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Contemporary Arts Practice and Outer Space: A Multi-Disciplinary Approach (3)

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UNCERTAIN GARDEN – SPACE DESIGN FOR FERTILIZING UNCERTAINTY AT IDEASQUARE,
CERN

Abstract

A garden, in the Japanese cultural context, is a poetic representation of the universe – everything embracing the environment and all life forms that are ever changing. It subtly reflects the microcosm and macrocosm that are inside and outside humans, and their inter-relationship. The relationships between the universe and humans are poetically deepened in Japanese gardens.

Humans have explored the universe in different ways. For instance, particle physics has unveiled the universe through theories and the experiments. Yet, what humans have discovered about the observable universe is still a little fragment in the whole structure of the universe. In quantum mechanics as one of the basis of particle physics, nothing is certain within this universe. In other words, everything is uncertain. Believing that this uncertainty would bring freedom of thoughts, fertilizing creativity of humans, we would like to challenge this question: how can we approach the essence of the universe through the idea of ‘uncertainty’ and the art of creating Japanese garden together?

This question is addressed through the creation of ‘Uncertain Garden’ at IdeaSquare; the R&D innovation platform at CERN. The basic characteristics of IdeaSquare can be found in its concept of openness – an acceptance of others having different values in an international, interdisciplinary circumstance. Regarding this, we aim at creating a space where people at CERN and visitors can think, and can realize the richness of uncertainty, which would lead positive effects on their works and lives. Furthermore, we expect this garden to open up a new way of innovation from the fundamental level, finding a subtle beauty of uncertainty.

This garden is realized through designing space in collaboration with artists/designers and scientists/engineers on an occasion of the author's one-year residency at IdeaSquare. For instance, the design will be influenced by the uncertain aspects of nature (e.g. shapes of water waves, lighting effects). In this paper, the background, process, methodology, and the result of this project will be discussed.