



ICFO Colloquium Series: The birth of collective experimental science: from the experiments on the void to the invention of the barometer

CARLA RITA PALMERINO

October 07, 2022

12:00

ICFO Auditorium

Profile

Carla Rita Palmerino is Professor in the History of Modern Philosophy and Director of the Center for the History of Philosophy and Science at Radboud University Nijmegen. Her research focuses on the history of early modern science and philosophy, and more specifically on the metaphysical and epistemological foundations of natural philosophy. She is also interested in the role of thought experiments in the history of philosophy and science.

Abstract?

For us, it is obvious that science is a collective endeavor. But for centuries, the scientist was

solitary figure, engaged in bookish activities. In the course of the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century, science became both experimental and collective. How and why this happened will be illustrated through the story of a debate over the possibility or impossibility of the void, which saw the engagement of scientists from all around Europe. What had for ages been an abstract, metaphysical question suddenly turned into an experimental matter involving all kinds of new pumps and pipes, and well as hikes to high altitudes. In the process, the debate over a metaphysical question - can a nothing exist? - culminated in the discovery of a new phenomenon - atmospheric pressure- , and in the invention of a new scientific instrument - the barometer.

Hosted by: Maria Garcia-Parajo