



The Research Group NEUROINFORMATICS, Faculty of Computer Science, at the University of Vienna cordially invites you to the *hybrid event* \*

## Colloquium

# Aesthetic and affective aspects of scene perception

with **Prof. Dirk Bernhardt-Walther**

(Faculty of Arts & Science, University of Toronto, Canada)

**When?** 22<sup>nd</sup> of July, from 4:00 pm

**Where?** Lecture hall 3 (HS 3), 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Faculty of Computer Science  
Währinger Straße 29, A-1090 Vienna  
<https://univienne.zoom.us/j/93192989157?pwd=a1ZONitlb2p5UklnTEpYN2xmd0sxUT09>  
Meeting ID: 931 9298 9157, Passcode: 305225

### Abstract

People have an inherent aesthetic preference for certain vistas over others. In fact, they will often go to great lengths in order to seek out or to avoid particular views. Hotel rooms with a view of the ocean garner higher rates than rooms with a view of the parking lot, for example. Artists, architects and designers attempt to predict which views are aesthetically pleasing, using a combination of intuition and heuristic rules. Beyond aesthetic evaluations, people often have strong emotional reactions to scenes. Indeed, quickly scanning an environment to determine relative threat is an essential part of survival.

Over the last few years, my lab has investigated several components related to the aesthetics and rapid affective evaluation of scenes. I will present this accumulated work in a framework of aesthetic appreciation of scenes.



## Bio

Having been trained as a physicist and computer scientist, Dirk Bernhardt-Walther earned a Ph.D. in Computation and Neural Systems at the California Institute of Technology in 2006, working with Christof Koch on modeling visual attention and object recognition. After a brief stint at York University in Toronto he became a Beckman Postdoctoral Fellow at the Beckman Institute at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. There he worked with Diane Beck and Fei-Fei Li on natural scene perception and on decoding natural scene categories from fMRI data. From 2010 until 2014, Dr. Bernhardt-Walther was an Assistant Professor of Psychology and from 2012 until 2014 Associate Director of the Center for Cognitive and Brain Sciences at The Ohio State University. In 2014, he moved to the University of Toronto, where he is now Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology. In his work Dirk aims to decipher the neural mechanisms that underlie the perception of complex real-world scenes. He also works on advancing methods for multivariate analysis of neuroimaging data.

\* More Information & COVID-19 compliance:

- We ask the participants to wear a mask in all public interior spaces of the Faculty.
- We ask the participants to present a valid access test (tested, vaccinated or recovered) upon entry to the event.
- We ask the participants to sign the attendance list.
- The premises are cleaned and disinfected.