

# Defending Uncertainty: The Creative Process and Generative Art

Professor Robert Spahr

School of Media Arts, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, USA

[www.robertspahr.com](http://www.robertspahr.com)

e-mail: [rspahr@siu.edu](mailto:rspahr@siu.edu)



**Abstract** paper and presentation uncertainty is explored as a critical component of the creative process and the making of generative art. Evolution has shaped our tendency to avoid uncertainty in order to better survive, yet art must defend the uncertain. Ambiguity and contradiction are a necessary ingredient of the creative process. This uncertainty is required in order to push back against the certainty of authoritarian rule, the certainty of knowledge, and the certainty of religious belief. In his book *Deviat: The Science of Seeing*

*Differently*, neuroscientist Beau Lotto explains the science behind how our perceptions deceive us, and how dependent we are upon our own limited sensory perceptions of the world. It is with the revelation that reality is relative, that we can accept a world of uncertainty, and use that to further develop our creativity. The painter and filmmaker David Lynch outlines his creative process in his book, *Catching the Big Fish: Meditation, Consciousness, and Creativity*. This paper will explore some of his methods of expanding his consciousness, catching ideas, and giving form to abstraction. Finally the author will discuss his own creative practice and share recent examples of his generative art which embraces uncertainty as a requirement within the process of it's own making. This auto-generated artwork referred to as *Cruft* reflects our present moment in time, as we live in an age of stillness, uncertainty and loss.

## References:

- [1] Beau Lotto, *Deviat: The Science of Seeing Differently*, Hachette Books, 2017
- [2] David Lynch, *Catching the Big Fish: Meditation, Consciousness, and Creativity*, TarcherPerigee, 2007
- [3] <https://www.robertspahr.com>