

ARTELEKU
SEMINAR
(conferences and workshop)

Y+Y+Y
the art and sciences of complexity

For several decades now (we could almost say from the 1920s) the so-called sciences of complexity have been occupying an important space in various scientific disciplines. Cybernetics, quantum physics, ecology, mathematics, cognitive sciences, engineering, molecular biology, psychology, geology, information and communication sciences, sociology and many other fields of knowledge have begun to incorporate various theories to produce important changes in their ways of understanding the world. Phenomena like self-organisation, emergencies, fractality, networks, collective intelligence, dissipative structures, distorted hierarchies, etc. and the theories that attempt to decipher them provide new tools for science and epistemology in what some people already present as a change of paradigm in Kuhnian terms.

Art, in spite of certain appearances and the efforts by certain “purists”, has always constituted a place of contamination and, of course, it has never been alien to scientific and technical knowledge. However, the specificity of art should be maintained, and not because it is a matter of beliefs (in its “autonomy”) but because it is a form of approaching reality that allows it to incorporate any type of knowledge or experience without that necessarily ending up as an irreversible, or even mortal, perturbation of its peculiar tasks.

Artistic practices have a capacity of accepting perturbations similar to that of more complex vital phenomena; that is to say, it can assume the input of variables from the context without this meaning the extinction of its specificity, as it only needs to increase its capacity of absorption and reorganisation. Art is an open system and, like science, it also considers the question “what would happen if ...?” It is just a matter of the specificity of its methodologies producing different experiences. That is why the possibilities of comprehension opened by the sciences of complexity, for the time being, are imponderables for the future of art although that future begins to be visible in close relationship to such possibilities.

Once we started to deal with the hazards, and we let them come into our lives as allies, we started to work with them to understand phenomena that used to look quite inextricable. The world is now (and now we know) much more multiple, uncertain and hazardous than what we until recently pretended it to be. Our versions of the world multiply themselves in a map that is ever more difficult to articulate, but such difficulties become more exciting than the Unitarian versions which we had given ourselves beforehand. Risks of dissolution in attitudes such as “all goes” certainly exist, risks of generalised confusion frighten our comfortable minds, risks of interested manipulation that support themselves on flexible and media-oriented capitalism started to show up long

ago, but artistic and scientific thinking have never gone backwards when confronted to challenges that in principle were indomitable.

In ARTELEKU, throughout the week of workshops and conferences, we are going to deal critically with such matters. Artists, epistemologists and scientists from various disciplines will have the opportunity to explain the tasks in which they are immersed and the problems they find in being understood by the world -through their works or in the study and elaboration of the theories which attempt to elude simplified versions and visions which have been given to us up to now -.

And we are going to propose questions such as ...

What is self-organisation? Is there a collective intelligence? // What are the real possibilities that are visible in the horizon for artificial life? And for artificial intelligence? // up to what point do sciences of complexity facilitate new forms of hypercontrol and hypergovernment of society? // are we at last being presented with a post-humanist future? What is it going to consist of? // -is it once again possible to reunite art, science and philosophy under the paradigm of complexity? // how does knowledge imported from sciences of complexity affect the development of artistic production? Is it but "just another movement" or will it impregnated all the productions just like a new *zeitgeist*? Is this already happening? // has art always constituted a model of complexity? And works of art? // -do the new computational technologies constitute a new rapprochement between art and science? // or is the new technology the only way for art to approach the phenomena and theories of complexity? Are there any other possibilities? // is computer programming the future for artists? // ...

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SEMINAR FORMAT

The seminar will take place between 28th June and 4th July 2009 in ARTELEKU. This seminar has an exchange forum, introductory sessions, six conferences and a workshop in which to develop proposals. Only the forum and the conferences will be open to the general public. The introductory sessions and the workshop is restricted to those people who are interested and who have carried out the corresponding inscriptions (there is a limit of 15-20 people).

During the month of June there will be a forum of communication open in the Internet for all those people interested in this seminar and in it there will be an exchange of information on the matters to work on. Those inscribed in the workshop will have the chance to attend to the general introductory session and to those on mathematics, physics and biology on the 28th, 29th (morning and afternoon) and to the technological introductory sessions on 1st, 2nd and 3rd July (mornings only). The conferences will take place on 1st, 2nd and 3rd July in the afternoons. And on 1st, 2nd and 3rd July there will be a workshop in the mornings which will culminate on 4th July during the whole of the day with a common session in which the initiatives proposed will be shared by the participants, after which there will be one final critical session.

OPEN CONFERENCES:

1st July at 5 pm Joaquín Ivars. At 7 pm Juan Luis Moraza.
2nd July at 5 pm J. J. Merelo. At 7 pm Christa Sommerer.
3rd July at 5 pm Federico Morán. At 7 pm Álvaro Moreno.

"Attendance to this workshop can be authenticated in the form of 1 free-choice credit in the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU)"

More information: www.arteleku.net or arteleku@gipuzkoa.net