

The Spotlight is on Robot

Nicolas Anatol Baginsky

Apparently mankind has an instinctive fear of being replaced or superseded by machines at his place of work. We only have to think of the attacks on machines at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution or of Fritz Lang's vision.

Here, I don't want to go into the question as to whether increasing technology improves the quality of our lives and work, or whether we are repeatedly making ourselves superfluous. I would much rather discuss whether machines, as a result of our intellectual efforts, have a right to have adequate self representation.

The fascination of creating artificial "beings" has preoccupied man since the times of Dedalus. In the meantime, "automatic" machines are no longer a rarity.

For decades now these "creations" have been represented in films, etc. exclusively by people. Actors, dwarfs and children disguise themselves and don the most impossible costumes and try to imitate the awkward movements and chopped speech of robots.

As a result, a false picture has been created in the public eye, as to the abilities and peculiarities of cybernetic machines. Indeed, in this sense robots have no opinion of their own and they are certain not to complain about this. Last but not least, it would appear to me to be in our own interests to realize that the time has come to insist that this highly developed technical apparatus has a right to self representation. Out with "Electric Boogie" und "3-PO".

HUMUNCULUS

("Robot in Show Business") the machine with the typing error was built in the time from 11th July to 25th July 1987 by N.A. Baginsky. Various accidents and malfunctions during the construction and test phase.

25th July 1987

First public appearance Hamburg Fun Club. With the greatest of efforts he succeeds in freeing himself on stage from his self-destructive mechanism. Welding arms deformed. Two mini spots demolished, 2 arm bearings are disaligned.

22nd August 1987

2nd appearance Hamburg underground railway tunnel – main railway station. Lost the small double pendular arm during the first set as the main nut had not been tightened. Arm collision. Spots replaced 4 times.

6th February 1988

Trip to London, performance for the opening of the new "One Off" gallery. Collision with 2 pogo dancers

10th November 1988

Main role in the machine musical "Humunculus and his friends" Exhibition "Strange Earths" Hamburg – HafenKlang. Attaches a travelling mechanism.

27th July–4th August 1989

Exhibition and 5 appearances in "Zomer Festein" Amsterdam. Engagement for the stage project "Archtyp". Dismantling the welding arm.

27th October 1989

Premiere in the Kampnagel Fabrik – Hamburg. 1990 Humunculus appeared 14 times with Archtyp: Rotterdam, Lucern, Hamburg, Coburg, Tübingen, Fribourg, Saarbrücken and Frankfurt. Changed a motor after a tussle with Quasi jun. – 1st evening in Lucern. Exchange a motor – transport damage. A new acoustic sensor system replaces the NF line control. In collisions with TyRaRex a total of 13 spots and 5 arm bearings were destroyed. The end piece of the arm was torn off and provisionally mended. Rehearsals Saarbrücken.

1991

Humunculus retires for the meantime ...