



Keio-NUS CUTE Center

TEDx Zurich 2010

Conference Report

Jeffrey Tzu Kwan Valino Koh

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About TEDx

In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TED has created a program called TEDx. TEDx is a program of local, self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience. The event I was invited to speak at was called TEDx Zurich, where x = independently organized TED event. At this TEDxZurich event, TEDTalks videos and live speakers were combine to spark deep discussion and connection in a small group. The TED Conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program, but individual TEDx events, including this one, are self-organized.¹

General Reflections on the Conference

TEDx Zurich was organized unlike any other conference I have attended. Radical openness and trans-disciplinary participants afforded a freedom of dialogue unprecedented when compared to conferences thematically organized around a specific discipline. This offered a less protectionist environment when compared to other conferences, where researchers and practitioners seem more closed and reclusive regarding the exposure of their research. The minus of this was that most of the discussion were generalized, yet still very engaging and insightful, as perspectives were offered to researchers who, if they shared acute fields, would not be able to provide.

Organization of the conference was excellent. Speakers were guided and taken care of. Timing of speaker slots was perfect. The documentation of the conference was excellently archived on the TEDx Zurich website (<http://tedxzurich.com/>). Overall, the conference was of the highest quality, both in speaker selection and organization.

Reflections on a Selection of Speakers

Each speaker offered concise and engaging talks. Speakers of note include the following:

Nicola Forster - Discussed the need For Switzerland to attract highly educated and talented immigrants. Switzerland's current innovation problems parallel Singapore's need to attract foreign talent to drive innovation.

Bruno Giussani - Discussed the TED phenomenon and the need for radical openness in order to desalinate information.

Corsin Gwerder and Lukas Limacher - Demonstrated their one-wheeled robot design. The fastest traveling one-wheeled robot in the world.

Marco Tempest - Performed his magic act, which is a combination of traditional magic and augmented reality technology. An interesting intersection of a traditional craft and an emerging technology.

Rachel Armstrong - Discussed her implementation to save the sinking city of Venice, Italy. She and her team have developed a chemical compound that repairs the foundation of buildings organically.

¹ <http://tedxzurich.com/2010/08/25/about-tedx/>

Speaker Roster

Name of Speaker	Description of Work	Topic of Talk Presented
Robin Cornelius	Founder and chairman of Switcher, (http://switcher.ch/) a Swiss textile company	How to Make Cloths Traceable (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/10/18/robin-cornelius-wants-to-make-clothing-traceable/)
Bruno Giussani	European director of TED (http://ted.com/)	How Ideas Can Travel Further (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/10/17/bruno-giussani/)
Reto Ringger	Founder of Sustainable Asset Management Group (http://sam-group.com)	Explains How he Builds a Sustainable Bank (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/10/17/reto-ringger/)
Nicola Forster	President of foraus - Forum Aussenpolitik (http://www.foraus.ch/)	Switzerland Needs More Brain Power (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/10/16/nicola-forster/)
Corsin Gwerder and Lukas Limacher	Students at Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, Zurich (http://www.ethz.ch/)	Shows Their One-Wheeled Robot (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/10/16/rezero/)
James Gruntz	Singer, song writer and musician	Makes Post-Pop Music (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/10/14/james-gruntz/)
Abbot Martin Werlen	Abbot of the Benedictine Abbey of Einsiedeln (http://kloster-einsiedeln.ch)	Wants us to Listen to Those From Whom we Expect Nothing (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/10/13/abbot-martin-werlen/)
Gian Klainguti	Co-founder of Kompost (http://www.kompostnyc.com/)	How to Play Birom (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/10/13/gian-klainguti/)
Karen Tse	Lawyer and founder of International Bridges to Justice (http://www.ibj.org/)	How to End Torture Worldwide (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/10/12/karen-tse/)
Margrit Hugentobler	Director of ETH Centre for Research on Architecture, Society & the Built Environment (http://www.wohnforum.arch.ethz.ch/)	How to Turn Urban Sprawl into an Aggloasis (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/10/06/margrit-hugentobler-on-how-to-turn-urban-sprawl-into-an-aggloasis/)
Marco Tempest	Techno-Magician (http://www.marcotempest.com/)	How a High-Tech Sorcerer Works (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/10/04/marco-tempest-shows-you-how-a-high-tech-sorcerer-works/)
Heike Bruch	Professor and director of the Institute for Leadership and Human Resources Management, University of St. Gallen (http://www.ifpm.unisg.ch/)	How to Manage Organizational Energy (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/09/29/heike-bruch-on-how-to-manage-organizational-energy/)

Name of Speaker	Description of Work	Topic of Talk Presented
David Bauer	Journalist and Consultant (http://www.davidbauer.ch/)	How an Ancient Greek Thinker Can Help us Understand Technology (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/09/25/david-bauer-on-how-an-ancient-greek-writer-can-help-us-understand-technology/)
Elgar Fleisch	Professor, ETH Zurich (http://www.im.ethz.ch/people/efleisch)	How Emerging Technology Can Influence Us (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/09/20/elgar-fleisch-shows-how-emerging-technology-can-influence-us/)
Jef Koh	PhD research scholar, National University of Singapore (http://www.nus.edu.sg/)	Builds Animated Liquids (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/09/05/jef-koh-builds-animated-interactive-liquids/)
Michael Hermann	Geographer, University of Zurich (http://www.uzh.ch/)	Visualizes Politics (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/09/05/michael-hermann-visualizes-politics/)
Rachel Armstrong	Senior TED Fellow (http://ted.com/)	Creates Living Environments (http://tedxzurich.com/2010/09/01/rachel-armstrong-creates-living-environments/)



Presenting findings to the TEDx audience regarding my PhD project, Liquid Interface.