

Responding through design

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The presentation “Responding through design” addresses the use of the ecological notion of *response diversity* (Elmqvist *Et al.* 2003) as a frame to develop naturecultures. It does so by focusing on the practice of design, making explicit the type of performativity that design proposals could enact by devising complementary responses designed to support the life of specific beings in specific ecosystems. The talk elaborates upon examples from the project *Dispersal machines*, part of my postdoctoral research entitled *Symbiotic tactics* and financed by the Swedish Research Council (2013-2016). *Dispersal machines* proposes two complementary artificial systems that attempt to minimise the damages by a moth (*Spodoptera frugiperda*) on crops (corn and soy predominantly) in the agroecosystems of Córdoba, Argentina. The proposals attempt to biologically control this species by interventions that disseminate and/or host species that predate or parasitize the moth at different stages of its life cycle: a diurnal response, based on the dissemination of parasitized eggs of the moth by a tiny wasp (*Telenomus remus*), as well as a nocturnal response, based on the placement of bat refuges that feed on the adult moth.

Interspecies care demands response-ability (Haraway 2016); the challenges being the development of a practice of design tuned to respond dynamically to multi-scalar phenomena and multi-species abilities. Addressing the “semiotics of hybrid natures”, the presentation reflects upon “abilities to respond” and the notion of *semethic interaction* (Hoffmeyer 2008) as it relates to the more general semiotic term, *semiosphere*. With this context in mind, it addresses pattern-making through design, co-evolutionary possibilities, and the human capacity to respond through design, and design as a form of response.

Martín Avila is a designer, researcher and Professor of Design at Konstfack in Stockholm, Sweden. His postdoctoral project *Symbiotic tactics* (2013-2016) has been the first of its kind to be financed by the Swedish Research Council. Martin’s research is design-driven and addresses forms of interspecies cohabitation. See also www.martinavila.com