


Robot Touch / Touching Robotics

Towards an Integrative Understanding of
Human-Robot Touch Interactions

16-17 June 2026
SDU, Odense, DK

SDU 

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DENMARK

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The DFF Research Network "Robot Touch" is organizing a two-day seminar exploring the status of and future possibilities for interdisciplinary research on human-robot touch.

From a practical point of view, touch between robots and humans is a necessity to accomplish several existing and proposed robotics applications within, e.g., healthcare, assistive robotics, rehabilitation, manufacturing, and even entertainment. In popular movies, computer games, and other contemporary media we are routinely presented with robots that interact haptically with humans and the multifarious meanings and expressions forms of robotic touch may be endowed

with. In this seminar, rather than focusing on the technical challenges or safety aspects relating to robotic touch, we aim to discuss its aesthetic, communicative, and emotional facets, as well as its possible implications for individual users and culture at large. Questions of interest include: What kinds of haptic interaction are desirable and permissible from robots and how can they be designed? How is robot touch interpreted and understood within different settings and contexts? How can touch contribute to more fluent or (proto-)social forms of interaction with robots? What does an adequate interdisciplinary approach to robot touch look like, and how might existing perspectives and methodologies be integrated to arrive at a more encompassing understanding of robot touch, to the benefit of future robot users and society?

The seminar focuses both on exploring the breadth of existing research addressing human-robot touch and the topics and methodologies pursued here. International experts from fields including neuroscience, design, psychology, sociology, cultural studies, HRI, robotics, and art practice/history will contribute and share insights into the current state-of-the-art. The seminar also pursues the question of what form research on robotic touch and robotic touch itself might take in the future, and how various perspectives of the humanities, art, and design might be included in research practices and how these disciplines and fields can aid in imagining and critically discussing how robotic touch could become otherwise.

The seminar is open to all stakeholders interested in discussing the salient aspects and critical issues surrounding robot touch from an interdisciplinary perspective with respect to basic and applied research as well as current robotics services and commercial platforms.

Organized by Jonas Jørgensen, Andrea Tesanovic & Kathrin Maurer.

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Register [here](#)

More info [here](#)



PROGRAM

Tuesday June 16 – Location: U301:

9:30-10:00

9:30-9:45: Welcome (coffee & tea)

9:45-10: Introduction (Jonas Jørgensen)

10-12:00: Neuroscience and Psychology

10:00-10:20: Sarah McIntyre

10:20-10:40: Louise Kirsch (online)

Break (10 mins.)

10:50-11:10: Jacqueline Borgstedt

11:10-11:50: Q&A + discussion (Moderator: Kathrin Maurer)

11:50-13:00: Lunch

13:00-15:00: Design and HRI

13:00-13:20: Caroline Yan Zheng

13:20-13:40: Isabel Neto

Break (10 mins.)

13:50-14:10: Amy Winters

14:10-14:50: Q&A + discussion (Moderator: Andrea Tesanovic)

Break (10 mins.)

15:00-16:00 Multidisciplinary Roundtable (Mark Paterson, Evgenios Vlachos, Bojana Romic.
Moderator: Jonas Jørgensen)

Wednesday June 17 – Locations: Dialogen (Koblingen building) + U301

Room: Dialogen (Koblingen building):

9:30-9:45: Welcome (coffee & tea)

9:45-10:45: Performance: Marco Donnarumma, *Lestes*

Break (30 mins.)

Room: U301:

11:15-12:15: Panel – Robotic Touch in/and Art (Marco Donnarumma, Kassandra Wellendorf, Andrea Tesanovic, Kathrin Maurer)

12.15-13.00: Lunch

13:00-15:05: Cultural Studies / History of Ideas / Ethics

13:00-13:30: Keynote: Mark Paterson

13:30-13:50 Q&A (Moderator: Jonas Jørgensen)

Break (10 mins)

14:00-14:20: Lea Laura Nørregaard

14:20-14:40: Evgenios Vlachos

14:40-15:05: Q&A (Moderator: Kathrin Maurer)

15:05-15:15: Concluding remarks (Jonas Jørgensen)