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Curators, ArtBots: The Robot Talent Show
July 12, 2003
New York City

We think that this mix of intriguing questions, strange ideas, and sheer, shameless fun is what makes a project like ArtBots worth doing. We hope you will agree.

Of course, not every category of artbot is represented in the show. Due to logistical issues we were not able to include robotic theatrical performances, despite several interesting entries. We would like to pursue this in the future. We hope that the twenty-two works in this year's ArtBots show are as engaging, frustrating, mystifying, entertaining, and affecting for you as they are for us. These works probably ask more questions than they answer, and we think that's a good thing. What is authorship? Can a machine be creative? Who is responsible for the actions of a machine? Can a machine think? Does it matter? Can a non-human be conscious? And what is consciousness, anyway?

For this, the second annual ArtBots show, we received far more entries than we could possibly include. Clearly melding art and robotics is an idea that is in the air. To help narrow the field, we developed some curatorial guidelines. Primary among these is a preference for physical devices that move and systems that have some degree of autonomy. We also made sure to include small-scale, one-artist works, as well as large, complex, collaborative projects. It's the ideas we value. Robotic technology is accessible technology. Creative artists with big ideas, small budgets, and a healthy dose of the do-it-yourself ethic can create impressive robot-based artworks.

Each artist has her own answer. As curators, our attitude is: "if you think it's a robot and you think it's art, then let's take a look." In a field as young and open as this one, we've tried to encourage people to take chances and to be creative with the idea of an "artbot." Some artists interpret "artbot" as "a device that makes art," while others see it as "a robot that is a work of art." We like both.

What, exactly, is an "artbot"? That's a good question, and one we've been thinking about for a long time. It's difficult enough to settle on a good definition of "art" or "robot"; put them together and things really get interesting!

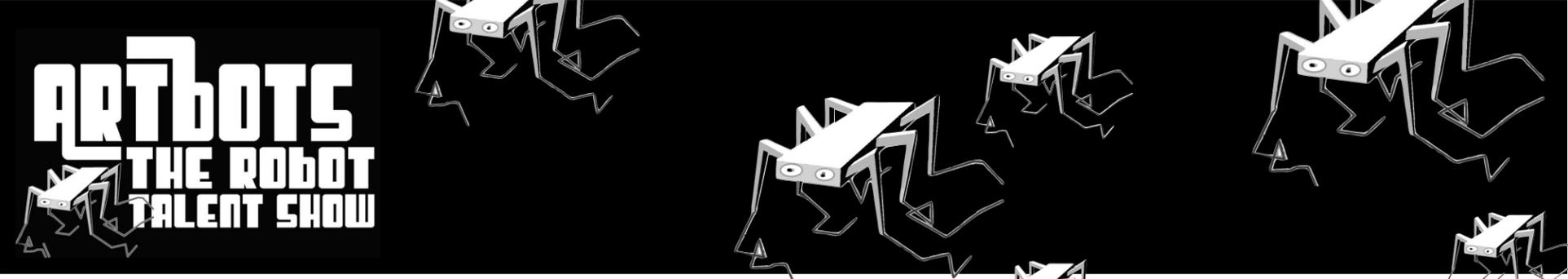


ARTBOTS THE ROBOT TALENT SHOW

ArtBots: The Robot Talent Show is an annual international art exhibition for robotic art and art-making robots. This year's show features work by 23 artists and groups from six countries. It is being presented as part of EYEBEAM's summer robotics festival, ROBOT, Log on to: <http://artbots.org> for the full catalog and details of show.

ArtBots Director: Jenny Lee
ArtBots Director: Douglas Repetto
Producing Organization: The Columbia University Computer Music Center
Hosting Organization: EYEBEAM
Additional Sponsors: NYU Arts Technology Group, Pratt Institute

ArtBots Gallery: 540 West 21st Street
July 12 & 13, 2003
Saturday and Sunday Noon to 6:00 PM
New York, NY 10011



THE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
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Re-live ArtBots every night at Remote Lounge. Stop by Remote Lounge to see continuously running video clips and images from ArtBots 2003

ArtBots <http://www.artbots.org/> and the artists gratefully acknowledge the support of the following sponsoring organizations, institutions and individuals:

Columbia University Computer Music Center <http://www.music.columbia.edu/cmc/>, EYEBEAM <http://www.eyebcam.org>, New York University-Arts Technology Group <http://www.nyu.edu/its/atg>, Pratt Institute www.pratt.edu; and The Arts Council of England <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/>, The University of Minnesota Art Department <http://www.arthist.umn.edu/>, Fergus Gilmore Fund through the Ohio State University, Fraunhofer Germany <http://www.fraunhofer.de/english/>, Peter Lewis of Goldsmiths, The Madagascar Institute, MIT Media Lab <http://www.media.mit.edu/>, The Polaroid Collection, The Remote Lounge <http://www.remotelounge.com>, The Rockefeller Foundation <http://www.rockfound.org/>, Aaron Edsinger, Jonathan Foote, Henry Kaufman, Jeff Weber and Sheika Hoor Al-Qasimi, of Sharjah, U.A.E. Exhibition directory designed by Don Arieu.