"Phrases of the Kinetic: Organicism and Transformation from Robots to Biofuels"

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12:30 - 2:00pm
Room 3-133

Amanda Parkes, PhD

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Bio:
Amanda Parkes is a media designer whose work focuses on how digital technologies and smart materials can expand our relationship with natural phenomena to facilitate a more intuitive connection between technology and the natural world. She recently completed her PhD in the Tangible Media Group at the MIT Media Lab where her research focused on computational materiality in kinetic interfaces as an area of innovation in future products-- combining principles of abstracted motion in robotics with hybrid materials to empower designers in the process of kinetic improvisation and motion prototyping. While at MIT she also developed a new design curriculum entitled Future Craft, examining how digital media is affecting the product design process in terms of information transparency, materiality and fabrication. She is currently the CTO of Bodega Algae, a company developing a modular, scalable, microalgae photobioreactor for the production of high-energy algal biomass for use in the production of biofuel. She also curates and produces the annual Seamless: Computational Couture runway show series. Before joining the MIT Media Lab, Amanda developed exhibits and educational media at the Exploratorium in San Francisco, the Science Museum in London and the the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice. She also holds an M.S. in Media Arts and Sciences from MIT, and a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering (Product Design) and a B.A. in Art History from Stanford University. Her work has been featured in various internationally recognized design and art awards including the ID Magazine Annual Design Review and the Prix Ars Electronica and she was named one of Mass High Tech's 'Women to Watch' in technology for 2008. Outside the lab she likes to sew, surf, and amass exquisite shoes.