

**Heinz von Foerster Lecture '17**

# **Paul Pangaro**

## **Designing Our World Cybernetics as Conversation for Action**

Dienstag, 20. Juni 2017  
19:00 Uhr

Hauptgebäude der Universität Wien  
Hörsaal 41  
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**heinz von foerster  
gesellschaft** am Institut für Zeitgeschichte  
Altes AKH, Spitalgasse 2-4  
A-1090 Wien

**in Kooperation  
mit dem  
Institut für Zeitgeschichte der Universität Wien**

To “design our world” has been the goal of every human generation since the first conversations for design occurred “between mind and hand” at the dawn of our species.

This goal has enticed generations of cyberneticians from Heinz von Foerster, to Gordon Pask, Stafford Beer, Francisco Varela and Humberto Maturana, to Ranulph Glanville, at the least. They showed how the processes and epistemology of cybernetics impelled “actions for designing” that are ethical as well as effective. Their work charts a course toward a methodology of design practice that is grounded in formalisms of variety and feedback, language and conversation, intention with action.

From their foundations, this lecture expounds cybernetics as design — that is, learning by constructing together. This comprises design as conversation and design for conversation — that is, cybernetics as conversation for action.

Paul Pangaro

Paul Pangaro’s career spans research, consulting, startups, and education. He relocated to Detroit in 2015 to become Chair of the MFA Interaction Design at the College for Creative Studies. He has taught systems and cybernetics for design at School for Visual Arts, New York, and at Stanford University in Terry Winograd’s Human-Computer Interface program. His most recent startup is General Cybernetics, dedicated to new ways of reading and writing in digital media based on Gordon Pask’s Conversation Theory. He has worked with and within startups in New York and Silicon Valley, in product and technology roles. His consulting clients include Du Pont, Nokia, Samsung, Instituto Itaú Cultural (São Paulo), Ogilvy & Mather, Intellectual Ventures, and PoetryFoundation.org. He has lectured in São Paulo, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Linz, and in cities in the US. His writing explicates “designing for conversation” from his research and his implementations of software and organizational processes. He was awarded a B.S. in Computer Science/Humanities from MIT and was hired by Nicholas Negroponte onto the research staff of the MIT Architecture Machine Group, which morphed into the MIT Media Lab. With Gordon Pask as his advisor, he was awarded a Ph.D. in cybernetics from Brunel University in the UK.

Impressum:

Herausgeber und Medieninhaber: heinz von foerster gesellschaft  
am Institut für Zeitgeschichte, A-1090 Wien, Spitalgasse 2-4.

Redaktion und für den Inhalt verantwortlich:

Dr. Albert Müller

Grafik: Werner Korn



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