



un centre dédié à la production et à la présentation de l'art, des pratiques contemporaines et des nouveaux médias
 a centre dedicated to the production and the presentation of art, contemporary practices and new media

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EXHIBITION

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Field Studies

Jessica Field

May 16 to June 13, 2009

Opening Saturday, May 16, 2009, at 5 pm
 the gallery is open Tuesday to Saturday, from noon to 5 pm

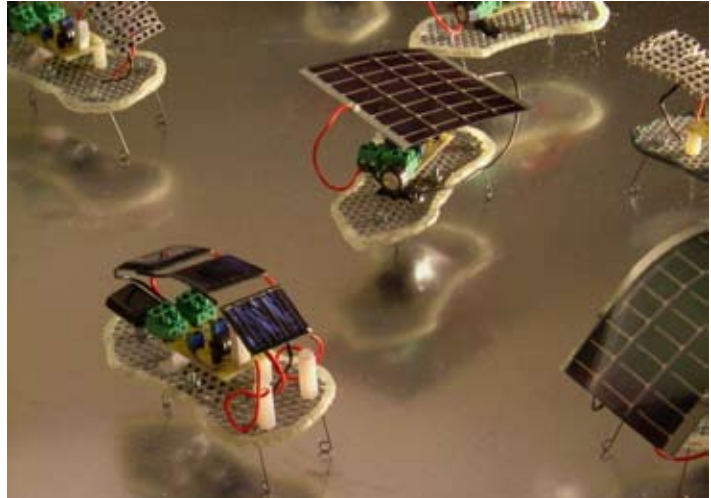
Commented Visit

Saturday, May 16, 2009, at 4 pm
 With the artist and Peter Flemming,
 author of an upcoming publication on *Field Studies*

Robots' hours of activity

Protozoan flagellate robots: noon to 2 pm
 Hydrozoans : 2 to 3:30 pm
 Anthropods: 2 to 5 pm

OBORO acknowledges the support of Cirque du Soleil for this project.



Protozoan Flagellates © J. Field, 2009

This project addresses social issues concerning the commercial creation of artificial intelligence robots that attempt to fulfil human expectations and desires. *Field Studies* uses video works to create a façade of expectation in the viewer. The videos are idealistic, they depict the robots in a virtual manner where everything they do is harmonious, orderly and fulfil the desires of the artist by doing everything she wants them to do. The real robots in the exhibition do not embody these behaviours; they have their own intelligence and shortcomings quite apart from Field's expectations of them and are nearly always out of sync with the video's expectations. The robots instead have behaviours of their own and their lack of evolution towards the artist's expectations creates a character that is their own.

The idea of evolution is explored in having three different classification of robots where each robot interacts with its similar class of robot in an ecosystem. Each class of robot has a different level of sophistication. The first carries the intelligence of a Protozoan Flagellate, a single cell organism. The second classification uses a nerve-net intelligence structure; it uses the senses to directly control the whole body's reaction

without any process of thought interpreting the experience. These robots are static and incapable of any form of evolution. This is the result of being created from conception to reality without having any way of reprogramming them to improve their behaviours. The last class of robots can evolve. They can be modified indefinitely to work in their environment as efficiently as possible by being able to remember their experiences and use logic to interpret their sensory data. With all this going for them, they still do not quite fulfil the grandeur of what they can do in their video. It then comes down to the question of how many times do these robots have to evolve before they work perfectly to the artist's expectations.

The mainstream idea of a robot is a stereotype of offering immediate gratification and is designed to fulfil human expectations and desires. Yet the robot itself has many hardware limitations in what it can actually do; in working with these limitations, the robot evolves very slowly and when finished only fulfils the smallest shadow of the idealism we desire for them. Our imagination of what we want the robot to become fills in the rest of the details.

Jessica Field was born in Pickering in 1978. She studied media arts at the Ontario College of Art and Design in Toronto and at Concordia University in Montreal. She works mainly with robotics and artificial intelligence to create theatrical robot plays where the environment determines the course of the plot and the robot actors play out their tragic flaw. Field

has exhibited in galleries and museums in Sweden, Montreal and Toronto. She has been teaching electronic workshops since 2004 at InterAccess. Recently, she has taught workshops through Centre Interuniversitaire des Arts Médiaiques in Montreal and has taught part-time at Concordia University in 2007.

Contact: OBORO, May 7, 2009

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