



人
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上
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The
Shanghai AI

智
能

Lectures

授
课

The ShanghAI Lectures

An experiment in global teaching

Fabio Bonsignorio

The BioRobotics Institute, SSSA and Heron Robots

Today from the BioRobotics Institute, Pontedera (PI)

欢迎您参与
“来自上海的人工智能系列讲座”

Lecture 6

Morphological Computation, Self-Organization of Behaviors and Adaptive Morphologies

1 December 2016

skype: PhD.Biorobotics

(only for lecture sites connected by streaming)

The need for an embodied perspective

- **“failures” of classical AI**
- **fundamental problems of classical approach**
- **Wolpert’s quote: Why do plants not have a brain? (but check Barbara Mazzolai’s lecture at the ShanghAI Lectures 2014)**
- **Interaction with environment: always mediated by body**



Successes and failures of the classical approach

successes

**applications (e.g.
Google)**

chess

manufacturing

(“controlled” artificial
worlds)

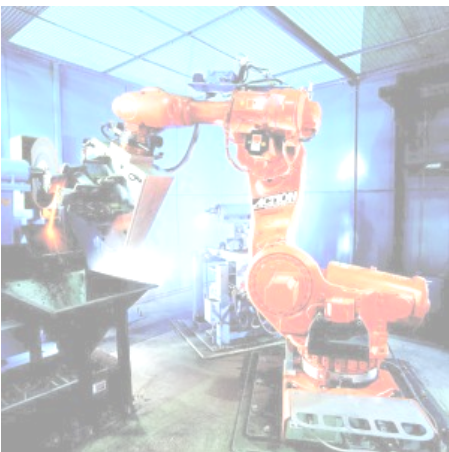
failures

**foundations of
behavior**

**natural forms of
intelligence**

**interaction with real
world**

Industrial robots vs. natural systems



robots

principles:

- low precision
- compliant
- reactive
- coping with uncertainty

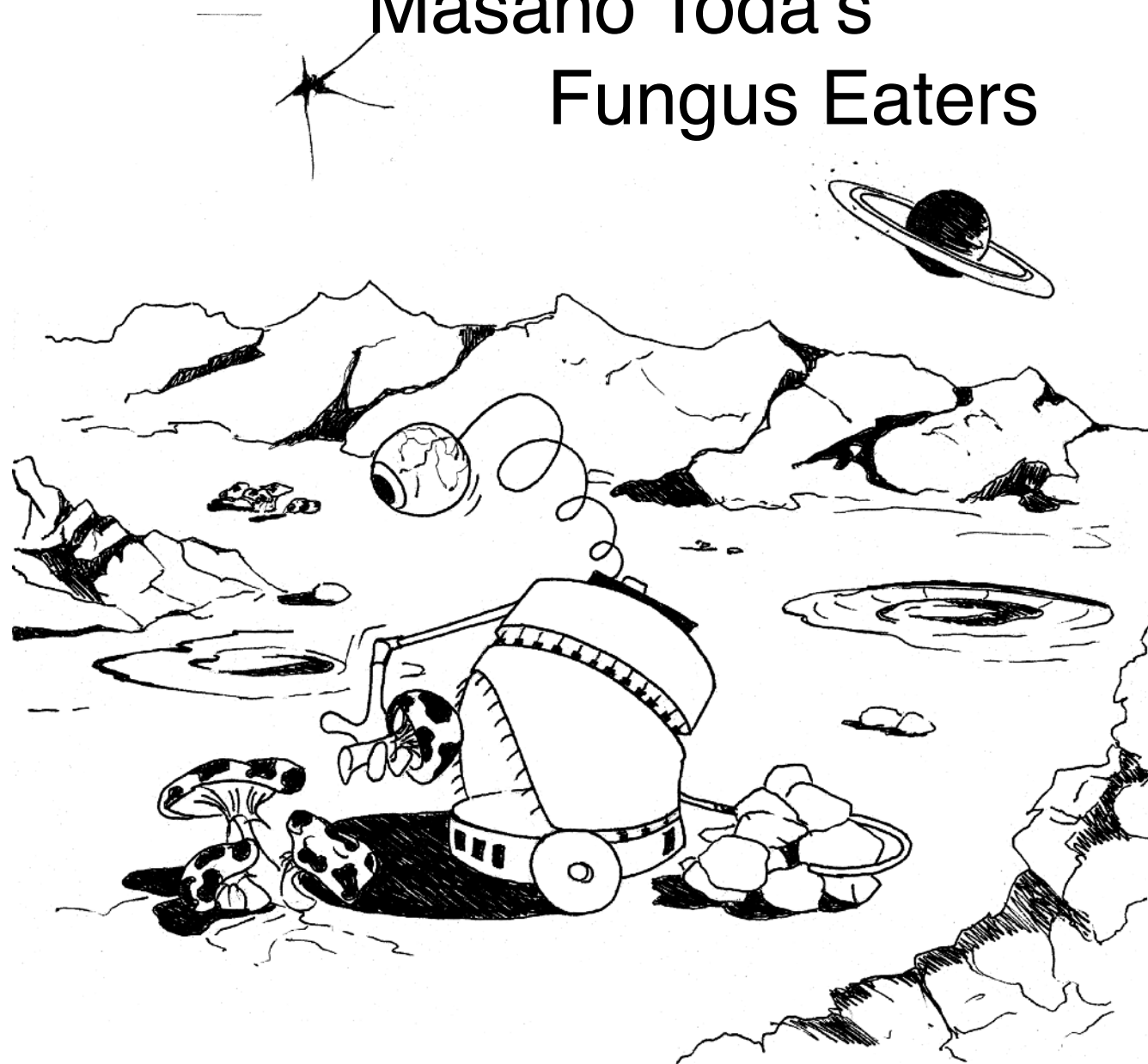
humans



➔ **no direct transfer of methods**

Complete agents

Masano Toda's
Fungus Eaters



Properties of embodied agents

- **subject to the laws of physics**
- **generation of sensory stimulation through interaction with real world**
- **affect environment through behavior**
- **complex dynamical systems**
- **perform morphological computation**

Parallel, loosely coupled processes

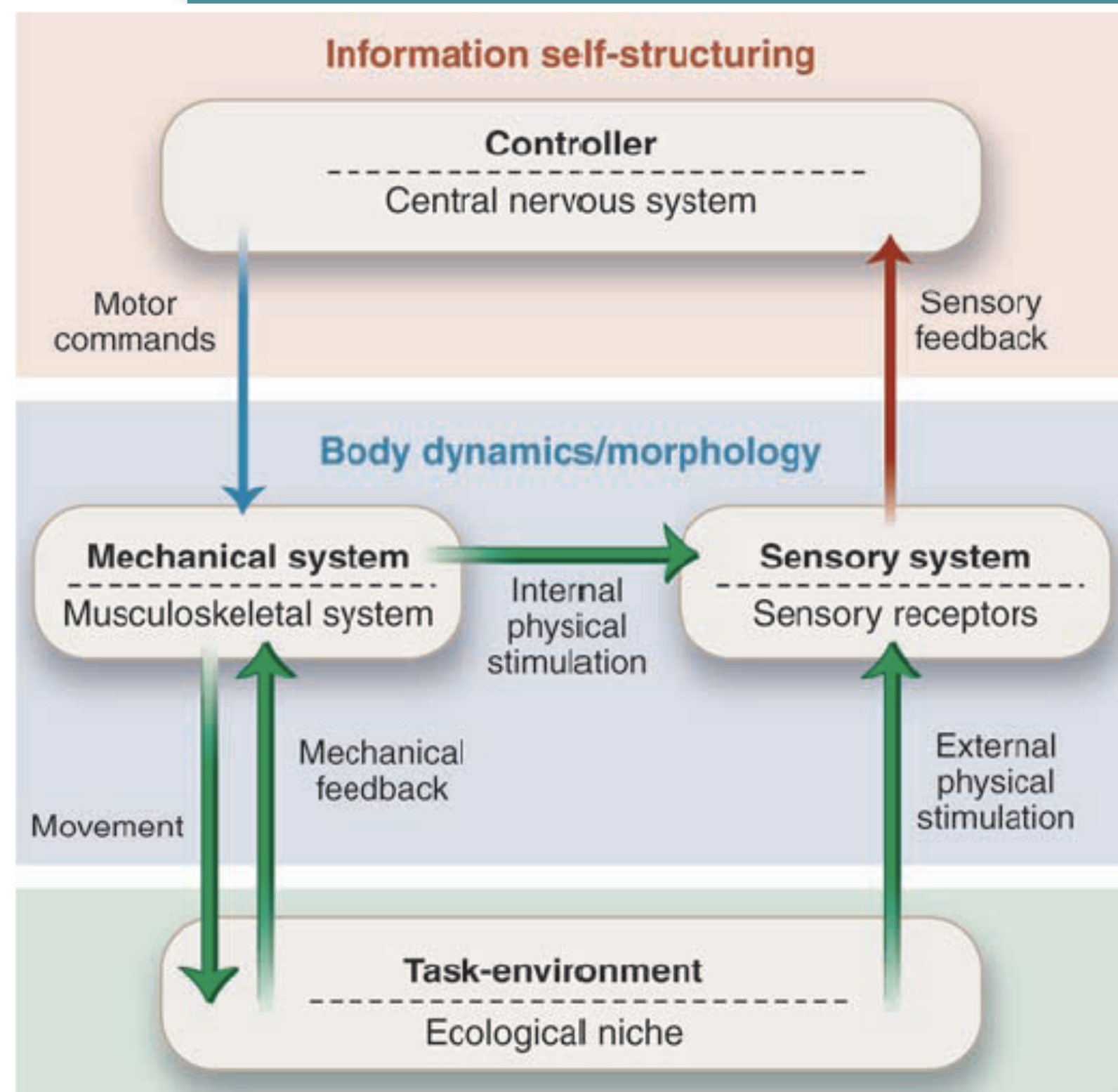
intelligent behavior:

- **emergent from system-environment interaction**
- **based on large number of parallel, loosely coupled processes**
- **asynchronous**
- **coupled through agent's sensory-motor system and environment**

Implications of embodiment

“Puppy”



Pfeifer et al., Science,
16 Nov. 2007



How to quantify?

- **Some hints Today!**

Approaches to evolutionary robotics

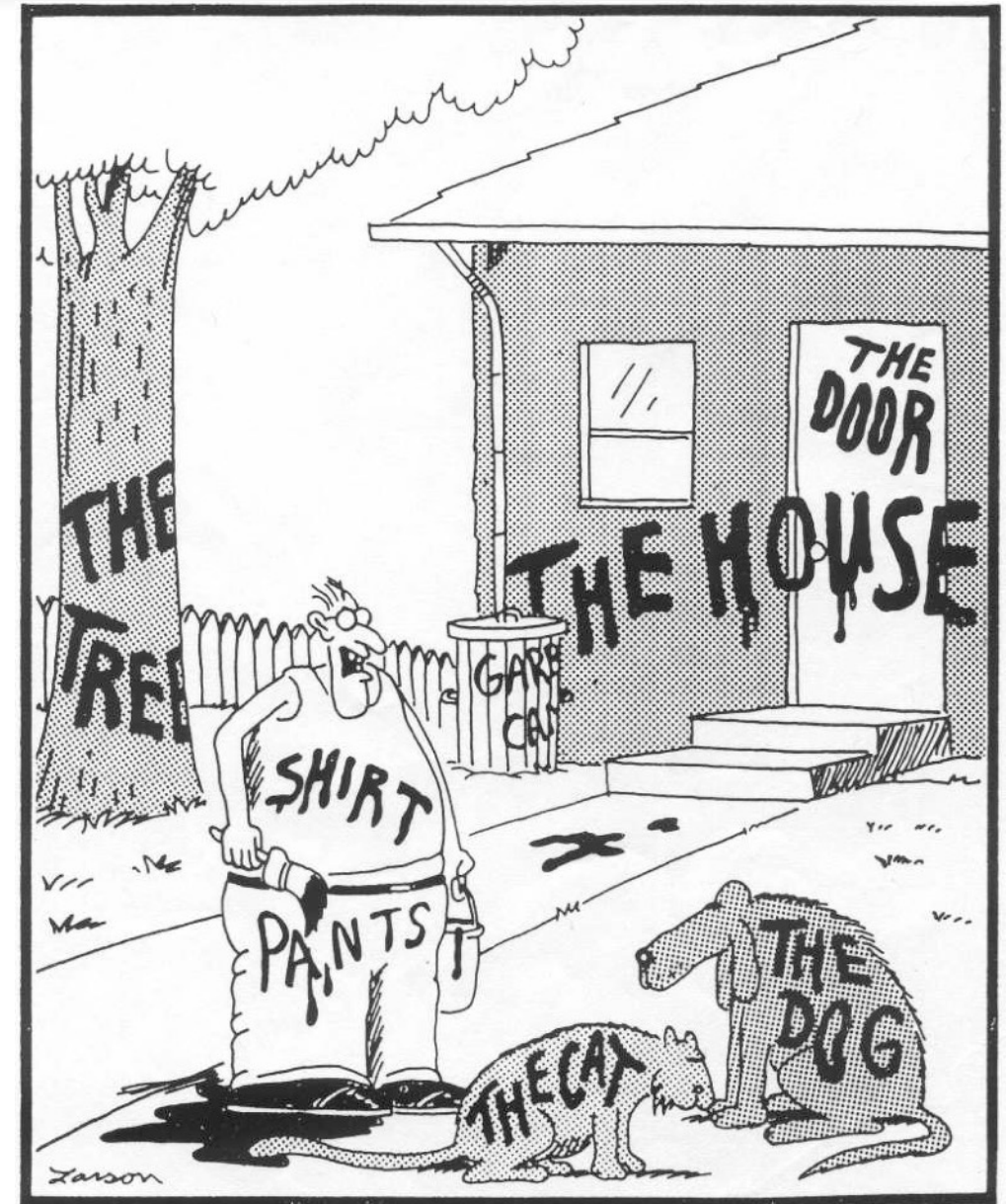
- **given robot (neural network)**  **evolve control**
- **embodied approach of morphology and control**  **co-evolution**

The “symbol grounding” problem

real world:
doesn't come
with labels ...

How to put the
labels??

Gary Larson



"Now! ... That should clear up
a few things around here!"

A step back: “Puppy” on a treadmill

Video “Puppy” on treadmill
slow motion

- **no sensors**
- **no control**



**self-
stabilization**

Self-stabilization: “Puppy” on a treadmill

Video “Puppy” on treadmill
slow motion

- **no sensors**
- **no control**



self-
stabilization

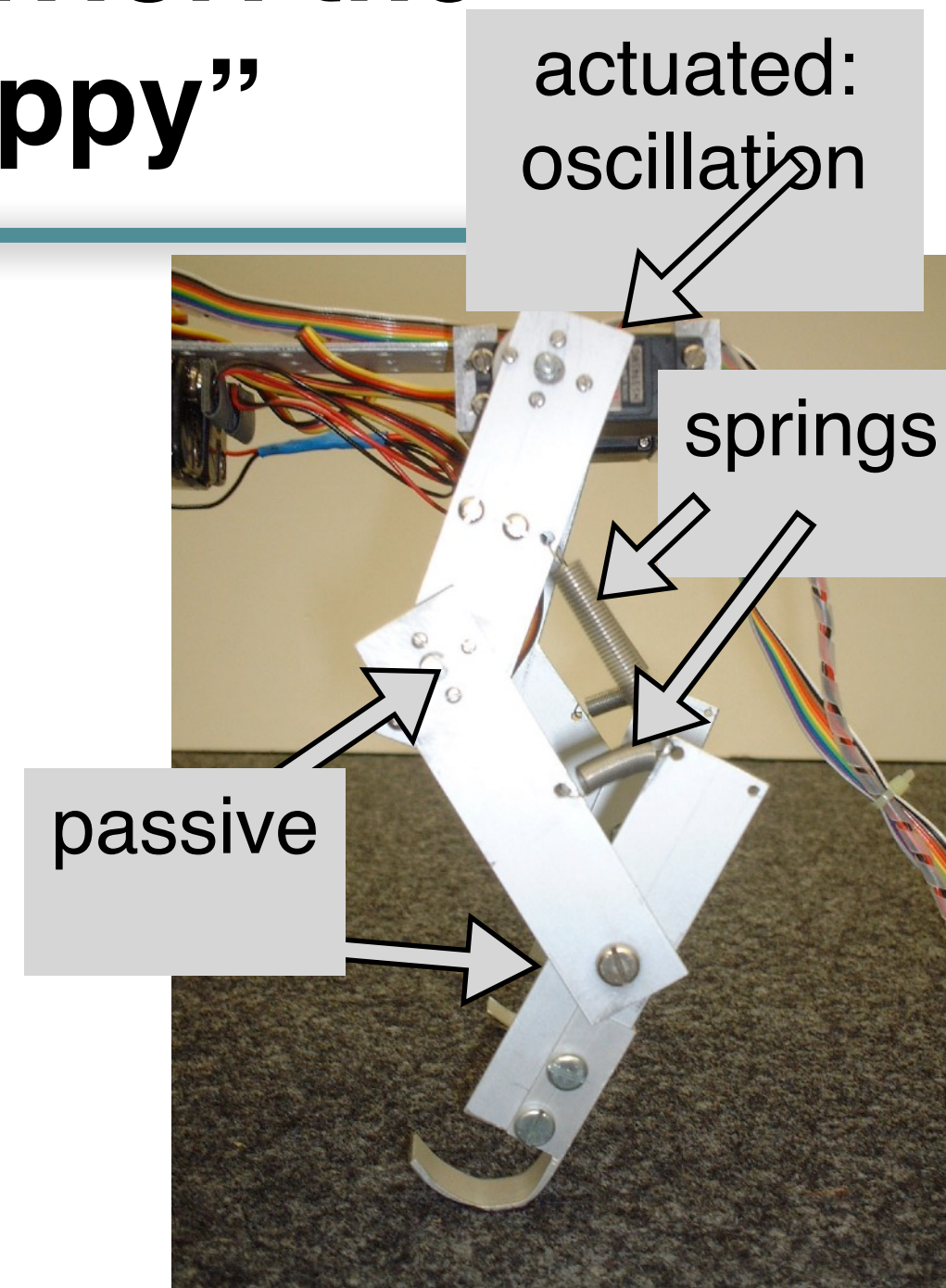
principle of
“cheap
design”

Emergence of behavior: the quadruped “Puppy”

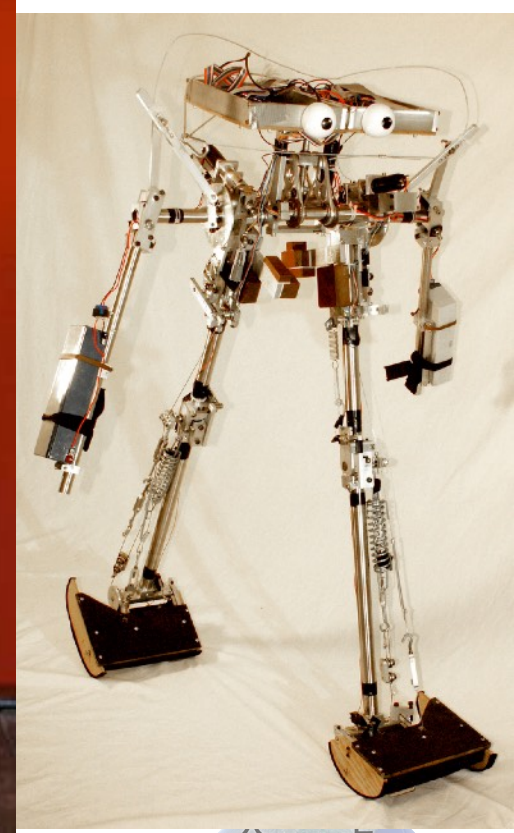
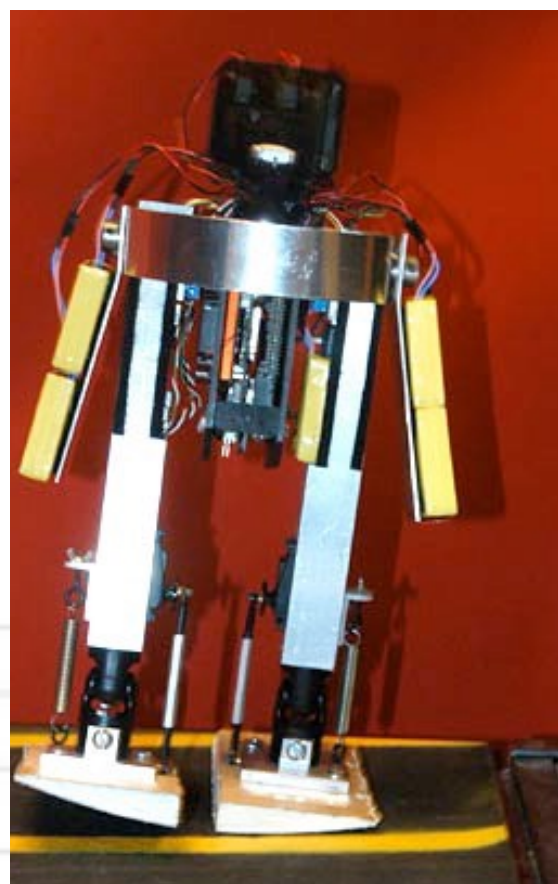
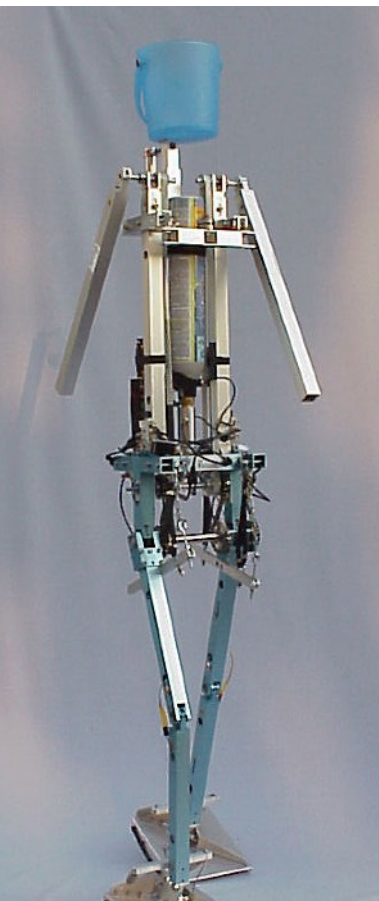
- **simple control (oscillations of “hip” joints)**
- **spring-like material properties (“under-actuated” system)**
- **self-stabilization, no sensors**
- **“outsourcing” of functionality**



morphological
computation



walking: GOF :-) and new designs



Extreme case: The “Passive Dynamic

**The “brainless” robot”:
walking without control**

Video “Passive Dynamic
Walker”

Design and construction:
Ruina, Wisse, Collins: Cornell University
Ithaca, New York



The Cornell Ranger



design and construction:
Andy Ruina
Cornell University

Video "Cornell Ranger"

exploitation of passive dynamics

The Cornell Ranger

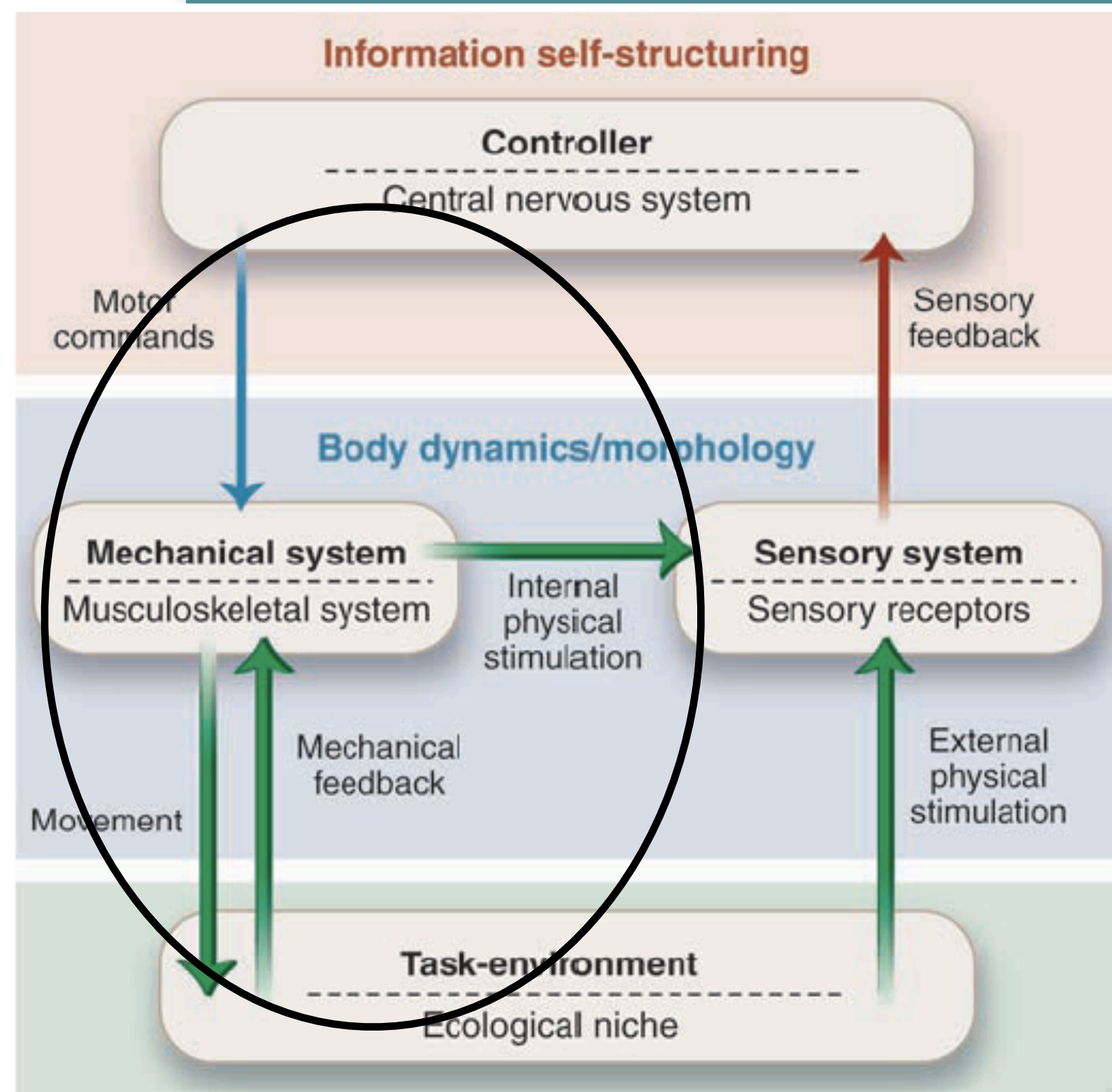


conception et construction:
Andy Ruina
Cornell University



65km with one battery charge!

Self-stabilization in Cornell Ranger (and Puppy!)



Pfeifer et al., Science, 2007

Contrast: Full control

Honda Asimo



Sony Qrio



Redundancy principle

Redundancy/examples? —>

further examples? —>

Design principles for intelligent systems

Principle 1: Three-constituents principle (ecological niche, desired behaviors/tasks, agent's organization)

Principle 2: Complete-agent principle

Principle 3: Parallel, loosely coupled processes

Principle 4: Sensory-motor coordination/ information self-structuring

Principle 5: Cheap design

Principle 6: Redundancy

Principle 7: Ecological balance

Principle 8: Value

Principle of “cheap design”

The principle of “cheap design” states that if agents are built to exploit the properties of their ecological niche and the characteristics of the interaction with the environment, their design and construction will be much easier, or “cheaper”.

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The value principle

The value principle states that intelligent agents are equipped with a ‘value system’ which constitutes a basic set of assumptions about what is good for the agent.

Principle of “ecological balance”

balance in complexity

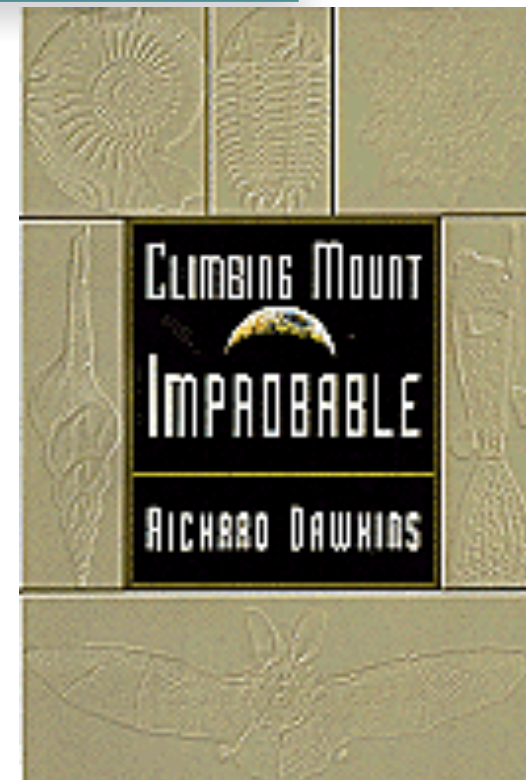
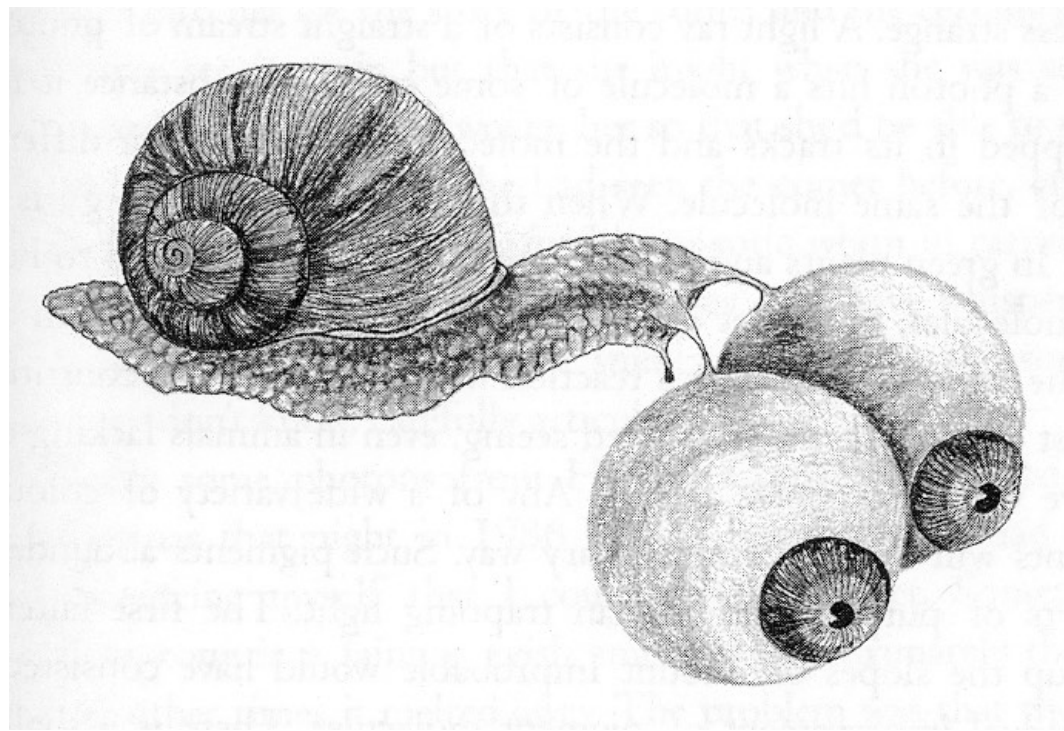
given task environment: match in complexity of sensory, motor, and neural system

balance / task distribution

brain (control), morphology, materials, and interaction with environment

Richard Dawkins's snail with giant eyes

ecologically _unbalanced_
system



Author of:
“The selfish gene” and
“The blind watchmaker”

Task distribution

between brain, morphology, materials, and environment

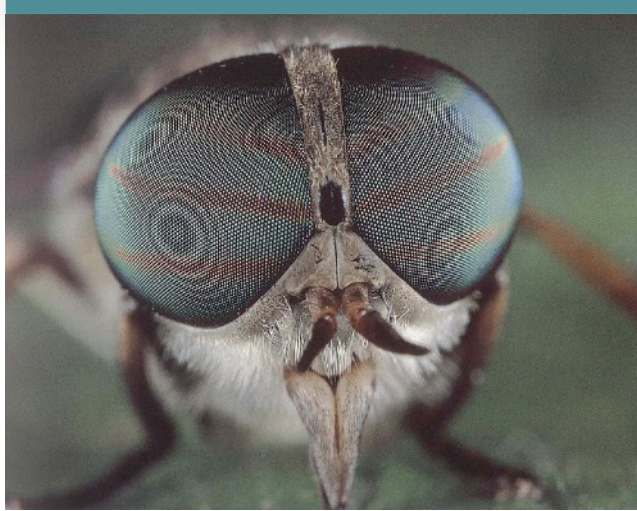
extreme case: Passive Dynamic Walker

Puppy, Stumpy

Animals, humans: dynamic change of muscle stiffness

Loosely swinging arm (later today)

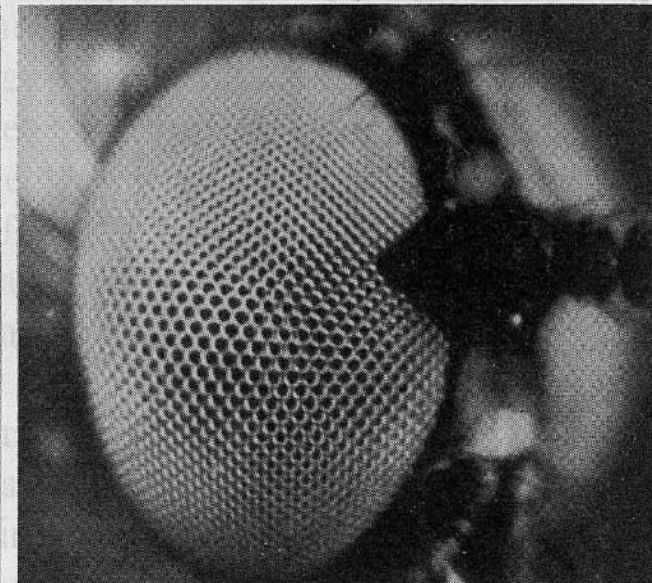
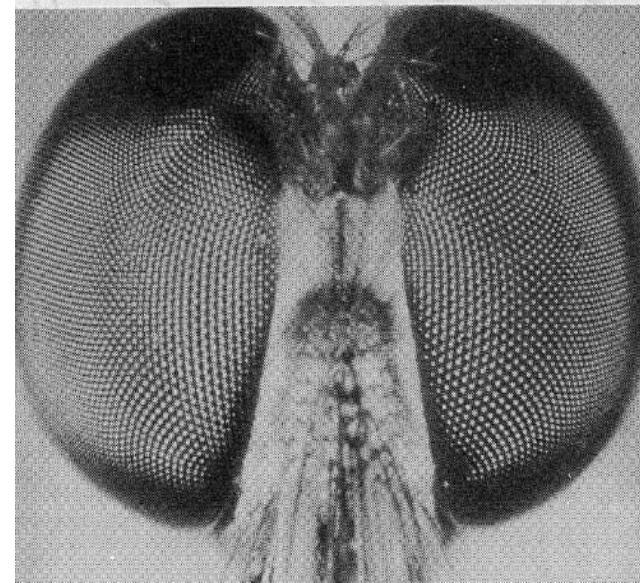
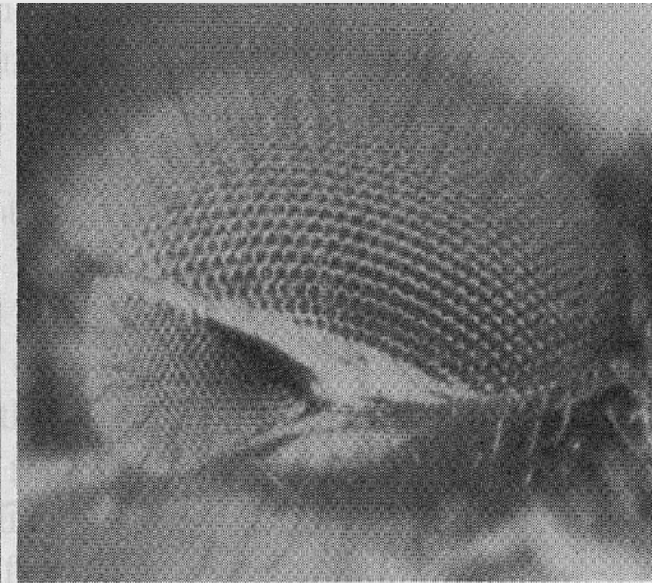
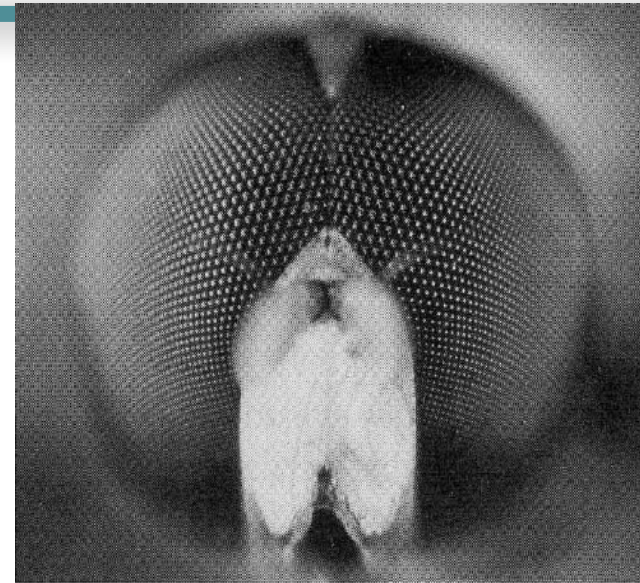
Different morphologies of insect eyes



housefly



large variation of shapes

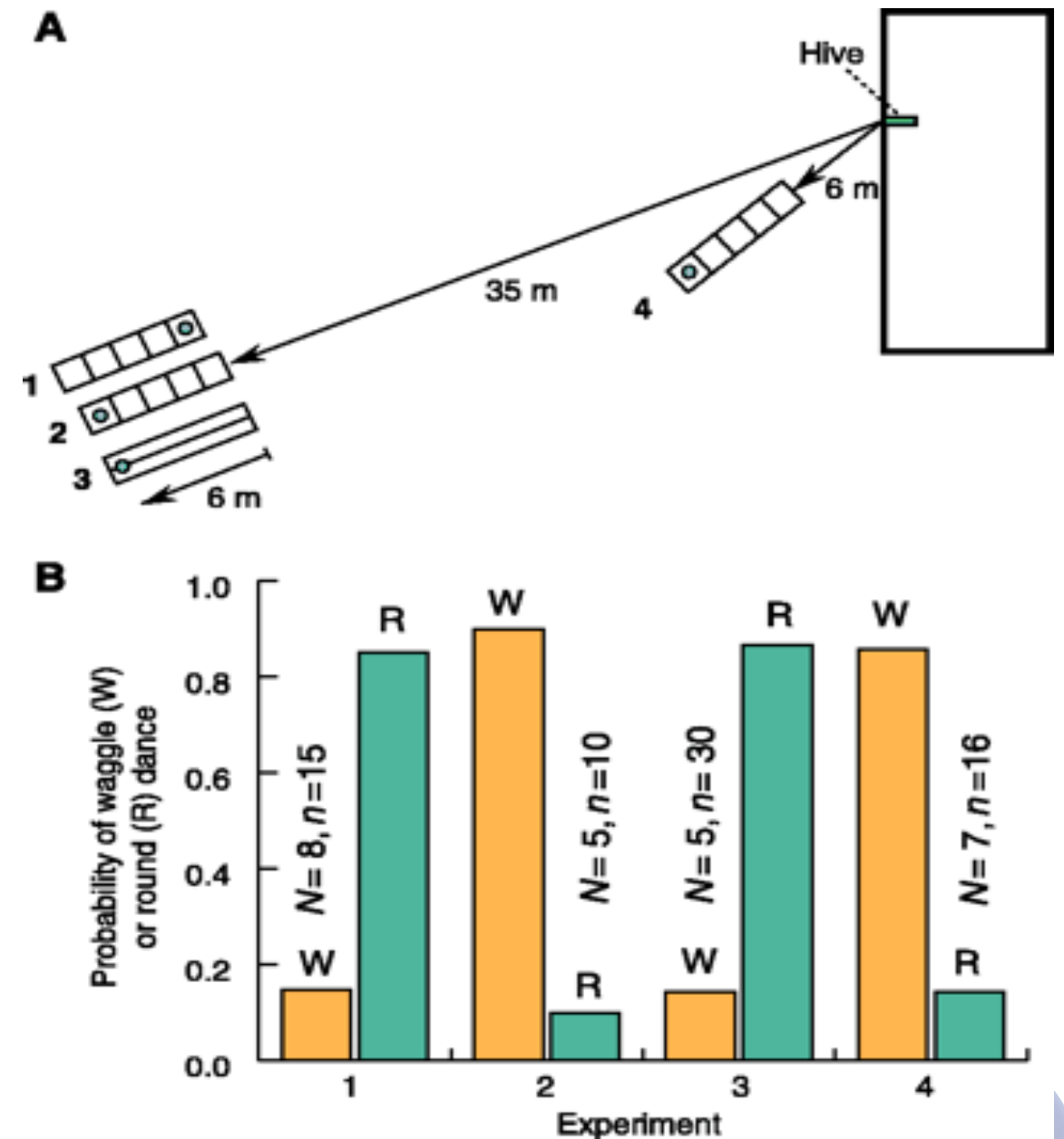


honey bee

Optic flow-based odometry in bees

Srinivasan's fascinating experiments (2000)

(A) Layout for experiments using tunnels. Each tunnel represents a separate experiment (1, 2, 3, or 4). The dot in the tunnel shows the position of the feeder in each case. (B) Probability of waggle (W) round (R) dance for experiments 1 to 4. N and n represent the numbers of bees and dances analyzed, respectively in each experiment. Science, 287, p. 852, 2000.



Design principles for intelligent systems

Principle 1: Three-constituents principle

Principle 2: Complete-agent principle

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Principle 4: Sensory-motor coordination/ information self-structuring

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Principle 6: Redundancy

Principle 7: Ecological balance

Principle 8: Value

The principle of sensory-motor coordination

induction of structured sensory stimulation through sensory-motor coordinated action

**principle of information self-structuring:
effect**

Grasping an object

- **many ways**
- **winding spring (effort)**
- **release**
- **exploitation by brain**
 - **“cheap design”, exploitation of material properties, “free”**
 - **“ecological balance”: outsourcing of functionality to morph. and material**

Grasping an object

- **induction of sensory stimulation**
- **dependence on**
 - **morphology: high density of touch, temperature, vibration sensors in hand**
 - **actuation: sensory-motor coordination**



- **induction of correlations**

“raw material” for information
processing of brain

Loosely swinging arm

- **complex trajectory of hand**
- **simple control (“cheap design”, “ecological balance”)**
- **exploitation of morphology/ materials (biomechanical constraints)**



control “decentralized”
“free”

Anthropomorphic arm with pneumatic actuators



Design and construction:
Raja Dravid, Max Lungarella, Juan
Pablo Carbajal, AI Lab, Zurich

Anthropomorphic arm with pneumatic actuators

Video “Heavily swinging
arm”

Video “Loosely swinging
arm”

Video “Passive
compliance”

Juan

Pablo Carbajal, AI Lab, Zurich

lla,



Robot Frog "Mowgli" driven by pneumatic



**Design and construction:
Ryuma Niiyama, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, The University of
Tokyo**

Robot Frog "Mowgli" driven by pneumatic

Video "Mowgli"



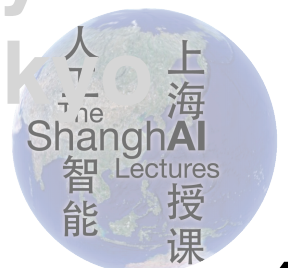
THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO

Ryuma Niiyama, Yasuo Kuniyoshi,

"Mowgli: A Bipedal Jumping and Landing Robot", ICRA 2007.

Design and construction:

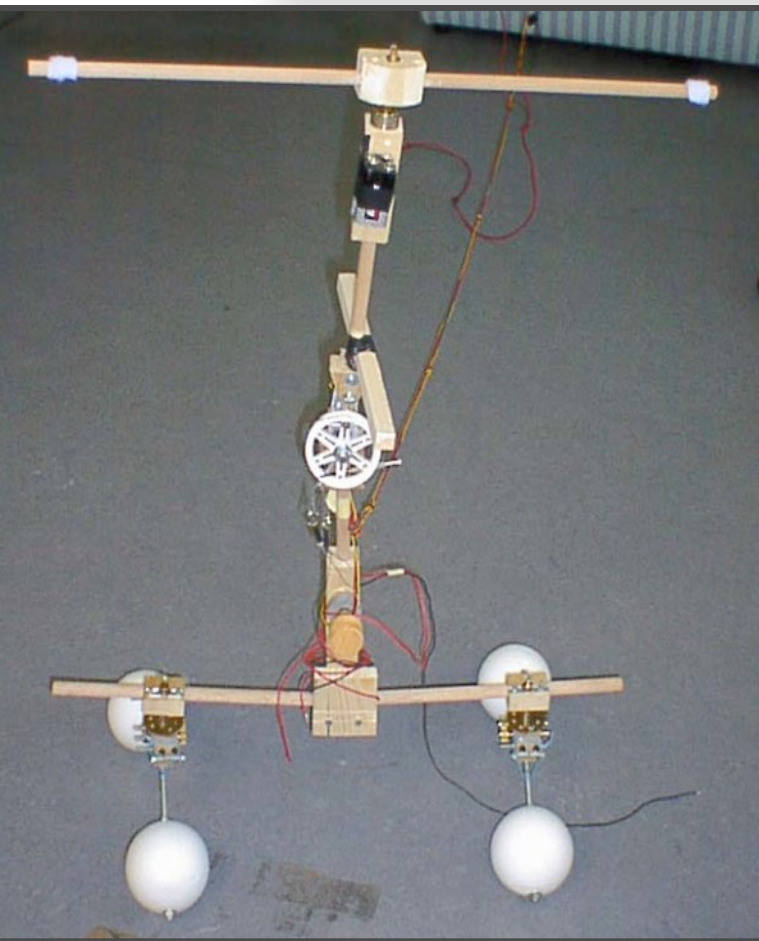
Ryuma Niiyama, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, The University of
Tokyo



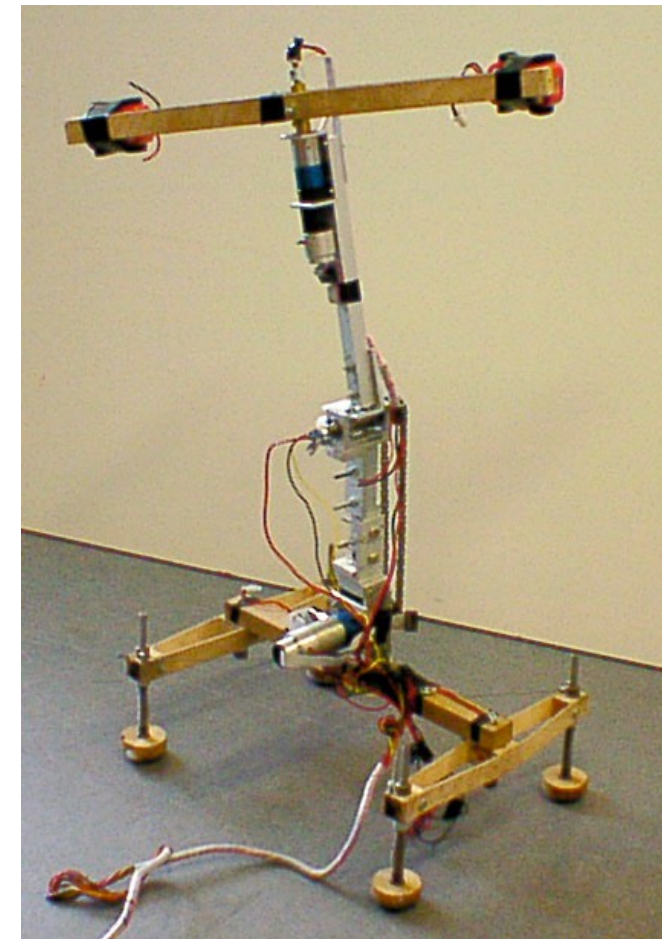
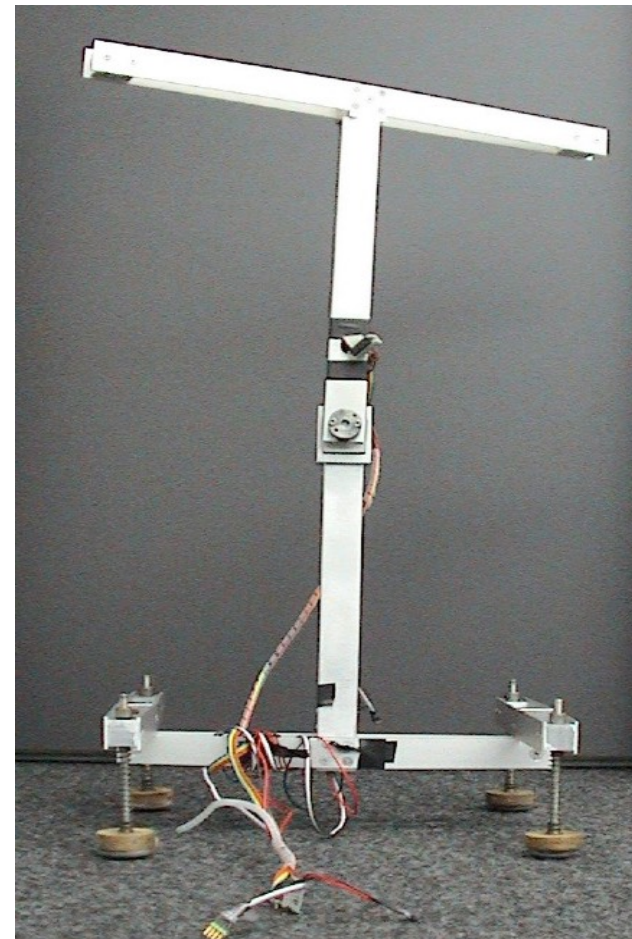
“Stumpy”: task distribution

almost brainless: 2 actuated joints
springy materials
surface properties of feet

Design and construction: **Raja Dravid, Chandana Paul, Fumiya Iida**



self-stabilization



Cognition: Memory: Are 'symbols' always needed?

which part of
diagram relevant?

→

memory for walking?



Water fountain

Where is the memory for shape?

clear structure visible
underlying mechanism?



**Where is the “structure” stored? -
what can we learn for human
memory?**

Ashby's concept of "memory as a theoretical construct"

W. Ross Ashby (1956). An introduction to cybernetics.



a.



b.

copyright: Isabelle Follath, Zurich

Where does 'symbols' come from?: physical dynamics and information processing

- **morphology and materials**
- **orchestration control**
- **exploration**
- **preferred trajectories from biomechanical constraints**
- **induction of patterns of sensory stimulation in different sensory channels**
- **sensory-motor coordination —> induction of information structure**

The “story”: physical dynamics and information

- **good “raw material” for brain**
- **cross-modal association, learning, concept formation**
- **extraction of mutual information —> prediction
(expectations: crucial for motor control)**
- **categorization (fundamental for cognition)**

Sensory-motor coordination (“active perception”)

“We begin not with a sensory stimulus, but with a sensory-motor coordination [...] In a certain sense it is the movement which is primary, and the sensation which is secondary, the movement of the body, head, and eye muscles determining the quality of what is experienced. In other words, the real beginning is with the act of seeing; it is looking, and not a sensation of light.” (“The reflex arc concept in psychology,” John Dewey, 1896)

“Since all the stimulations which the organism receives have in turn been possible only by its preceding movements which have culminated in exposing the receptor organ to external influences, one could also say that behavior is the first cause of all the stimulations.” (“The structure of Behavior,” Maurice Merleau-Ponty, 1963)

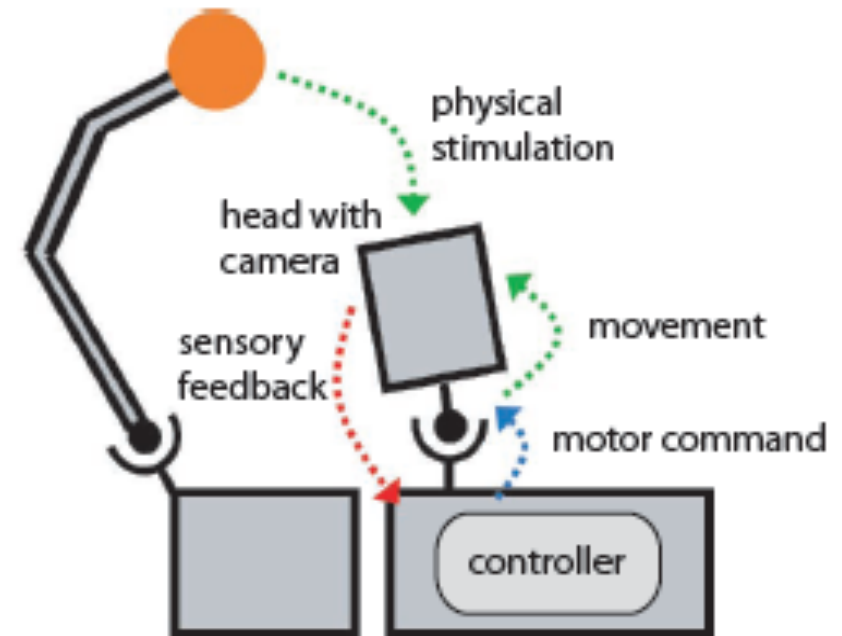
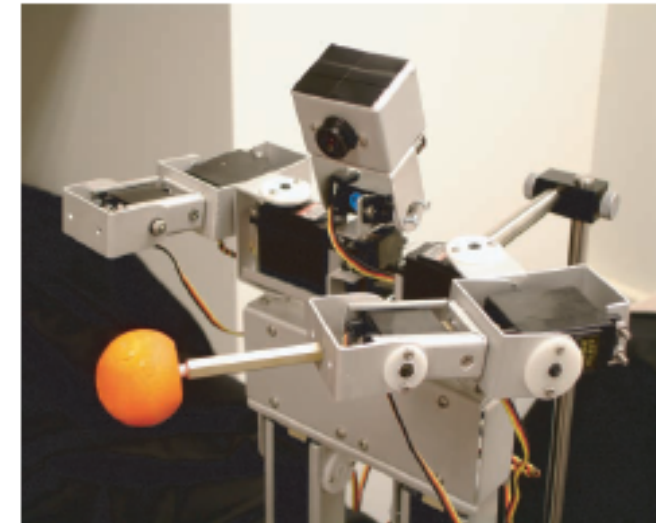
Information self-structuring

Experiments:

Lungarella and Sporns, 2006

**Mapping information flow
in sensorimotor networks**

PLoS Computational Biology



Quantitative measures

entropy: disorder, information

$$H(X) = -\sum_i p(x_i) \log p(x_i)$$

mutual information: statistical dependency

$$MI(X, Y) = H(X) + H(Y) - H(XY) = -\sum_i \sum_j p(x_i, y_j) \log \frac{p(x_i)p(y_j)}{p(x_i, y_j)}$$

integration: global statistical dependence

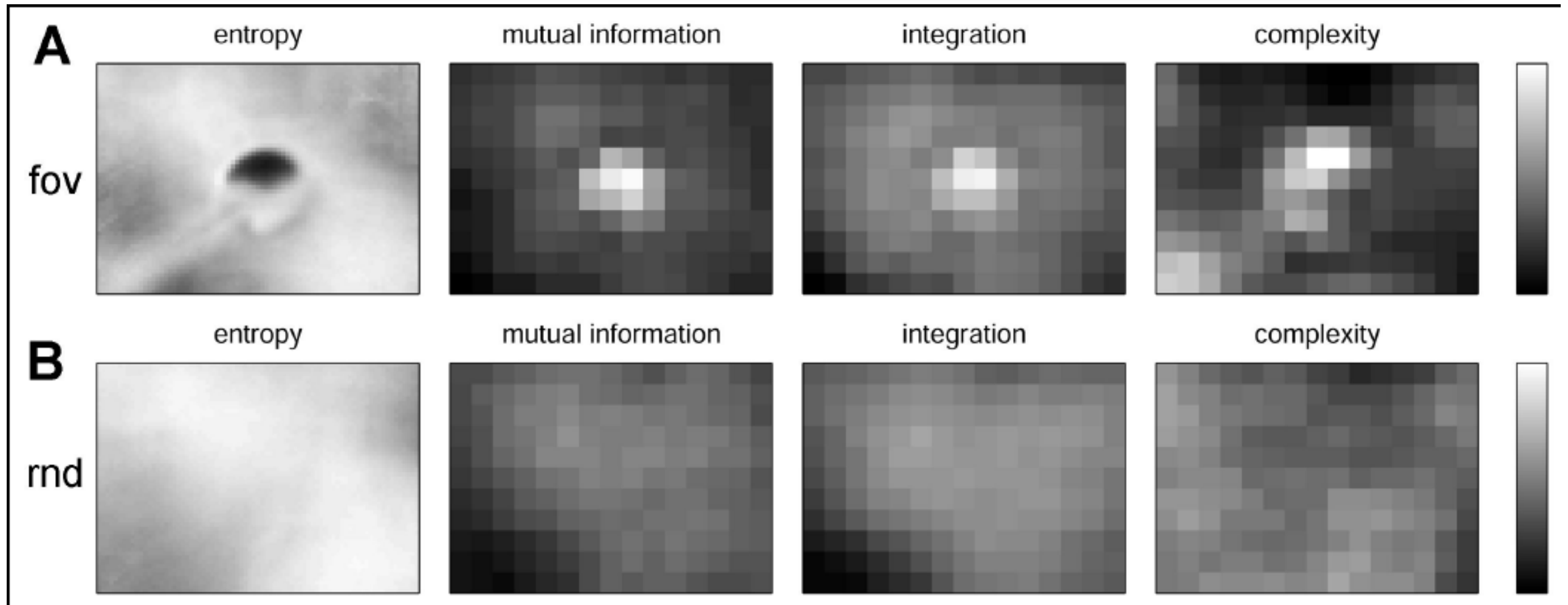
$$I(X) = \sum_i H(x_i) - H(X)$$

complexity: co-existence of local and global structure

$$C(X) = H(X) - \sum_i H(x_i | X - x_i).$$

from: Tononi, Sporns, and Edelman, PNAS, 1994, 1996

Results: foveation vs. random



entropy

mutual
information

integration
(over patch)

complexity
(over patch)

Information Driven Self Organization

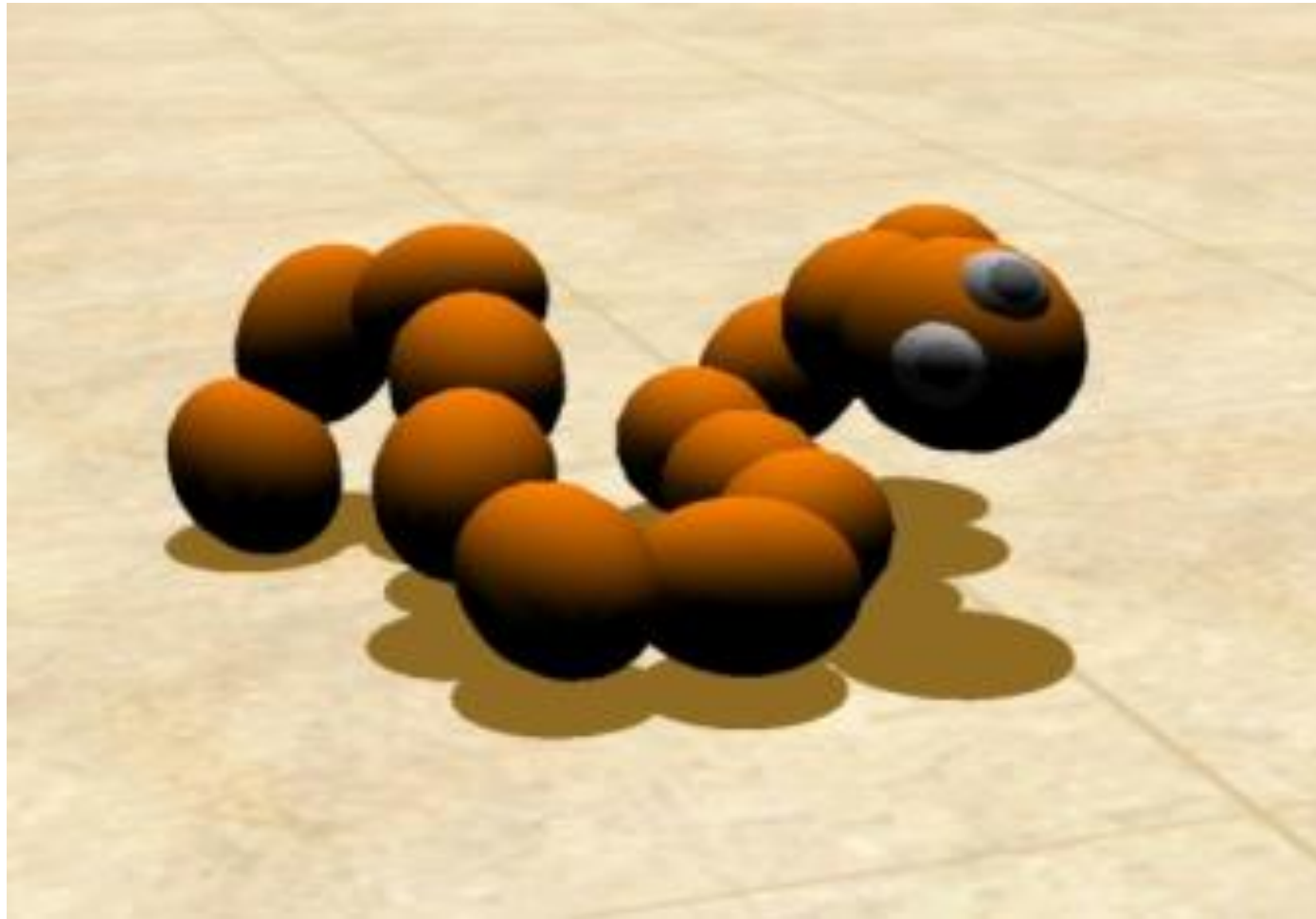
Why not using information metrics to implement an emergent control?

Several researchers have shown the importance of Information Driven Self Organization (IDSO).

In particular Prokopenko, Ralf Der and others have shown simple demonstrators, mainly in simulation, with snake-bots, humanoids and grasping systems.

These approaches seem very promising.

Snakebot



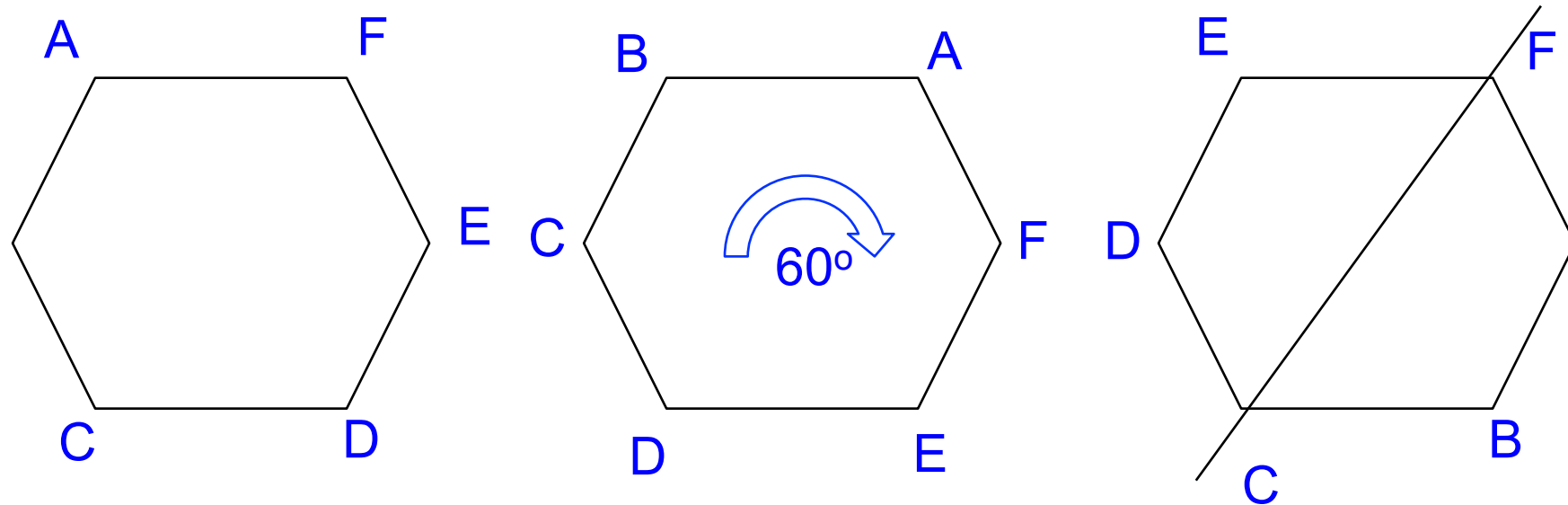
see: Tanev et. al, IEEE TRO, 2005

Maybe not GOF Euclidean space? :-)

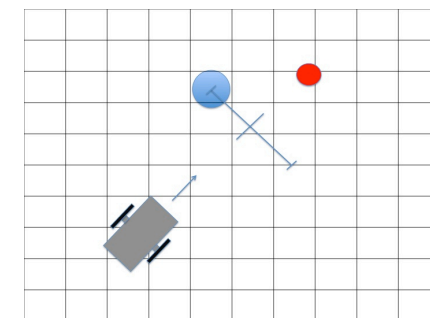
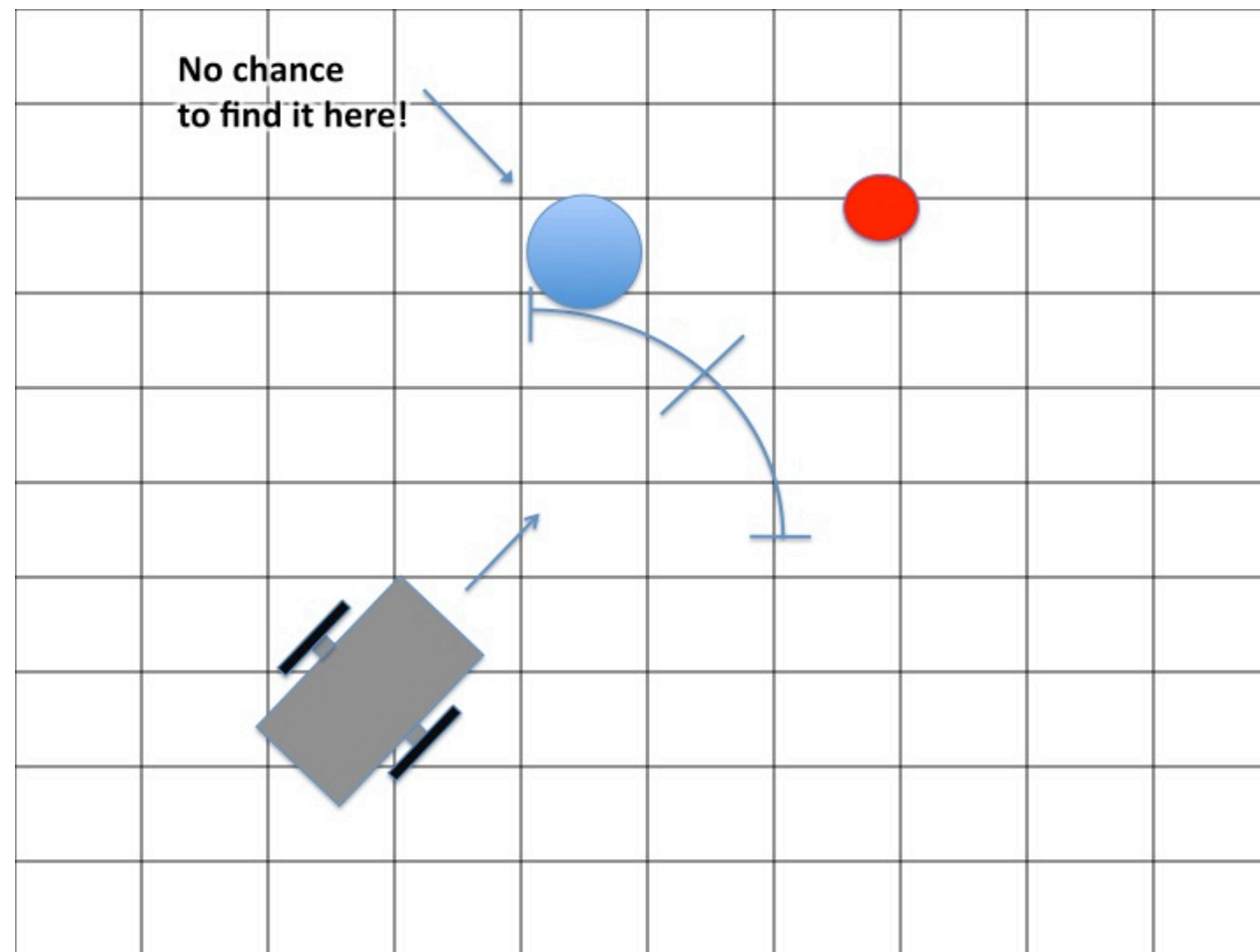
Unfortunately IDSO approaches are computationally heavy.

In [Chirikjian, 2010; Bonsignorio, 2010] it is argued that the recognition of the Lie group structure of the mobility space may help planning methods based on searching in the configurations space.

In Bonsignorio, Artificial Life, 19(2), 2013 the possibilities of the IDSO on Lie groups are shown from a theoretical standpoint.



Maybe not GOF Euclidean space? :-)



see: **Bonsignorio, Artificial Life, 2013**

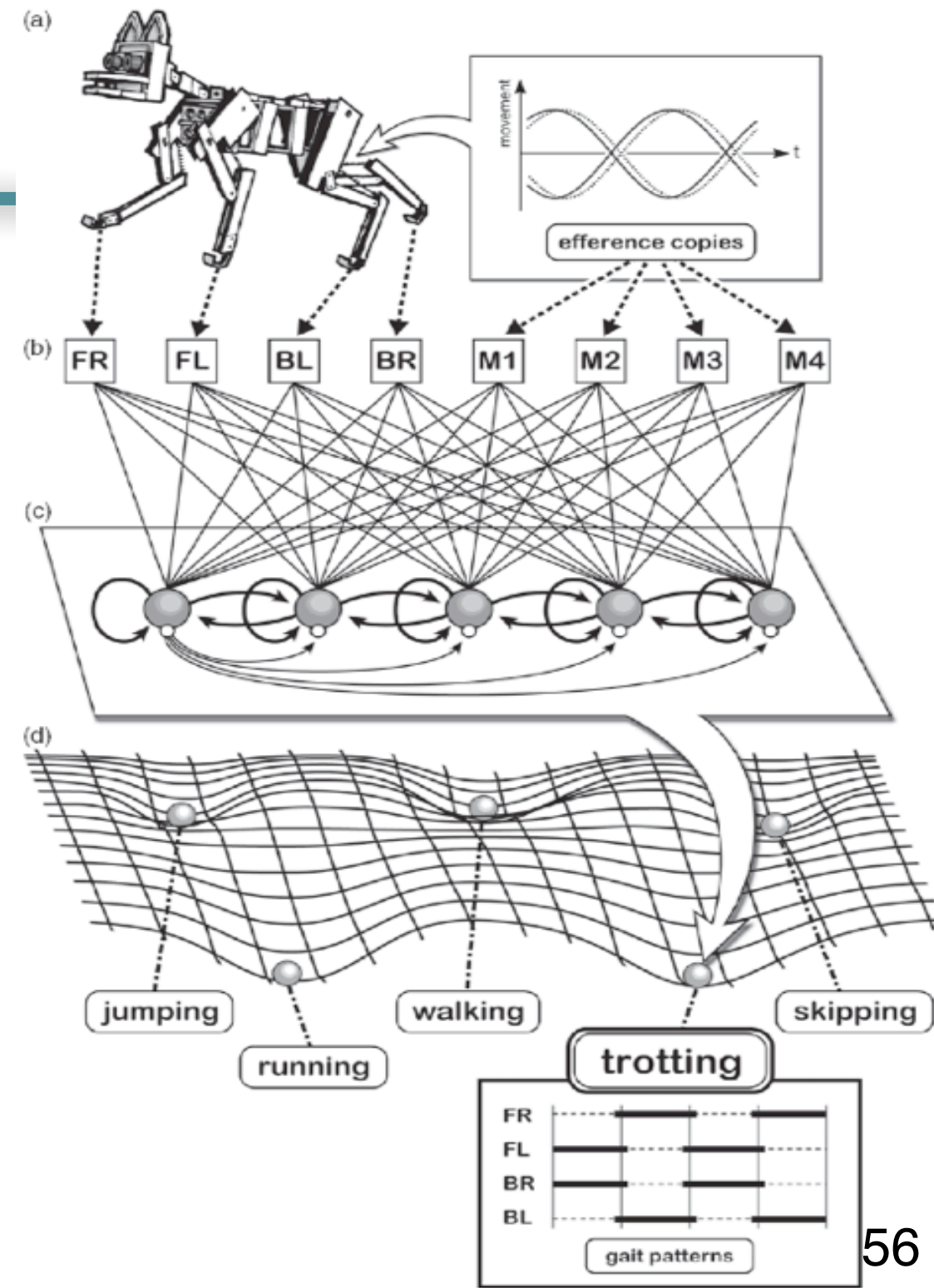
Building grounded symbols (labeling!)

Human: grasping object — patterns of sensory stimulation “match” morphology of agent

Puppy: patterns from pressure sensors or joint angle trajectories: match morphology of agent



grounding for “high-level” cognition



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University of Zurich

robotics+

Swiss National
Centre of Competence
in Research

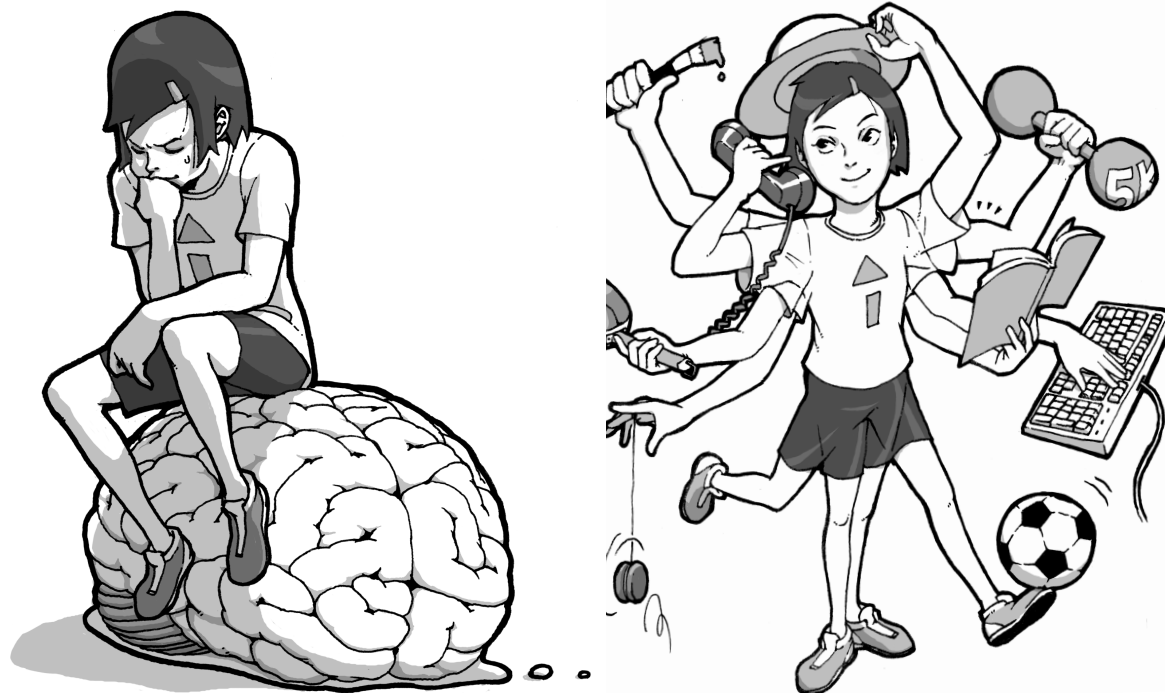
ai lab



End of lecture 6

Thank you for your attention!

stay tuned for the guest lecture



Assignments for next week

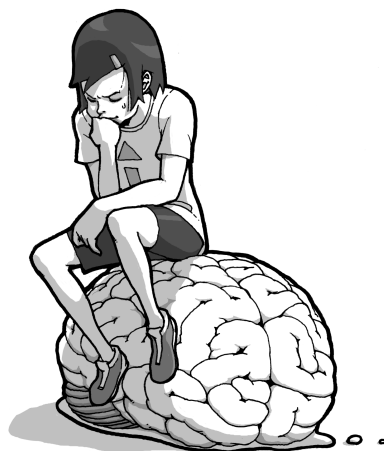
- **Next lecture on 8 December 2016: “Industry Day/...”.**
- **Continue to read “How the body ...”**
- **Additional study materials (on web site)**

End of lecture 6

Thank you for your attention!



stay tuned for lecture 7 “Industry day/Ethics-Societal-Economy”



Fabio Bonsignorio

Prof, the BioRobotics Institute, SSSA

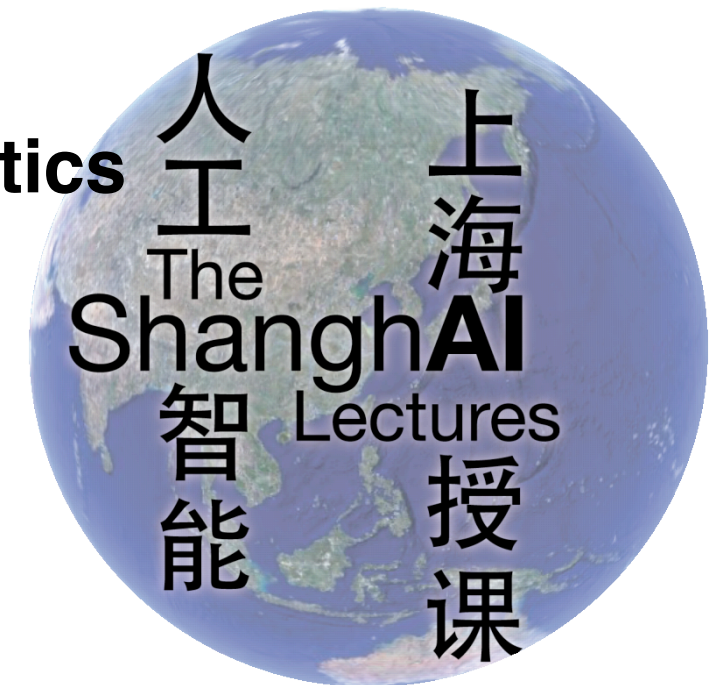
CEO and Founder Heron Robots

Santander - UC3M Chair of Excellence 2010



Research interests

- embodied intelligence, cognition/AI and robotics
- experimental methods in Robotics and AI
- Advanced approaches to Industry 4.0
- synthetic modeling of life and cognition
- novel technologically enabled approaches to higher education and lifelong learning



The Shanghai AI Lectures
2013-2016



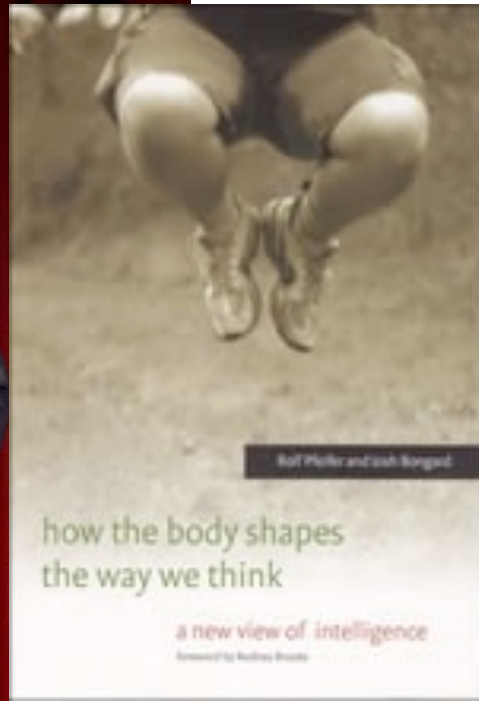
Rolf Pfeifer

Prof,

Institute for Academic Initiatives, Osaka University, Japan

Dept. of Automation, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China

Prof Em., Former Director AI Lab, Univ. of Zurich



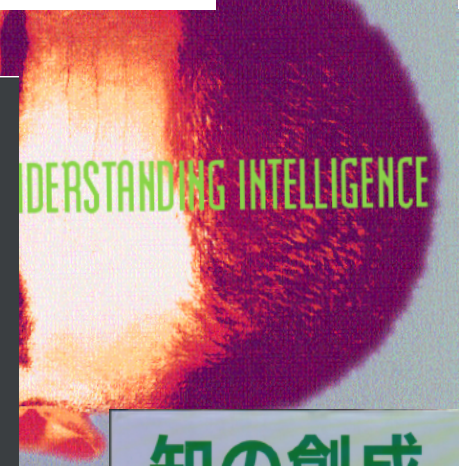
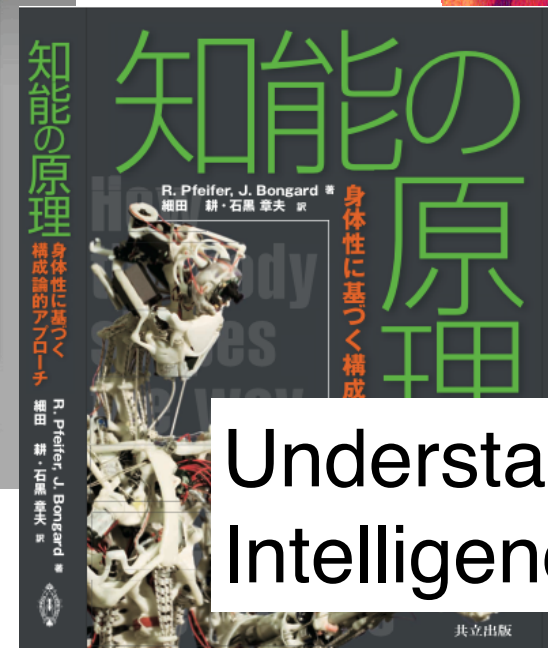
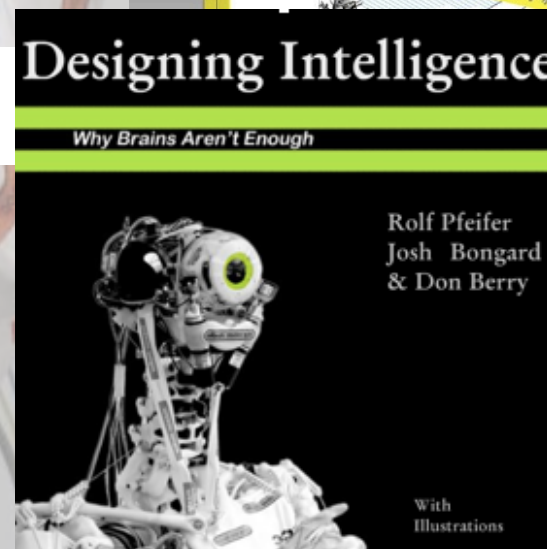
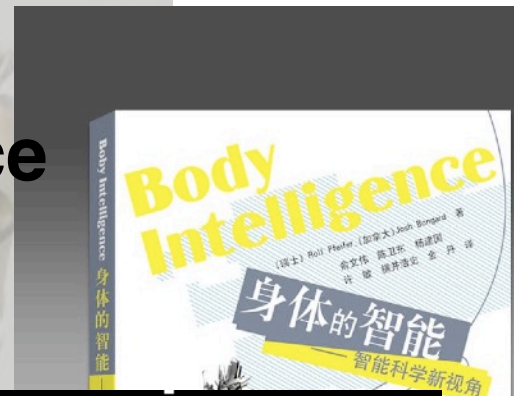
Research interests

- embodied intelligence
- bio-inspired robotics
- self-organization and emergence
- educational technologies

How the body shapes
the way we think

MIT Press

The ShanghAI Lectures



Understanding
Intelligence

