

# CYBERPUNK SUBCULTURE

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**S**PEAKING of cyberpunk, most people can talk a word or two, but once it becomes a discussion, the ending often turns into a quarrel, but what really is cyberpunk? Is Cyberpunk a cluster of buildings like the Kowloon Walled City in Hong Kong, or flickering neon lights? Is it a mechanized stump of human arms? Are they cyberpunk? They are all, but perhaps none of them are. Now, let us dig a little deeper into the world of cyberpunk.



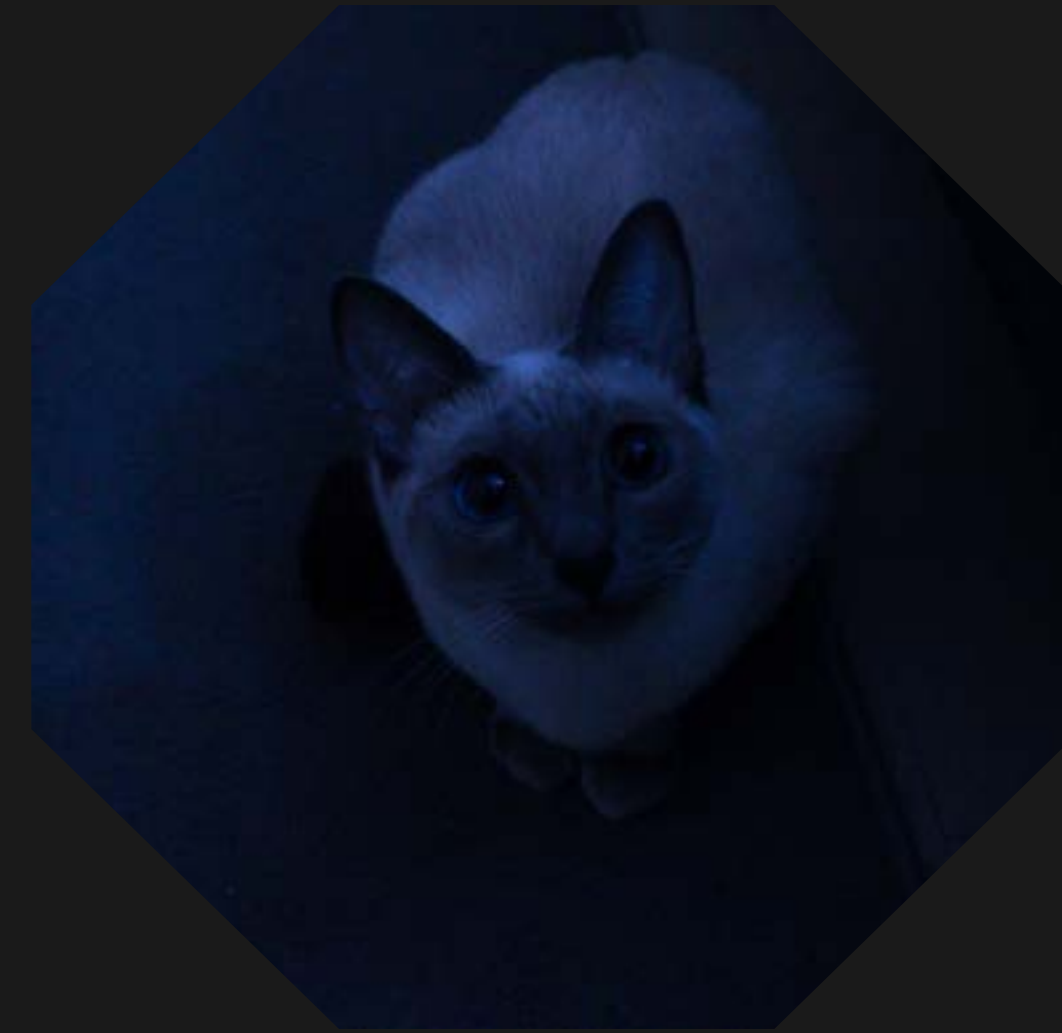
**W**E can divide the term cyberpunk into two components. According to the Oxford Learner's Dictionaries the word Cyber is short for "Cybernetics", and it means "the scientific study of communication and control systems, which involves comparing human and animal brains with machines and electronic devices". "Punk" is well known, this is a music subculture that originated in the 1970s-punk. So, what kind of work can be called cyberpunk, it usually contains the following elements: large-scale centralized enterprises (corresponding to corrupt governments); genetic engineering; the sharp contrast between high-tech and low living standards; artificial intelligence; pink and blue neon lights, etc.





**BLADE RUNNER** is the earliest and typical cyberpunk style movie, but the earliest origin form of cyberpunk comes from novels. There is also a novel called *Neuromancer*, 1984, the creator of cyberpunk. "Its author William Ford Gibson was the first to use proper nouns such as Cyberspace and Intrusion Countermeasures Electronics, referred to as ICE, in the novel. In addition to affecting the Western world, the cyberpunk craze in the 1980s also deeply affected Japan. As a result, many comics about cyberpunk were published in that era.





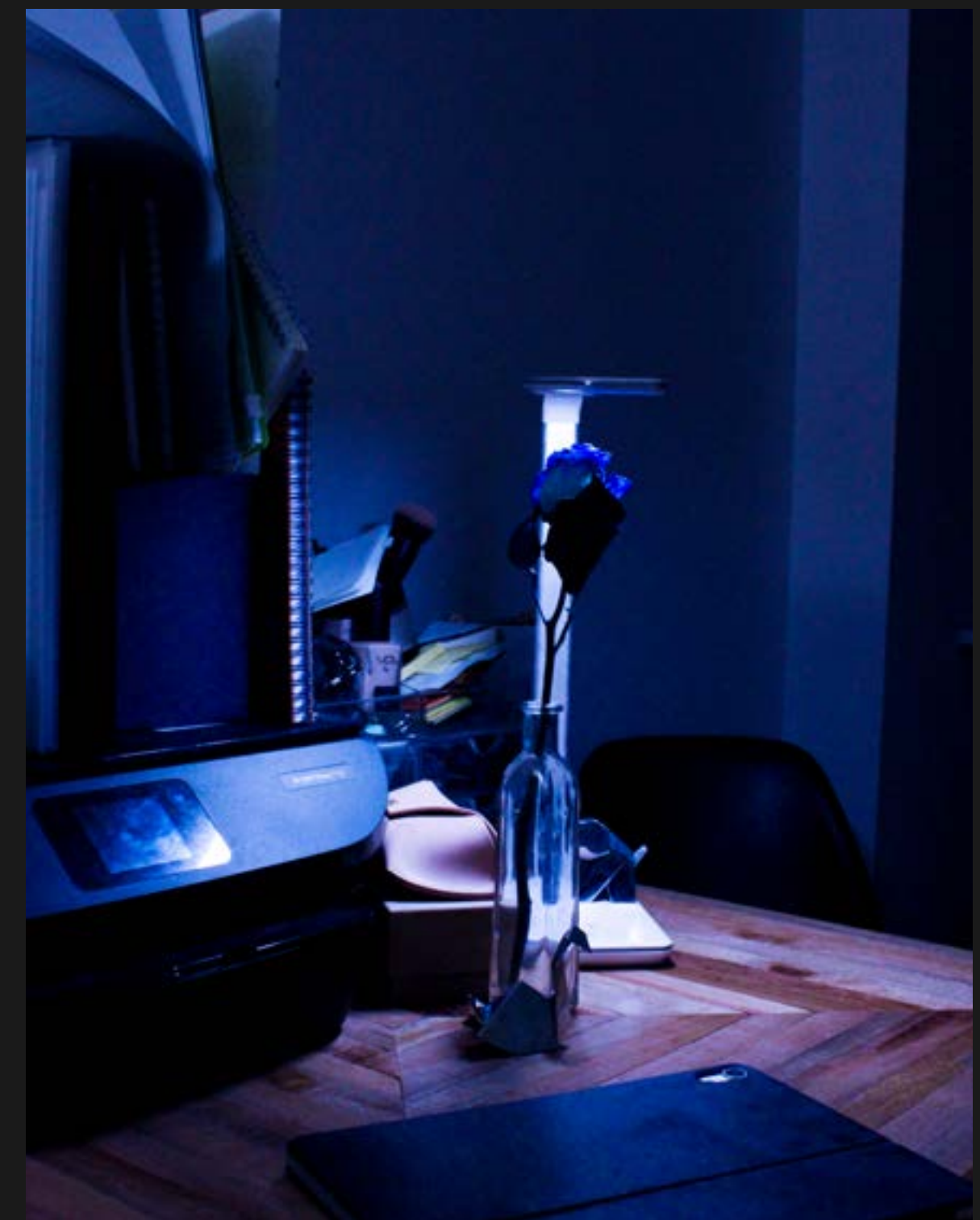
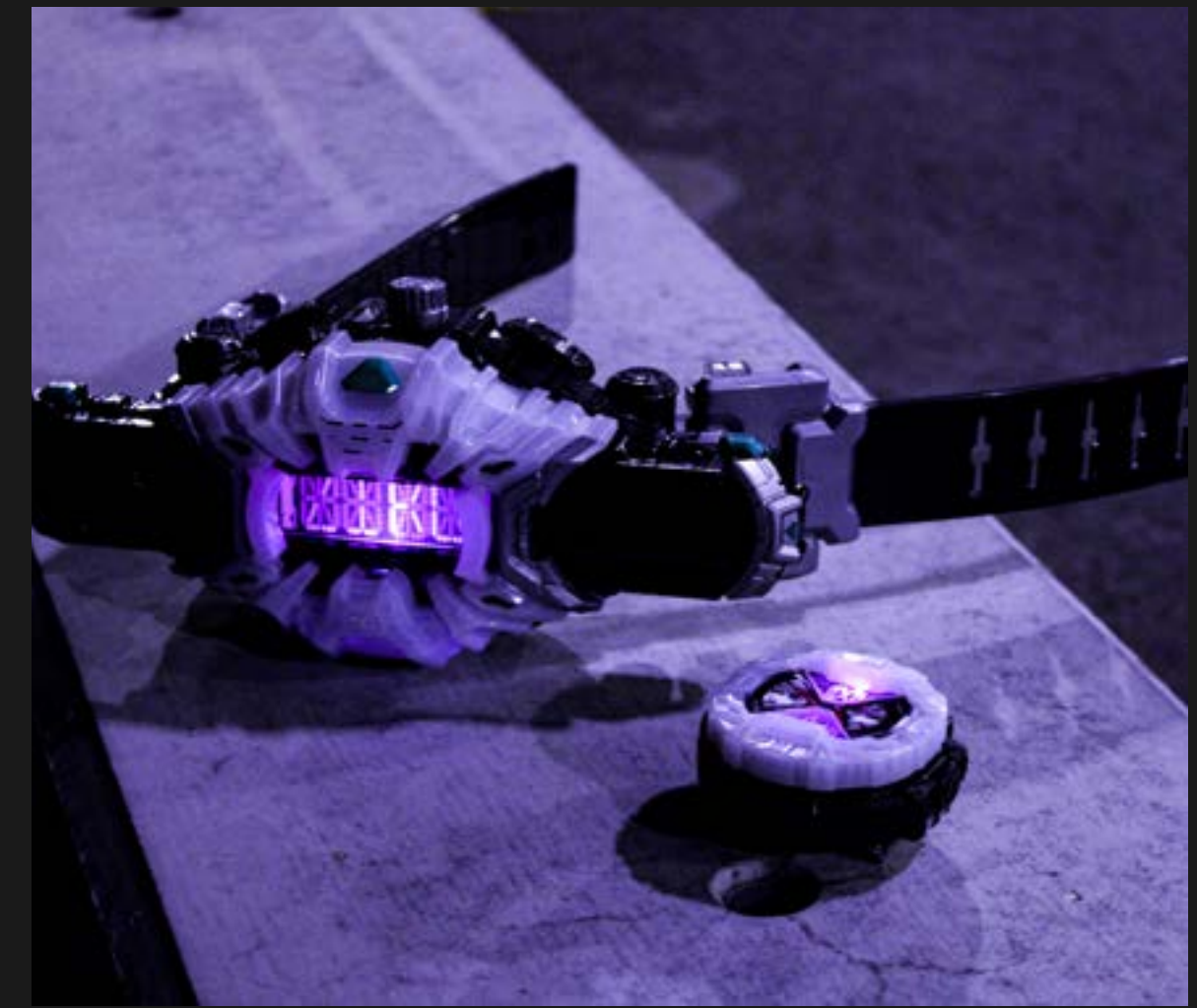
**F**OR example, the animated film *Akira* with the background of World War III was released in Japan in 1988. Soon after its release, the *Ghost in the Shell* drawn by manga artist “Shirou Masamune” was serialized for the first time. Once again shocked Japan and even Western society.

**T**HE live-action version of *Ghost in the Shell* and the movie *Blade Runner 2049* were released in 2017, the cyberpunk boom has been ignited again. This year, with the release of the video game *Cyberpunk 2077*, cyberpunk has once again set off a wave of enthusiasm. Due to its impact on youth, it is inseparable from the discussion of its ideology. The political situation in the cyberpunk world is generally oppressive and totalitarian, but where there is oppression, there is resistance. Most of the protagonists in Cyberpunk’s works are full of rebellious spirit... This setting has had a great influence on young people during this period.





In the early 1980s, the international situation was in a state of cold war. It is in such a special period that the science and technology of various countries are constantly improving. At that time, the outdated routines of the golden age of science fiction and the mainstream literature's "not paying attention" to science fiction gradually made people unbearable, so people raised questions.







- IS A HIGH-TECH FUTURE A BRIGHT FUTURE?
- CAN TECHNOLOGY REALLY LEAD TO UTOPIA?
- CAN ROBOTS AND HUMANS REALLY BE HARMONIOUS AND SUSTAINABLE?



**W**ITH a rebellious and exploratory mentality, the great cyberpunk pioneers waved their pens and gave their answers. Hence, cyberpunk literature such as *Cyberpunk* by Bruce Bethke, *Neuromancer* by William Ford Gibson, 1984, and the earliest *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* by Philip K. Dick turned out.





**T**HE core feature of cyberpunk subculture lies in its deep thinking about the development of science and technology. The future of high technology may not be satisfactory. Such warnings and deep thinking are the essence of cyberpunk. Therefore, cyberpunk did not evolve from punk music, it just borrowed or shared the word “punk” to refer to the same era and that environmental background. Its works have the distinctive characteristics: they are dark, decadent, and desperate. However, cyberpunk culture is obsessed with describing the struggle of people in the darkness to reflect the light and hope of the world. Dystopian works express a world that looks beautiful, but inside is filthy darkness. The punk works illustrate that although the world is dark, light and hope are immortal.