In this talk I will distinguish ‘emergent learning’ from ‘teleological learning,’ which is learning for the sake of passing predefined tests and goals. While teleological learning may succeed or fail, emergent learning is always going on in ways that are under-determined and largely unpredictable. Emergent learning involves getting engaged in events and places and participating in the circulation of affects imbuing them. I will describe ongoing work towards a new theory of emergent learning as self-sustained development in the thick of circulating affects. My talk will be divided in two parts: 1) Articulation of a theoretical/philosophical framework about the nature of affects; and, 2) Exploration of the socio-historical and material dynamics of affects and emergent learning in the course of a videotaped 10-minute episode during a field trip by 5th graders to a science museum.

Ricardo Nemirovsky is professor at the Manchester Metropolitan University in Manchester, UK. He has directed educational projects in Argentina, Mexico, USA, and currently in Europe. He is conducting research and theory development on the interplay between embodied cognition, affects, and mathematics learning. Part of his work focuses on the synergy between art and mathematics. He has been working with several science and art museums in mathematics-oriented projects that combine research, development, and museum staff professional development. In addition to research papers, he has co-authored curricular units and has designed multiple devices for students' use.

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