

Cie Nicole Seiler
Human in the loop

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Human in the Loop(WIP) is a performance where dancers and digital choreographers work together to create an exciting new dance experience. Nicole Seiler from Switzerland, the brainchild behind the concept, speaks about the project

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ARTIFICIAL Intelligence taking over the human world has been a common topic of conversation, but have we ever witnessed a performance where humans and machines blur each other in a live choreography? *Human in the Loop(WIP)* is one such performance, where dancers and digital choreographers work together to create a new dance experience. At the show, which will be showcased at Ranga Shankara on March 11, dancers Diya Naidu and Parth

Bharadwaj will be performing it live.

Nicole Seiler from Switzerland, who conceptualised the concept, says the inception of the idea came about after many projects started involving technology. "In 2021, thanks to a research grant, I was able to discover the two main fields of robotics: on one hand, robotics with the physical machines and their hardware; and on the other, Artificial Intelligence, the programming that governs the machine. What happens when we blur the boundaries be-

Dancing to futuristic tunes

tween humans and machines? "Being more subtle and often invisible, AI has an almost elusive presence," says Seiler, adding that the show is brought by Swiss Arts Council - Pro Helvetia.

With dance traditionally being associated with human emotions, the concept also deals with how AI does not have emotions. It is impossible for it to grasp what our bodies represent for our thoughts. "While it can be taught to interpret certain bodily behaviours, the complex dynamic body thoughts are largely alien to it. It is incapable of empathy," she explains. With such layered details, some might find slight difficulty understanding it. Putting it in simple terms,

Seiler explains people can expect a 'show that is like a laboratory on stage' - with all parties involved - dance, music, AI, and light. "The AI issues choreographic instructions into the dancer's ears through a earpiece and the dancers interpret them, live and on stage. The AI instructions are generated live during the show, as is the improvisational electronic music. The two accomplished contemporary Indian dancers will respond with their bodies, bringing in personal nuances to the same set of instructions they will

each receive," she says.

She might be dealing with a futuristic idea, but Seiler has deep appreciation for the Indian dance forms. "I've come to realise that Indian dance forms are so diverse and multiple, way beyond the clichés of Indian classical dance forms we think of from the west. This huge variety and rich landscape of different dances are extremely fascinating," says Seiler.

(Human in the Loop(WIP) will be staged at Ranga Shankara on March 11)