

Quantum Physics at the ‘Einstein meets Magritte’ conference*

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From 29 May till 3 June 1995 scientists from many different disciplines gathered in Brussels at the international conference ‘Einstein meets Magritte’. The meeting between Einstein and Magritte represented an experiment, to hope to progress beyond the many programmatical appeals that have been formulated in recent decades in order to cut across disciplinary boundaries. The experiment consisted of bringing together scholars and creative performers who have already - in their own distinctive ways - taken a path that leads to interdisciplinarity-transdisciplinarity - albeit in different directions. In bringing them together, we invited them to set up a dialogue between different attitudes, and integrate the more relevant insights into a new perspective on global change. In this respect, a number of our invited speakers had agreed to act as initiators in attracting attention to various problems, around which workshops had been set up.

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Workshop 1: Science, Society and the University.

Adolf Grunbaum, Rom Harre, Barbara Herrnstein-Smith, Ilya Prigogine, Linda Schele, John Zimon.

Workshop 2: The Nature of Life and Death.

William Calvin, Zygmunt Bauman, Paul Devroey, Robert Edwards, Chris Langton, Francisco Varela, Linda Schele.

Workshop 3: Worldviews and the Problem of Synthesis.

Diederik Aerts, William Calvin, Constantin Piron, Robert Pirsig, Nair Ranjit, Bas Van Fraassen, Jan Van der Veken.

Workshop 4: A World in Transition.

Diederik Aerts, Brain Arthur, Robert Pirsig, Riccardo Petrella, Nair Ranjit, Heinz Von Foerster.

Contributed papers were presented in five parallel sessions and two satellite symposia, that were organized in 'streams' according to the colors of the rainbow. A red stream explored science and art. An orange stream considered both university and society, and social and cultural studies of the sciences. A yellow stream investigated worldviews and the problem of synthesis. A green stream grouped together controversies on the nature of life and death, and moved onto man and nature, global change and the world in transition. A blue stream started with meta-debates and flowed off into a mosaic of discussions. A first satellite symposium constituted the indigo stream, centered around quantum physics and the nature of reality. A second satellite symposium provided an overview of state-of-art general systems theory and cybernetics and constituted the violet stream.

The technical and professional physics papers that were presented in the indigo stream of this interdisciplinary conference 'Einstein meets Magritte', around the theme 'Quantum Physics and the Nature of Reality', are collected here in this special issue of International Journal of Theoretical Physics.