



Cognitive aspects of aesthetical experience

(Monographic lecture)

A. DÉMUTH

30 hours / 6 ECTS

Introductory description

The main goal of the course is to introduce and to explain the main problems, concepts, and theories (terms of basic ideas and terminology) in cognitive aesthetics. This subject is trying to open up a whole area of thinking which includes a wide palette of problems and approaches to the cognition of beauty and aesthetical experience. Second half of the course is focused on some cognitive aspects of attractiveness.

Course content

- Introduction
- Historical background and terminology
- Hume, Ried, Kant and calculation
- Attractivity of body
- Attractivity of face
- Attractivity of eyes
- Evolutionary conclusion
- Summary I
- Beauty and understanding
- Beauty and emotions
- Neuroaesthetics
- Ramachandran's theory of beauty
- Beauty as unity
- Summary II



Requirements of credits – Assessment criteria

- active participation (25%)
- essay or critical analysis (3000 words), (25%)
- test (50%)

References / Literature / Reading list

1. Bahm, A. J. (1972). *Is a Universal Science of Aesthetics Possible?*, Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism, 31 (1): 3-7
2. Calder, A. J. et al. (2011). *The Oxford Handbook of Face Perception*. Oxford UP
3. Chatterjee, A. (2015). *The Aesthetic Brain: How We Evolved To Desire Beauty and Enjoy Art*. Oxford UP
4. Etcoff, N. (2000). *Survival of the Prettiest*. Anchor
5. Nichols, S. & Stich, S. (2000). *A Cognitive Theory of Pretense*, Cognition, 74 (2): 115-147
6. Perrett, D. (2010). *In Your Face*. Palgrave, Macmillan
7. Ramachandran, V. S. (2012). *The Tell-Tale Brain: A Neuroscientist's Quest for What Makes Us Human*. WW Norton
8. Shimamura, A. (2013). *Experiencing Art: Explorations in Aesthetics, Mind, and Brain*. UOP
9. Shimamura, A. P. & Palmer, S. E. (2012). *Aesthetic Science: Connecting Minds, Brains, and Experience*. UOP
10. Swami, V. & Furnham, A. (2008). *The Psychology of Physical Attraction*. Routledge
11. Zeki, S. (2000). *Inner Vision: An Exploration of Art and the Brain*, Oxford UP
12. Zeki, S. (2008). *Splendors and Misery of the Brain: Love, Creativity, and the Quest for Human Happiness*. Willey
13. Zeki, S. (2015). *Starr Feeling Beauty: The Neuroscience of Aesthetic Experience*. MIT Press