



“The Creative Gesture” International and Interdisciplinary Symposium

University of Molise

28-30 May, 2024

The international and interdisciplinary symposium *The Creative Gesture* represents one of the concluding events of the “MyExperience Molise” project, aimed at the enhancement/communication of the contents related to the archaeological excavations that the University of Molise is conducting at Agnone, Pesche, Sant’Elia a Pianisi and San Giuliano del Sannio.

The conference will take place on **May 28-30, 2024** at the University of Molise, Campobasso (Italy).

The main goals of the conference are:

- Propose an interdisciplinary discussion, through plenary sessions, on: *Creativity, Interdisciplinarity, Creative Professions*;
- Promote academic discussion among faculty and young researchers through parallel sessions;
- Activate Living Labs for university students and the population;
- Enhance the territory of Molise and its traditions through guided tours to the Archaeological sites.
- Organize an evening event open to the public to disseminate scientific results.

Creativity, the leitmotif of the “MyExperience Molise” project, is today an indispensable skill in an increasingly complex society. It is new ideas that drive progress, social change and all forms of communication nowadays.

Creativity is now a “hotspot,” an important agenda appointment: the phenomenon is unequivocally attested to by the growth of creative consulting agencies and departments for creativity in organizations, by the surge of books on “how to do it,” by the expansion of research on the subject, by the establishment of institutes for creativity and by its applications in the organizational field. Being creative today pays off. It remains true, however, that the value of the creative attitude, now back to being esteemed and sought after, goes far beyond the immediate usefulness of its instrumental applications. Creativity is a dynamic that has to do with the very expression of human action, with humanity’s identity, its values, and social and civil achievements. It, therefore, has to do with social relations and, in particular, with relationships that insist on the human dimension of interactions, particularly for those on which we need to rely.

Between 1957 and 1958, at Michigan State University, several important interdisciplinary symposia were held. These led to the successful publication of 1959 *Creativity and its Cultivation*: psychologists, psychoanalysts, anthropologists, pedagogists, and communicationists tried to take

stock of the situation of the studies on the subject, not sparing each other very different or even opposing perspectives. Anthropologist Margaret Mead, to clarify her concept of creativity, used this expression: “I will use the term creativity to indicate the process that takes place in the individual, of which it can be said that he has carried out a creative act if he does, invents, thinks something that is new to him” (Mead 1959).

What is more critical as an apodictic statement, or at least darker, is the clarification “to him.” On the one hand, in this way, the (sacrosanct) emphasis is placed on the fact that novelty must be evaluated by those who make a (creative) personal experience; on the other hand, it becomes difficult to say that the very possibility of making a creative experience and judgment can mature in solitude. Many interpersonal relationships are involved in the creative experience, starting from a “subjective” perspective, and moving on to an “inter-subjective” one.

In this way, every innovation, every change is the result of organism-environment interaction: thus, in a sense, “all creativity is an emergent process that involves a social group of individuals engaged in complex, unpredictable interactions” (Sawyer 2003). A relational perspective of creativity opens up the field of research to a new complexity, without which approaches are inevitably isolated and ineffective in relation to their potential: it is not just a matter today of multiplying disciplinary research perspectives but rather of making them interact.

A first step towards a more precise relational approach comes from the notion of “gesture” that some authors from different disciplines have addressed in the late years, using a notion already present in linguistics, philosophy, philosophy of mathematics, and sociology but transforming its meaning. “Gesture” can be a particular body motion but also an event that includes specific moves, a mathematical drawing, a scientific experiment, or an artistic performance. Beyond any specific definition, the notion of gesture can cover the idea of a particular action that has creativity among its distinctive characteristics.

The International Symposium *The Creative Gesture* intends to establish an up-to-date point in the research devoted to creativity almost 70 years after the American one. To this end, it envisages the presence of interdisciplinary round tables (plenary sessions) alternating with specific sections for the different disciplines involved (parallel sessions), such as Anthropology, Archaeology, Arts and Literature, Cognitive Science, AI Engineering/Architecture, Law, Pedagogy, Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, and Creative professions.

More specifically, as shown in the overall structure program (Fig. 1), it will include:

- 5 interdisciplinary roundtables (plenary sessions)
- 3 thematic sessions for faculty and young researchers within ten years of PhD (parallel sessions)
- Living Labs for students
- 1 guided tour at Archaeological sites
- an evening event/performance.

The opening and closing sessions will be the two interdisciplinary roundtables devoted to Creativity. Interdisciplinarity, both as a method and as an object of study, will be focused on in a third roundtable; a fourth roundtable will host creativity professionals to discuss *Creative Professions*. Parallel disciplinary sessions foster academic disciplinary discussion among faculty and young researchers. Expert faculty of each discipline will contribute to the parallel disciplinary sessions upon invitation. As for the two sessions dedicated to young researchers, an international call for papers will be opened, and ad hoc Scientific Committees will select abstracts for each discipline. The Committees will be composed of Italian faculty in collaboration with international faculty. Creative workshops (Living Labs) for undergraduates will be organized in parallel with the disciplinary sessions and run by expert faculty in different research domains.

Two guided tours at some of the four excavation sites (Agnone, Pesche, Sant'Elia a Pianisi, San Giuliano del Sannio) supported by the MyExperience Molise Apps will be fundamental to the program. Finally, an evening event/show is open to the public to disseminate scientific results.

Overall program structure (Fig. 1):

	Tuesday 28 May 2024	Wednesday 29 May 2024	Thursday 30 May 2024
9:00am-11:00am	Plenary session The Creative Gesture Interdisciplinary: 3 speakers	Living Labs / Parallel sessions 4 speakers (1 faculty/3 researchers)	Parallel sessions 4 speakers (1 faculty/3 researchers)
11:00am-11:15am	Coffee break	Coffee break	Coffee break
11:15am-1:15pm	Parallel sessions 4 speakers (1 faculty/3 researchers)	Plenary session Multi/inter/trans-disciplinary Interdisciplinary: 3 speakers	Plenary session Creative Professions 4 speakers
1:15pm-2:30pm	Lunch on your own	Lunch on your own	Lunch on your own
2:30pm-4:15pm	Living Labs	Visit to University of Molise Archaeological Sites	Living Labs
4:15pm-4:30pm	Coffee break		Coffee break
4:30pm-6:30pm	Plenary session Creative Professions 4 speakers		Plenary session The Creative Gesture Interdisciplinary: 3 speakers
8:00pm-10:00pm	Social Dinner	Social Dinner	Social Dinner

Given the variety of audiences, the Conference foresees the use of the English and Italian languages according to the following scheme:

- Plenary sessions: in English or Italian with simultaneous translation via headphones.
- Parallel sessions: English language.
- Living Labs: Italian and/or English language with translators in the classroom.
- Site Visits: English language.
- Event: English and Italian Language with translation on screens.

Scientific Committee (*in progress*)

Pier Paolo Bellini Università degli studi del Molise
 Michela Bella Università degli studi del Molise
 Giovanni Maddalena Università degli studi del Molise
 Vlad Glaveanu DCU, Dublino
 Noel Fitzpatrick TU, Dublino
 Chiara Leva TU, Dublino

Organizing Committee

Rebeca Andreina Papa Università degli studi del Molise
 Marco Stefano Birtolo Università degli studi del Molise
 Simone Bernardi della Rosa Università degli studi del Molise
 Alessandro Mauro Università degli studi del Molise

For further information: cor@unimol.it