

*Imagination will carry us to
worlds that never were.
But without it we go nowhere.*
Carl Sagan

*I throw a spear into the dark
– that is intuition. Then I have
to send an expedition into the
jungle to find the way of the
spear – that is logic.*
Ingmar Bergman

*Not only is the universe
stranger than we imagine,
it is stranger than we can
imagine.*
Arthur Eddington

Invited papers from external experts in the field
of science and art

Friday 1 October 2010, 12.00 – 19.30
Weston Auditorium, de Havilland Campus
University of Hertfordshire

University staff papers and art-science
workshops

Saturday 2 October 2010, 09.30 – 17.40
Lindop Building, College Lane Campus
University of Hertfordshire

www.herts.ac.uk/events/Ways-of-Knowing-Art-and-Sciences-Shared-Imagination.cfm

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University of
Hertfordshire



Ways of Knowing: Science and Art's Shared Imagination

Perspectives from the Sciences, Humanities
and Creative Arts

An interdisciplinary staff symposium at the
University of Hertfordshire hosted by the
Fine Art Practices Research Group,
School of Creative Arts.

Dedicated to Robert Priddey, 1975 – 2010



This symposium is motivated by the sense of wonder shared by artists and scientists at the complex cosmos we inhabit. It forms part of the celebration of the first anniversary of the Faculty of Science, Technology and Creative Arts and is a step toward what will hopefully be a longer-term interdisciplinary research effort in science and art within the new faculty. This first meeting is deliberately broad in scope hoping to uncover as much work in science-art with the University as possible.

In 1975 a young artist named Tony Longson worked with the computers in the engineering department at Hatfield Polytechnic to produce what are considered to be important works in the then nascent discipline of computer aided art. In 2010 Tony will return to Hatfield to speak at this symposium on thirty-five years of engagement between art and science.

Art and science are at a fundamental level creative acts of imagination, invention and discovery. Until the modern period they were construed as complementary aspects of a continuum of enquiry. In China, the Islamic world and India especially art, philosophy and science flourished in this syncretic way. Despite the splitting of art and science into separate realms in the European enlightenment, cross-fertilisation and mutual fascination has continued to the present day.

Examples of this would be the two way relationship of Cubism and relativity: artists had their world view radically altered by the discoveries of Poincaré and Einstein into relativity and later work in relativity theory found imaginative inspiration in the work of the cubists. Another intertwining is found in the development of perspective in western painting as a way of seeing the world locating an observer as separate from the observed which was paralleled in the rise of empirical science. In the second half of the Twentieth century artists rapidly colonized the new computational sciences, robotics and biotech. Today a rich field of art-science work exists globally with numerous interdisciplinary courses being created in universities and much effort being put into interpretation and dissemination of scientific knowledge through the arts.

There has been much discussion of what astrophysicist Roger Malina calls a "third culture" within the art-science community. This third culture is syncretic, in it science recognizes the broader culture and society within which it is embedded and is more connected to the public; there is a much greater understanding between artists and scientists of each-others fields.

This symposium will explore questions such as: do artists engaging with scientists affect the outcome of any science being done? Can art be a contribution to knowledge? Can science contribute to meaning in a way similar to the arts and humanities? What is the nature of discovery and creativity in art and science? Philosophical questions might look at how the value judgments of the creative arts and the testable statements of science interact when they come together.

Invited external speakers:

- Simon Biggs, research professor at the Edinburgh School of Art
- Mario Caeiro, curator of the Skyway Art and Astronomy Festival, Torun
- Anna Dumitriu, Artist and researcher
- Rob Kessler, Professor of Ceramic Art & Design, Central Saint Martins
- Tony Longson, Professor of Art, CalState, Los Angeles,
- Nicola Triscott, director Arts Catalyst, London

Science Art Workshops – Ways of Working

These intensive 2 hour workshops will explore ways that artists and scientists can work together. Two breakout groups of mixed artists and scientists will be led by Anna Dumitriu and Tony Longson with the aim of instigating art science collaborations within UH.

Science Art Commission Opportunity

One of the resulting art science collaborations from UH staff member will be selected by Mario Caeiro, director of the Skyway International Festival of Art and Astronomy in Torun, Poland to be showcased at the next festival in August 2011.

Schedule:

Friday 1st October: Invited External Speakers

Weston Auditorium, de Havilland Campus

12.00 – 12.30	Arrival and registration
12.30 – 12.40	Welcome from John Senior
12.40 – 13.00	Introduction – Simeon Nelson
13:00 – 13:40	Nicola Triscott
13.40 – 14.20	Robert Kessler
14:20 – 15.00	Anna Dumitriu
15.00 – 15.20	<i>Coffee Break</i>
15:20 – 16.00	Simon Biggs
16.00 – 16.40	Tony Longson
16.40 – 17.20	Mario Caeiro
17.20 – 18.00	Plenary
18.00 – 19.30	<i>Drinks at UH Galleries, College Lane campus</i>

Saturday 2nd October: Parallel UH Staff Sessions

Lindop Building, College Lane Campus

09.30 – 10.00	<i>Coffee, Registration</i>	
	Room 1:	Room 2:
10.00 – 10.20	Rob Godman	Craig Bourne
10.20 – 10.40	Pat Simpson	Kerry Andrews
10.40 – 11.00	Rebecca Thomas	Amiy Chatey
11.00 – 11.20	Jim Collett	Grace Lees Maffei
11.20 – 11.40	Plenary	Plenary
11.40 – 12.00	Philip Mead Recital	
12.00 – 13.00	<i>Lunch</i>	
13.00 – 13.20	Brendan Larvor	Marty St James
13.20 – 13.40	Alan Peacock	Lyndall Phelps
13.40 – 14.00	Monia Brizzi	Alice Williamson
14.00 – 14.20	Plenary	Plenary
14.20 – 14.40	<i>Break</i>	
14.40 – 17.40	Arts/Sciences collaborative practice sessions:	