

Bob Bicknell-Knight
Second Variety, 2023
PLA plastic, rust effect paint, wax, steel
70.5 x 110 x 36.6 cm
Edition of 3, 2AP



Second Variety is a 3D printed life size autonomous robot dog, with its form inspired by the real-life robot dogs currently being produced by the American company Boston Dynamics. The work imagines a future where robot dogs have been utilised in various unknown ways. In this future scenario the dog has been discovered, rusted and worn down, by a society that has forgotten its original purpose.

The title is inspired by the 1953 short story of the same name by science fiction writer Philip K. Dick. Set in a world where war between the Soviet Union and United Nations has reduced most of the world to a barren wasteland, the story concerns the discovery that self-replicating robots originally built to assassinate Soviet agents have gained sentience. The work embodies this idea of being watched from the shadows, alongside emphasising the fact that many believe that autonomous robots will soon reach the technological singularity, a hypothetical future point in time at which technological growth becomes uncontrollable and irreversible, resulting in unforeseeable changes to human civilization, where our once robotic slaves will transform into our masters.

This 2023 version is a reproduction of the original work created in 2021. After spending the last few years refining my 3D printing skills I reproduced the work for a collector, sealing it with a wax finish and rebuilding the original 3D model used to produce the work from the ground up.



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