



**JPT**



**WE, ROBOTS**

A Jet Propulsion Theatre show  
an Aritodesio Company production

What does it mean *Being* Human?

# What does it mean Being Human?

## WE, ROBOTS

Inspired by **The Bicentennial Man** and other works of **Isaac Asimov**

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With **Laura Anzani** and **Andrea Brunello**

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A special thanks to **Caterina Freda**

In collaboration with  
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In **The Bicentennial Man** the great visionary **Isaac Asimov** describes a humanoid robot that longs to become human. But its desire can't be fulfilled because of its intrinsic nature, first of all its lack of mortality. Nevertheless it shows all the characteristics of a good human being: It is compassionate, creative, it has desires and it feels pain... **Maybe "it" can become a "he"?**

We, Robots is a play about **what it means to be human**, and what love is in the age of Thinking Machines. It is a play about the connection between our brains and that of machines. In this play two "individuals" discover that the relationship man/machine is not so simple and it can lead to **insurmountable paradoxes**.

This JPT production investigates in a careful and precise way our most wonderful organ, the brain, and at the same time it aims at understanding where the field of Artificial Intelligence is going, **how are our artificial "brains" evolving?** Moreover, the play makes an explicit connection with the "other collective brain" of ours, the whole Universe seen as a complex system in many ways very similar to our brain (starting with the peculiar notion that there are approximately **100 billion neurons in the brain and approximately 100 billion galaxies in the Universe we can observe!**).

*We, Robots connects beautifully with a completely poetic perspective: the human brain is deeply connected to something greater than us, something infinite like the universe. It is the origin of a potentially unlimited soul and yet it has a very human ambition, which in itself is incredible: to reproduce mankind through technology - Chiara Musati / [www.milanoteatri.it](http://www.milanoteatri.it)*

Here you can find a teaser video: <https://vimeo.com/241835302>

**Keywords: Isaac Asimov, Future, Robot, Brain, Intelligence, I.Q., A.I., Astrophysics, Cosmic Web, Quantum Computing, Machine Love, Soul, Clone, Emulation, Brain Surgery, Life, Human, 100 Billion, Universe, Galaxies, Machine Learning, Love,...**

I have decided to write this text and to invest in a new production because I strongly feel the desire to understand where humans are heading in **their unceasing attempt to develop and grow**. Following my previous works on quantum mechanics, the concept of time and above all about climate change, I am increasingly convinced that humanity has the potential to **achieve wonderful results but it also bears great responsibilities**. My feeling is that at this point we are living on the edge of deep societal transformations. On the one hand there is the legitimate desire to explore, to understand, to improve our lives. On the other hand, we have achieved such a sophistication of means that **we are struggling to control the results of our actions**. The issue of Artificial Intelligence is a prime example. Great thinkers such as **Stephen Hawking** or **Elon Musk** have repeatedly warned that, before we proceed with the development of artificial thinkers, we should develop “rules of engagement” because we will soon face **deep ethical dilemmas**: what rights will thinking machines have when **they will be able to be creative and experience feelings** that are “human” like pain, desire, love? And how can we really define such feelings if, as a matter of fact, human brains that generate them can be “calibrated” through pharmacological and psychological interventions? With the development of artificial prosthesis will there come a moment when a human being will cease to be fully... human? Should we be afraid of machines?

It is very fascinating to note that **Isaac Asimov** had already described these issues several decades ago. This is the proof that we are dealing with truly universal themes that do not depend solely on science but which are engrained in our human nature and the way that we relate to the connected world at large.

We, Robots is a “trap” for the audience. They become **unaware judges** of a very dramatic issue: **can there be a relationship between a human being and a machine?** On stage there are two characters, a woman (a researcher in the field of Artificial Intelligence) and a man (a world-famous astrophysicist). But right away we realize that not everything is as it seems, that these two people share a secret. The dialogue is tight, witty but also scientific and philosophical. The audience feels “intelligent” because the goal is just that, to **understand how brilliant the human brain can be**. But then a twist happens and the audience is faced with what could be considered **the ultimate Turing’s Test**. After all is said and done it all hinges on this question: **can real intelligence exist if not by allowing it to experience the full range of human feelings?**

We, Robots is a **highly philosophical as well as scientific text** that investigates what it means to be human. But at the same time it is a journey inside our brains and so it becomes a voyage of discovery on the concept of intelligence and **the responsibilities that are placed upon us** by our very consciousness.

**I have studied the subject in depth**, I have consulted with **Artificial Intelligence experts**, and I have sought the **advice of neuroscientists**. Like all JPT productions, this show is **scientifically solid** and it excites **curiosity on** the topics being treated, creating a sense of wonder and stimulating the acquisition of **new awareness** not only on our brains and intelligence but also on what science is about. **This show is, for me, wholly necessary.** (Andrea Brunello, Nov 2017)



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