ROBOT SOCLE ROSE

2002

a pink structure sings while moving about the room and approaching the visitors

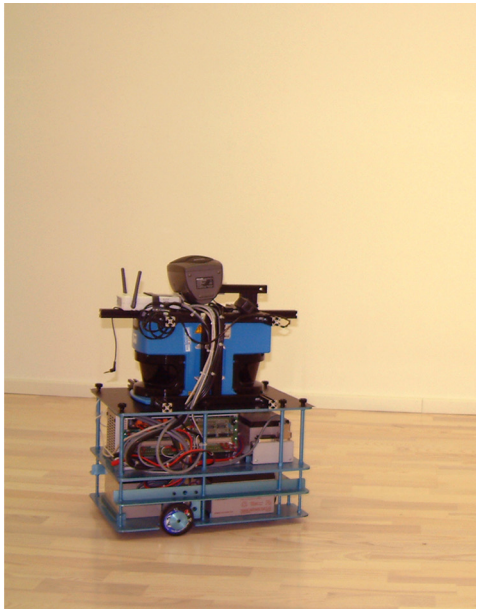
As part of the opening of my personal exhibition entitled *Sweet Dependance* at the Galerie Imoberdorf in Morat in February 2002, I appointed a mobile robot from the Autonomous Systems Lab of the Ecole Polytechnique Federale de Lausanne (EPFL), along with the four singers from 4 VOIX, to do a performance in my place.

The mobile robot (SmartRob) is programmed to move independently in one of the gallery rooms. As a troubadour, it transports my voice which speaks and sings and transmits messages of love to the audience: *«Where are you my Love ?»; «Something New begins with you»; Summer Automn Winter Spring»; «I want you !»; «Ouh ouh in front of me, can you hear me ?»*

A baby-pink structure covers the machine. Laser sensors necessary for navigation can be seen through two lateral openings, and a round hole at the top allows my singing voice to be heard. A pre-recorded soundtrack and a speaker have been added to the robot and hidden in the box. The moving structure seems to be looking for someone to talk to. However any kind of conversation is impossible since it only goes one way. In reality, the robot knows its position in the room and constantly chooses a direction at random which it modifies according to the obstacles it finds on its path, which it avoids. Because of this its movements are sometimes hesitant. It can freeze for a few seconds in front of a viewer who stands in its way, as if the viewer were its target, then turns around to move in a different direction.

This work bears witness to the technological and robotic developments of our time. I am interested in the use of machines deemed “intelligent” which are meant to help us in our daily lives, to simplify tasks or even to replace us, whether at an industrial level or in our private lives.

ROBOT SOCLE ROSE was created with the help of Dr. Kai Oliver Arras. The algorithms and the components used are the results of contemporary research in robotics. For more information, please visit: http://asl.epfl.ch and http://www.nurobot.com



Under the pink box is a SmartRob from the Autonomous Systems Lab, EPFL