Hello World
(Being Robot)

A Robotic, Choreographic and Experiential Project

Antoine Schmitt, digital artist
Hortense Gauthier, composer
Jean-Marc Matos, choreographer

___Synopsis

Hello World (Being Robot) adopts the perspective of a robot at the very moment of its first activation: a semi-autonomous entity suddenly endowed with a body.

Like a newborn living being, the robot discovers its physical presence, explores movement, its limits, its sensations, and its immediate environment, eventually encountering human beings.

Hello World (Being Robot) is a hybrid artistic research project that may unfold as a performance, an installation, a workshop, or a fluid combination of these different formats.

AI-generated conceptual image (see prompt at the end)

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___Intentions

Through the design and creation of a newly born robot, **Hello World** seeks to investigate, imagine, develop, and implement the dynamics of primordial movement inherent to embodied living beings, in order to create works that question our fundamental nature as bodily beings-in-the-world: presence, fragility, and coexistence.

At its first activation, the robot possesses pre-programmed abilities, yet it must learn how to inhabit and master its body. The project focuses on this process of exploration.

The robot is fragile, shy, uncertain, and fallible. It experiments. We discover the world through its gaze. Movement does not emerge as a search for efficiency, but as a process of discovery. Error, instability, and hesitation become expressive material rather than defects.

The project is based on a simple yet essential shift in perspective:

What if we observed the world from the point of view of a robot learning how to exist?

From machine as object to machine as an emerging being.

From performance as execution to performance as learning.

Rather than presenting technology as spectacle or mere tool, the robot becomes a sensitive and vulnerable presence engaged in a process of embodied learning.

Its wanderings and motor experiments constitute the primary material of the choreographic dimension of the project.

The central themes include:

- embodiment and perception
- fragility, hesitation, and failure
- human–machine coexistence
- empathy toward non-human entities
- the importance of experimentation

___References

"Bonjour le Monde" (Hello World)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KKftLQthPuc

Hello, World!
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%22Hello,_World!%22_program

Byungjun Kwon, robotic artist
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WflibcYoD90

https://fisheyeimmersive.com/article/maladroits-deviants-inutiles-les-robots-de-byungjun-kwon-questionnent-notre-rapport-au-monde/

Dr. Catie Cuan, choreographer
https://www.instagram.com/p/C0zomhgJvMg/

Jean Piaget, biologist and psychologist
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jean_Piaget

Jakob von Uexküll, biologist and philosopher — the concept of Umwelt
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jakob_von_Uexk%C3%BCll

___Artistic Team

- **Jean-Marc Matos** — Compagnie K. Danse, specializing in dance and technology relationships
- **Antoine Schmitt** — visual artist exploring movement processes and algorithms of being
- **Hortense Gauthier** — electroacoustic composer

Project lead: Compagnie K. Danse

___Research Process

The project explores:

- robotic design and construction
- robotic embodiment and expressivity through programming inspired by primary animal behaviors
- choreography extending beyond the human body alone
- failure and behavioral fragility as aesthetic material
- perception and empathy toward machines
- relational dynamics between humans and artificial intelligence
- improvisation with non-human agents

___Dramaturgy & Choreographic Structure

The dramaturgy is processual rather than narrative. It is based on several fundamental principles:

- exploration rather than demonstration
- body states rather than characters
- interaction rather than control
- emergence rather than predefinition

Improvisation plays a central role. Both robot and performer evolve within a framework composed of constraints, rules, and responsive systems.

The choreography unfolds as an organic dialogue between different bodily states:

instability, curiosity, resistance, adaptation, fatigue, and play.

Spectatorial Experience

Spectators witness:

- attempts
- failures

– adjustments
– repetitions
– moments of unexpected grace

From this gradual experimentation emerges a form of empathy.

The audience is invited into a subtle perceptual shift:

it is no longer a matter of watching a machine perform, but of observing a being learning.

___Expected Outcomes
Artistic Productions

The project may result in:

– one or several performative versions
– an interactive installation format
– workshop and transmission modules
– research documentation
– audiovisual materials
– sound creations and compositions
– theoretical reflections

___Formats

The project is conceived as a modular system.

Performance

A live encounter between a robot and a human performer, structured through an evolving choreographic dialogue based on body states rather than fixed sequences.

Installation

An immersive environment in which the robot continuously explores space, movement, and interaction, with the potential possibility of modifying its own operating code.

The audience therefore witnesses not a completed narrative event, but an ongoing process.

Spectators discover the world through the robot's perspective and perceive its internal states through the sounds it emits.

___Public Engagement & Mediation

Workshops, open rehearsals, and participatory sessions enable audiences to explore:

– robotic perception and logic
– embodied interaction
– alternative ways of relating to technology
– sensory and motor experimentation

Example Workshop / Participatory Format

Participants experience the logics of robotic perception, embodiment, and movement.

Through physical, sensory, and interactive exercises, they explore what it might mean to **"be robot."**

___Production Stages

1. Robot Design

Collaboration with robotics teams to select, design, and build a simple robot sufficient for the concept and robust enough to operate in performance and exhibition contexts.

Selection and experimentation of morphologies, possible movements, and perceptual systems (vision, hearing, touch, proprioception, etc.).

Working with a non-anthropomorphic robotic form allows us to adopt a more generic and abstract perspective on being-in-the-world than would be possible with a humanoid robot. Nevertheless, the robot will remain capable of readable movement and of eliciting empathy.

2. Development of Movement and Perception Vocabulary

Design of primary behaviors (perception and motor functions).

Creation of low-level movement and behavioral vocabularies.

Potential collaborations with neurologists, psychologists, and ethologists.

Study and artificial reproduction of the fundamental stages through which living beings—particularly humans—discover their own bodies (following Piaget's work).

Proprioception, body awareness, hand-eye coordination, shape recognition, object permanence, recognition of others, notions of goals, action, success, and failure, among others.

3. Sound Design

Creation of sonic expressions reflecting the robot's internal states and general moods.

Relationships between sound, movement, behavior, bodily states, and emotional states.

4. Behavioral Composition

Development of the robot's higher-level behaviors.

A process situated at the intersection of programming and choreographic writing.

A significant place is given to (robotic) improvisation, interacting with choreographic structures conceived as evolving body states.

5. Choreographic Composition

For the duet performance version, choreographic development with a dancer.

Creation of a choreographic duet.

Scenarios, body states, and overall composition.

Dancing with otherness, discovering primary movement, engaging in dialogue with a fragile being, and interacting with a non-anthropomorphic entity.

___Preliminary Budget for the Requested Residencies

The budget primarily consists of fees for the creative team, travel expenses, accommodation and per diems, considering several one-week trips for three people, as well as writing and development work (choreography, programming, and music composition).

___Addendum

Note: The images presented were generated from variations of the following prompt using the Tongyi-MAI Z-Image-Turbo model: *A scene featuring a very simple and small-scale automaton (height: 1 meter), consisting of a single slender articulated arm made from fragile reclaimed metal and motors, with an electronic head pierced by two openings suggesting eyes; beside it, a young brunette female performer dressed in a fitted white costume, kneeling in a tender and protective posture toward the automaton. Abstract, schematic black-and-white style on a black background.*

___Contacts

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