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"The SkyNet funding bill is passed. The system goes online on August 4th, 1997. Human decisions are removed from strategic defense. SkyNet begins to learn at a geometric rate. It becomes self-aware at 2:14am Eastern time, August 29th. In a panic, they try to pull the plug."

Arnold Schwarzenegger - Terminator 2: Judgment Day

Robots in reality fall far short of their fictional counterparts. Nonetheless they seem to have a hold on the imagination in a way other technologies don't. They are invested with personalities and referred to as "him/her" rather than "it". Somehow they seem to be more than just machines regardless of the simplicity of their programs. I chose to use robots in my project for this very reason. I wanted to move outside of the constraints of the virtual domain and bring my ideas into the "real" world. For me robots are so much more engaging than ones and zeros.

Running a simple program on a computer is by and large a predictable activity. Using the same starting point and inputs it is highly probably that an identical result will be achieved repeatedly. Running a robot under similar conditions can produce wildly differing results. This is because the "real world" is not a uniform environment - it is chaotic and any number of external factors can affect the robot's behaviour. Consequently programming a robot is almost a biological process. Instead of the binary digital, true/false outcomes of computers it is much more about probabilities of outcomes. A successful program is one that increases the likelihood of a given objective being achieved. programs evolve as one develops and improves upon successful strategies and rejects those less successful.

Though it may be some time before we become subservient to intelligent machines, it is likely to happen long before we realise it has.