

Art in Con- versa- tion

Overview

Art is a complex phenomenon that has fascinated researchers in different fields, including philosophy, art history, theology, psychology, and neuroscience. Given this wide scholarly interest in art, the theoretical frameworks and methodologies employed by researchers can vary quite dramatically, not only across but also within disciplines.

'A COMPLEX PHENOMENON'

In this seminar series, we aim to bring together researchers of different disciplines and perspectives around a set of core themes relevant to art. We believe that only through a multidisciplinary conversation it is possible to develop an integrated approach to the study of art. Our larger aim is to advance research in this field, identifying a common ground on which to deepen our understanding of art and, more generally, human nature.

'MULTIDISCIPLINARY CONVERSATION'

Organisers

Marina Iosifian

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Sept. 2021 Events

Seminar 6: What is art?

[3rd September 2021, from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm UK time](#)

Defining art is an ancient challenge and we believe it is still a relevant starting point for anyone interested in better understanding this complex phenomenon. How can psychology and art contribute in shedding light on this fundamental question?

Speakers:

Dhanraj Vishwanath, Senior Lecturer in Psychology, University of St Andrews

Fulvia Carnevale aka Claire Fontaine, MA Fine Art, artist

[YouTube link available on our website](#)

Seminar 7: Serial Television

[10th of September 2021, from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm UK time](#)

Serial television is one of the youngest and most popular art products. However, it is yet unclear how people cognitively engage with serial television and how this format differs from cinema. We will discuss this question from two different approaches, involving psychological science and film studies.

Speakers:

Zoe Shacklock, PhD, Lecturer in Film Studies, University of St Andrews

Joseph Magliano, Professor of educational psychology, Department of Learning Sciences, Georgia State University

[YouTube link available on our website](#)

Seminar 8: Imagination

[17th of September 2021, from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm UK time](#)

Imagination is a fundamental aspect of human cognition and of our experience of the world. What is the role of this process when we encounter a work of art? We will discuss how scientists and researchers in the humanities theorise this concept.

Speakers:

Judith Wolfe, Professor of Philosophical Theology, University of St Andrews

Gerald Cupchik, Professor of Psychology, University of Toronto Scarborough

Seminar 9: Fashion

[24th of September 2021, from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm UK time](#)

Fashion is one of the most significant cultural phenomena of our times. But can fashion influence our moods and communicate cultural status? We will discuss this question from two different approaches, involving psychological science and theology.

Speakers:

Robert Covolo, PhD, Center for Pastoral Residents, Christ Church Sierra Madre

Carolyn Mair, Professor of Psychology for Fashion, Independent scholar

[YouTube link available on our website](#)

Oct. 2021 Events

Seminar 10: Music

1st of October 2021, from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm UK time

How do we engage cognitively and emotionally with music? We will discuss mechanisms of music processing involving multidisciplinary approaches to music perception and experience.

Speakers:

Julia Merrill, PhD, Systematic musicologist, Max Planck Institute for Empirical Aesthetics

Eric Clarke, Heather Professor of Music, University of Oxford

Seminar 11: Text and Image

8th of October 2021, from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm UK time

Can art be considered a form of communication? Comics are the 9th art, integrating text and images to describe temporality and telling stories. We will explore how this unique visual language can give us insights about human communication.

Speakers:

Neil Cohn, Associate Professor, Tilburg University

Matteo Farinella, PhD, multimedia producer for Columbia University Zuckerman Institute

Seminar 12: Cinema

15th of October 2021, from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm UK time

We will discuss the cinematic experience from a multidisciplinary point of view, trying to address fundamental issues, such as: How do we cognitively and emotionally engage with films and visual storytelling? Which are the embodied mechanisms that are activated while we watch moving images?

Speakers:

Tim Smith, Professor of Cognitive Psychology, Birkbeck University

Lucy Fife Donaldson, Senior Lecturer in Film Studies, University of St Andrews

Seminar 13: Perception of portraits

29th of October 2021, from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm UK time

Portrait is one of the oldest art forms. How we perceive portraits? We will discuss psychological mechanisms of face perception and aesthetic judgments.

Speakers:

David Perrett, Professor, School of Psychology and Neuroscience, University of St Andrews

Jesse Prinz, Professor of Philosophy, The Graduate Center, The City University of New York

Nov. 2021 Events

Seminar 14: Creativity

5th of November 2021, from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm UK time

How do people create works of art? What makes us perceive an artefact as creative? Which are the mechanisms that enable us to respond so powerfully to the products of creativity? We will discuss this fascinating topic by comparing the perspectives of psychology and philosophy.

Rebecca Chamberlain, Lecturer in Psychology, Goldsmiths University of London
Dustin Stokes, Associate Professor in Philosophy, University of Utah

Seminar 15: Art and morality

12th of November 2021, from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm UK time

The beautiful and the good: are aesthetic judgments related to moral ones? And if so, why do we have the tendency to attribute moral qualities to certain aesthetic qualities? We will discuss the state of the art and the relevance of this topic in the aesthetics and art domain, combining insights from neuroscience and philosophy.

Speakers:

Anjan Chatterjee, Professor of Neurology, Psychology, and Architecture, University of Pennsylvania

Panos Paris, Lecturer in Philosophy, Cardiff University

Seminar 16: Fiction

19th of November 2021, from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm UK time

Fiction can be broadly described in terms of imaginary narratives of different formats (e.g., writings, films, theatre, poetry, comics). It is not yet clear whether cognitive and affective engagement with fiction is different from engagement with real-life events. We will discuss this question from different perspectives, involving psychological and philosophical approaches.

Speakers:

Keith Oatley, Professor Emeritus of Cognitive Psychology, University of Toronto

Jérôme Pelletier, Associate Professor of Philosophy, Institut Jean Nicod, Ecole Normale Supérieure and University of Brest

Seminar 17: Multi-sensory perception and art

26th of November 2021, from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm UK time

Art often does not involve all our senses, as real-life perception does. We cannot hear paintings or touch music. Nevertheless, engagement with art involves multi-modal aspects of human perception. We will discuss this question from two different perspectives, involving psychology and art.

Speakers:

Charles Spence, Professor, Department of Experimental Psychology, University of Oxford

Carol Steen, Artist, Professor, Touro College

Dec. 2021 Events

Seminar 18: Art and science: collaboration projects

3rd of December 2021, from 10:00am to 11:30am

Art and science are often seen in opposition, as two conflicting ways of looking at the world. Integrating those two disciplines is a challenging task, however the last two decades have witnessed an increasing research interest in the field of aesthetics. How can psychology and art collaborate in order to deepen our understanding of art?

Speakers:

Johan Wagemans, Full Professor of Experimental Psychology, K.U. Leuven
Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven aka AMVK, artist, MS Fine Arts

Seminar 19: Art in context

10th of December 2021, from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm UK time

Researchers in empirical aesthetics often investigate how humans perceive art in unnatural settings, such as a psychology lab. How does the context in which we encounter a work of art (a gallery, a lab, a street) affect the way we engage with it? How to fill the gap between aesthetic science and aesthetic experience?

Speakers:

Alistair Rider, Senior Lecturer in Art History, University of St Andrews
Alexis Makin, Lecturer in Psychology, University of Liverpool

Seminar 20: Learning from fiction

17th of December 2021, from 3:30 pm to 5:00 pm UK time

People often interact with the worlds of fiction, involving cinema, serial television, theatre, etc. Can engagement with fiction influence our cognitive abilities in everyday life? We will discuss this question from different perspectives, involving philosophy and psychology.

Speakers:

Anna Abraham, E. Paul Torrance Professor, University of Georgia
Gregory Currie, Professor of Philosophy, University of York

For more details about the ArC seminar, please visit our website:

<https://artinconversation.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/>

Scientific committee

Francesca Borgo (School of Art History)

Berys Gaut (Department of Philosophy)

Laura Moretti (School of Art History)

Erin Robbins (School of Psychology and Neuroscience)

Sam Rose (School of Art History)

Dhanraj Vishwanath (School of Psychology and
Neuroscience)

Brendan Wolfe (School of Divinity)

Judith Wolfe (School of Divinity)

Organising committee

Marina Iosifian (School of Divinity)

Nicole Ruta (School of Divinity)

Follow our YouTube channel:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/
UCqwtlgk-mf8Ei2uHSGHoNpQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqwtlgk-mf8Ei2uHSGHoNpQ)

Follow us on Twitter @ArcSeminar

All seminars take place on Teams. If you would like to attend one or more of our events, please contact the organisers, **Nicole Ruta** or **Marina Iosifian**. We would be happy to add you to the ArC community!

<https://artinconversation.wp.st-andrews.ac.uk/>