

# INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY

*The intelligence  
of connections*



## THE CULTURE ELEMENT I

*Working with  
Michelangelo Pistoletto  
and Oliviero Toscani*



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**OCTOBER 3RD**



# INNOVATION

**OLIVIERO TOSCANI & MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO**

WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS TO PUT IN PLACE IN OUR LIVES, IN OUR COMPANIES, TO ALLOW US TO FEEL FREE AND RESPONSIBLE AND, FOR THAT, INNOVATIVE?

TRANSCRIPTION NOT REVISED BY THE AUTHORS



## MARIA ROSARIA NATALE

Welcome everyone, thank you for coming, I'm very happy to start this path with each one of you and our two masters, **Michelangelo Pistoletto and Oliviero Toscani**.

Today I am fulfilling a dream, today we start a path leading to innovation, and I think that is clear to all of us here to try to innovate our companies.

To begin we ask to Pistoletto and Toscani how to innovate. We come from different countries, from different companies, from different sized companies...

But we are here together, to start our idea on what are the conditions to put in place to innovate our company, and I think we can try to innovate by just understanding what are the conditions we personally need to be creative.

And at the end of the day, when each of us, feels free and for that responsible, we can be innovative inside a company. So, if you want, what is most personal is most universal. If we are able to understand what personally we need to feel free, we can understand what are the conditions also for other people inside our company and today it will be an experience, an experiment, a way to feel free working with the master, creating something new, absolutely new, and feeling, understanding our personal emotions and living this kind of unique experience.

**So, how we can understand better what we need to be free?** I think it is not just by reflecting on ourselves, we can stay alone as Oliviero said, in a big corporation, but at the end of the day we are not able to say "I need this and that to be free", but we can do that in a dialogue with other people.

I studied philosophy, and I would like to repeat what the Greeks said about dialogue. The word dialogue is made of two words, dia and logos., Dia is the relationship, two people, and logos is the reason why, behind the thing, its meaning. It is very important to remember the value of this word, because dialogue is built through a truly honest relationship with another person, understanding one another in this relationship, and through that understanding what it means to be yourself and what it means to ask for the condition to be free. It is very complex, but it is very honest and true.

The relationship we start today is not obvious, because what we start it is a dialogue between Michelangelo Pistoletto and Oliviero Toscani. Why them and not other people?

**Michelangelo Pistoletto because he is a Master in the world working on what it means to be free, and thus responsible.** He founded the idea of the third paradise, where we each of us has the responsibility to build a place where we can be responsible while being ourselves, and for that we can change the world.

And **Oliviero**, I like him a lot, he normally says shocking things, but when you ask him why, he is able to explain something that is very, very deep, and normally they are things we see, but we don't have the courage to say. And I remember very well when we started the path in July, **you said we want and need to be brave to share our inner thoughts because this means sharing ourselves.** So for this reason I am very happy to start with you, with the Masters.

A few words about today: we are now in the welcome part of our experience, today it will be an experience asking each of **us to be totally involved, because today we will have an experience of freedom, so nobody can be behind the others, everyone is at the centre of the table.** And we start this path with **Maestro Pistoletto**, in dialogue with him and his arts, then we will have a solitude and a creative experience, and then we will have the opportunity to speak and to share again with Michelangelo what our creativity is doing. At the end of the day, we will try to understand what we learned during this unique experience of freedom. Now I would like to ask to Maestro Pistoletto to introduce himself.



*DIALOGUE IS A WORD COMBINED OF TWO WORDS, DIA AND LOGOS, DIA IS THE RELATIONSHIP, TWO PEOPLE, AND LOGOS IS THE REASON WHY, BEHIND THE THING, IT IS THE MEANING.*



## MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO

Thank you very much, it is very nice to have all you here, I think it is a great opportunity for us to have you in this place, **to start a connection with art and production, and activity**



**and social life.**

**We have invested here in Cittadellarte to create a connection between creativity, art and different sectors of social life.**

Cittadellarte is structured in offices; each office is dedicated to a specific sector of social life, economy, politics, communication, work, architecture, fashion and all the different sectors. We hold an exhibition every year and you will see part of this is still on now, it is called Arte al Centro, Art at the Centre of socially re-

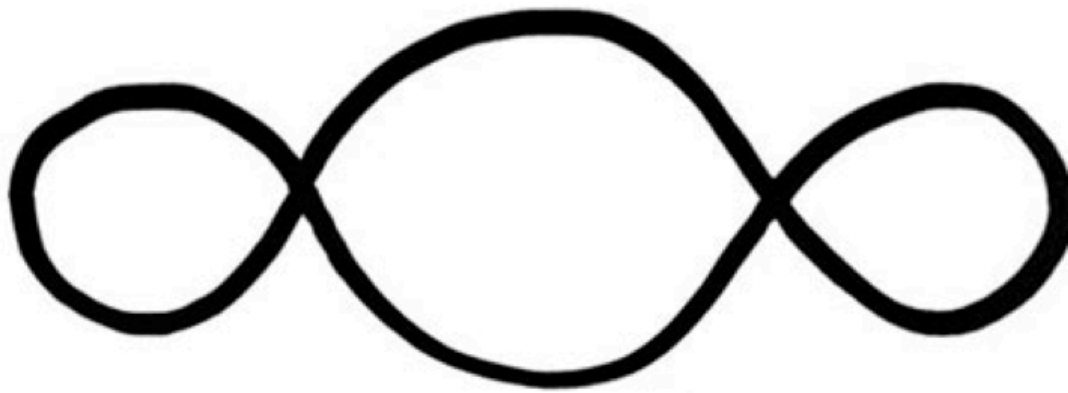
*ETHICS MEANS TAKING  
RESPONSIBILITY AND  
AESTHETICS BEING  
FREE.*



sponsible transformation. At the centre not because it wants to be the centre, but it has to be central in the act of transformation. Actually in the 19th century, transformation is changing the form, what we want now is to also transform the meaning, not only the aesthetics but the ethics, Cittadellarte is an aesthetic-ethical place of activity. Ethical means taking responsibility as you said, and aesthetic is being free. So both of them need to balance together. We basically speak about balance between art and different sectors of social life to always find balance, between also the sectors themselves, the possibility that art has a dimension in life. So in this way art becomes a dynamic element between everything, creating connections, connections with culture, arts, ideal and practical developments. This balance is represented by the symbol I created. That is the symbol of the Third Paradise. I will draw it for you...It starts from the symbol of infinity made from two circles. What does infinity mean? It means this... It is a line that goes and crosses over itself, and goes away for a long trip, crossing over itself, so this [indicating the

centre of the symbol] the centre is the present, and is never the same. It always changes, it doesn't stop, because in the mirror you will see an image, that was not here before and will not here after now. So the present is being consumed, it is consuming itself, which means that it is death and life together, you are born and you die each instant, because we are not like yesterday, this is why I decided to create a space that determines duration, this is going and this is duration, so that line crosses over itself twice, so we have life time, we have infinity before life and after physical life, and this is duration, that is life between infinity. So we have to consider that in any case **we have always been confronted with those two extremes, before, after, you and me.** We are the balance, the duration, you and I are something that escapes, that can be conflicting. I made a theory from the dynamic theorem, that is the dynamics of number three, the number three is not one more than two or one less than four, it is a universal number because it is the interaction between one and one. One and one make two, but we have two elements that combine





*Terzo Paradiso - Paradiso*

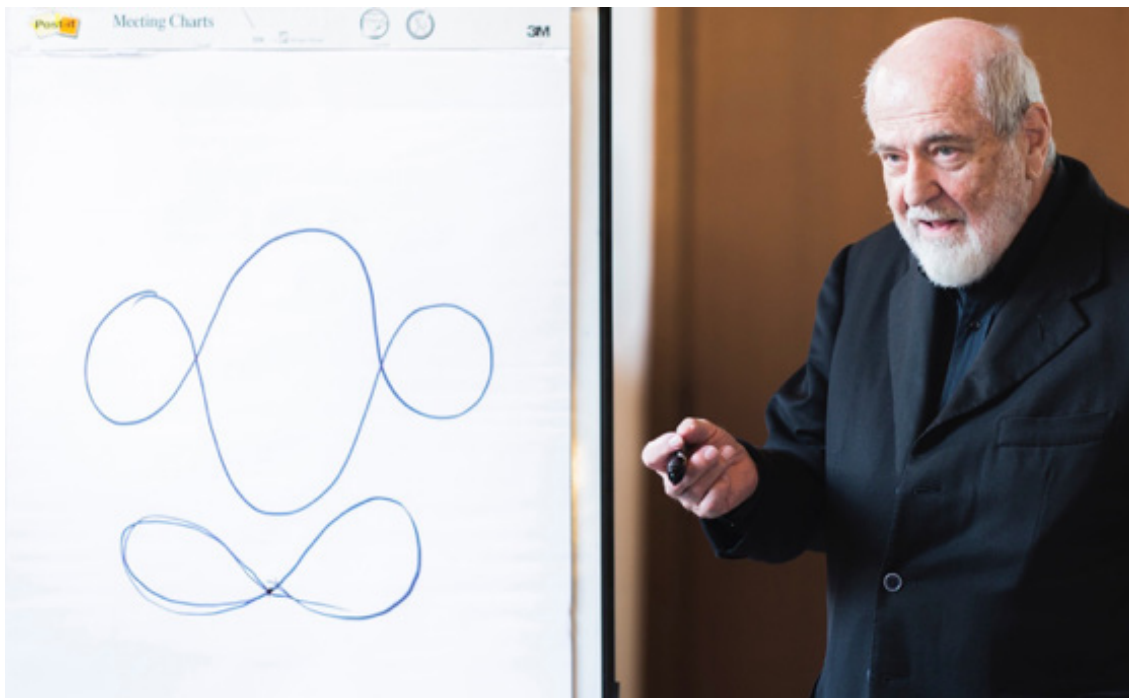
and create a new element, that didn't exist before, and this is creation, creation is when something starts to exist because two other elements are connected in some way. [Speaking of the symbol] This is can be seen as a battery, a positive and negative pole and this is energy. So you have thousands and thousands of examples of what is polarity, bipolarity and polarisation. It is a chemical process, we came from chemistry and will return to chemistry. This is paradise, we have to be good chemists, and good gardeners, because **paradise it is a word that come from the old Persian**

**language and means protected garden**, because in ancient times they had the problem of surviving in the desert, and they had to make walls so that the humidity of the night would water the garden. What is the wall of protection of today? It is the atmosphere, that is really, really important, it protects us from the Universe that can burn us. Today's problem is that we create a desert inside paradise, and forget that we should create the best life, so we are destroying instead of creating. We need to return to being gardeners.

The Third Paradise means needing to create

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the consciousness we had in the first paradise, in which humanity was totally included in nature - there was no human intelligence, intelligence was the intelligence of nature, but afterwards. This is an apple, with a bite, and with that bite we went outside of the nature, little by little we became more distant from nature, and we created another planet, the artificial planet of today, you can say that this one is a religious symbol but it is not anymore, because if you look at it, today it is a technological symbol, it comes from the ancient meaning of paradise, but it totally cancelled nature, it is 100% artificial. **So what do I think we have to do today?**

*WE NEED TO START TO BE "GARDENERS" AGAIN*

We have to bring back this piece here and recreate the apple, and this is our big problem. We can do this with **the symbol of the Third Paradise, this is nature, and this is the artefact. From the connection of the first, nature, and the second, artefacts, we must create the Third Paradise, that is, balance, that is, the possibility to bring technology and modern ability to reintegrate the nature, but not going back but going ahead, going to the Third Paradise. We are in the limit.**



Anything we have done is artificial what we reproduce. A garden is artificial, we don't take pieces of nature for eating but we produce to eat, this is a human system. What it is interesting is that in the first part of the word artificial, there is the word art, so art takes new responsibility in this process, art as a base of taking into consideration what we have done, starting from the first paradise. What it is important is the second phase when, we reached at a point of enormous freedom, because we invented incredible things, besides art.

**Freedom is not only in art, it is in every industrial idea, there is a creativity in every development and any idea we can have, because we are free to do, but of course the more you are free the more you escape something, freedom can be also be free to kill someone... it is important to have a balance between freedom and responsibility.**

The more you're free, the more you should be responsible. Driving society is not just individually divided from the society, is not to be free until you explode in freedom, it is the more you're free the more you're responsible. And the more you're responsible the more you are free at the same point. We are here to connect freedom and capacity of management, because they take the same roads, they are artificial, made by art. This is the idea of connected extremes that makes the ideas of the third paradise. This symbol can be mathematic but it didn't exist before, with infinity and duration.

*THE MORE YOU'RE FREE,  
THE MORE YOU SHOULD  
BE RESPONSIBLE.*

## OLIVIERO TOSCANI

**MARIA ROSARIA NATALE** Oliviero, how do you see the relation between art and our normal work in a company?

**OLIVIERO TOSCANI** Well, my freedom starts where your freedom starts. So normally you hear “My freedom stops where your freedom starts”. But this is not true, **I can be free if you are free too.** My freedom starts where the other’s starts. Now, let’s leave freedom for a while, let’s talk about nature, art and nature. I have a problem with nature, because I really think that nature wants to get rid of human beings, it tries in every way to get rid of us, and we, in a very natural way invented chemistry, medicine, all kinds of possibilities to save ourselves. Because if it just depends on nature we will not live that long and will not be that healthy. So with the help of human creativity we invented doctors, machinery, and everything that makes our world better. So I don’t think nature it is such a friend. No, people say “I want to help nature”, wow, what a presumption! Nature doesn’t give a shit, Nature could get rid of us in a second, we have to help ourselves to survive nature, and all those people who speak with nature are suicidal. So this is just a point of view to think about, and then there is art. For me art... Ok, let’s start from another theme, power. Power is production, religion, politics, everything we are busy with. Power needs art to impose itself and art needs power to express itself, so there isn’t such a thing as free art. Art is strongly related to some kind

of power. Michelangelo Buonarroti was working for the Pope. Art become art when it transcends power, but it has to work closely with it to know what is going on. So art is just, in a way, communication. Because there’s also the art of war. What is war, when there are two opposite thinkers communicating with bombs, this is still communication. So **art is an expression of communication**, probably the highest level of quality of communication, because ...let’s go back to understand it.



Genesis: on the first day God created light and dark, on the second day earth and seas, then flora, everything was perfect, then fauna, they had perfect intelligence, on the sixth day He created the human being, He worked hard, not the human.. At the end of the day he realised He hadn't finished us really, we were not finished Seventh day he rested, probably he belong to some union!

He had to rest. He told the human, I will give you the capacity to create, because the lion doesn't have it, it is perfect. We however, need to create our perfection. We need to look to something higher, so there is a gap between what we're able to reach and what we want to reach, so we know we have an emptiness for which we do this kind of meeting, **we talk about innovation, just because we cannot go higher than our status of mediocrity of being human...** An animal doesn't have this problem, he believes in an infinite life, he doesn't know he has to die. **We have to fill the gap, we have some people like artists**

**who do things that take you to the place, me in front of a Hieronymus Bosch, or a Picasso or a Pistoletto, I look and I "aaaah". You know, it takes you there.** It is media that take you there, because art is just a medium, it is communication. So we are taken to that gap, between our limit and what we aspire to be constantly, **that is why we are unhappy, we are looking for something else.** So this is the task of art, and of course there is a lot of art that is just composition, aesthetics, mediocrity, whereas the task of art is to take the single place, and you can get there alone. But this sense, this goal, he said infinity, he talked about the desire to be in the third paradise, but this is not really gratifying because we are always looking for something that we cannot reach. And now I would like to conclude this circle by saying that we are very much attracted to the world of technology, because the world of technology takes you to places where we are already been, we know them, and looking back is always nicer. There



is no technology to talk to you about technology, everybody now knows about the present, about the past, but we don't have any more time to think about the future. We have to talk about innovation. **My dear friends, innovation is simply the future, and the future is imagination, it couldn't be anything else, you can do nothing new if you do not imagine it.** Now on is only imagination, you have to face up to this situation, all the rest is a waste of time. Have you got the balls to imagine or are you afraid? Because imagining is scary, you have to imagine every single second, you can't programme it.

So innovation requires an incredible imagination and imagination can exist only in a state of full insecurity. **If you're not fully insecure, you're not fully creative.**

**ROSA RIERA** Am I confusing imagination with dreaming?

**OLIVIERO TOSCANI** Dreaming... We dream something we have already seen, more or less. Probably it even happened yet, but imagination is something else.



*HAVE YOU GOT THE  
BALLS TO IMAGINE OR  
ARE YOU AFRAID?*





**MARIA ROSARIA NATALE** What do you mean?

**OLIVIERO TOSCANI** Imagination is ... the future. Tell me, what is future? What is, a program? No sorry, you're fucked up with your technology and your technology is old, because today you're using a technology that if you're lucky, has been invented at least one year ago. Your engine is over... Your pistons are not... [talking to Vincenzo Regazzoni]

**MARIA ROSARIA NATALE** Oliviero, he is the Head of Technology...

**OLIVIERO TOSCANI** And he is not in diapers! He is an old man! Old, I mean... He should have diapers...

**VINCENZO REGAZZONI** We always say that if it is functional it is obsolete

**TRACY TURTON** Yes, by the time you have invented it, it is obsolete.

**MARIA ROSARIA NATALE** Imagining is linked with observing, with what?

**OLIVIERO TOSCANI** It is linked with instinct. I can

imagine that it will not happen anymore, no camera! I click [gesturing a click with no camera, just focusing with eyes] and you smile, and I get it and I can send it to you. Is that imaginative technology?

Michelangelo and I, we are born in Italy. When we were born, let's be practical, we were born in a country that was fascist, under a king...

**MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO** The Pope is still here...

**OLIVIERO TOSCANI** Let's get rid of one thing at the time... Fascist, royalist and allied with the Nazis, and in war with the Allies. I was born in 1942 under the bombs, I was saved by the bomb because my mother wanted to abort, because she needed to work, but the bombs saved me because she couldn't go to the hospital, so... When I was one year old, in the pasta box, if I had said "Hey, you, here! In seventy years Europe will be unified, with just one currency, we will travel around without passports" and they had said "Madam,, your son is an idiot!" No, I was not an idiot, I was an imaginative person. So we can stand up any time in that box, and say whatever. Technology too, because actually technological things unified

Europe, they're not so great, but they were a wonderful idea. We created them but now we are giving up..

**ROSA RIERA** What do you mean we're "giving up"?

**OLIVIERO TOSCANI** People say they don't want Europe, of course we will be much better in an athletic or football team, Europeans all mixed up, no Chinese, no Americans, no Brazilian... it's ridiculous, isn't it?

**When we were creating Europe, we started creating the future.**

So innovation is just imagination, if you want to innovate forget your computer, or better, use it as you use toilet paper, it is not a primary thing, I mean I don't go there because I use toilet paper, I use toilet paper because I go there... So, forget your technology, because toilet paper is technology too, and you have to imagine. **Anything is possible.**

**MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO** But you can, if I can join you, you can create or imagine in both way, in a responsible and productive way and destroying way. It takes the same engagement... That's why **we have the positive and the negative, the good and bad, we have those two points, we have to find the future, our imagination, stay in between, but it must be conceived not like a free imagination, but a responsible imagination**, so we have to organise... And when you speak about football, you're speaking about chance, chance is there,

everything is combined by chance, nothing is predestined, but why is football important? It is now like a religion, because it is blame as if it were God, chance, you don't know what is happening, but you have two people who want to score a goal, that is the physical representation of chance, to go in this direction and the other wants it to take the opposite direction. This means that we are always playing with chance, but we can also politically and economically play together for a better chance.







**OLIVIERO TOSCANI** I don't know what is better, I've been always afraid of people with ideas, I hate people with ideas, they do incredible damage.

**MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO** You have to go back to the first paradise, if you want everything happening by itself, here we are responsible for the world we are creating and we have brought the world to a certain point and we have to be honest with ourselves.

**ROSA RIERA** How do you differentiate between ideas and imagination? You say you're afraid of people with ideas, but before you said you need imagination...

**OLIVIERO TOSCANI** Imagination comes from good ideas, normally if you are a flat creativity person, just an idiot says "I am a creative person", you cannot say that, creativity is the result of something processed in a creative way, creativity, I start to be myself and if I have got the talent and luck, I will do something creative, but people with flat minds need ideas, otherwise they can't get higher, those people who actually are mediocre, just think they need an idea to emerge. People who really emerge

are what they are.

**BERNADETTE KESTER** Is it an unconscious process, this creativity?

**OLIVIERO TOSCANI** well society says so... But look, I have a lot of young people who come to me and say "I really want to work with you, because well, I am a very creative person". Sometimes it is the mothers who say so, because their son has two piercings and some tattoos, and so they think they are creative. And I say "So, you're creative" "Yes, I'm full of ideas, but I have a problem, I can't make them come out" "Sorry, your problem is that you are not an artist" because we all have ideas, just close your eyes 10 seconds, we will have infinite ideas, I can do this for you [talking to Vincenzo Regazzoni], I can imagine a Ferrari that loses its redness from the speed it has. Just think and imagine! The problem is that an artist simply does what he is able to do, and we will all say, wow what a creative person.

**ROSA RIERA** So, I still do not understand why you're so negative about ideas, because I agree with you when you said that having ideas it is just nothing, but there is an impulse and

you realise, but you still need to have them, and it takes effort, it takes practice.

**MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO** I don't agree with him, because he is speaking about the category of the artist, for me artist should go away from the category, everybody can.



**OLIVIERO TOSCANI** Maybe !

**MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO** Everybody can be an artist. Can and could is the same. But also many people like him [talking to Vincenzo Regazzoni], obviously, we love Ferrari, but I mean, he is an artist, he works with materials, it has a prospective, he also want to lose the redness of the Ferrari, but his job is to create, to get to the future, so tomorrow will go better, but also the rest of the people of the world want... And that people, they make a congregation to have everybody subdued, those are still creative people, but for me you are creative if you just think that a good imagination can be

democracy, there are people against democracy, and I think that if everybody were a little more artistic , that means more freedom and responsibility that would mean that democracy would become possible. So I am a democratic artist, I don't want to be Pistoletto, I want me to be at the service of the society, and bring the creativity of everybody in the possibility of changing the society. This is my dream, if you want to dream, or this is my imagination, but remember that the word imagination come from image, it gives you an image, the difference from a human being and a lion is that a lion, as you said [talking to Oliviero Toscani], doesn't have the sense of the image that we have. The first work of art that was done, for me, probably is the impression of the hand on the wall of the cave, when that person, not an animal anymore, recognised the human hand and the word hand, because it became a word, we had image, and language, and communications, it started from the image.

Now, we developed such an enormous process of imagination, and it became science, technology. It is not something that happened by itself, it happened because we became

## EVERYBODY CAN BE AN ARTIST

able to drive chance, and now we have to drive chance taking in consideration that we are a person but we are the whole of humanity at the same time, each one of us, we have the same responsibility at the same time, this is the concept behind the European currency, because we are one and the world and everybody else is like us, no difference.

We are at the point in which we can't plan what will happen, we can't think we will live long anymore, we will die through intelligence and the naturally made disaster. We created technology because we wanted to protect us from nature, nature is terrible, but it is also good, because it gives you the apple, everything, but we have to take control of nature so that we can control our relationship with nature, and we have to go as fast as we can, but honestly we need to work together. Imagination puts us together, we cannot go alone, that is why I am not an individual artist. When an art student



comes to me and asks “ What do I have to do to be accepted, to have success?” For me, if you want to go to the future, you have to stop thinking me and one, and start to think two. Two is the principle of society.

We are different from the animals, they’re not responsible, but they’re infinite, because they don’t feel the end., We have this concept of duration of the person and also of nature, and we are different. Difference is everywhere in the world, but we are different because we have self knowledge, ambition and desire. What is the basic human characteristic? It is desire, we want to go on, we don’t know yet what we do but we desire something. Art is the biggest example of an object of desire, the maximum desire is to have a piece of art.

Desire at the point that there is no price, we can have desire of everything, even of a Ferrari, but art is more expensive than a Ferrari, because it is the maximum expression of desire, something that is related to power, that is also the maximum expression of desire, and when a powerful person want to buy a piece of art, they want to spend the maximum possible, because power is represented by art, and they don’t want anymore to represent the power but

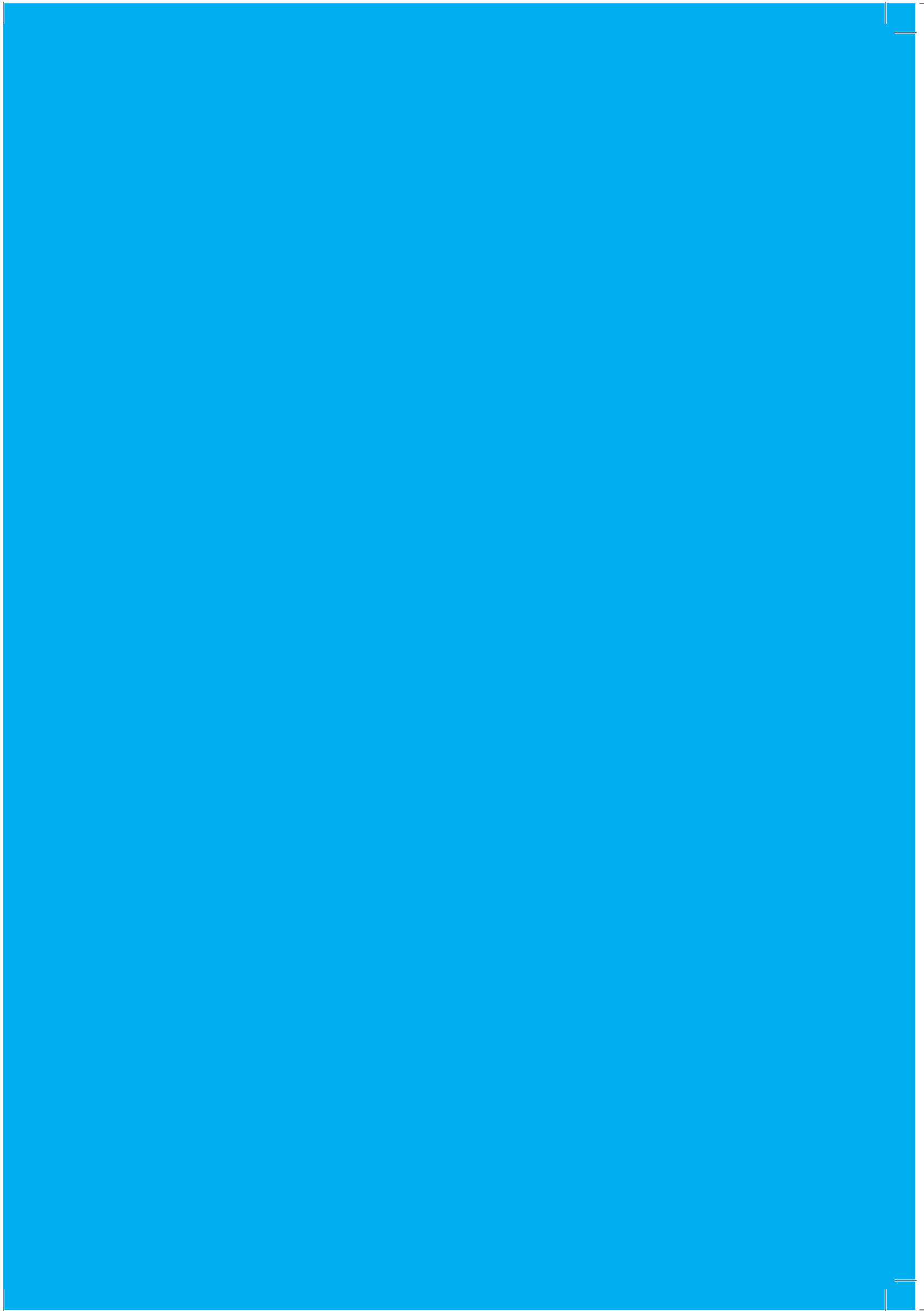
the democracy.

I think in the end we agree [talking to Oliviero Toscani], because it takes the idea of imagination to its strongest meaning, but...

**OLIVIERO TOSCANI** I’m not here to tell you what it is good and what it is bad, I tell you what is the system, of course imagination made a lot of miserable results, people did imagine that there was the Arian race, they imagine that there is God... The only energy for innovation and future is imagination. If I have to explain the word future I would say imagination, because imagination doesn’t mean creativity, there’s positive and negative, but that’s politics, I talking about what kind of path we have to follow, to go into the future.

**MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO** There is a technology of the system of life, politics it’s too technological, because it doesn’t take into consideration the freedom of the imaginations and art has to open a space in that bureaucratic concept of living, but imagination became itself politics, art has to be more political and politics has to be more imagination, and there we have philosophy. ■

*WHAT IS THE BASIS OF HUMAN CHARACTERISTICS?*  
**IT IS THE DESIRE.**





**CITTADELLARTE**  
**FONDAZIONE PISTOLETTO**

October 3rd 2014

Biella