

On Growth and Form 100 – Centenary Conference

From the Curator of Museum Services at the University of Dundee :



Centenary Conference – ON GROWTH AND FORM 100
13th -15th October 2017
University of Dundee and University of St Andrews

2017 marks 100 years since the publication of D’Arcy Thompson’s landmark book *On Growth and Form* – “the greatest work of prose in twentieth century science” (Stephen Jay Gould), written by the man that Richard Dawkins recently nominated as possibly “the most learned polymath of all time”.

One of the key works at the intersection of science and the imagination, it is a book that has inspired scientists, artists and thinkers as diverse as Alan Turing, C H Waddington, Claude Lévi Strauss, Norbert Wiener, Henry Moore and Mies van der Rohe. It pioneered the science of biomathematics, and has had a profound influence in art, architecture, anthropology, geography, cybernetics and many other fields.

To mark the occasion, a three-day interdisciplinary conference is being organised at the Universities of Dundee and St Andrews. It will feature a range of presentations covering every aspect of D’Arcy’s own work and the various fields that it has influenced. The conference will also include visits to the D’Arcy Thompson Zoology Museum and the Bell Pettigrew Museum of Natural History and there will be a special preview of a new exhibition exploring *On Growth and Form* and its legacy.

We are also delighted to welcome two outstanding speakers to give the keynote lectures at the conference. These will be free and open to the public to attend.

Friday 13th October – Lars Spuybroek (NOX / Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta)

Lars Spuybroek is an internationally acclaimed Dutch architect whose practice, NOX, has become renowned for organically inspired projects. Having taught in the University of Kassel and Columbia University, he is now Professor of Architectural Design at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta. His lecture will discuss the implications of D’Arcy’s ideas for architecture, drawing on experiments with both analogue as well as digital

computing techniques for design.

Saturday 14th October – Evelyn Fox Keller (Massachusetts Institute of Technology)
(The Fauvel Lecture, supported by the British Society for the History of Mathematics)

Evelyn Fox Keller is one of the most internationally respected historians of science. A physicist, author and feminist, she is currently Professor Emerita of the History & Philosophy of Science at MIT. Beginning her career in theoretical physics, she moved on to work in molecular biology before becoming renowned for her work as a feminist critic of science. Her books include *Keywords in Evolutionary Biology* (1998), *The Century of the Gene* (2000) and *Making Sense of Life: Explaining Biological Development with Models, Metaphors, and Machines* (2002). The latter has a particular focus on mathematical biology and in her lecture she will discuss the legacy of D'Arcy Thompson's work.

The venues will be as follows:

Friday 13th October – University of Dundee
Saturday 14th October – University of St Andrews
Sunday 15th October – University of Dundee

Booking for the conference is now open. The costs, programme and details for registration can be found [here](#). We gratefully acknowledge support from the Dundee & Angus Convention Bureau for this event.