

SIN

Sydney Intermedia Network Inc

in conjunction with



presents

Robotica

film and video

film program curated by Peter Morse

visions of
a robotic future
from the
past and present

Screening one afternoon only

Saturday 21 September, 2.30pm

Domain Theatre, level 1

the Art Gallery of New South Wales

admission \$7 full \$5 conc

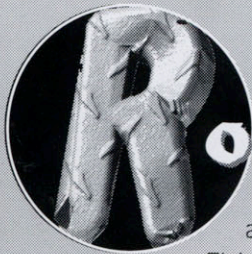
cyborgs, gryndroids, softbots, replicants – pop. 65,000 and growing!

SIN receives financial assistance from the Australian Film Commission, the Visual Arts & Crafts Program of the NSW Ministry for the Arts, the NSW Film and Television Office, and the Australia Council - the Federal Government's arts funding and advisory body.



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Robotica

Humans have always had a fascination with the idea of artificial life created from inanimate materials. Every age has seen a plethora of stories and artefacts which express a mingling of fear and desire for autonomous machines. Galatea, Coppelia, Golem, Frankenstein, Robby the Robot, Astroboy, Eighth Man, the Terminator and Robocop (to mention just a few) have become staple cultural fare.

Pundits predict that the first autonomous robots will be amongst us within twenty years and that they will outstrip humans both physically and intellectually within ten years of their introduction. With this reality will come a whole new set of moral, ethical and cultural conundrums. Will robots be truly intelligent? Will they become accepted as full members of the human community or will we own them as slaves? Will they see us as their creator-gods? Or will they see us as an evolutionary level they have left far behind – to be either eradicated or protected in twenty-first century zoos? These films present humorous, disquieting, eccentric visions of future citizens who already seem strangely familiar.

Robotiks: Isaac Asimov's (clank! clank!) Artificial Man USA, 16mm, col, sd, 1976, 20mins *
Isaac Asimov, science-fiction writer and originator of 'Three Laws of Robotics', offers now quaint yet fascinating revelations of the science of robotics, accentuated by his 'hip' meditations upon the implications that robots will have for 'Women's Lib'.

Ballet Robotique
dir/pd Bob Rogers, USA, 16mm, col, sd, 1982, 8mins *
A classic short film of computerised dance performed by giant industrial robots on an automobile assembly line. 'Each type of robot has its own personality...[a chicken, a cat]... Our objective was to use the cinematographer's art to enhance and emphasise the personalities.' – Bob Rogers in *American Cinematographer*, February 1983.

Birth of the Robot
dir Len Lye, UK, 16mm, col, sd, 1936, 7mins
This early animated puppet film (ostensibly, an advertisement for Shell Oil) is strikingly modern in its visual composition, and features Lye's highly innovative techniques of hand-painting on the film strip and Gasparcolour print process.

Rehearsals for Extinct Anatomies
dir/an/cin/ed The Brothers Quay, UK, 16mm, b&w, sd, 1988, 15mins *
The Quays' animated and live-action films are revered for their distinctive aesthetic and mesmerising nuances. This is another dream-like trip into their surreal world of miniature architectural forms, living skulls, psychedelic patterns and tool-using robots.

Puppenhead
dir/wr David Cox, Australia, 16mm, b&w, sd, 1990, 8mins (produced with the assistance of the Australian Film Commission)
A puppeteer is harassed by a Nazi spy. Cox cleverly integrates live-action and model animation in a high contrast, ambitious black comedy that quotes from *Metropolis* and *Caligari*, and recalls the violence and psychological horror of the Brothers Quay.

digital robot animations by Australian new media artists:

Robotica (Dethacid Remix)
dir/wr/pd Lee Britow, Biotek Productions, Australia, video, 1996
Heavy strobe meets B-Club Japanese mecks.
Warning to those affected by strobe.

Robot Cycle
dir/wr/an Elena Popa, Australia 16mm/hi-band U-Matic, col, sd, 1994, 3mins
A poignant humanist vision of the cyborg body defiantly reproducing her own kind. A Robot takes her last walk, sad and struggling against obsolescence. In her last moments she breaks her 'heart box' in order to give birth. The cycle continues. Is this her revenge on the world?

Plastic Energy
pd Troy Innocent in collaboration with Psy-Harmonics, music is by Sonic Sufi, Australia, Betacam, col, sd, 1996, 5mins
Part of *Psy-Vision*, a recent experimental music video, *Plastic Energy* merges hypnotic, artificial visions with a Super Deformed icon body. Forms, images, and movements match the sonic structure to create a journey through a fragment of media space.

* print source: Film Lending Collection, National Library of Australia

SIN coming attractions

elastic light

an international retrospective of computer animation art Saturdays 5 & 12 October '96
Domain Theatre Art Gallery of New South Wales

Stelarc/Cyber/Psycho

doco on world-renowned techno-mutant Saturday 26 October '96
Domain Theatre Art Gallery of New South Wales

Pacific Wave: 100 years of anthropological film across Oceania

Thursday 14 & Saturday 16 November '96
Museum of Sydney Theatre

For more information contact

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