

PREFACE

The Italian community interested in artificial life and the one active in evolutionary computation have decided a couple of years ago to merge their annual meetings in a single event, since there were many interesting overlaps concerning both topics and persons. This decision has proven fruitful, and there have been successful meetings in Siena and Scicli, before this year's one in Venice. Previously, separated workshops had been organized for artificial life in Cosenza and Rome, and for evolutionary computation in Milan.

The growth, both in quantity and quality, of the activities in these fields are the reasons why in the 2008 meeting we decided to move to a more international setting, with some invited speakers and some participants coming from abroad, and to publish a proceedings volume.

We wish to thank all the invited speakers (Armando Bazzani, Annamaria Colacci, Rosaria Conte, Stuart Kauffman and Norman Packard) for their contribution to the success of the conference: besides delivering extremely interesting presentations, they all actively participated to the discussions in the conference room and also had many informal talks with the participants during coffee break and spare time.

This volume comprises all the accepted full-length papers which have been contributed to the Wivace08 workshop held in Venice, 8-10 September 2008, and also three invited papers. The workshop has been really successful, there have been many interesting discussions both in the conference room and in informal gatherings, and we hope that some new collaboration will spring from the encounters among the researchers which were in Venice. The Italian word "vivace" means lively, and the workshop Wivace stood up to its name!

We wish to express our gratitude to the organizations which made this event possible, the European Centre for Living Technology (ECLT) of the Ca' Foscari University in Venice and the Department of Social, Cognitive and Quantitative Sciences of the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia. The energy and competence of the ECLT operations manager, Elena Lynch, was particularly important in getting an effective organization and a smooth running of the workshop.

We are also grateful to the E-learning Centre the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, and to its director Tommaso Minerva, for support in the preparation of the conference website.

Special thanks are due to the persons who most contributed to the organization of the workshop, our Ph.D. students Alex Graudenzi and Chiara Damiani, who took care with enthusiasm and skill of the various aspects related to the workshop and who collected all the contributions for this volume. Important support was also provided by Alessandro Filisetti and Luca Ansaloni.

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