

AIKU Blue Bag

An informal educational session of presentation to share early-stage research and discover more about aiku



16 APR

16.00 - 17.30

Venice School of Management,
San Giobbe Campus,
Volpato Room

Irony and the undoing of necessity: rethinking craft narratives through art-based research

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In an era marked by the rapid expansion of artificial intelligence and digitalization, craft has re-emerged as a topic of interest in organization studies, increasingly framed as a discourse rich in symbolic, economic, and political meanings. Dominant narratives often construct a romantic and sacralized image of craft production, portraying artisans as tragic custodians of endangered heritage.

This paper proposes the use of irony to disrupt these nostalgic representations and open space for alternative narratives about craft and craftmakers' identities.

Drawing on Lear's (2011) interpretation of Socratic and Kierkegaardian irony, we conceptualize irony as a disruptive experience that exposes the gap between what practices claim to be and what they become in reality.

Accordingly, we ask: how can irony reveal new ways of narrating craft beyond mainstream accounts? What alternative identities and narratives emerge through such disruption?

To address these questions, we collaborate with artists within an Art-based Research framework. We present two case studies: an AI-generated speculative historical exhibition (A Brave New World by D20 Art Lab) and a satirical live performance (Intelligenza Artigianale Frullatorio Show by H2O non potabile).

Developed through collaborations between artists and researchers, these cases show how irony can unsettle dominant narratives and enable a shift from nostalgic preservation toward new forms of discursive resistance.