

Mystery and Wonder, Play and Discovery: Mathematics and Art as Creative Activities

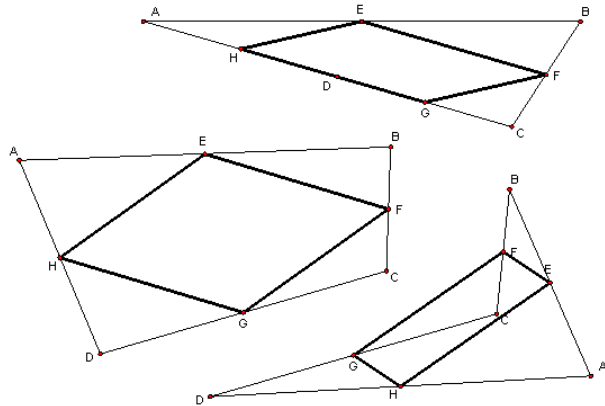
LKL Maths-Art discussion event
Tuesday 8 January,
6.00 – 7.30pm
London Knowledge Lab, WC1N 3QS

This month our event will take the form of an open discussion rather than a long seminar presentation. We will have several short presentations by mathematicians and artists at the start to motivate the discussion.

The theme of the discussion is to consider mathematics and art as creative activities in imagined spaces: What are the motivations which drive individuals to do mathematics or art? What characterises an interesting starting point -- a "problem", as mathematicians tend to say -- for work in mathematics or art? Interesting explorations often begin with a mystery: why does a certain configuration of elements behave as it does?

Exploration leads from mystery to insight and understanding, but good problems never lose their capacity to cause wonder.

What are the benefits for mathematicians and artists of understanding each other's ways of working and thinking? There is a stock answer which denies anything in common: mathematical work is all terribly logical and constrained, whereas artists can just be sensual and unconstrained with their paint or whatever. But mathematical creation requires a measure of sensuality and lack of constraint, and artistic creation cannot function without the use of constraints and systems (rules) to generate, for example, the initial marks on the paper, and how they may be re-worked and refined. So there is a middle ground where the insights are worth exploring.



All welcome. No registration or ticket required, but an email to lkl.maths.art@gmail.com is appreciated to assist with planning.

LKL Maths-Art seminar series

Website and archive: www.lkl.ac.uk/events/maths-art

This seminar is part of a regular series of maths-art seminars held at the London Knowledge Lab, usually on the second Tuesday of each month during term times. To receive email announcements about events, subscribe to the mailing list at www.dcs.bbk.ac.uk/mailman/listinfo/lkl-maths-art.

We propose these seminars as explorations of the connections between "mathematics" and "art", where both terms are understood broadly: art implies visual art (painting, drawing, sculpture, computer graphics, video), architecture, music, textile art, literature/poetry (and others), and mathematics implies both mathematics as a discipline and the related disciplines in science and engineering for which mathematics is an essential means of expression and communication.

Next seminars: 12th February, Simon Schofield, Experiments in Digital Surface Generation: Stochastic methods of making interesting and beautiful textures; 11th March, Cameron Browne, Truchet curves and surfaces; 8th April, Penelope Woolfitt.

Seminars are normally video-recorded for viewing on the website. The seminar organisers are John Sharp and Phillip Kent. We welcome your suggestions about speakers or topics for future seminars; email us at lkl.maths.art@gmail.com.

Getting to the London Knowledge Lab

Nearest tube stations are: Holborn (Central, Piccadilly lines), Russell Square (Piccadilly line). Approximately 10-15 minutes walk from either station.

