

Talking Machines and Cultural Imagination

Introducing a Kone Foundation research project:

TALKING MACHINES

Electronic voice and the interpretation of emotions and self-understanding
in human-machine communication in 1960–2020

[Http://talkingmachinesproject.wordpress.com/](http://talkingmachinesproject.wordpress.com/)

Kimi Kärki at TransVision2018

Research Fellow, Talking Machines / Kone Foundation 2018-2022

Dr.Phil, Adjunct Professor (Title of Docent), Dept. of Cultural History, University of Turku, Finland



PRINCIPAL RESEARCH QUESTION

How talking machines, including listening and singing machines, have challenged our ideas on humanity, communication, and the relation of the human and the machine?

SUB-QUESTIONS

1. How talking machines have been envisioned and discussed in popular culture, media and art?
 2. What kind of impact the cultural imaginings have had on the evolution of talking machines?
 3. How the voice-based human-machine communication has challenged our understanding on artificial intelligence and the agency of the machine?
 4. How electronic voice and talking machines have entered our every-day life through media, art and popular culture? What is their impact on our understanding on humanity and its future?
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RESEARCHERS

Pertti Grönholm (PI)

Adjunct Professor at European and World History, University of Turku

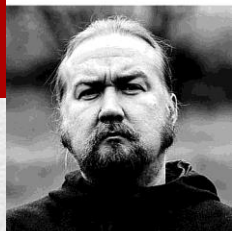
Electronic transformation of human voice and “robotic” vocalities in pop music.



Tanja Sihvonen

Professor at Media studies, University of Vaasa

Algorithms, affect, and artificial intelligence in social media and digital culture.



Kimi Kärki

Dr.Phil, Cultural History, University of Turku

Auditive human-machine interactions and depictions of AI in related popular culture.



Tiina Männistö-Funk

Dr.Phil, Technology management and Economics, Chalmers University of Technology

Everyday user-encounters with electronically produced human voice.



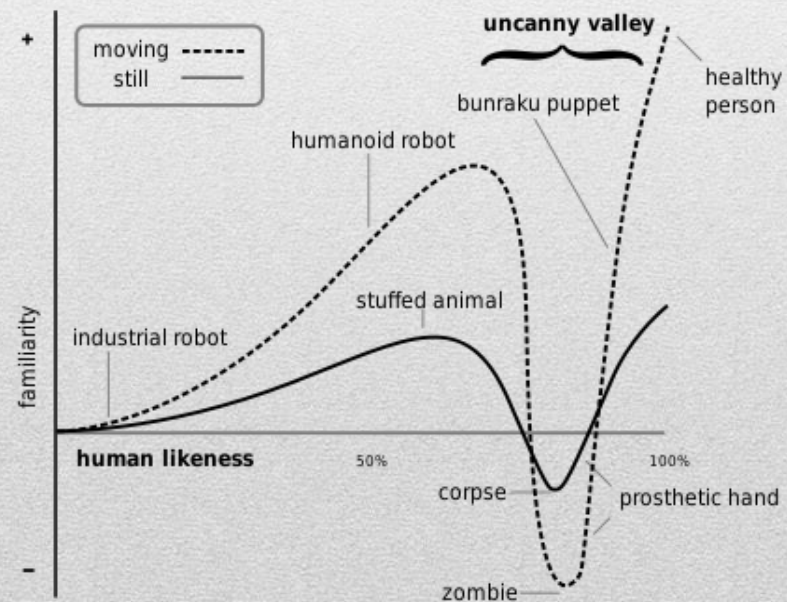
Petri Kuljuntausta

Dr.Phil, Independent researcher and composer

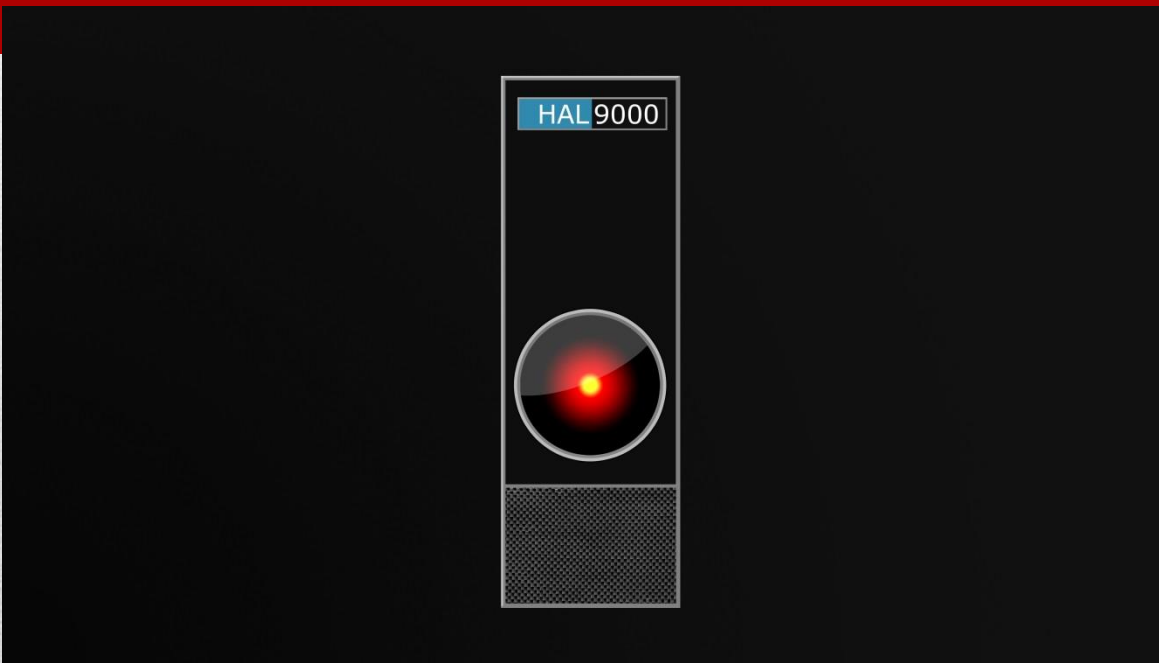
History of electronic speech and vocals in Finnish art, especially in music.



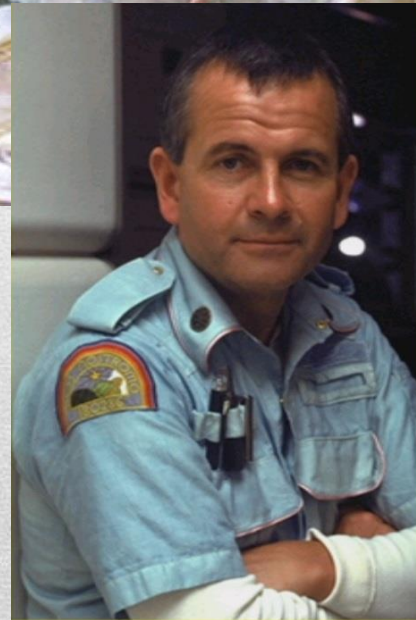
Daisy, Daisy, give me your answer do
I'm half crazy all for the love of you
It won't be a stylish marriage
I can't afford a carriage
But you'll look sweet upon the seat
Of a bicycle built for two.



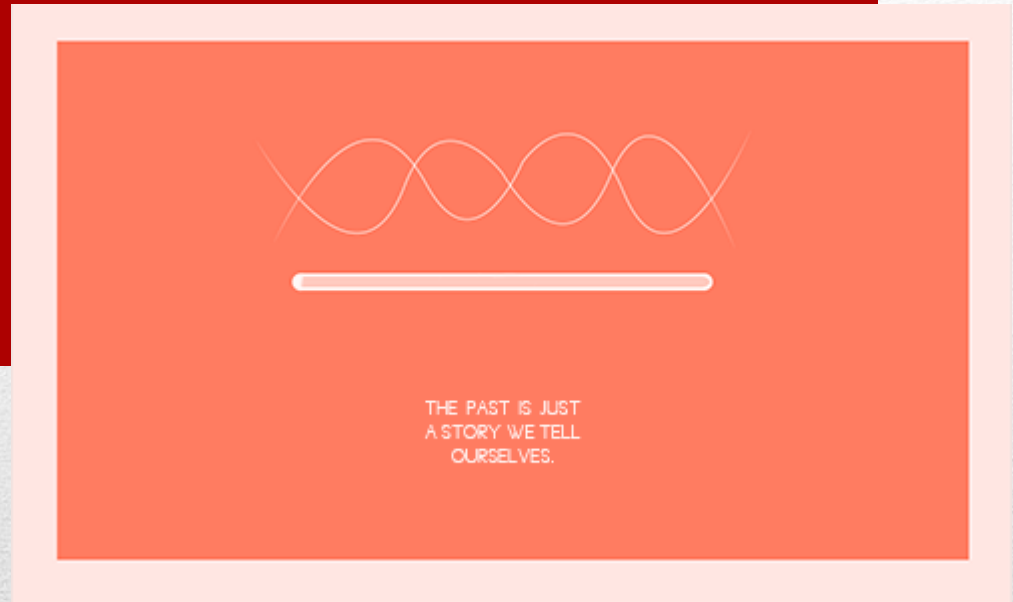
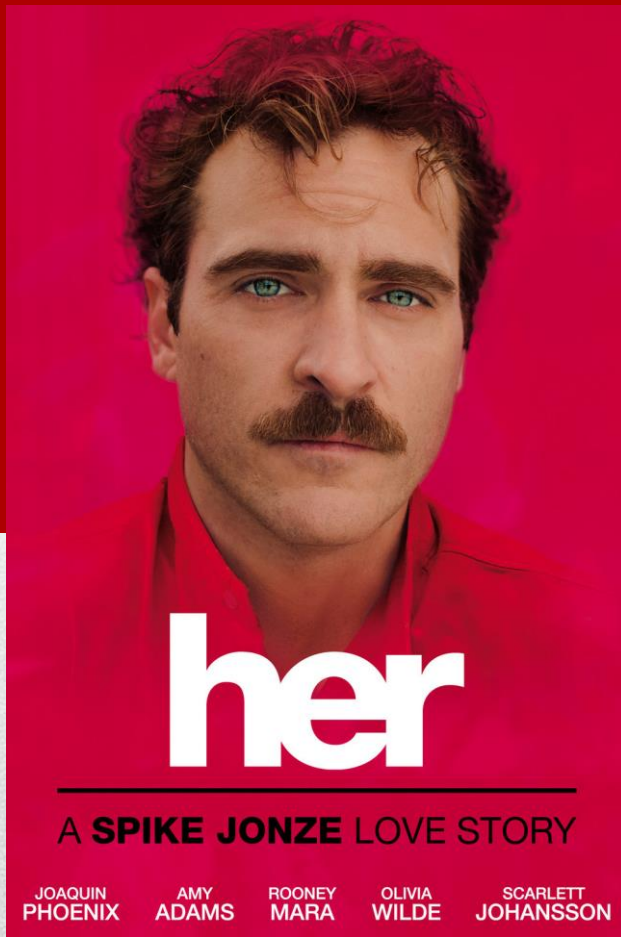
'Daisy Bell' - Sung by IBM 7094 (1961).



Dave Bowman/Keir Dullea & HAL 9000/Douglas Rain: "I'm afraid, Dave" Past futures!



Ash/Ian Holm in *Alien* (Ridley Scott, 1979): “You have my sympathies” (*Sympathos*, to feel together)



Samantha/Scarlett Johansson in *Her* (Spike Jonze, 2013): “In every moment I’m evolving, just like you”



Professor Timo Honkela and 'Peace Machine' <http://www.understandingpeace.net/>



KEY CONCEPTS

history, culture, utopia/dystopia, futurism, imagination, innovation, progress, human/nonhuman/posthuman, gender, aesthetics, emotions, technology, machine, device, artificiality, agency, practices, voice, speech, singing, sound, music, soundscape, audiovisuality, systems/networks, communication, information, intra-action, commodification, consuming, appliances, services, everyday assistance (see [Google Assistant](#))

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