INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

DEDICATED TO THE WORLD PHILOSOPHY DAY

PHILOSOPHY TODAY:
TRADITIONS, INNOVATIONS, CREATIVITY

Creativity-in-Between

November 27, 2020
Sofia, Bulgaria

“Social theories, strategies and prognoses”
Institute of Philosophy and Sociology
Bulgarian Academy of Sciences
Creativity is undoubtedly one of the major characteristics of humankind. It is intrinsically linked to how modern humans emerged in the process of evolution (Hoffecker 2012). The need for radical creativity has never been more pressing today as our society is facing a new wave of “information overload” (the “big data” phenomenon). The unimaginable crisis of the Anthropocene is another challenge which summons humankind in its totality, compels it to overcome the reigning fragmentation of knowledge, and to bridge the gap between the techno-sciences, the humanities and the arts. Only by connecting all sources of knowledge can humanity draw from its full collective capacity for “radical imagination” (Haiven) and manage to reinvent its future. The aim of this conference is to explore how the concept of creativity is changing in the light of the current dramatic shifts. Can we still regard artistic creativity as a purely human expression of internal affective states? Or as an individual effort of a creative genius separated from the collective mind? Or could creativity be seen, instead, as a rather universal capacity for organizing the multiplicity of the world into higher levels of complexity, which demands the creative cooperation of various types of collectives and assemblages? Shouldn’t we as well begin to recognize the active participation of non-human agencies into our own creative process?

Organising Committee:

Nevena Ivanova, Ph.D., Assist. Prof., Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, BAS – Chair

Bogdana Todorova, D.Sc., Prof., Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, BAS

Mihaela Pop, Ph.D., Prof., University of Bucharest, Faculty of Philosophy

Oana Şerban, Ph.D., Assist. Prof., University of Bucharest, Faculty of Philosophy

Abdulkadir Çüçen, Ph.D. Prof., University of Uludag, Department of Philosophy

Damien Charrieras, Ph.D., Assoc. Prof., School of Creative Media, City University of Hong Kong

Website: http://ips-bas.org/social-theories-strategies-and-prognoses/
Time zone of all presentations: Sofia, Bulgaria (UTC+2).

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| 9:50 – 10:00| Break                                                                                     |
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10:15 Constantin Stoenescu. “Magic Realism” in Terry Gilliam’s films and the “iron cage” of rationality  
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10:45 Mihaela Pop. Creativity and comprehension. (The pluralism of rationality in contemporary philosophical theories) |
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Keynote Speakers

Carole ECOFFET, PhD, Associate professor at CNRS and ENSAD (France)

Carole Ecoffet is a senior research fellow at the CNRS at the Institut de Science des Matériaux de Mulhouse where she investigates the interaction between light and materials and micro and nano manufacturing processes. For several years now, she has been interacting with visual artists and exploring their practices in the science laboratories. She is also associated with the Laboratory of the National School of Decorative Arts (ENSADLab). In collaboration with the European Physical Society, she was also involved in a project to promote artistic practices in science education.

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Artist in the lab... encounter of creativities

When an artist arrives at university, and even more when he goes inside research laboratories, artistic creation and production of knowledge meet together. From this encounter, hybrid practices are born, between technology and poetry, between experimental protocols and aesthetic research. Although we are talking about creativity in both fields, the interaction between the artistic intuition and the scientific rationality is not self-evident. The process of production and the final results (works on the one hand, articles on the other) respond to fundamentally different logics. Working with artists leads to a dialogue that goes far beyond the speculative field. It is necessary to design, to make works, to take up technical challenges, and that questions both the practices and the beliefs of researchers. This talk will present experiences of residencies conducted at the University of Haute Alsace and examples of doctoral studies in Art and Science (SACRe) implemented within the PSL (Paris Sciences Lettres).
Dr. Vesselin Petrov holds an M.A. in mathematics (1977), a Ph.D. in philosophy (1989) and a D.Sc. in philosophy (2011). Currently, he is the Director of the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences. His fields of research include process-relational philosophy, metaphysics, ontology, applied ontology, philosophy of mathematics, and philosophy of education. He leads the team of the project “Synergy between process philosophy and elements of AI in the theory of learning” sponsored by the Bulgarian National Science Fund.

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Creativity in Education: The Feedback in the Learning Process

The present paper is devoted to the application of the general metaphysical category of creativity in the field of education in connection with the appearance and application of Artificial Intelligence in education. The aim of the paper is to clarify the Whiteheadian approach to the feedback in the learning process. First of all, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of feedback in general in the world processes. Next step is to clarify what is feedback in the learning process concretely and in our present day situation. And in this regard how feedback works in cases when Artificial Intelligence enters actively in learning processes. Finally, it is necessary to put more light on the question what Whiteheadian approach consists in concerning the feedback in the learning process.
Abstracts

Christina Ambareva, Ph.D., Assoc. Professor, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

AI Creativity and the Anthropocentric Frame of Reference

The presentation will discuss the “anthropocentric frame of reference” (Chollet 2019) and the way human likeliness is applied as a standard for evaluation of AI creativity. The presenter will argue in support of the opinion that evaluation of AI creativity is not simply a matter of admitting AI creative achievements but relies on a social consensus about the conceptual frame of creativity. There will be an attempt to outline some feature of this conceptual frame.

Albena Baeva, artist-researcher and curator, Gallery Gallery

Creative AI

Today’s Artificial intelligent (AI) networks are far from being as creative or intelligent as humans. But do they have the potential to become autonomously creative? The popular narrative is that creative professions will be less affected by the current transformations of the job market in relation to jobs that include repetitive tasks. Is this really valid considering the up-to-date state of involvement of AI in cultural processes? In the era of big data, AI is already involved in the cultural process and influences our choices when used as a tool for organisation and enhancement of content like the recommendation of photos, music and videos (Manovich, 2018) in applications like Spotify, Netflix and Instagram or to automatically beautify selfies and crop images for previews in Twitter. Big tech companies like Google and NVIDIA are showcasing interesting achievements in the sphere of AI creating artistic content. Although these achievements are technically quite convincing, they are undervalued as being just imitations in the context of contemporary art. Visual artists and musicians are already experimenting and creating new works using artificial intelligence and machine learning in different ways. These works highlight the need to revise questions about authorship, meaning in the context of contemporary art and the place of AI in society.
Creative Thoughts based on Cross-Modal Comparisons

Art is the typical domain of creative thoughts. In a series of articles, Diarmuid Costello suggests that artistic creativity is demonstrated in artworks through strong metaphors. Strong metaphors, in contrast to weak metaphors, are such that their meaning is not exhausted by finding a middle term but presuppose rich associative comparisons between the two terms in the metaphor. For instance, “Man is wolf” entails an open list of appropriate comparisons between “man” and “wolf”. Hence, generating and reading metaphors in a strong way is a process which par excellence entails creative thought. If Costello is right, there should be some psychological mechanism underlying these aesthetic comparisons. In my talk, I refer to the literature on cross-modal congruences, in particular to the study of Lawrence Marks in his book “The Unity of the Senses”. I claim that the psychological phenomenon of cross-modal congruence plays a determining role in our creative thoughts. The phenomenon can serve as a basis for a mathematical model of creativity which I will sketch at the end of my talk.

On Creativity and the Most Beautiful Passion

The report aims to pay aesthetic and axiological tribute to Charles Fourier’s conception of the so-called attraction passionelle – the basic drive of social development, and, in particular, of the composite passion, “the most beautiful of the twelve passions, the one which enhances the value of all the others.” The exposition will consecutively focus on Herbert Marcuse’s note in Eros and Civilization on the transformation of labour into pleasure as the central idea of Fourier’s socialist utopia; on Fourier’s insisting that only the composite passions, not the simple, are human trait; and, respectively, on analysing beyond Fourier and Marcuse the role and significance of the composite passion – or, the ‘pure human passion’, as the base of creativity in contemporary culture of post-/trans-/alter-human art, science and technology. Last but not least, the exposition will pay attention to how this ‘pure human passion’ as the core of creativity could be related to the emotional intelligence–artificial intelligence (EI vs. AI) opposition in contemporary age.
Barad and Whitehead: Emergence | Relations | Processes

The notion of emergence can be understood from the vantage point of relational ontologies or processual ontologies. We will comment the perspectives of Karen Barad and Alfred North Whitehead. We will especially evaluate the notion of performance in Barad’s writings and the notion of process developed by Whitehead. We will discuss the implications of these complementary and contrasting views for the description of diverse situated forms of analogue and digital creativity.

The interrelation between the philosophy for children (P4C) and creative thinking

The aim is not to teach children the history of philosophy in the understanding of philosophy for children. It is to teach them to think, starting from philosophical concepts. In this way, it is aimed to develop high-level skills in children such as questioning, research, understanding and interpreting the information, establishing meaningful relationships between information, creating original ideas and problem solving. In many countries of the world, models of philosophizing with children have been developed and systematic application attempts have been made and successful results have been obtained. According to Matthew Lipman, these skills should be developed at a very young age with the model of philosophy for children. So our aim is to show and explore how creative thinking, which is one of the achievement in this presentation. Because If Lipman is right, children participating in these activities will start to gain creative thinking skills from an early age, and the child will use this acquisition in other information acquisition processes in advanced ages. This presentation aims to reveal the interrelation between P4C and creative thinking activity. Therefore, firstly P4C will be explained, then creative thinking and the interrelation between the two will be revealed in conclusion.
Neli Dobreva, Ph.D., Assoc. Professor, École des Arts de la Sorbonne, University Paris 1 Panthéon Sorbonne

**The Technical Knowledge as Indistinction between Art and Sciences Creative Imagination**

In this talk I would like to stress on the unavoidable continuum between nature and culture through the classical Hegelian problem of the Mind, which is always looking for itself, i.e. its own development, and the imaginative creativity of Arts using the Mind itself. I will argue that contrary to Hegel’s claim that Art is something which has been overcome and belongs to the past, Art is still creating forms of life and is the very activity that transforms human life through technical invention and creative imagination. In that sense Art is encountering the Hegelian thought as a radical error contradicting his thesis that Art could not and should not imitate Nature. On the contrary, I will claim, we need artistic involvement with Nature to stimulate technical and scientific innovation in a direction, which will allow us to face the challenges of the Anthropocene and to resolve its urgent ecological, political and social problems. We need radical creative imagination for thinking about our human future. Although creativity is undoubtedly present in every human endeavour, the critical perspective of Artistic creative imagination is especially crucial in regard to the recent developments of cutting-edge technologies (such as artificial intelligence, nanotechnology and biotechnology) and the emergent technoscientific experiments with all kinds of hybrid natures. Therefore, I am suggesting to explore some contemporary art-science practices and hybrid forms of creative imagination, which by repositioning our interaction with Nature, open new narratives in the scientific discourse about natural systems and their manipulation.

Nevena Ivanova, Ph.D., Assist. Professor, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

**The Systemic Nature of Algorithmic Creativity**

The focus of computer scientists is to systematise, formalise, and thus automatise what has once been deemed an unexplainable almost mysterious capacity of some exceptional individuals to generate new ideas and artistic masterpieces. In their attempts to mathematize creative behaviour AI researchers reduce creativity to specific processes, algorithms and knowledge structures. At stake here is to program the least programmable – the freedom to deviate from predetermined rules and past behaviour – so that machines could produce outputs that are novel, surprising and generate unexpected value, all these judged by human criteria.

Contrary to the conventional understanding of computer science which sees machine-based creativity as automated mimicry of human-level creativity, this talk will switch the focus to question whether the concept of algorithmic creativity points to the emergence of a new form of algorithmic logos, creating systemic conditions for structural transformation of the world, reconfiguring the bonds between space-time, objects and actions in a new form of worldmaking. It is a new algorithmic governmentality operating beneath the surface, which Benjamin Bratton termed ‘the stack’ – a megastructure of multiple layers of systemic organisation stretching at a planetary scale, which follows the contingencies of its own internal logic. In order to understand the principle novelty computation might bring into the world, we have to inquire first into the nature of technics and its relation to creativity.
Ana Negoită, Ph.D., Associate Lector, Centre for Excellency in Image Studies (CESI), University of Bucharest

Methodologies of Creativity in Conceptual Art

How we define a core meaning of creativity inside the artistic process and the work of art? In most of the cases the basic sense of creativity is linked with certain artistic features, shown as a mandatory attribute for what we call the "fine art production". One of the most important art and thinking movements able expose the maximum of this unaccountable and puzzled relation between art/ artists and creativity is conceptual art. Conceptual art proposed a "dematerialization" of art by removing the need for objects, it stopped analyzing the (final) work of art as a material result of the artistic process. There are categories of conceptual artists which saw conceptual art as a radical break with formalism and modernism. Following these paradigms, conceptual art stages a whole series of artistic practices and methodologies, where the core element focuses on creativity, expressing the countless, heterogenous nuances of the term itself. Involved, body art, performances, installations, video & sound, language and text as inner media elements of "performing, conceptual art "radicalized" the idea of creativity.

For example, an important chapter of the first phases of conceptual art, was language, seen as a central concern for the first wave of conceptual artists of the 1960s through the 1970s. Although, the utilization of text in art was not used in the literary sense or purpose, in the first stages, the language/ text was used to produce art exclusively linguistic, and this is a major swift from the previews category of artists, where language was presented as one kind of visual elements alongside others being subordinated to the main composition. "In conceptual art the idea or concept is the most important aspect of the work. When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes a machine that makes the art. " (Sol LeWitt "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art", 1967)

Blagovesta Nikolova, Ph.D., Assist. Professor, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences

Creativity and multi-perspective knowledge encounters

One of the main aspects of the European research and innovation policy is fostering interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary collaborations in order to ensure a variety of epistemic perspectives in coming up with comprehensive and more acceptable solutions to pre-defined societal challenges. Creativity is deemed crucial resource in activating not only a productive dialogue between academic disciplines but also in engaging representatives of the public with the science and technology realm in a meaningful way. The current presentation will attempt at conceiving the notion of creativity in the light of the specifics of those knowledge-production processes. This will allow us to lay the groundwork for discussing it as a recent construct that comes as a conceptual and practical response to certain deficiencies in our ability to grasp and cope with what we perceive to be a complex, uncertain and ethically ambiguous "world".
Poullo Oconne, artist-researcher, Meta-I-Tale

**Genealogy of creativity in the context of existential discourse**

The main object of this report is to look for a possible genealogical model of technology derived from a general pluralistic-indeterminate framework. We will take the concept of technology out of its narrow modern context and understand it in the more general sense of the ancient Greek concept of τέχνη, which designates both art and technology as the main products of human creativity since the dawn of history. Our main approach to the conceptualization of the genealogy of τέχνη will be guided by what we call the method of ‘existential discourse’, which unites the idea of a common language based on the notion of discourse (as the term was introduced by Foucault) and the emerging existential analysis following the Heidegger-Binswanger line. By playing out different navigation scenarios in a general pluralistic-indeterminate framework we will try to trace a dynamic mapping of τέχνη and try to demonstrate some fundamental criteria and parameters of creativity in its emergence, thus avoiding fixated definitions of a general concept of creativity.

Mihaela Pop, Ph.D., Professor, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Bucharest

**Creativity and Comprehension (The pluralism of rationality in contemporary philosophical theories)**

This paper aims at presenting a comprehensive image of the philosophical activity of a Romanian Professor, Alexander Boboc. He manifested a deep interest for the new trends in philosophical research being preoccupied especially on the “pluralism of human rationality”. His purpose was to prove, using contemporary theories, the necessity to accept the pluralism as mentality in order to understand specific rationalities for humanistic disciplines as models of analysis. Hermeneutics, phenomenology, philosophy of language are some of the domains where the positivist and scientist supremacy was avoided during the last decades of the 20th century making possible a new type of analysis, based on comprehension and interpretation which pointed out to the role played by subjectivity in such ways of understanding the human creativity. Hermeneutics and phenomenology seem to be the main styles of thinking in order to bring together the “experiences of truth” in science, art, history and philosophy. They assure a cognitive model for an active participation to the human creativity. In this way Professor Boboc unveils the process of the development of a new critic of reason and of new ways of rationality understanding and application. We shall try to point out the major thematic researches achieved by Professor Boboc as an expression of comprehension and creativity in philosophy.
Andreea Stoicescu, Ph.D. Candidate, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Bucharest & National University of Music of Bucharest

The Principle of Creativity in Alfred North Whitehead’s Process Philosophy: A Short Exposition with an Application to Music Ontology

First of all, this presentation will be a brief introduction to the speculative scheme developed by Alfred North Whitehead in the treatise Process and Reality (1929) focusing on the metaphysical role of the Principle of Creativity in linkage with the idea of ‘process’. Secondly, I will exemplify the functioning of this speculative philosophy by applying it to the contemporary debate concerning the ontological status of the musical work. Whitehead’s approach of creativity and metaphysics is relevant, mainly, from two points of view: on the one hand, he is one of the few philosophers who granted a major significance to the concept of ‘creativity’, namely that of being the ‘substantial activity’ of reality; on the other hand, his philosophy is generous regarding the width of issues, important for contemporary society, that can be analysed within his conceptual architecture: from problems of ecology, evolutionary patterns of becoming and the development of new categories of thought for contemporary physics, to problems of theology and of art ontology. These characteristics of Whitehead’s philosophy are pointing to the fact that ‘creativity’ gains within this thought a profound, complex-structured, meaning. My thesis will be that, in discussing music ontology, such ‘cosmological’ categories are fully operative in shifting our way of thinking toward a more adequate understanding of the nature of music. This approach is also consonant with the phenomenological perspective upon art and with results from the analytical type of research, such as that of Jerrold Levinson or Roger Scruton.

Oana Șerban, Ph.D., Teaching Assistant, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Bucharest

How does creativity provided by the cultural imaginary of hospitals contribute to the development of biopolitical strategies for securing life and health in times of epidemic?

This paper tackles the potential of the architectural and aesthetic trajectories that compose the cultural imaginary of hospitals, understood as a complementary dimension of the medical protocols and practices developed by such institutions, to shape biopolitical strategies for securing life and health in times of epidemic. Nowadays, when the coronavirus showed the most vulnerable aspects of our European medical systems, we have confronted the need to readjust the ergonomic capital of hospitals in order to satisfy the protocols of securing patients and preventing the spread of SARS-CIV-19, as well of progressively developing enclosed parts for treating patients confirmed with such a diagnosis. Some hospitals have been completely suspended their medical protocol related to a certain medical speciality and have converted entirely to COVID units. In these cases, medical units that architecturally embrace the structure of former monasteries, caserns and psychiatric asylums proved to be more efficient in satisfying medical standards of isolation. Therefore, my aim is to explore the potential of tangible and intangible elements of cultural heritage developed by European hospitals homologated as monuments, to enhance and invest creativity in biopolitical strategies for securing life, welfare and health in times of epidemic.


**Elena Tsvetkova, Ph.D., Postdoctoral Fellow, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences**

**Language creativity as a soft skill**

The paper that I am proposing researches the idea that everyday language creativity can be viewed as a soft skill in a sense that creativity is actually serving a pragmatic purpose to create an effect or to establish rapport. In such cases creativity is best understood as a purposeful violation of Grice’s manner maxim in order to create a particular perlocutionary effect. The speech act itself and some examples of implicatures will be considered as instances of everyday language creativity in effort to show that using purposefully positive language or metaphors for example leads to better understanding and acceptance of the message a speaker is trying to convey, than when something is said in a negative manner, ironically, or just matter-of-factly. In this context creativity is viewed as a property of all people, and as an aspect of a dialogue in which social and cultural conventions play an important role.

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**Constantin Stoinescu, Ph.D., Professor, Faculty of Philosophy, University of Bucharest**

**“Magic Realism” in Terry Gilliam’s films and the “iron cage” of rationality**

The aim of this paper is to argue that the so-called “iron cage” of rationality is challenged by the so called “Magic Realism” used in different arts as a philosophical background of creativity. We were right to talk about a Natural Ontological Attitude which is well expressed by the presuppositions of Scientific Realism and is contained in the idea that there is a real world which is independent from our mind and that this real world is outside us. I think that modernity developed this philosophical approach in the form of an “iron cage of rationality”, an expression used by Max Weber and Talcott Parsons, which isn’t adequate as an explanation of creativity. I suggest that we may also talk about “Magic Realism” and that the movies made by Terry Gilliam are the best cases for this way of thinking about how are we able to make art and to be creative minds.