

Intellectual Furniture

A (Pre-)History of Large Language Models

eikones Forum, University of Basel
Rheinsprung 11, 4051 Basel, Switzerland

Thursday, September 10.

14:00–14:30
Welcome & Introduction

14:30–15:30
Ewa Zakrzewska
European University
Institute, Florence
Calculating Notions: The Mechanical and the Mindful in 17th Century Combinatorial Repositories

15:30–15:45
Coffee Break

15:45–16:45
Alberto Cevolini
University of Modena and Reggio Emilia
The Age of the Artificial: From Early-Modern Filing Cabinets to Turing’s Machine

16:45–17:00
Coffee Break

17:00–18:00
Carolyn Sargentson
Independent Researcher
Touching Secrets: How Flesh and Metal Share Agency in Historical Artefacts

19:00
Invited Dinner

Friday, September 11.

09:00–10:00
Michael Friedman
University of Bonn
Editing Too Many Notes and Too Much Information: On Joachim Jungius’ (Posthumously Published) Manuscripts

10:00–11:00
Maja-Lisa Müller
University of Bielefeld
Embedded: The Many-Folds of the Walderdorff-Desk

11:00–11:15
Coffee Break

11:15–12:15
Mark Gamsa
Tel Aviv University
The Passion for Totality: Encyclopaedic Ambition and Its Instruments

12:15–13:15
Iris van der Tuin
Utrecht University
Susanne K. Langer’s Card-Index File as Integrative Object

13:15–14:15
Lunch Break

Saturday, September 12.

09:00–10:00
Hannah Wiemer
Humboldt University Berlin
Furnishing Language: Library 21 and the Material Organization of Knowledge in 1962

10:00–11:00
Yannick Nepomuk Fritz
University of Basel
Architectures of Reasoning and Modes of Conversation

11:00–11:15
Closing Remarks



10.–12.09.2026