

First headliner announced for Manchester Science Festival 2017



[Embargoed until 9.30am, Tuesday February 7th](#)

- **Announcement made at *Robots* launch in London**
- **Robots will open in Manchester on Thursday, October 19th as part of the 11th Manchester Science Festival**
- **The Manchester Science Festival runs from Thursday, October 19th until Sunday, October 29th**

An exhibition charting the remarkable 500-year history of robots is to headline this year's Manchester Science Festival, it has been announced today.

Robots will open at the Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester, on Thursday, October 19th. The exhibition will explore humanity's 500-year quest to recreate ourselves in mechanised form. Featuring a unique collection of over 100 robots, from a 16th-century mechanical monk to robots from science fiction and modern-day research labs, this exhibition will enable visitors to discover the cultural, historical and technological context of humanoid robots.

Among many other highlights will be an articulated iron manikin from the 1500s, Cygan, a 2.4m tall 1950s robot with a glamorous past, and one of the first walking bipedal robots.

In the exhibition, visitors will go behind the scenes to glimpse recent developments from robotics research, exploring how roboticists are building robots that resemble us and interact in human-like ways. The exhibition will end by asking visitors to imagine what a shared future with robots might be like.

The Manchester Science Festival runs from Thursday, October 19th to Sunday, October 27th 2017.

Robots first opens to the public on Wednesday, February 8th at the Museum of Science and Industry's sister museum, the Science Museum, in London.

Ian Blatchford, Director of the Science Museum Group said: "This exhibition explores the uniquely human obsession of recreating ourselves, not through paint or marble but in metal. Seeing robots through the eyes of those who built or gazed in awe at them reveals much about humanity's hopes, fears and dreams."

"*Robots* explores the wondrously rich culture, history and technology of humanoid robotics."

Antonio Benitez, Director of the Manchester Science Festival, said: "Manchester Science Festival is delighted to announce *Robots* as our first headline event for 2017. This exhibition will be an extraordinary opportunity for our audiences to explore the ways robots mirror humanity and the insights they offer into our ambitions, desires and position in a rapidly changing world."

2017 marks the 11th year of the Manchester Science Festival, which is produced by the Museum of Science and Industry. Last year's event received a record number of visitors, with 136,000 people attending 125 events across 60 venues in the city and across Greater Manchester.

Events included the hugely popular Chronarium – a sleep lab in the Manchester Arndale – and a performance by Public Service Broadcasting.

Notes to editors

Robots will open at the Museum of Science and Industry, Manchester, on Thursday, October 19th as part of the Manchester Science Festival. The exhibition will run until Sunday, April 15th 2018 before continuing its tour to The Life Science Centre, in Newcastle, and the National Museum of Scotland, in Edinburgh.

Hi-res images can be downloaded from:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/dnm7as99w7bx0h8/AADXQRc3NdIF7u3Wzf1nRj_ka?dl=0

Robots is open at the Science Museum, London, from Wednesday, February 8th until Sunday, September 3rd.

About Manchester Science Festival

Manchester Science Festival (MSF) is produced by the Museum of Science and Industry, supported by Siemens and Lead Educational Sponsor, The University of Salford. Billed as part laboratory, part playground, MSF is a showcase for the most creative, surprising and hands-on science, where people of all ages can participate, experience and be curious about the world around them.

This year's Festival marks the end of the city's year-long role as European City of Science, and runs throughout half-term from Monday, 20 October, to Sunday, 30 October. The Festival is supported by Siemens as part of the Curiosity Project; a three-year programme aimed at bringing science, technology, engineering and mathematics to life for young people across the UK. Siemens has been

a long-term supporter of the museum, with a local office of 700 employees, many of whom volunteer at the Festival each year.

About the Museum of Science and Industry

The Museum of Science and Industry tells the story of where science met industry and the modern world began. Manchester was one of the first global, industrial cities, and its epic rise, decline and resurrection has been echoed in countless other cities around the world. From textiles to computers, the objects and documents held in the museum's collection tell stories of everyday life over the last 200 years, from light bulbs to locomotives. The museum's mission is to inspire all its visitors, including future scientists and inventors, with the story of how ideas can change the world, from the industrial revolution to today and beyond.

The Museum of Science and Industry is part of the Science Museum Group, a family of museums which also includes the Science Museum in London; the National Railway Museum in York and Shildon; and the National Media Museum in Bradford. The Science Museum Group is devoted to the history and contemporary practice of science, medicine, technology, industry and media. With five million visitors each year and an unrivalled collection, it is the most significant group of museums of science and innovation worldwide.