen at the other end of the Gallery, which is a window onto this virtual world.

### **Exhibits**

#### **Anna Dumitriu and Alex May with Dr. Michael L. Walters and Prof. Kerstin Dautenhahn 'My Robot Companion' / Social Robot**

A robot inviting visitors to react to the idea of having robots as companions, exploring personal relativities and new identities.

**HOW TO INTERACT.** Stay in front of the robot and it will pick up your face to integrate into its own face. Ready for a dialogue with your robot self?

#### **Alastair Eilbeck and James Bailey 'MeYouandUs' / Interactive screen installation**

An artwork encouraging passers-by to play with their representation, to create their own narrative and to look at their identity in a new light.

**HOW TO INTERACT.** Move in front of the screen and play with your image!

### **Tobias Klein 'Soft Immortality' / Embodied sculpture**

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' / Robot 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.

#### **LJ Rich 'Music for Robots'**

Live composition inspired by the showcased artists and collectives.

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### **Collectively Engaged**

On the invitation of 12 Star Gallery, body>data>space is showcasing 'Robots and Avatars - UK Selection' and 'Collectively Engaged', two days of Forums 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. 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

#### **'Robots and Avatars – our colleagues and playmates of the future'**

This showcase at 12 Star Gallery is part of an exhibition created and touring through 'Robots and Avatars – our colleagues and playmates of the future', a 2-year EU cultural cooperation project exploring the future world of work and play by envisioning our expanding relationships with robotic and avatar colleagues and playmates.

*"The exhibition tackles the overlap between the virtual and the real worlds."* Wired

*"It's art that's interactive and immersive."* The Guardian

The exhibition is now touring to **KIBLA**, Maribor (Slovenia) from 5th to 30th October 2012 as part of Maribor 2012: European Capital of Culture, and to **AltArt**, Cluj-Napoca (Romania) from 5th to 18th November 2012.

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

[www.bodydataspace.net](http://www.bodydataspace.net)

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### **12 Star Gallery / Europe House**

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.

<http://ec.europa.eu/unitedkingdom/>

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***'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 our EU Culture Projects 'RACIF' (Robots and Avatars Collaborative and Intergenerational Futures) and 'MADE' (Mobility for Digital Arts in Europe). In collaboration with FACT (Foundation for Arts and Creative Technologies) and Knowledge Transfer Network / Creative Industries. This project was conceived in 2009 by lead producer body>data>space with the support of NESTA.***