

Research Institute of Molecular Pathology

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Meetings of Minds - a Dialogue between Art and Science

Film-evening at the mdw - University of Music and Applied Arts Vienna

An EU-project on cell division inspired artists to create extraordinary works of art that went on display in Rome, London and Heidelberg. British film-maker Natasha Serlin accompanied the creative process and turned it into the documentary 'Meetings of Minds'. The film will be shown at the mdw - University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna on 30 April in the presence of some of the artists and scientists involved.

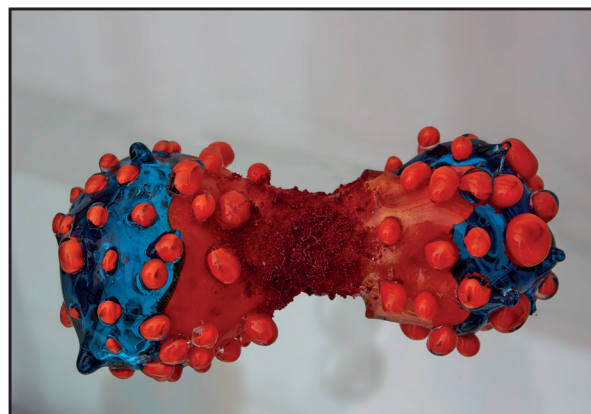
The EU-project MitoSys started five years ago and will draw to an end in the summer of 2015. Twelve partners from six European countries worked on elucidating mechanisms of cell division (mitosis). Jan-Michael Peters, scientific director of the Research Institute of Molecular Pathology (IMP) in Vienna coordinated the Project. His aim to add a different perspective to the basic research approach was met by introducing artists of various disciplines to the research project.

'I was curious to find out to what degree scientists and artist are driven by the same motivation to understand and explore the world, and what role creativity and imagination have in the different approaches', says Jan-Michael Peters.

Artists accompany the scientific process

The accompanying art project encouraged a dialog between scientists and artists. Four cell biologists teamed up with four artists or pairs of artists and learned about each other's ideas and concepts. This exchange resulted in a series of stunning pieces of art that were shown in Rome, London and Heidelberg. The exhibition 'Lens on Life' was curated by Marina Wallace, professor at the University of the Arts in London and director of Artakt.

The documentary 'Meetings of Minds' is a poetic testimony to the creative process. The film shows how Jan-Michael Peters of the IMP and his colleagues Kim Nasymth (University of Oxford), Melina Schuh (MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Cambridge) and Tony Hyman (Max Planck Institute for Cell Biology and Genetics, Dresden) introduce their artist partners into the world of cells and how these are studied by sophisticated techniques in the laboratory. Natasha Serlin and her film crew from the Bespoke Film Company (London) then followed the artists into their studios to see how they used their impressions of cells in their own artwork. Heather Ackroyd and Dan Harvey in England, well known for their art composed of biological materials like grass and bones, developed new drawing and animation techniques to create a video inspired by the mitotic process. Paris based artist Lucy Orta, who like Ackroyd and Harvey has a long-standing interest in biological and environmental questions, traveled with her scientist partner Tony Hyman to Murano in the lagoon of Venice. There she created a series of glass objects representing different types of cells, normal cells, dividing cells, cancerous cells. Glass is also one of Rob Kessler's favorite materials. Working in London, he created objects inspired by Melina Schuh's studies on human oocytes, the one cell type that we are all ultimately derived from. A very different approach was taken by choreographer Shobana Jeyasingh, also based in London. She interpreted Kim Nasymth's description of the chromosome segregation process by the expressive means of contemporary dance.



Lucy + Jorge Orta, Cells, 2014
EMBL Photolab

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The one hour documentary ‚Meetings of Minds‘ will be screened this week at the mdw - University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna. The event was jointly organised by the mdw and the IMP. Several of the artists and scientists will be present: Dan Harvey, Rob Kessler, Marina Wallace, and Jan-Michael Peters will talk about their experiences and answer questions from the audience. Radio FM4-moderator John Megill will lead through the evening.

„Meetings of Minds“

30 April, 2015, 5.30 p.m.
mdw – Joseph Haydn Saal
Anton-von-Webern-Platz 1
1030 Vienna

Media Representatives are welcome to attend the event.

Illustrations can be downloaded from the IMP website:
www.imp.ac.at/pressefotos-meetingsofminds

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