**Metaphor and the Human Creative Potential**

Metaphors in the wild rarely occur in isolation. Rather, metaphors in many texts are supported by, or give support to, other metaphors, similes and blends. These various figurative devices present different affordances to an author, and serve complementary roles in the communication of a complex idea. Thus, a tentative simile or speculative analogy lays the groundwork for bolder metaphors to come, which can in turn set the stage for an immersive conceptual blend. This complex interplay is illustrated by the following dialogue from the movie *Jurassic Park*:

**Hammond**: All major theme parks have delays. When they opened Disneyland in 1956, nothing worked!

**Malcolm**: Yeah, but, John, if The Pirates of the Caribbean breaks down, the pirates don't eat the tourists.

Clearly, similes, metaphors and blends are not distinct phenomena arising from distinct cognitive mechanisms, but manifestations of different settings – such as degree of integration – of what is fundamentally the same creative mechanism. Computational modeling offers us a generative approach to demonstrating this claim, by allowing researchers to build generative systems that can produce their own similes, metaphors, analogies and blends from the same core principles. In this talk I explore the workings of a computational system called *Metaphor Magnet* that is realized in a number of public forms, from a *Twitterbot* called @*MetaphorMagnet* to a Web service that provides figurative competence to third party software systems. In particular, we demonstrate how the separation of concerns – chiefly, conceptual content and linguistic framing – allows a system to achieve a wide variety of human-like figurative outputs from a small number of cognitive principles and AI mechanisms.