



# WeiBot

Robots in the Wild

Meet WeiBot  
A small social robot that invites you  
to sit next to it on a bench!

## What is a robot?

### Attributes:

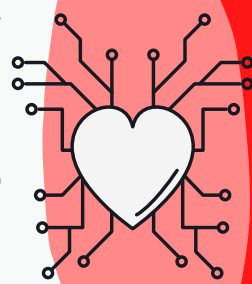
- Execution of specific tasks with little/no human intervention
- It has a body and some kind of movement capabilities
- Has a certain degree of autonomy
- Attracts attribution of human categories on non-human entities (Anthropomorphism)

Yet, it is hard to explicitly define what a robot is since this depends on how it is perceived. After all they vacuum our carpets, serve in restaurants, work in the production or just play beer pong.

## Observations of the “public”

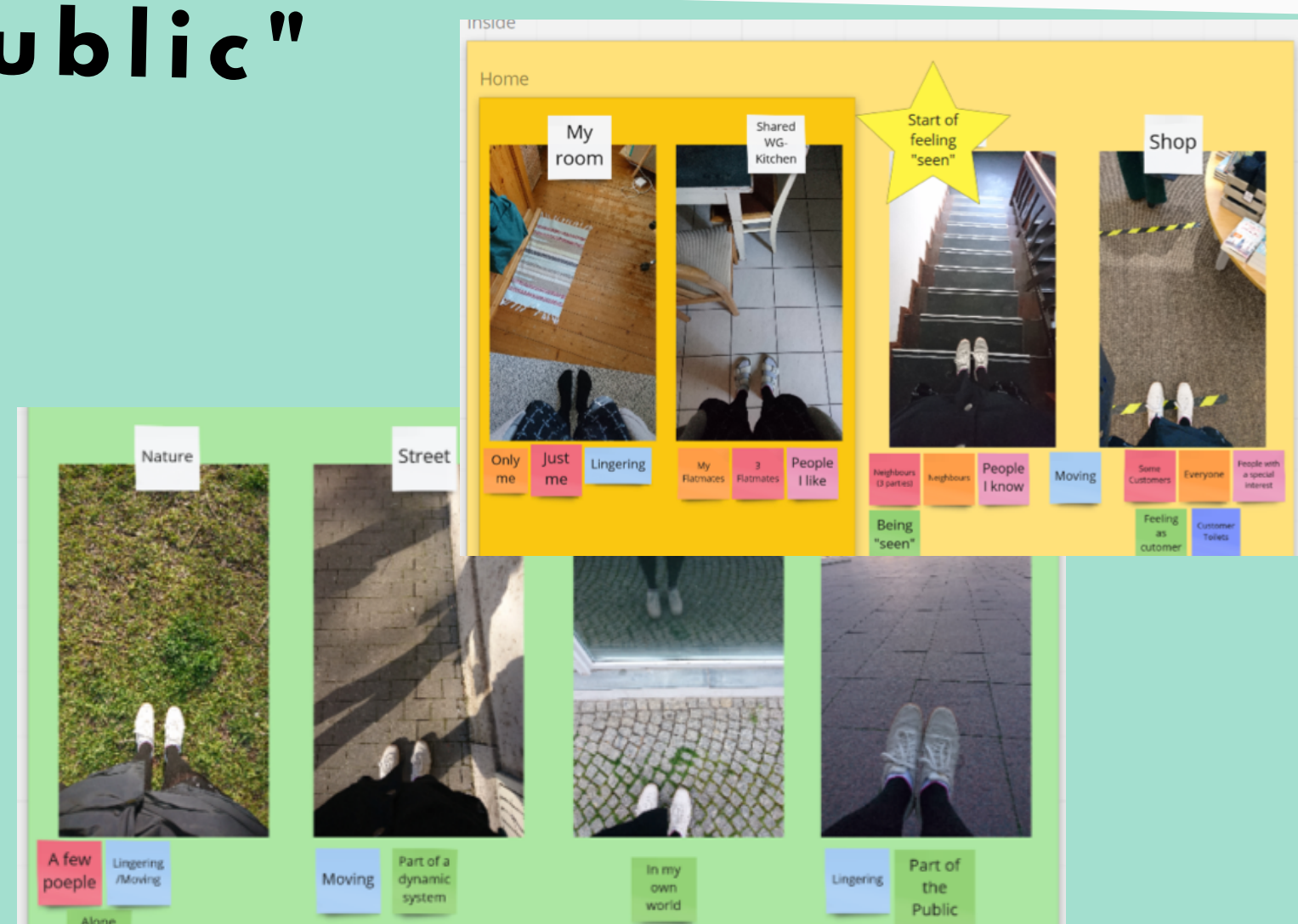
### Public Space

- Accessible to (almost) everyone
- Strongly regulated by social norms and emotions (for example *shame*)
- Potential interactions with strangers



### Private Space

- Limited accessibility & social interactions
- No fear of judgement from others
- Personal (& public) rules
- People experience it as a familiar space



## Study Design

Understanding of the term "**public**" helped us to choose an appropriate location to conduct the study. Robots in public places, in general, must deal with **dynamic, multiparty** scenarios, meaning high levels of two-sided interactions (human-robot interaction).

**Perceived intimacy** can be biased when interacting with a humanoid (human-like) robot, therefore we aimed for a **non-anthropomorphic** robot design.

Our research question is: **How do people interact with a non-anthropomorphic robot in public and how do they perceive intimate practices, like hugging the robot?**

We place the robot on a bench in the Weimarhallenpark and remote control the robot in order to interact with people walking by. During the interaction, we try to evoke an **intimate feeling** in people towards the robot by asking **for help, for a hug**, and **being carried** around.

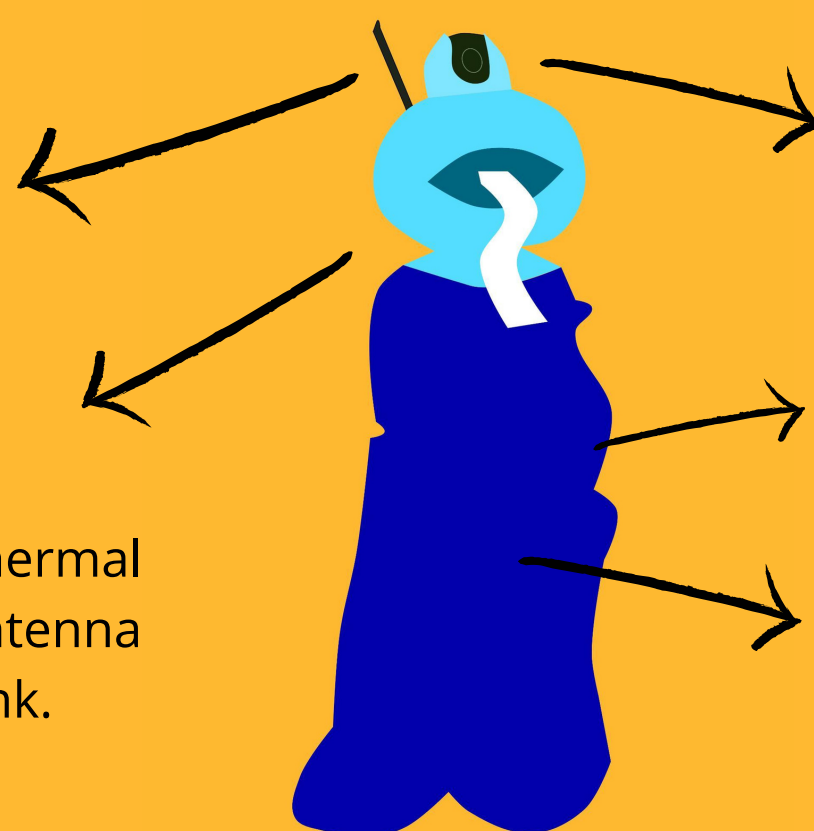
Lastly, our methods to study this, are **participatory observations of interactions and participant interviews** subsequently.

## Prototype

Moving **antenna**, as an indicator to create attention during interaction.

The **head** is made out of plastic (easy to clean)

Other technical components in there: a thermal printer for communication, a sensor for the antenna movement, a microcontroller, and a power bank.



**Webcam** is a representation of an "eye", that holds the gaze of the interacting person.

**Soft-feeling neoprene** aims to create a nice soft surface to touch.

**Body** with a soft filling that is hard to balance and handle during the interaction.