

The KREYON-day: Art, Science and Creativity

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On the 13th and 14th of September, Andreas Roepstorff (IMC), Sebastian Wallot (IMC), and Jacob Sherson (AU Department of Physics and Astronomy) have been to the First International KREYON-day – a kickoff event, marking the beginning of the [KREYON-research project](#), a 3-year project headed by [Vittorio Loreto](#) at La Sapienza-University of Rome, in which the Interacting Minds Center participates. The aim of the project is to inquire into the nature of creativity: How can creativity be defined? How do creative processes evolve, and what is their relation to innovation (mental, social, technological, economical)?



Building site at the entrance of the exhibition during the course of the day.

The kickoff event was an interesting, novel, and energetic mixture of a public art event, and a scientific conference, that invited people – children and adults alike – to learn about science, explore different exhibits, or simply enjoy being creative together.



Andreas Roepstorff presenting at the KREYON-day.

The event blended a talk series on the nature of creativity – where [Andreas Roepstorff](#) presented recent research done at the IMC on meaning making, joint action and cooperation, and [Jacob Sherson](#) presented work on how do crowd science in quantum physics – with interactive activities that allowed visitors to

learn about mathematics and physics, explore music and text composition, and work together on joint Lego building projects.



Building sites of the two collectively build Lego sculptures that became interpreted as “kaos” (top row) and “dittatura” (bottom row).

One of the projects prompted participants to express concepts in terms of Lego-Brick representations on small plates. Another project allowed participants to collectively build two Lego-sculptures in free cooperation during the whole day. Participants could freely start on two large empty squares to either build with colored or white Lego bricks, and as visitors flowed through the exhibition during the day, people left building contributions on those squares that were taken up and became re-interpreted by later visitor during the course of the day. The results were surprising with regard to what the project team expected beforehand – both in terms of the end products, which looked like cities but became interpreted as “kaos” (“chaos”) and “dittatura” (“dictatorship”) respectively, but also with regard to the ways in which people interacted to build them: While everyone had expected a rather close collaboration between participants at the building sites, it turned out that most participants rather preferred to build or add structures alone, so that collaboration became much more mediated by the material Lego structures and less so by direct social engagement.



Visitors playing with Lego in the hallway (left) and visitor-made sculptures (right).

As an even greater surprise came the way in which visitors became actors, taking ownership of the exhibition space for leisurely playing and interacting in ways that no one had anticipated, and that led to results that no one had planned-in, for example families and children taking Lego-bricks from the exhibition sites and spreading out all over the exhibition area to build and play together in small groups. Apart from being a successful and fun public event, the KREYON-day also highlighted the enormous ambition of the underlying research project to come to grips with the uniqueness and surprises that are in store when one tries to tackle creativity seriously, that is, as the kind of thing that people do in their everyday lives.