

Dear subscribers, find here a compact overview of all current events as well as the **latest column** by IPU President Prof. Jan-Hendrik Olbertz.

Sooahn Meier started working in the International Office in mid-January. Welcome to the IPU Berlin.

The International Horst Kächele Memorial Webinar Series 2022–2023

1st webinar with Prof. Mark Solms & Prof. Thomas Fuchs
12 February 2022 | 3 pm (CET)



Events

27 January 2022 | 5pm

IPU Information Session for prospective students

Register [on our website](#).

11 February 2022 | 8 pm

On the Matter of Neuro-Psychoanalysis: A Reason to Resist or Resistance to Reason?

Hybrid event with Prof. Christine Kirchhoff and Prof. Mark Solms,
hosted by krIPU Berlin and moderated by Benedikt Salfeld

Register [on our website](#).

12 February 2022 | 3 pm (CET)

The Hard Problem of Consciousness

First webinar of the International Horst Kächele Memorial Webinar Series 2022—2023 with
Prof. Dr. Mark Solms and Prof. Thomas Fuchs (University of Heidelberg)

Register [on our website](#).

IPU Information Session for prospective students

Online event
27 January | 5 pm



Beethoven's Tenth

The **January Column** from Prof. Jan-Hendrik Olbertz

I recently happened to be listening to the radio and Beethoven was on. But it didn't sound to me like a piece I knew. Which symphony was it? And then the radio host gave it away:

“Beethoven's tenth symphony, performed by the Bonn Beethoven Orchestra.” The tenth?

Weren't there only fragments, sketches, and notes (in comparison to Schubert's “incomplete” piece that is only missing the third movement) for that one?! And now, for the 250th anniversary of the composer's birth, a team of musicians and IT experts used an artificial intelligence to create a symphony from all the pieces in the musical style of Beethoven. The first versions from this AI were, however, “not playable”, and the endeavor faltered. But then, once man and machine cooperated on it, they could create a concept that was at least performable.

What could have been the reason that the artificial intelligence wasn't capable of creating a distinct, coherent piece of art from the available set pieces? I think the answer can be found in the fact that it had never loved and never suffered, never felt anger, disappointment, relief, or joy – human emotions, especially as they had found their way so marvelously into the music of Ludwig van Beethoven.

Prof. Jan-Hendrik Olbertz took up the office of IPU Berlin President in July 2021. He was previously head of the Institute for University Research in Wittenberg, president of the Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, and Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs in Saxony-Anhalt.



It is just that, which is missing from this piece. The arc, the idea, the statement, over which everything spans, is lacking ... It sounds like Beethoven, but it's not. Maybe that's why I remained so unmoved. Or would it have been different if I hadn't known the work was formed by an artificial intelligence? Difficult question ...

There is also definitely something to be said for the composition, for example the inclusion of an organ, which is highly atypical for Beethoven. The computer interpreted certain keystrokes for the piano out of the sketches as if they were meant for an electric organ, which did not exist at the time of the composition's origin. The AI composer “extracted” this kind of creative openness and with it was able to reproduce Beethoven's unconventional style, which even during his own time provocatively threw out innumerable compositional rules. Actually, the most beautiful part of this project is that it surpassed the limits of artificial intelligence.

But what if an AI can actually one day create such an accomplishment? “Well then we're dead and buried,” was my daughter's quick response. It would be the sign that artificial intelligence had surpassed human capabilities, even in the aesthetic sense. However, we don't really need to fear that ...

In any case, I am sure that Beethoven would have approved of and supported the experiment, but probably would have completely flown off the handle at the result.

