HYDRA FOR A SAFER WORLD

NEW MEDIA ART CLUB

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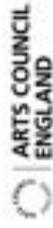
Show the images in the zine to the camera

Explore the sketches we created with Hydra and Teachable Machine

Special thanks to
Sean Carroll & Anoushka Carroll

FdF / NH / SM / NGPT / JY / 2026

L|C|B

This zine emerges from the shared experimentation and conversation during the Hydra Live Coding with Teachable Machine Bootcamp Residency, organised by New Media Art Club in January 2026. The bootcamp brought together Sian Morrell, Ngo Chun Phoenix Tse, and Jash Yuan as bootcamp residents, led by Flor de Fuego and Naoto Hieda. Across the bootcamp, the artists explored live visual coding on Hydra, engaging with machine learning, as tools for thinking rather than solutions to be optimised.

The outcome of this process is a collective projection installation developed for COMPUTALA 2026, presented by LCB Depot and New Media Art Club, with support from Arts Council England. This year, the festival reflects AI as an urgent and widely debated subject. COMPUTALA's interest lies not in technological novelty, but in critical discourse around how artificial intelligence is embedded within creative practice and everyday life.

The installation responds to the exhibition theme Robots for a Safer World, originally framed as a policy challenge by the previous UK government. Yet Robots for a Safer World is a curious phrase. It carries the tone of science fiction optimism rather than the material realities of nuclear decommissioning, deep-sea engineering, or extractive labour. It imagines the robot as a helper rather than worker, companion rather than mechanism. The language is gentle, even comforting, masking the complex systems of power, labour, and responsibility that automation inevitably reshapes.
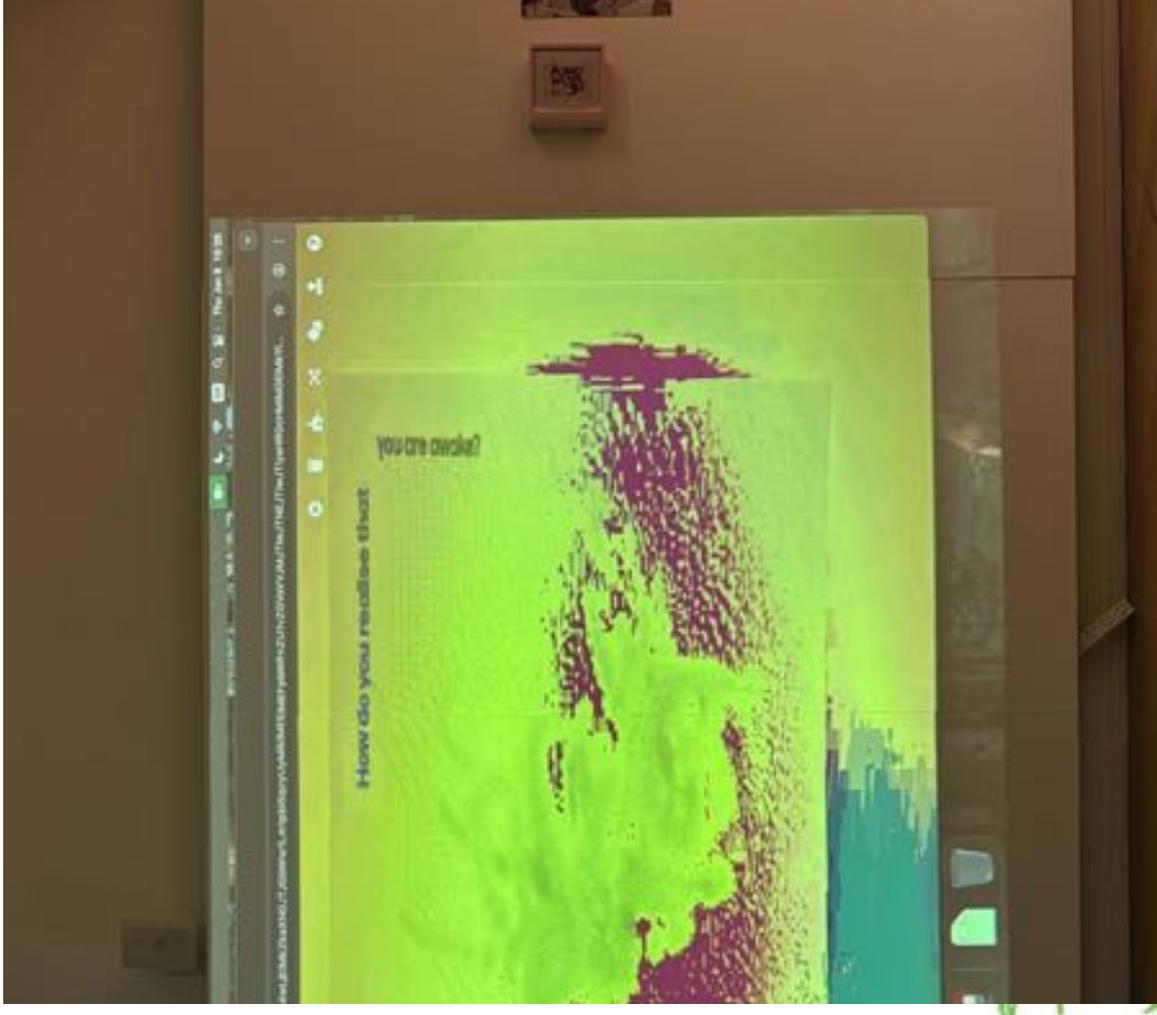
During the Hydra bootcamp, we approached these tensions through practice. Using Hydra as a live visual coding environment, we explored how real-time graphics could function within performance contexts. Alongside this, we worked with Teachable Machine, engaging machine learning not as an opaque intelligence but as a system shaped by input, gesture as well as repetition. Rather than building autonomous agents, we focused on interaction, responsiveness, and miscommunication.

From this process emerged a series of questions addressed to the audience. These questions are projected alongside simple hand gestures for greeting and recognition, forming a loop of call and response between human bodies and machine vision.

These questions move between the everyday and the philosophical, from lived interactions with devices to longer traditions of speculative thought, recalling works such as I, Robot and Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?. They are not intended to be answered correctly, but to reveal how deeply machines already shape our habits, memories, and sense of self.

As artists working closely with coding and AI, we are interested not only in intelligence, but in warmth: how computational art might remain attentive to vulnerability and care.

We attempt to recognise ourselves within systems we continue to build.
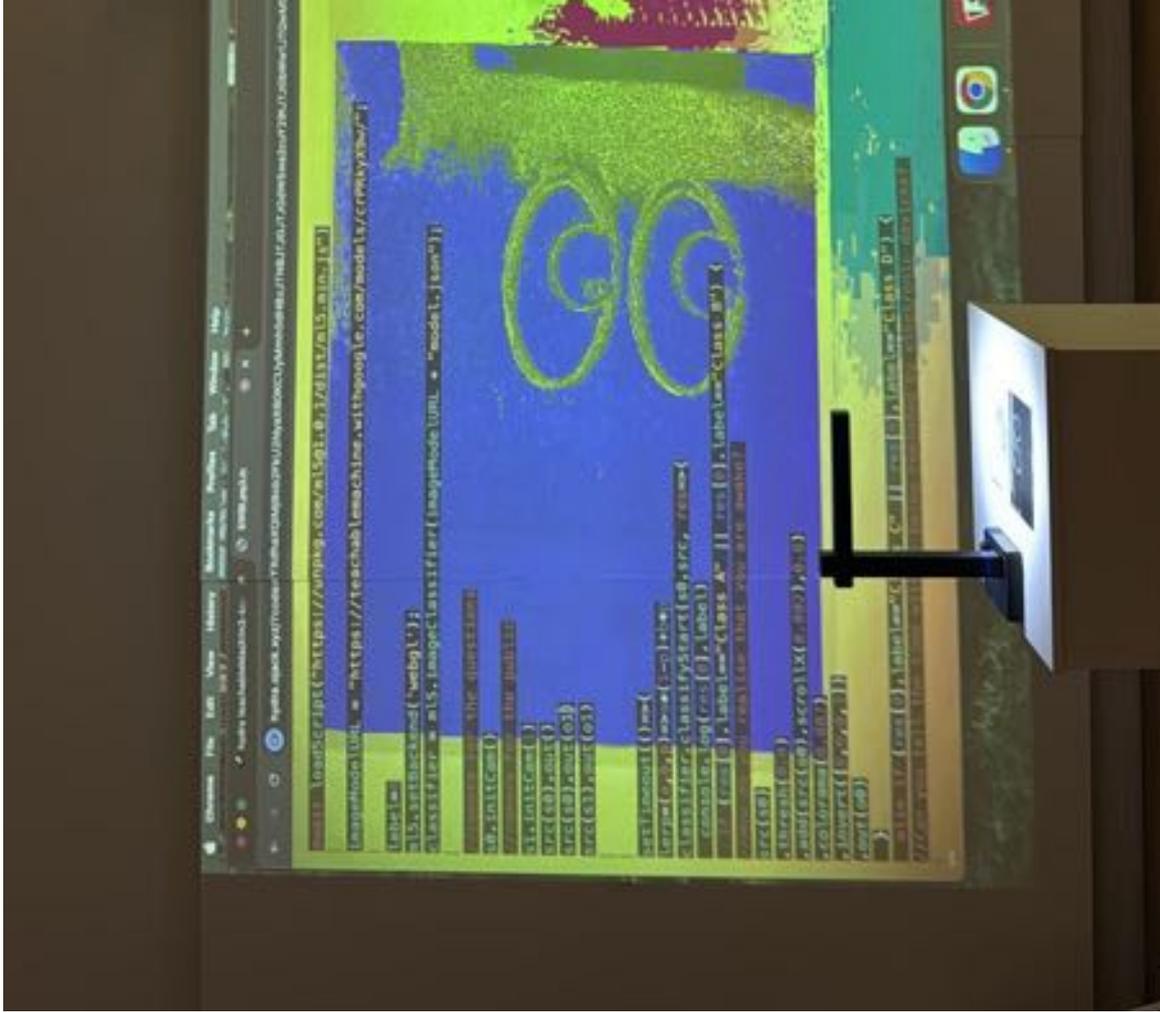
BIOS

Sian Morrell

Sian is a multidisciplinary artist / designer / facilitator from Derby, East Midlands, exploring the use of creative technologies in live events and exhibition environments.
insta @___cyanamber
web https://cyanamber.cargo.site/

Josh Yuan

Josh is a London-based artist whose practice primarily engages with non-material forms, alongside sound, lens-based media, text, and performance.
insta @awesomejosh
web https://awesomejosh.com/

Ngo Chun Phoenix Tse

Chun is a London-based artist and writer working in the intersections of contemporary art, film and performance.
insta @phoenixchunzz
web http://ngochuntse.com/

Naoto Hieda

Naoto Hieda is a Japanese researcher and an artist based in Estonia. They question the productive qualities of coding and speculate on new forms, post-coding through neuroqueerness, decolonization and live coding.
web https://naotohieda.com/

Flor de Fuego

Flor de Fuego is a digital-craft artist based in Germany who primarily uses with programming and live coding to create performative experiences. Her research explores concepts such as the body, space, code, and the chaos-cosmos.
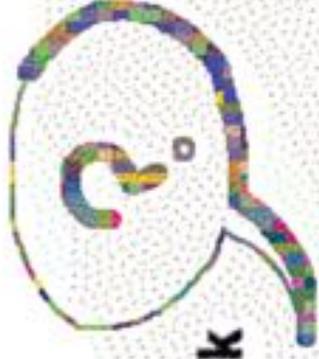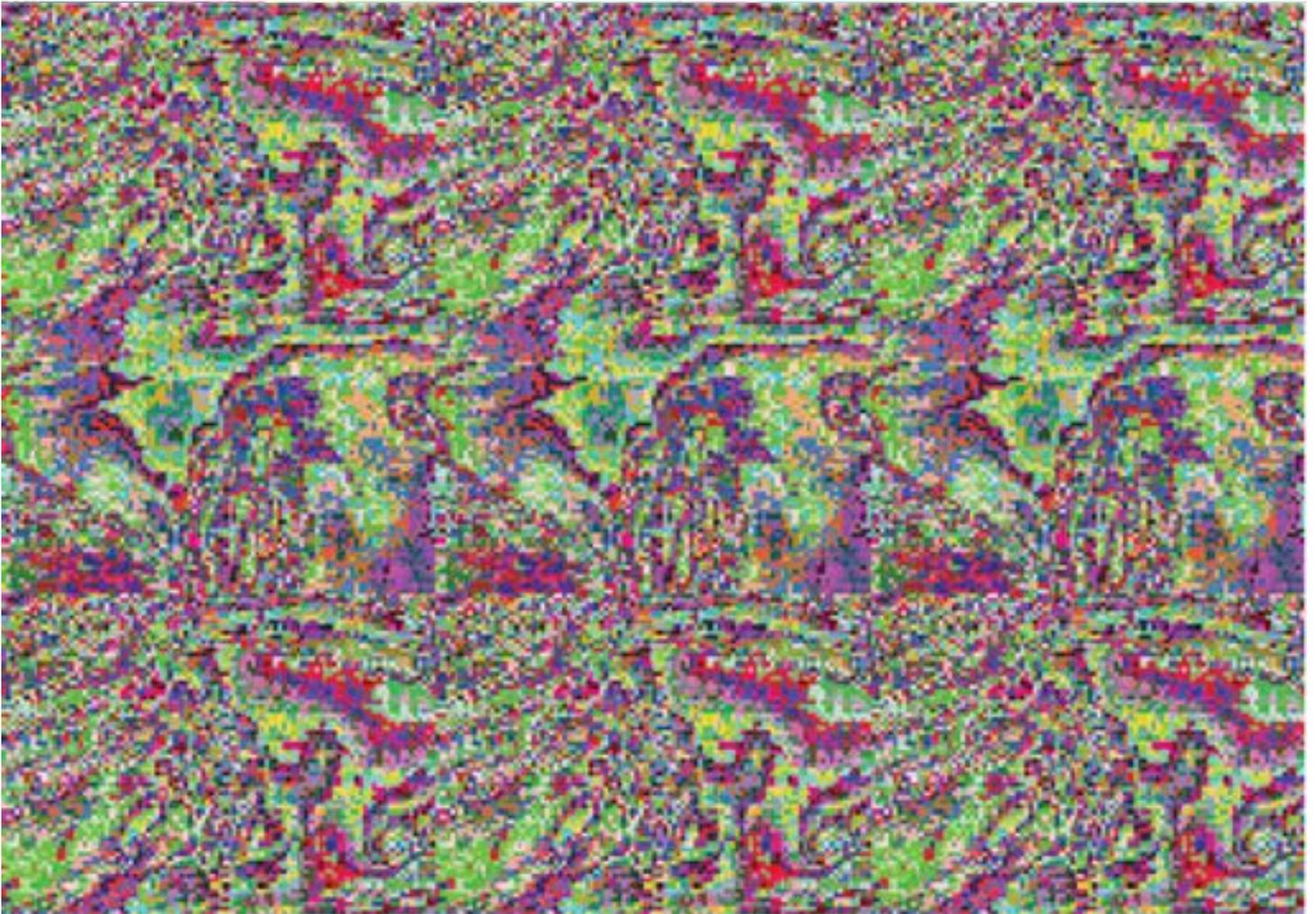
How should we talk
to robots/AI?
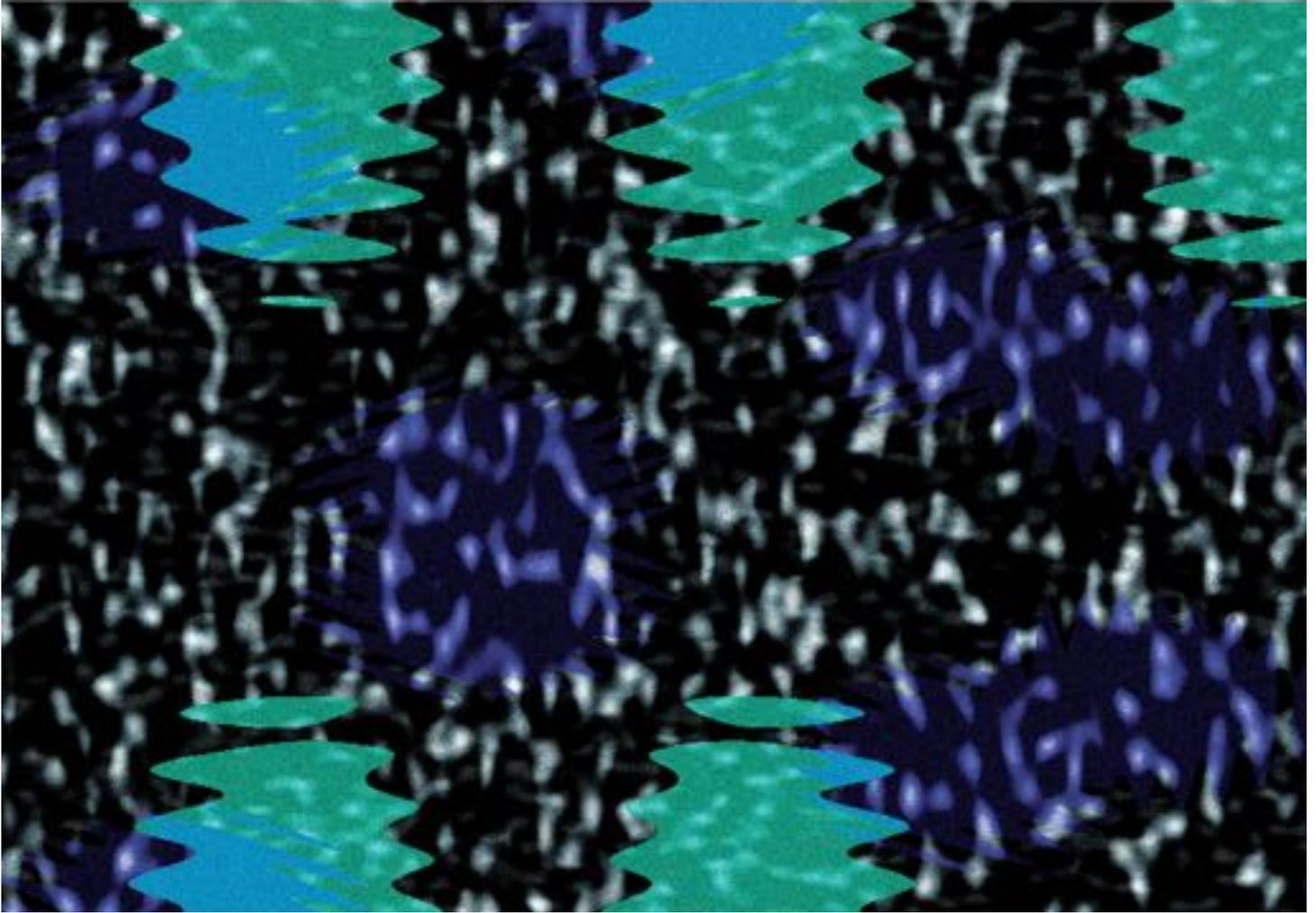
Are
you
human?

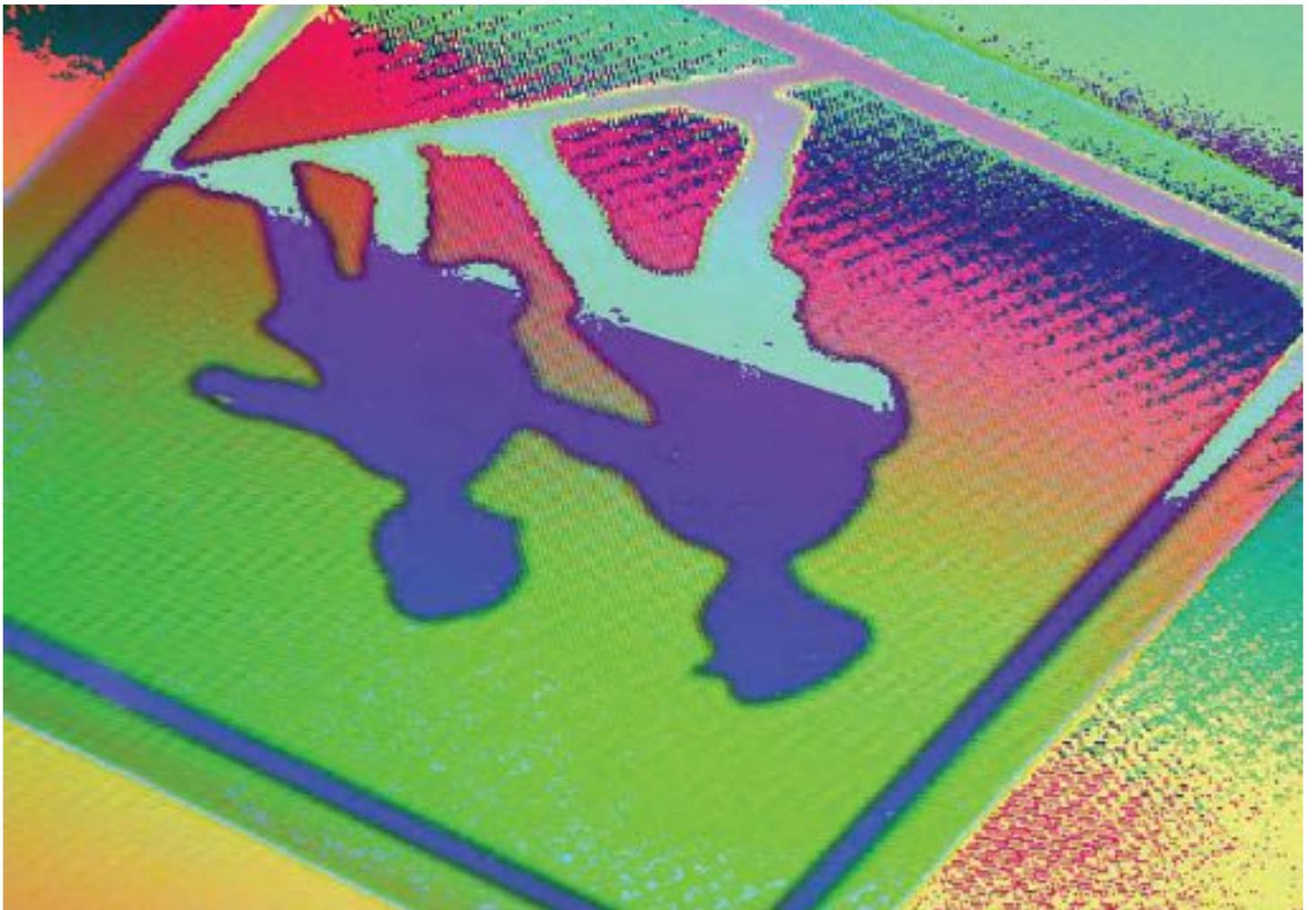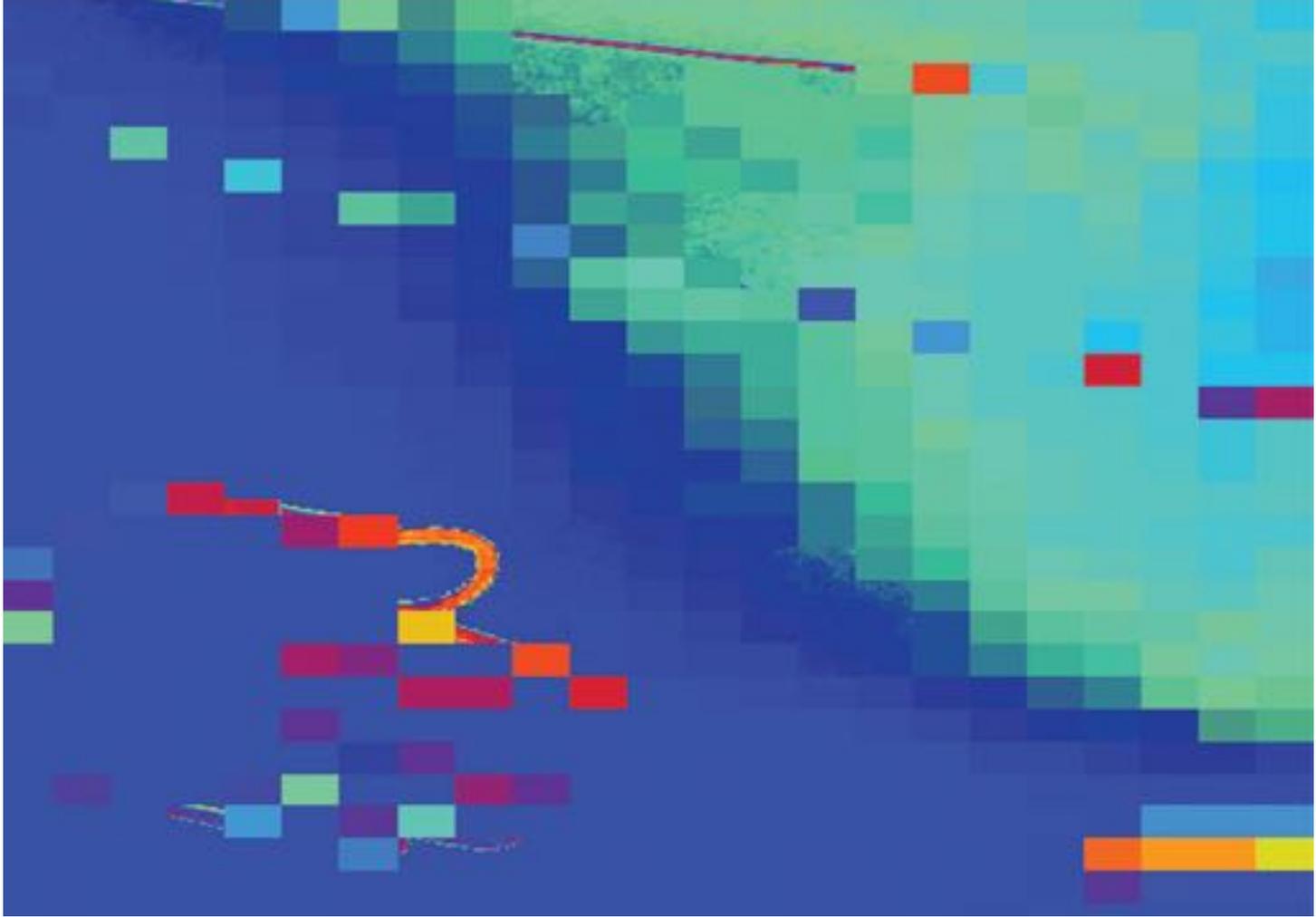Do you consider
robots as a friend
in the future?

Do you exactly follow
the (traffic) signal?

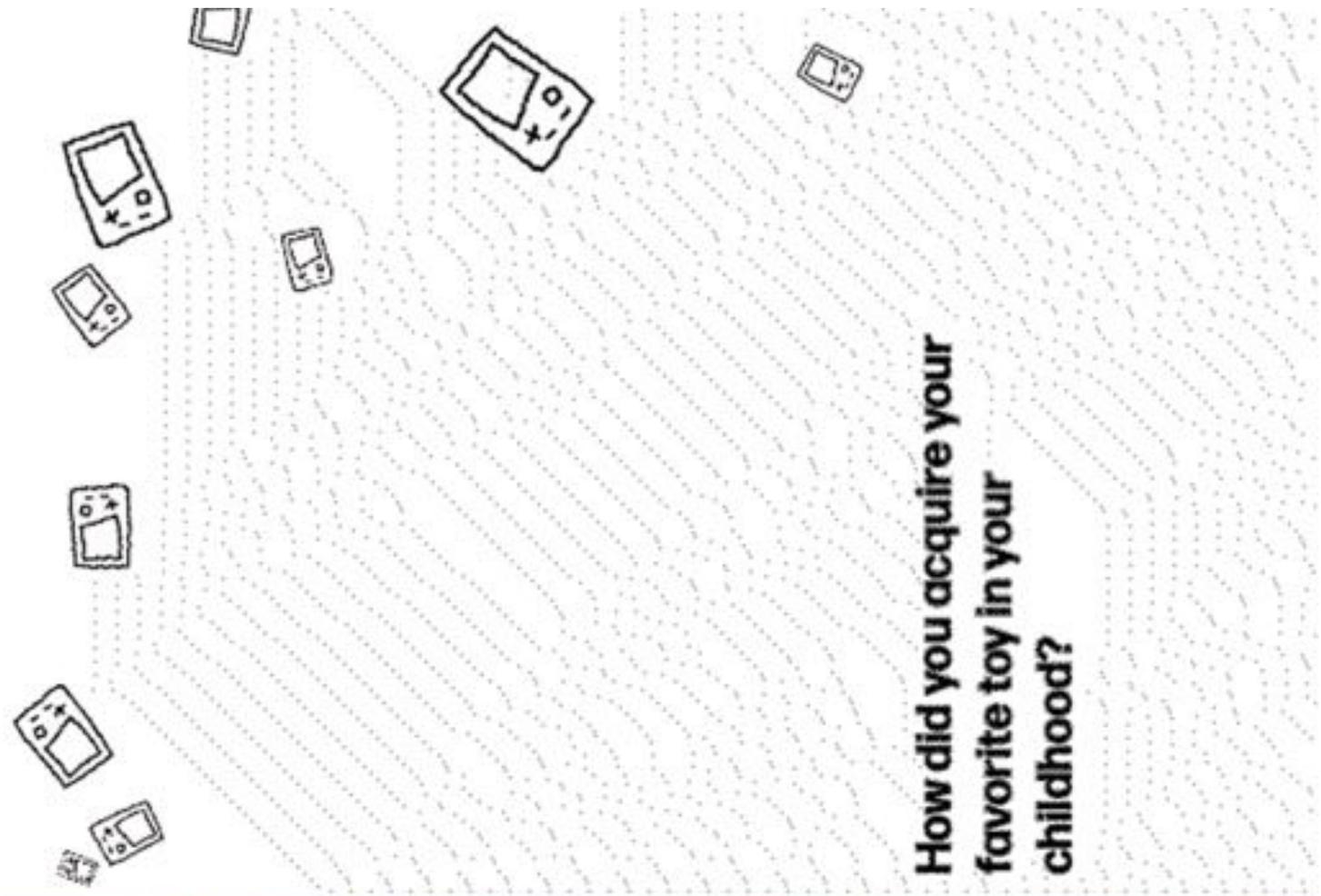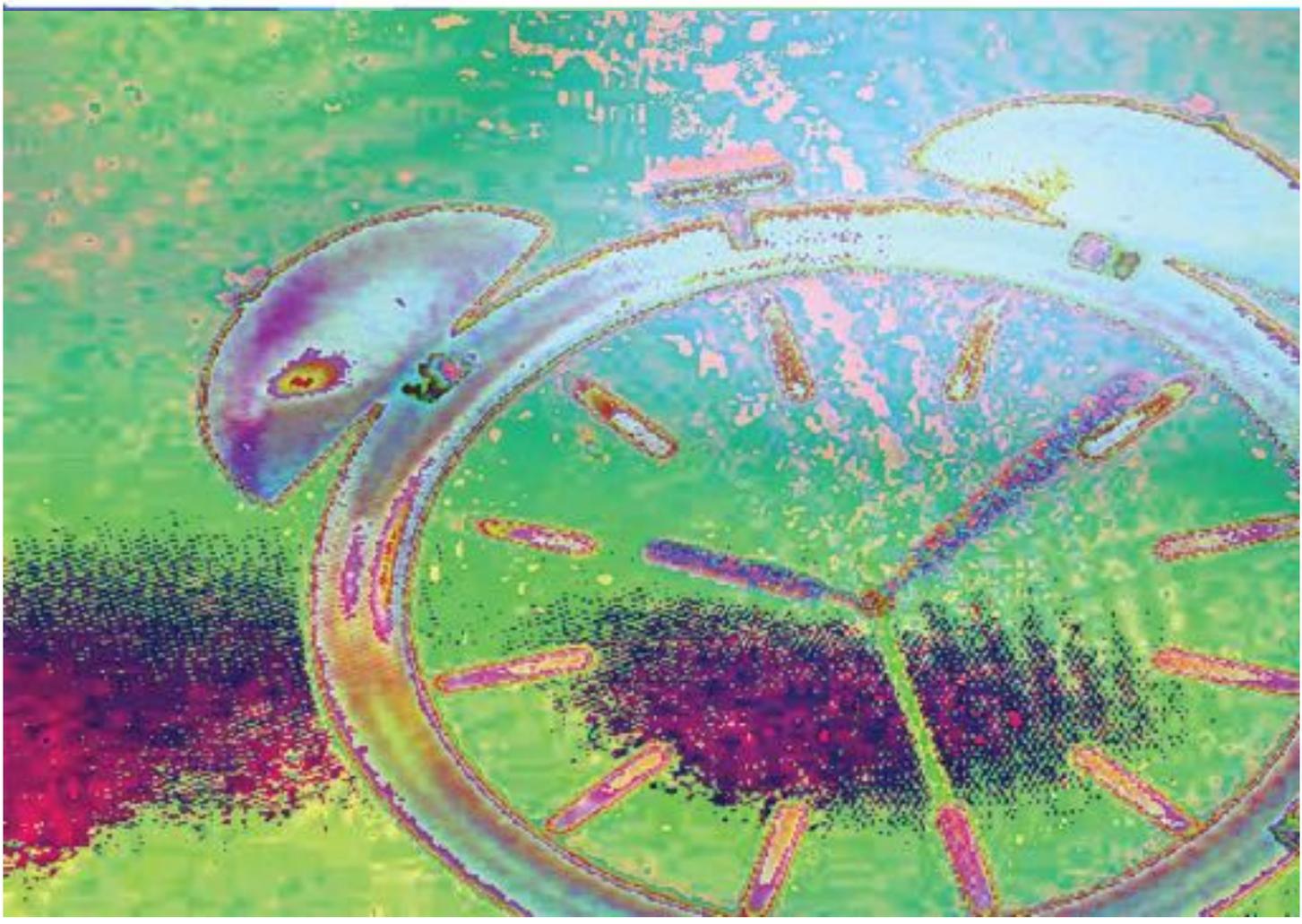# What responsibilities would you allow a robot to have?

Can you tell the time without being reminded by electronic devices?

How did you acquire your favorite toy in your childhood?

How do you realise that you are awake?