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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GIANT, RIDEABLE ROBOT BEING DEVELOPED IN SOMERVILLE

Artisan's Asylum class designs giant robot, currently raising funds to build it

Project Hexapod, a class taught at Artisan's Asylum, designed a 4,000 pound, 18-foot wide, 10-foot tall, 135 horsepower, 6-legged robot christened 'STOMPY' that seats two. Project Hexapod has launched a Kickstarter campaign (<http://kck.st/NPXY1G>) to raise the \$65,000 needed to build the final robot. In 10 days, the fundraiser has earned more than \$60,000, over 90% of its ultimate goal.

The class includes three instructors, one teaching assistant, and fifteen students. The three instructors (Gui Cavalcanti, Dan Cody, and James Whong) all have professional robotics backgrounds, having worked in a variety of commercial and military robotics firms. The class was designed to teach students how to design, control, and fabricate large robots outside of a traditional academic setting. In the past four months, the class has built prototype legs, designed and built hydraulic powerplants, developed cohesive hydraulic actuation systems, programmed a simulation of a full-scale robot, and ultimately designed 'STOMPY', among other milestones. The class' progress (and all released data and presentations) can be found on its blog, <http://www.projecthexapod.com>.

In a drastically different manner than the way most new robotic technologies currently develop, plans for 'STOMPY' and all associated technologies are being released as open source upon completion of the robot. The group has developed hydraulic actuation control techniques that are significantly less expensive than the traditional actuation used in other robots, and hope that the open release of such techniques will allow for much faster-paced worldwide development and acceptance of large robots as a whole. When complete, 'STOMPY' will be able to walk through water more than 6 feet deep, walk over rough terrain, and walk across rubble-strewn areas that you might find after a natural disaster. Project Hexapod hopes that the technology developed for 'STOMPY' may one day be used to create disaster response vehicles that are much more effective than those available today.

Artisan's Asylum is a 31,000 square foot nonprofit community workshop in Somerville, MA. It provides public access to high-end manufacturing equipment, and hosts woodworking, metalworking, welding, machining, electronics assembly, fabric arts, computer aided design and bike repair facilities under one roof. It also provides training on how to use equipment, peer-taught classes on a variety of design and fabrication subjects, 119 rental studios for local artists, craftspeople, engineers, and entrepreneurs, and project storage space. Artisan's Asylum was recently voted "Best Classes in Boston" by the Improper Bostonian for 2012, "Best Place To Get Schooled" by Boston Magazine for 2012, "Best Art Space" by DigBoston for 2011, and "Best Of The New: Diversions" by the Boston Globe for 2010.