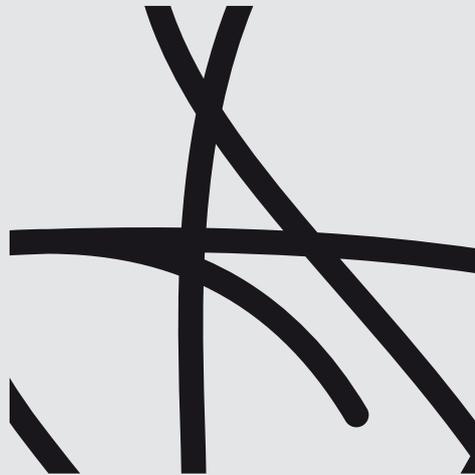


Take the title in three ways: freedom or revel enabled by the presence of that which is nearly impossible; surrender of a sense of surprise, or the squelching of joy in surprise; anxiety or terror under the shadow of that which looms, unpredictable yet ostensibly imminent. These days it seems that we are all "risk managers." The more we are called to the management of risk, the less we admit wandering, cognitive or cardiac, manic or geomantic, pedagogic or chronotopic. Call it errancy, noise, or abandon, wandering at once entreats and neglects risk. What might we learn about ourselves and our ubiquitous "emergencies" by tracking the historical forces at work to suppress wandering?

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The English verb 'to err' has largely lost its positive connotations. It no longer invokes wandering, rambling, or roaming, and is now understood negatively in relation to a prescribed path or goal. To be sure, errors are acknowledged to play an important role in the pursuit of knowledge and happiness, but usually only to the extent that their recognition allows for their elimination, correction, and avoidance. Recognizing that a critique of ideals of productivity, success, goal-orientation, and determination is necessarily paradoxical, the **ICI Lecture Series ERRANS** will take the shifting meanings of 'erring' – connoting the violation of norms as well as the activity of wandering – as a prompt to explore the critical potentials and risks of embracing error, randomness, failure, and non-teleological temporalities, and to do so across different disciplines and discourses.

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Hillel Schwartz

The Abandon of
Unlikelihood

