

A BRAVE NEW WORLD. TALES FROM A CRAFT UTOPIA

Thursday, October 17 at 5:30 PM
Venice, Ca' Foscari University
Exhibition spaces of the San Giobbe Campus, Cannaregio 813

This exhibition marks an important milestone in our research journey within the “Hephaestus” project, funded by the European Commission’s Horizon program, where we serve as artistic researchers at Copenhagen Business School.

How would the world appear if a production system different from the one we know had redefined our relationship with nature, society, education, urban planning, and lifestyles? Addressing these questions, the exhibition envisions an alternate history—a world where the relationship with resources, modes of production, trade, and consumption is radically different, aligning more closely with craft production. Drawing from discussions with researchers in management and economic history, we creatively utilized artificial intelligence to generate a timeline of 18 images exploring a universe of possibilities beyond the capitalism we know.

Our artistic research is thus proposed as a connector between history, science and management to stimulate the re-imagination of reality. The inauguration of the exhibition is in fact included in a scientific event of the Venice School of management entitled “ARTIFICIAL. Managerial intelligence and artistic thought” and dedicated to the dialogue between the world of art and that of business.

The worldview, values, and desires of those who engage in artistic craftsmanship are vastly different, almost alternative, to those that drive the now unsustainable model of mass consumption and production. We experienced this firsthand through discussions and exchanges with researchers and artisans we met during our artistic research within the Hephaestus project.

Craftsmanship represents a kind of utopia that led us to wonder: what would the world be like if our present were built on artisanal foundations instead of being a full expression of an unsustainable industrial civilization?

A possible answer can be found by imagining an alternate history—a world where the relationship with resources, modes of production, trade, and consumption is radically different, resembling more closely that of craft production. What would that world look like? And what impact would a production system different from capitalism as we know it have on the environment, politics, education, urban planning, and lifestyle?

We initiated a dialogue with researchers in economic history, management, and organization from partner universities within the Hephaestus Project, who became a fundamental part of our creative process, bringing forth this first “emergence” of a new world. We generated a timeline of images that explore artificial creativity, with its blurred perspectives that reshape reality and its distortions.

We hope that this timeline will be an ever-evolving space where academic research and artisanal practice can creatively converge.