

FILMS (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

01 THE MICROBIAL VERDICT : YOU LIVE UNTIL YOU DIE (2015) | ZOË HOUGH | ZOEHOUGH.CO.UK

When are you dead? Scientific and medical advances are prolonging the lifespan of the human body, but our brains are not keeping up the pace, with diseases like Alzheimers becoming ever more widespread.

The Microbial Verdict: You Live Until You Die presents a speculative scenario where synthetic biology allows all citizens to live until they die; that is, they live only for as long as they remain 'themselves'.

Under this policy, citizens have until the age of 65 to decide on the characteristics which they think make them 'them'. A protein is then synthetically engineered to track the brain activity corresponding to the chosen characteristics. Once ingested, the protein recognises when brain activity falls below the specified levels for the specified amount of time and releases a toxin so that the person dies a quick and painless death.

Each citizen is invited to attend a compulsory ceremony, inside the offices of The Department for Self & Sanity, to ingest their synthetically engineered pill. This special day marks the moment that each citizen steps towards their blissful future, safe in the knowledge that they will only live for as long as they remain 'themselves'.

Although a speculative design project, the scenario is scientifically plausible. The film is one element of a larger design project.



BIOGRAPHY

Zoë Hough is sometimes writer, sometimes designer, most-times anxiety sufferer.

Works range from speculative design to the non-speculative anxietyempire.com

02 ELSEWHERE (2017) | JOSEPH POPPER | JOSEPHPOPPER.NET

Elsewhere responds to the promise of virtual reality to experience new worlds as new characters in new bodies. The work imagines a fall from one reality into another and a transition between the physical and the virtual. A man stumbles and wades alone through a country stream. He appears out of place, his grey city clothes contrast with the green landscape around him and his shoes are far from waterproof. On his face rest a pair of glasses with a lens conspicuously missing. He ignores the world around him, absorbed in the search for a means to escape it - to return to somewhere else and to be someone else. The disconnect of the protagonist from his environment explores how senses of 'presence' are changing as we move further from reality into virtuality.



BIOGRAPHY

Joseph Popper is an artist from London. His work examines space travel and other human technological

endeavours by imagining future narratives and fictional experiences. He employs hand-crafted imagery and built environments in his approach. Everyday objects, simple materials and found locations transform into props and stages for playful, critical fictions where the normal is made fantastic. His works are exhibited internationally, including La Gaîté Lyrique (Paris), Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art (Gateshead), La Panacée Centre for Contemporary Culture (Montpellier) and Vitra Design Museum (Weil).

Joseph is currently a PhD Candidate at the European Centre for Artistic, Design and Media-based research (ECAM). He is working in the Institute for Experimental Design and Media Cultures. He is also a visiting lecturer for a number of arts universities in the UK and Europe, leading a series of workshops for higher education courses and other institutions.

03 CLAIRYOYANCE (2015) | HIROKI YOKOYAMA | HIROKIYOKOYAMA.COM

Sony had an E.S.P. (extrasensory perception) research laboratory during the period between 1990 and 1998. They carried out experiments and finally confirmed the existence of E.S.P. If the lab was still open now, what kind of experiments would they carry out?



BIOGRAPHY

Hiroki Yokoyama is a designer and filmmaker. His work explores how everyday life in the future or alternative worlds is changed by existing, emerging and speculative technologies. He is especially interested in the blurred boundaries between reality and fiction in mundane, daily events.

04 DRONES WITH DESIRES (2015) | AGI HAINES | AGIHAINES.COM

This is a film showing aspects of the research that went into the production of project 'Drone with Desires'. An art science collaboration funded by the Bio art and Design Awards. An MRI of the artist's brain was taken by neuroscientists at Erasmus MC Rotterdam and coded into a drone. As the drone moves it takes in information about its anatomy and environment, updating its internal algorithm. This then can represent how the plasticity of the brain might change if it was in a completely different anatomical structure.

The drone makes decisions based on comfort and curiosity, moving its wings to navigate. As it does so connections in the network alter their strength to replicate learning behaviour as it develops in the human brain. A neural soundscape generated from MRI sounds and internal sounds from the human body represents the most active nodes in the network.

In collaboration with... Marcel de Jeu, Jos van der Geest,

Sean Clarke, Jack McKay Fletcher, Christos Melidis, Vaibhav Tyagi, Marcel Helmer.

BIOGRAPHY

Agi Haines' work is focused on the design of the human body. How might people respond to the possibilities of our body as another everyday material and how far can we push our malleable bodies while still being accepted by society?

After completing her masters in Design Interactions, she is now undertaking PhD research at Transtechnology Research, funded by Plymouth University. Working amongst various artists and scientists who are all focused on creativity and cognition. Her research, teaching and exhibiting are inspired and informed by the weird and wonderful things that exist inside us. Questioning how our morbid curiosity for the viscera of life might affect the future of design, not only for the environment but also for us as sentient sacks of flesh within it?

05 COMPLEX CINDERELLAS (2018) | AMINA ABBAS-NAZARI | AMINANAZARI.COM

The Cinderella Complex was first described by author Colette Dowling in 1981 (the cusp of second wave feminism), who wrote a book on women's fear of independence – an unconscious desire to be taken care of by others. She describes women, having taken steps to extend their own autonomous presence in the world, but still not capable of changing situations by their own actions and having to be helped by an outside force, usually a male (i.e., the Prince).

'Complex Cinderellas' is a fictional design project that critically and satirically investigates Dowling's propositions through objects, using them as actors within the narrative; and dissection of the material worlds' power hierarchies. The project presents a collection of particularly feminine or domestic products specifically designed to be bought, used, and then knowingly fail, but at an unknown point in time. The objects' catalytic malfunction would manufacture a situation of putting the woman in danger; facilitating the interaction of needing to be rescued.

The project challenges the male dominated design world with objects created to be utilized by, empower and

emancipate women; complete with their complex needs, emotions and sexual desires.

BIOGRAPHY

Amina Abbas-Nazari is an independent artist and Research Fellow at the Royal College of Art within the Design Products department.

She graduated from the RCA with an MA in Design Interactions. She is interested in finding points where fiction can become reality and aims to disperse metanarratives to give way for a more diverse range of ideologies. She creates designed interactions, speculative systems and sonic fictions, using designed media to expand reality and broaden people's notion of what design can encompass, manifest as and effect.

Amina has presented her work at the London Design Festival, Milan Furniture Fair, Venice Architecture Biannual and Critical Media Lab, Basel, Switzerland. Also, given lectures at Harvard University, America, Queen Mary University London, the V&A museum, to industry and government.

06 THE INFUMIS (2015) | NESTOR PESTANA | NESTORPESTANA.CO.UK

The Infumis is part of the After Information series, an ongoing research that incorporates a series of fictional narratives translated into props, films and illustrations. It imagines a post-informational era, where biotechnologies are widely used in our lives.

The narrative of the project develops around The Infumis, a community that lives beneath large traffic intersections and has developed an alternative means to dealing with pollutants. In this world, intersections effectively become farms where air and water pollutants are harvested to nourish the body of these people.

The project is presented as a cautionary narrative, exploring the aesthetics of pessimism and dystopia, and aiming to generate discussions about our increasingly

toxic environments.



BIOGRAPHY

Nestor Pestana is a Portuguese speculative designer and multimedia artist based in London. He holds a bachelor's degree in design from the University of Aveiro, and a master's degree in design interactions from the Royal College of Art in London.

Nestor has organised and presented seminars, workshops and talks in the U.K. and overseas. His exhibited highlights include: Night school on Anarres at Somerset House, Bio-art Seoul: Abundance of Life and Swiss Pavilion's School of Tomorrow at the Venice Architecture Biennale. His work is in the Wellcome Trust Collection.

07 EMBARRASSED ROBOTS (2017) | SOOMI PARK | SOOMIPARK.COM

Artificial intelligence and robotics will play an increasingly important role in supporting our lives. Currently, AI and robotics remain crude – confined to our smartphones, sat-navs, or tasked to build our cars. To fit more seamlessly into our daily lives they will have to learn to successfully reflect our emotions – the embarrassment for example. Embarrassed Robots project proposes an investigation into how through material, form and function a robot can come to express emotion, without aping and alienating us.

Embarrassment is a quintessential human emotion and something that in the future any robot occupying a human facing role will need to be able to replicate. This project investigates how the design of a robot can come to express embarrassment.



BIOGRAPHY

Soomi Park is a London-based speculative designer and multimedia artist from Seoul, South Korea. Her work explores the complex relationship between emerging technologies and human desires. Her works encompass a

wide range of mediums, including interactive installations, speculative objects, film, photography, performance, & wearables.

She holds an MA in Design Interactions from Royal College of Art, and is currently pursuing her PhD in the Media and Arts Technology (MAT) programme at Queen Mary, University of London. She is also involved with teaching and mentoring in higher education institutions including Goldsmiths University of London and Chelsea College of Arts (UAL).

Her work has been featured by numerous media outlets including The New York Times, Vogue Paris, The Guardian/ The Observer and Wired UK. She has exhibited throughout Europe and South Korea, including the Design Museum, Biennale Internationale Design Saint-Etienne, Science Gallery Dublin and Ars Electronica Linz.

She is currently one of the Designers in Residence at the Design Museum, London.

08 MAKE YOUR MAKER (2012) | LUCY MCRAE | LUCYMCRAE.NET

Make Your Maker takes genetic engineering to the extreme, depicting a world where technology is liquid and the human body is cloned to the point of a food source.

Food and Body Inseparable – Make Your Maker takes the concept of genetic manipulation to extreme; where gender and ego are blended like a chef makes a cake and human edible clones are consumed for sensory enhancement. The deliberate modification of life led Lucy to question her own genetic make up; “What if we could choose our own human traits; or if our parents could choose what they give us?”

Assembling the body from scratch in the kitchen where technology and biology merge, may seem absurd – But its important to hover the imagination and discuss how scientific breakthroughs are slowly reconstructing the body.

McRae (the protagonist) moves through a series of sensory chambers spending time in an anechoic chamber examining the psychoacoustics of silence or in a self-invented microgravity trainer conditioning the body for possible life in space. These fictional locations explore whether the design of isolation into buildings could play a role in advancing human biology on an evolutionary scale.



BIOGRAPHY

Lucy McRae is a sci-fi artist, film director, TED Fellow and body architect, placing the human body in complex, futuristic scenarios that confound the boundaries

between the natural and artificial; inventing iconic artworks that take people beyond the expectations of themselves. Trained in classical ballet and interior design, her approach is to influence culture by exploring scientific breakthroughs relating to health and the human body, while providing a feminine point of view on emerging technology.

Inventor of Swallowable Parfum, Lucy is recognised as an early identifier of emerging technologies that drive product innovation. Lucy led Philips Electronics far-future research lab, developing stretchable electronics, an electronic tattoo and a range of emotional sensing dresses. She has consulted with companies such as Procter & Gamble, Unilever, Intel and Aesop on the cultural impacts that emerging technologies will have on future lifestyles.

McRae encourages scientific conversation around the slipperiness of where science and technology meet the body, throwing into question “What makes us Human”? She has spoken and taught masterclasses on the impact technology has on human nature at TED, WIRED Health, Royal Albert Hall, London’s College of Physicians, Tribeca, Cannes Lion and most recently at MIT’s Being Material conference in 2017.

McRae’s award-winning science fiction artworks have been developed in collaboration with leading institutes including NASA, MIT and Ars Electronica. Her work has been exhibited at the London Science Museum, Centre Pompidou and the Venice Biennale.

09 DESIRE MANAGEMENT (2005) | NOAM TORAN | NOAMTORAN.COM

Desire Management is a film comprising five sequences in which objects are used as vehicles for dissident behaviour. In the film, the domestic space is defined as the last private frontier, a place where bespoke appliances provide unorthodox experiences for alienated people: An airline hostess with a unique relationship to turbulence, the owner of a mysterious box which men ritually visit to look inside, an elderly man who enjoys being vacuumed, a couple who engage in baseball driven fantasies, a man who is forced by his partner to cry into a strange device.

Based on real testimonials and news reports, the objects specifically created for the film attempt to reveal the inherent need for expression and identity formation in the face of conformity. The project was originally shown at the Venice Architecture Biennale in Summer 2004 as an installation of three objects, Baseball Bed, Vacuum Scanner, and Turbulent Air Trolley. The film premiered at the 2005 Raindance Film Festival.



BIOGRAPHY

Noam Toran’s work involves the creation of intricate

narratives developed as a means to reflect upon the interrelations of history, memory, and storytelling as embodied in cinematic, literary, and performative forms. Research based, the works examine how fictions influence the collective consciousness, and are realised through an original way of reconfiguring narrative codes, conventions and structures, and weaving them with historical materials.

The work is exhibited, screened and published internationally, notably at the CNAC Pompidou (Paris), Kunsthalle Wien (Vienna), Venice Architecture Biennale, London Architecture Biennale, Victoria & Albert Museum (London), Israel Museum (Jerusalem), Witte de With (Rotterdam), MuHKA (Antwerp), Museum of Modern Art (NYC), Lisbon Architecture Triennale, Musée d’Art Contemporain (St Etienne), Baltic Contemporary (Newcastle), London Design Festival, Arnolfini Gallery (Bristol), Center for Contemporary Art (Tel Aviv), Musée D’Art Moderne (Luxembourg), Kulturhuset (Stockholm) and Haus der Kulturen der Welt (Berlin).

Noam Toran is represented by Raw Art Gallery in Tel Aviv.