

A R T S · A T · C E R N

'Art and Life Sciences. SymbioticA as artistic research lab'
A conversation with Oron Catts and Ionat Zurr
presented by Mónica Bello

Tuesday 8 October, 2019
At 17.30 at CERN Main Auditorium



SymbioticA is an artistic research centre at the University of Western Australia's School of Anatomy and Human Biology. The lab looks at biology and life sciences from an artistic point of view and has been used to research, develop and produce a number of artistic projects, specially link to the field of bioart. SymbioticA offers a new means of artistic inquiry where artists actively use the tools and technologies of science, not just to comment about them but also to explore their possibilities.

In this conversation Catts & Zurr will reflect and share their experience of running an interdisciplinary program for two decades; the complex and rich relations between artistic and scientific research; the projects that emerged and their effects on the larger community and industry. They will also give an overview on some of their artistic practice with the hope to be able to find new synergies between cellular life and particle physics; for example the use of magnets. In *Crossing Kingdoms* artwork they employ nano-magnets to fuse together mammalian and yeast cells and they are looking forward to see the totally different scale of the LHC magnets.

Oron Catts and Ionat Zurr are artists/researchers founders of the internationally renowned Tissue Culture & Art Project in 1996 which lead to the establishment of SymbioticA Laboratory in 2000. Catts is the Co-Founder and Director of SymbioticA: the Centre of Excellence in Biological Arts, School of Human Sciences at the University of Western Australia (UWA) and was a Professor of Contestable Design at the Royal College for the Arts UK. Dr Ionat Zurr is a researcher and lecturer at the School of Design UWA and SymbioticA's academic co-ordinator. Catts & Zurr's interest is Life, more specifically the shifting relations and perceptions of life in the light of new knowledge and its applications. Often working in collaboration with other artists and scientists, they have developed a body of work that speaks volumes about the need for new cultural articulations of evolving concepts of life. Catts & Zurr ideas and projects reach beyond the confines of art; their work is often cited as inspiration to diverse areas such as new materials, textiles, design, architecture, ethics, fiction, and food.

<http://www.symbiotica.uwa.edu.au/>
<https://tcaproject.net/>