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Playfool

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Playfool is an art-design unit by Daniel Coppen (UK) and Saki Maruyama (JP). Their practice explores the transforming dynamic between human agency and technology through the medium of play. Their work invites a critical engagement and reimagination of technology, often taking the form of experimental games and interactive installations.

Playfool's work has been awarded in the S+T+ARTS Prize (2024) and Dezeen Award (2021), and exhibited internationally at the Science Gallery (Monterrey, 2025), Ars Electronica (Linz, 2024), and the V&A Museum (London, 2023).

Solo Shows (Selected)

2024: *a (re)imitation of life* - More Than AI Sandbox, Watershed, Bristol, UK
2024: *How (not) to get hit by a self-driving car* - RAD, Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, USA
2023: *Deviation Game* - Civic Creative Base Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan

Group Shows (Selected)

2026: *Deviation Game - Are You Human? Body-Machine-Publics* - Khoj, New Delhi, India (upcoming)
2026: *a (re)imitation of life - Metal - Skill Academy* - Fondation Hermès, Tokyo, Japan (upcoming)
2025-2026: *Deviation Game: What Makes Our Expression Human?* - Miraikan, Tokyo, Japan (upcoming)
2025-2026: *a (re)imitation of life - CONSCIOUSNESS* - Science Gallery, Monterrey, Mexico
2025-2026: *Deviation Game - DISTRACTION* - Science Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
2025: *Deviation Game - Friday Late: Is This For Real?* - V&A Museum, UK
2025: *How (not) to get hit by a self-driving car - ALT: Games* - powerhouse Museum, Australia
2024-2025: *Deviation Game - Art Plays Games* - FACT, Liverpool, UK
2024: *Deviation Game - Digital Art Festival Taipei* - Taipei, Taiwan
2024: *Forest Crayons - The Abney Effect* - London Design Festival, London, UK
2024: *How (not) to get hit by a self-driving car - HOPE – who will turn the tide* - Ars Electronica Festival, Linz, Austria
2024: *Deviation Game - CCBT Compass 2024* - CCBT, Tokyo, Japan
2024: *How (not) to get hit by a self-driving car - Invisibles in the Neo City* - SusHi Tech Square, Tokyo, Japan
2023-2024: *Forest Crayons - Japan: Myths to Manga* - Young V&A, London UK
2023: *How (not) to get hit by a self-driving car - Friday Lates: Defying the Code* - Science Gallery, London, UK
2023: *Deviation Game - P.O.N.D. Dialogue* - PARCO Museum Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan
2023: *Deviation Game - Who Owns the Truth?* - Ars Electronica Festival, Linz, Austria
2023: *How (not) to get hit by a self-driving car - Playable City Sandbox* - Watershed, Bristol, UK
2023: *Deviation Game - Now Play This* - Somerset House, London, UK
2022: *Forest Crayons - Rethinking Material Futures* - V&A Museum, London, UK
2021: *Forest Crayons - Wood Change Challenge* - Tsutaya Daikanyama Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
2019-2025: *Various - Design Lab* - MAK, Vienna, Austria

Grants & Awards

2025: *SOLO AI AWARD*, Finalist - WORLD Ø-1
2024: *Gemini API Developer Competition*, Most Creative App - *Deviation Game*
2024: *More Than AI Sandbox*, Watershed – *a(re)imitation of life*
2024: *S+T+ARTS Prize*, Honorary Mention – *How (not) to get hit by a self-driving car*
2023: *UK Games Fund* – *Deviation Game*
2023: *Playable City Sandbox*, Watershed – *How (not) to get hit by a self-driving car*
2021: *Dezeen Awards*, Product Design, Highly Commended – *Forest Crayons*
2021: *Dezeen Awards*, Product Design, Public Vote Winner – *Forest Crayons*
2021: *Wood Change Camp*, Best Camp Award – *Forest Crayons*

2019: *IxDA Interaction Awards*, Finalist – Knotty
2018: *GUGEN*, Grand Prix – Knotty
2018: *Good Design Awards*, Awarded – PLAYFOOL Workshop
2019: *Lexus Design Award*, Shortlisted – Lulu

Artist Residencies / Fellowships

2024: *More Than AI Sandbox* – Watershed, Bristol, UK
2023: *Building Arts Programme* – Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Trust, Scotland
2023: *Playable City Sandbox* – Watershed, Bristol, UK
2022: *Artist Fellowship Program* – Civic Creative Base Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan
2021: *Wood Change Camp* – Loftwork Inc & Ministry of Forestry and Fishery, Hida, Japan

Workshops & Teaching

2024: *More Than Human Workshop* – Young V&A, London, UK
2023: *Forest Crayons Workshop* – V&A Innovate, London, UK
2023: *Playing with forest* – Hidakuma, Gifu, Japan
2022: *Colour and Health* – The German Colour Centre
2022: *Introduction to play and design* – University of California, Berkeley, US
2022: *Introduction to play and design* – University of Chicago, US
2022: *Introduction to play and design* – Royal College of Art, UK
2022: *Forest Crayons Workshop* – V&A Museum, London, UK
2022: *Make Good: Rethinking Material Futures* – V&A Museum, London, UK
2021: *Making Matters* – Yamaguchi Center for Arts and Media, Yamaguchi, Japan
2021: *The role of Playfulness in Creativity and Design* – FabCafe, Tokyo and Kuala Lumpur
2019: *The role of Playfulness in Design* – SDDTalk, DesignIt Tokyo, Japan
2018–2020: *Future Play Factory* – The University of Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan

Publications (Selected)

2024: *crayons made from recycled japanese trees and wood uncover different hues found in forests* – designboom
2024: *I learned how to trick self-driving cars at a San Francisco museum* – SFGATE
2023: *You win this street game by getting “hit” by a self-driving car* – Freethink
2023: *this street-based game challenges you to get hit by a self-driving car to outsmart its AI* – designboom
2023: *Can you make an AI understand love? The experimental games festival about relationships*, The Guardian
2022: *Life in Green* – Stratus Journal
2022: *Forest Crayons bring alive the hues of the forest using natural colours from wood*, Stir World
2021: *Forest Crayons reveal the spectrum of colours within Japanese wood*, Dezeen
2018: *Children’s toy set encourages playfulness*, Dezeen
2017: *Mirrored tableware tricks diners into thinking they're full*, Dezeen

Education

Daniel Coppen

2015-2017: MA/MSc Global Innovation Design, Royal College of Art, UK (Distinction)
2012-2015: BEng Mechanical Engineering, Imperial College London, UK

Saki Maruyama

2016-2018: MA/MSc Innovation Design Engineering, Royal College of Art, UK (Distinction)
2016-2017: MSc Building and Urban Design in Development, The Bartlett, UCL, UK
2011-2015: LLB Law, Keio University, Japan