University in Singapore reveals new ‘human-looking social robot’, comparing it to Star Wars’ C-3PO

University claims the social robots could even ‘earn as a platform for Star Wars.”

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A university in Singapore has released footage of a human-looking robot having a conversation with its creator, comparable to Star Wars’ C-3PO and suggesting it can be used as a “social companion for the young and the elderly” in the future.

The “humatron” called Nadine was created by Professor Nada Thalmann at Nanyang Technological University (NTU). An expert in virtual humans and a faculty from NTU’s school of computer engineering, the professor said the latest technological revolution is one of “many exciting trends in robotics that companies can leverage for commercialisation.”

According to the university’s website, Nadine looks almost like a human being, complete with soft skin and brunette hair, and is able to smile when the person gives a like as well as talk back.

The professor said: “In the short video clip, which has been viewed on NTU’s Facebook page close to 25,000 times in just two days - Nadine is seen to shake hands with, and greet, Professor Thalmann. Speaking with a French accent, Nadine says ‘I recognise you' Nadia. Nice to meet you again today.”

When Nadine met Nadia:

When Nadine meets Nadia: Nadine a social robot from NTU that is being created by the world’s most intelligent software. On her left is a great big person-shaped robot and on her right, a human. Nadine has her own personality, memory and emotions. She can see her own hands,知道她自己的位置. The picture above shows her ability to create Nada Thalmann, an NTU professor. Photo: NTU/BBYO

Prof. Nada Thalmann’s lab at NTU University, Singapore on Tuesday, 23 December 2014. Credits: Professor Nada Thalmann and powered by intelligent software - said to be similar to Apple's Siri or Microsoft's Cortana. NTU described how, unlike “conventional robots”, Nadine has her own personality, memory, and emotions and that, depending on the conversation being had, she can also express being happy or sad.

With “a good memory”, NTU added Nadine can recognise the people she has met and also remembers what that person has said in prior conversations, treating humans like she can be used as a personal assistant in offices and homes in the future.

Professor Thalmann added: “It’s something like a real companion that is always with you and conscious of what is happening. In the future, these socially intelligent robots could be the C-3PO – the iconic golden droid from Star Wars – with knowledge of language and etiquette.”

More about: Nanyang Technological University; Singapore; AI; automation; University; Robots; Social Robots; C-3PO; Star Wars