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ACADEMY

*for the humanities and social sciences*

British Academy Late

# Love, sex and marriage...with a robot?

Fri 3 Feb, 18.30–21.30



## Love, sex and marriage...with a robot?

Designers are producing robots that are increasingly human-like in appearance and actions. From sophisticated machines we can chat to, through to lifelike sex robots, these creations have the potential to change how humans date, have sex or fall in love. But do we really want – and need – artificial companionship? Join us for an evening of activities, from talks to performances, as we explore the future of romantic relationships.

### 1 Meet Mitsuku

18.30–21.00 (Reception)

Drop in and talk to Mitsuku, an online virtual friend who responds to typed conversation. Winner of the 2013 and 2016 Loebner Prize, Mitsuku will be accompanied by her programmer Steve Worswick.

### 2 Bar & build your perfect partner (using LEGO)

18.30–21.30 (No. 11 lobby)

Indulge in treats from the bar while building your perfect partner.

### 3 Robot-issimo!

18.45–19.15, 19.45–20.15 & 20.45–21.15 (Reading Room)

Join the world's only improvising opera company, Impropera, as they perform on the spot in response to audience suggestions. Combining serious music with surreal comedy, they will present a unique musical production working to the theme of robot relationships.

### 4 Talks

(Wolfson Auditorium)

18.40–19.10

#### A trip to the future

World Academy Fellow Ian Pearson considers how robotics, AI and bio-IT convergence will affect sex, gender and relationships, asking "how close can you get?"

19.15–19.45

#### Better than the real thing? From androids to seductive robots...

The obliging android of Villiers' *L'ève future* started a trend that filmmakers soon enthusiastically embraced. Film historian Ian Christie FBA reviews some of the screen's most seductive mechanical sirens.

19.50–20.20

#### For and against sex robots

David Levy, academic and author of *Love and Sex with Robots: The Evolution of Human-Robot Relationships* debates the pros and cons of sex robots with University of Liverpool's Eleanor Hancock.

20.25–20.55

#### Are men human?

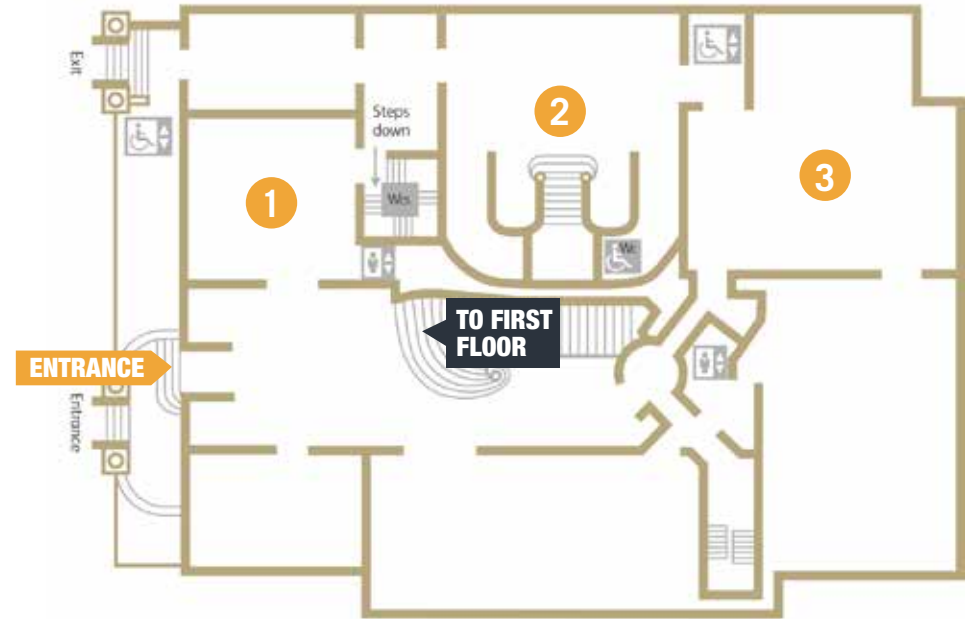
Philosopher Heather Brunskell-Evans asks are men human?

21.00–21.30

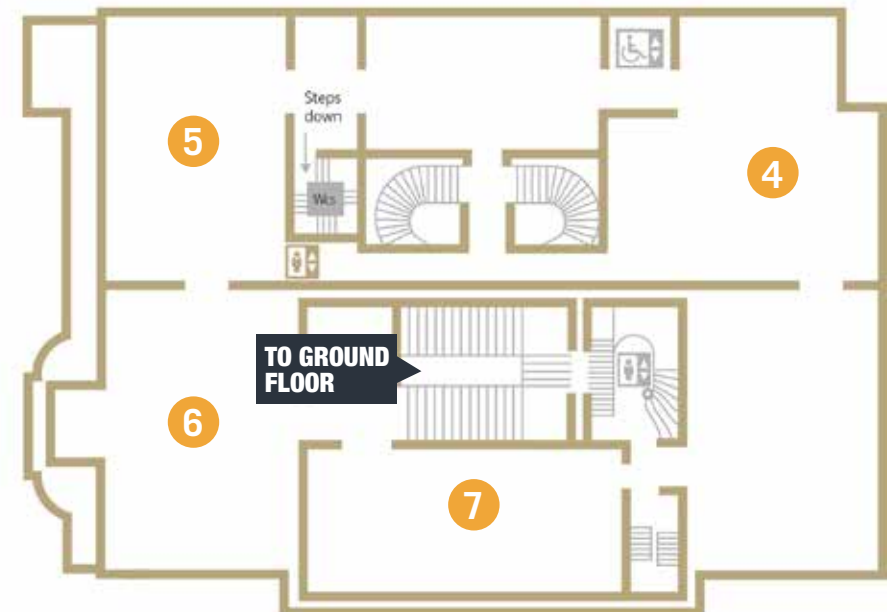
#### Sex robots and the death of relationship

Robot Ethicist Kathleen Richardson highlights why sex robots will be detrimental to society.

## Ground Floor



## First Floor



## 5 What about the heart?

18.30–21.30 (Music room)

Fine art photographer Luisa Whitton showcases a selection of prints from her acclaimed project *What about the heart?* These powerful images of the Japanese robotics industry offer an insight into the creation of hyper-realistic robots.

## 6 Drawing the Uncanny Valley

18.30–19.30 & 20.00–21.00

(Council Room)

Art Macabre invite you to explore the Uncanny Valley in this theatrical illustration workshop featuring Amy Kingsmill and FoxGlove. Drop in and sketch costumed models who will challenge your understanding of the human/robot body.

## 7 Performances

(Lecture Hall)

18.40–19.00 & 20.10–20.30

### We belong to each other

David Short, translator and retired university lecturer, introduces *R.U.R* (1920), a classic of science fiction. Written by Czech playwright Karel Capek, the play is credited with introducing the word 'robot' into the English language. His introduction will be followed by a theatrical reading of the play's iconic love scene, delivered by actors from the award-winning short story night Liars' League.

*Organised in partnership with the Czech Centre*



CZECH CENTRE

ČESKÉ CENTRUM

19.20–19.50 & 20.50–21.20

### Human Machine: First dates

HumanMachine is a new artistic experiment from Piotr Mirowski, research scientist and performer, fusing improvised theatre with AI. Join Albert (human) and A.L.Ex (machine) as they pair up to stage first dates based on your suggestions.

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The British Academy  
10–11 Carlton House Terrace  
London SW1Y 5AH

020 7969 5200

[www.britishacademy.ac.uk](http://www.britishacademy.ac.uk)



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