

## A singing marionette made of junk and a dancing robotic swan in the reactor hall



Follow us on a rare journey under the earth to see some remarkable creatures, such as the electro-mechanical marionette **Olimpia** made from junk and the dancing robot swan **Robocygne** in Åsa and Carl Unander-Scharin's **Opera Mecatronica** – an exhibition in the abandoned Reactor hall (R1) at the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH), November 18<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>.

Between the 18<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> November, the exhibition **Opera Mecatronica** is on show in Reaktor 1 at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, where Åsa and Carl Unander-Scharin present eight mecatronical opera and dance works. The exhibition room is a unique 13000 m<sup>3</sup> space, 35 meters below earth which was Sweden's first nuclear reactor, designed for scientific research, built in 1954 and phased out in 1970s.

In the exhibition **Opera Mecatronica**, the computer directed marionette **Olimpia** made from junk, will perform for the first time. Olimpia is a three-meter tall three-dimensional creation built from rusty and patinated machine parts that dance in a curiously human like manner whilst singing an aria from *The Tales of Hoffmann*.

It is also the Stockholm debut for the dancing robot swan **Robocygne**, who will be dancing to Carl Unander-Scharin's electroacoustic version of Tchaikovsky's majestic music from *Swan Lake*. The impression created when **Robocygne**, which was developed at Mälardalen University, was shown to an audience for the first time at the Swedish Book Fair in Gothenburg in September 2010, was enormous. That a robot could bring tears to the eye with its captivating dance created a newsworthy item that reached as far as the USA, India, Canada and Singapore.

In this exhibition there are other curious items such as an interactive copper tree singing Handel's *Ombra mai fù*, accompanied by vibrating brass loudspeaker leaves, a tub with dark water where a dancer interactively dances to the Pearl Fisher duet by Georges Bizet, and an electro mechanical miniature version of the ballet *Petrushka*...

**Opera Mecatronica** is created in close collaboration with the robot constructor **Magnus Lundin** and the lighting designer **Anders Larsson**, as well as with **KTH R1**.

**The exhibition Opera Mecatronica** is open Thursday 18th of November until Sunday 21st of November - and on Thursday and Friday between 4pm-8pm and Saturday and Sunday

between 12pm-4pm, on the hour every hour, a group of 100 people will gain admission on a tour among the robots and interactive opera- and dance installations in KTH R1.

**To be sure of a place make a reservation at [www.operamecatronica.com](http://www.operamecatronica.com)**

**Åsa Unander-Scharin** is a choreographer and dancer who creates choreographic works in collaboration with composers, visual artists, programmers, robot researchers and dancers. She is also an artistic researcher and wrote her PhD thesis *Human Mechanics and Soulful Machines* in 2008. Since 2009 she has held the post of postdoctoral research fellow at Luleå University of Technology/ Department for music and media, where she in a series of choreographic works investigates bodies and bodiliness' as multistable phenomena.

**Carl Unander-Scharin** is a composer and singer, working as soloist at the Royal Opera and the Folkoperan in Stockholm. Carl has written 8 operas, a number of choral works, interactive music, as well as music for dance performances and film. During 2007-2009 he was Artist in Residence at the Gothenburg Opera, and since autumn 2010 he has held the post of PhD candidate at KTH in collaboration with the University College of Opera in Stockholm. His artistic research project Tenor Techniques and Singing Technologies is investigating how a deepened understanding of vocal expression can inform the creation of technologically expanded vocal art and vice versa.

The Installations of Opera Mecatronica has been developed in collaboration with Luleå University of technology, Mälardalen University, The University College of Opera, The Royal Institute of Technology and The Dance museum, financial supported by the Swedish Arts Grants Committee the Swedish Arts Council, The region of Stockholm, Längmanska kulturfonden, SAMI, University College of Dance and Asea Brown Boverly.

**To find your way to R1:** R1 is situated at Drottning Kristinas väg 51 at KTH Campus

**Further information and photos can be found at [www.operamecatronica.com](http://www.operamecatronica.com)**

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