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The Next Level of Thinking: The IFA+ Summit 2018 took 550 participants on a multifaceted journey into the future

IFA+ Summit, the top-class think tank dedicated to the world of the future, once again gathered numerous international speakers and 550 participants this year for an exploration of our future world with its extraordinary possibilities, challenges and ambiguities.

Berlin. The two-day IFA+ Summit, with its renowned participants, was devoted to the latest technological developments and their implications for our experience and living environment. Across four sessions, the program gathered scientific, philosophical and industrial viewpoints and wove together diverse voices to produce a fascinating mosaic of the future.

The first session, entitled "Hybrid Minds", was opened by the chess grandmaster **Garry Kasparov**, whose legendary matches against the IBM computer Deep Blue in 1996 and 1997 were emblematic encounters between human and artificial intelligence. Kasparov presented a gripping lecture on the relationship between artificial intelligence and human creativity, which was followed by talks by **Prof. Elisabeth André** (University of Augsburg) on the emotional intelligence of machines and **Gesa Schöning** (CEO, QualiFiction), whose company seeks to identify potential literary bestsellers with AI.

The second session, entitled "Moral Machines", addressed the diverse social effects of technological progress. How do emerging technologies and progressive digitalization trigger radical change on a societal level and fundamentally reshape the way we live together? Leading philosopher of ethics and technology and Head of Yale University's Interdisciplinary Centre for Bioethics **Wendell Wallach** envisioned an ethics to curb the dangers of disruptive technologies, while **James Curran**, a founding father of media history and professor at Goldsmiths University, mapped our rapidly changing and complexifying media landscape, and **Stephan G. Humer**, a pioneer of Internet sociology in Germany, shared vital insights into our increasingly fluid and changeable social identities in the digital age. Questions about new mechanisms of censorship on the Internet were also critically explored by **Jillian C. York** under the provocative title "The Land of the Free?". As an activist and director of the Electronic Frontier Foundation, York seeks to raise awareness of problematic and often hidden developments in the digital society.

The second day, entitled "Emerging Alliances", initially focused on our fundamentally changed and ever-changing interaction and communication habits. Early "cyborg" and professor **Kevin Warwick**, one of the first people to receive sensor implants and pursue the future possibilities of in-body technology, was on board, as was **Alexander Mankowsky**, futurologist at Daimler AG, who predicted a technology-based revolution in transport.

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The fourth and final session of the IFA+ Summit, under the title "Augmented Cognition", presented a wide-ranging discussion of how immersive technologies such as Virtual and Augmented Reality fundamentally redefine our concept of experience and its possibilities. **Poppy Crum**, Chief Scientist of Dolby Laboratories and professor at Stanford University, gave insights into her research, which uses facial expressions, breathing patterns and body heat to enable machines to read the feelings of their human counterparts. **Rachel Sibley** of Singularity University raised critical questions about an ethic of living together with avatars. Artist and filmmaker **Karen Palmer** explained how she combines the latest findings of neurology with new, immersive and responsive narrative forms in her work, which modifies what is seen depending on the stress level of the viewer in real-time, provoking confrontations with the unconscious.

This session closed with a striking performance by the Catalan cyborg artist **Moon Ribas**. Utilising data from the earthquake sensor in her foot that functions as an implanted seismograph, Ribas generated a percussion performance on stage to provide a living example of what it means to expand one's senses through technology.

The IFA+ Summit Innovation Congress ended with the ALL YOU CAN MEET goes IFA, where an eclectic mix of dance and the 'electric diva' sensibilities of artist Malonda brought the creative, music and start-up scene together with the summit's speakers and participants at the Marshall House.

In terms of the future, of course, the end is just the beginning. The IFA is already looking forward to IFA 2019 from 6 – 11 September. For further information please visit www.ifaplussummit.com and follow us on Twitter (@ifaplussummit) and Facebook (www.facebook.com/ifaplussummit).