

Affect & Emotion

Newsletter of the NCCR Affective Sciences

THIRD PHASE
2013 - 2017



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Publications

- Bombardi, D., Schmid Mast, M., Brosch, T., & Sander, D. (2013). How interpersonal power affects empathic accuracy: Differential roles of mentalizing versus mirroring? *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, 7, 375.
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EDITORIAL



A new phase, a new home, and even more interdisciplinary affective sciences!

Happy New Year! We enter the third phase of the National Center of Competence in Research (NCCR) in Affective Sciences. Since 2005, our major aim has been to promote interdisciplinary research on emotion and affective phenomena. Given the level of integrated research achieved over the years, it is very likely that with 14 core research projects and 6 research foci, our team of more than one hundred researchers will make this new phase more productive than ever. Our other key activities will continue to grow too: Education and Training, Communication and Knowledge Transfer, Advancement of Women, and the Applied Affective Sciences.

We also found a new home that welcomes the NCCR together with our permanent Centre Interfacultaire en Sciences Affectives (CISA): the new Campus at Sécheron that brings together researchers from the University of Geneva and from the EPFL in the context of an extraordinary research environment including new research facilities and equipment, the Center for Neuroprosthetics and the Human Brain Project (HBP). We are thrilled to be the first Center to initiate this endeavor in the Campus!

This is indeed a Happy New Year, and a Happy New Phase for our Center! ■

David Sander

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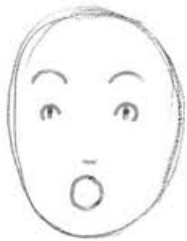
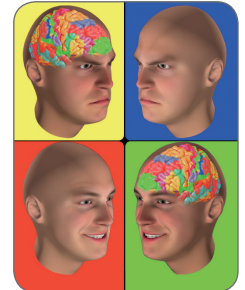
APPRAISAL / VALUES / NORMS

Affective Relevance: Nature, Determinants and Effects

David Sander

University of Geneva

This project aims to improve the conceptualization and the empirical study of the mechanism of appraised affective relevance. It investigates the nature of appraised affective relevance (particularly its different types and their neuronal substrates), its determinants (particularly goals and values) and its effects on other non-evaluative cognitive systems (particularly attention, memory, and decision-making).



Emotion, Attention & Value

Julien Deonna / Fabrice Teroni

University of Geneva / University of Bern

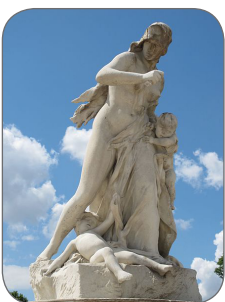
The aim of this project is to elucidate the relations between emotions and attention, and to investigate their consequences for our understanding of emotion and value.

Affective Dynamics & Aesthetic Emotions: Contempt in Literature

Patrizia Lombardo

University of Geneva

This project focuses on contempt considered as an emotion or attitude. In literature, satire and irony are the most important ways in which contempt is represented or expressed. Literary examples show that contempt has a temporal dimension and that it is possible to distinguish various types of contempt - bitter, desperate, self-defensive, self-destructive, didactic - addressed towards a single person, groups or the whole humankind. The investigation shows that literature and the arts can provide knowledge of human affectivity, and that the emotions have a narrative structure.



The Translation of the Emotions: From Greece to Rome

Damien Nelis

University of Geneva

This project aims to provide a study of the emotions in Seneca's great tragic play Medea. Attention will be focused on Seneca's imitation of Euripides' Medea and his use of key Latin poetic models, especially Vergil and Ovid. This intertextual approach will be combined with the study of the relationship between Seneca's tragic poetry and the Stoic philosophy of the emotions.

INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES / DISPOSITION

Training Self and Emotion Regulation: Neurobiological Foundations and Behavioural Consequences

Ernst Fehr

University of Zürich

This project investigates the impact of two cognitive interventions on children's ability to self-regulate and control emotions, prosocial and risk-taking behavior, delay of gratification and academic performance. In addition, it will investigate the neurobiological consequences of training self-regulation and the different factors associated with individual differences in training success.



Work & Emotions: Experiencing and Regulating Emotions, Issues of Self-involvement, and Relationships to Well-being and Performance

Franziska Tschan / Achim Elfering / Norbert Semmer

University of Neuchâtel / University of Bern

We study the experience and regulation of emotion in work settings, focusing on issues of self-involvement, and their effects on well-being and performance. Using various methods (e.g., observation, questionnaires, experiments), and settings (e.g., health care, surgery, mixed occupations), we investigate associations between a variety of stressors and resources, and well-being/ health (e.g., subjective well-being, cortisol, sleep quality; back pain, self-esteem) and performance.



Power and Emotion Recognition Accuracy

Marianne Schmid Mast / David Sander

University of Neuchâtel / University of Geneva

Using behavioral and neuroimaging paradigms, this project investigates how and when interpersonal power is related to emotion recognition accuracy. The main focus is on the effects of power on two brain systems related to accurate emotion recognition, namely mirroring and mentalizing.



Influence of Emotional Relevance and Sleep on Learning and Future Decision Making

Sophie Schwartz

University of Geneva

Our main aim is to better understand how emotional relevance guides the selection of information to be further processed and consolidated during sleep. We also ask whether emotions experienced in dreams influence the consolidation (or forgetting) of emotionally-loaded mental representations, and whether this influence may depend on the activation of emotional and reward brain circuits.

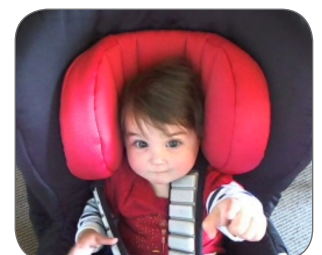


The Interests in the Making

Fabrice Clement

University of Neuchâtel

The main aim of this project is to understand how the social environment influences people's appraisal. We hypothesize that the detection of interest in others' expressions plays a major role in detecting what is socially relevant. In a developmental perspective, we use an eye-tracker to observe the reactions of 9-18 month year olds when others express interest towards an object. With adults, we observe how socio-cultural origins can influence what people consider as socially relevant and "interesting".



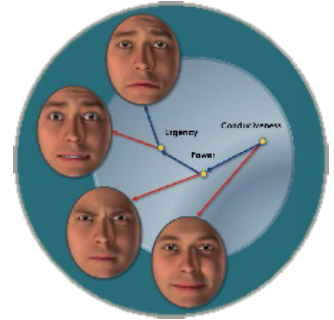
SYSTEMS / DYNAMICS

Computational Modeling of Appraisal Theory of Emotion

Klaus Scherer

University of Geneva

This project tests the prediction that emotional responses are elicited and differentiated by appraisal. Specific areas of study are the interaction and integration of checks, the patterning of motor expression, and the resulting emotional experience and verbalization. Current research foci concern different types of valence, especially with respect to aesthetic and epistemic emotions, and the computational modelling of emotion production and perception processes.

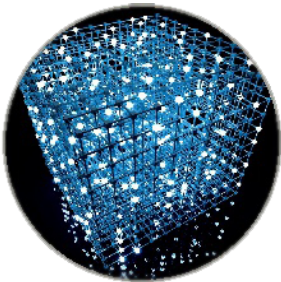


From Elicitation to Emotional Response: Neural Mechanisms of Patterning and System Synchronization

Didier Grandjean

University of Geneva

This project aims to experimentally examine how emotions are related to action tendencies and actual behaviors. More specifically, we will focus on the processing of binding between environmental perceptual aspects, internal states, and the organization of behaviors. In order to investigate these relationships we will use brain imaging, virtual reality settings, human intracranial recordings and autonomous peripheral reactions and their links with motor actions.



Brain Networks of Emotions and their Influence on Cognitive Processes

Patrik Vuilleumier

University of Geneva

People differ in the way they react to emotional events. This project aims to identify the neural processes underlying individual differences in emotion perception and emotion regulation, including their relation to attachment style, self/other representations, and empathy. The project also examines how emotional events may induce long-lasting effects on brain states, and thus modify subsequent behavior or cognitive performance.

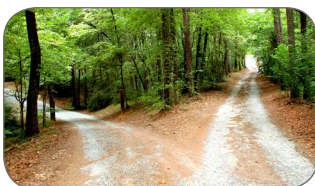


Emotional Future Thinking

Martial Van der Linden / Arnaud d'Argembeau

University of Geneva / University of Liège

This project aims at investigating the characteristics and functions of mental representations of future emotional events, their organization and structure within the cognitive system, their impact on the appraisal of current emotional situations, and their modulation by individual differences in personality traits and psychological symptoms.



Affective Computing and Emotion Awareness in Computer-Mediated Interaction (EATMINT)

Mireille Beetrancourt / Thierry Pun

University of Geneva / Distance Learning University Switzerland

This project investigates the importance of being aware of others' emotions during a computer-mediated collaborative task (CMC). The two main objectives are: to design and implement real time systems for automatic emotion awareness in CMC based on physiological and behavioral measurements; and to study the role of emotion awareness in CMC with respect to task performance, emotion monitoring and regulation.



Focus Applied Affective Sciences

Marcello Mortillaro

University of Geneva

The research focus Applied Affective Sciences (AAS) aims to facilitate applied studies (by providing administrative, legal, and scientific support to NCCR researchers) and to make applied research conducted at the NCCR more visible. The AAS focus is intended to be the first contact for external institutions (public or private) interested in a research partnership with the NCCR.

Focus Affective Computing

Guillaume Chanel

University of Geneva

Affective computing aims at creating emotionally intelligent interfaces able to detect and synthesize emotional expressions of affect. The goal of the Affective Computing focus is to gather researchers from various disciplines to design computerized models of affect and to bring applications out of the lab to the society.



Focus Gender

Marianne Schmid Mast, Elena Cañadas

University of Neuchâtel

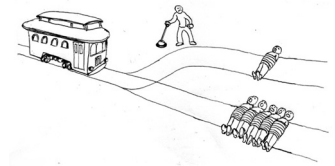
The Gender focus reunites emotion researchers that have an interest in gender, including but not limited to differences between men and women in emotional expression, experience, and physiology. The Gender focus aims to understand the gender differences and similarities in emotion expression and experience.

Focus Moral Emotions

Florian Cova

University of Geneva

For the third phase, the Moral Emotions focus will concentrate its activities on the study of two particular emotions: contempt and “being moved”. We will investigate the nature and object of contempt while studying the impact of “being moved” on prosocial behavior. Among our planned activities are the publication of a special issue of *Topoi* on moral emotions and of a collective interdisciplinary volume on contempt.



Focus Language and Culture

Aglæ Pizzone, Cristina Soriano

University of Geneva

During its third phase, the focus Language and Culture will expand its scope, both in space and in time. Building on the now published GRID study, the inquiry on the language-emotion relation will now include local, minority and pre-modern languages, and it will be combined with other methodologies like metaphor analysis. The focus will also explore if and how emotions affect and shape cultural selection and transmission.

Focus Emotion, Virtual Reality & Videogames

Swann Pichon, David Sander & Daphné Bavelier

University of Geneva

This new focus aims at supporting and developing projects which use virtual worlds in the affective sciences. Virtual worlds provide powerful, interactive and immersive environments that can be used to induce and study emotions. These technologies also have the potential of becoming of significant value for education and training of skills ranging from emotion regulation to prosocial competencies.



Academic meetings

Gods and Performers: The Affective Semantics of Voices and Sounds. (May 29, 2013). The research day organized by the Focus Language and Culture explored the affective meaning of voices and sounds with a number of talks from linguistics, classics, literature, the history of religion and music studies. <http://www.affective-sciences.org/events/focus-day-language-and-culture-gods-and-performers-affective-semantics-voices-and-sounds>

Music, gestures and emotions (June 3-5, 2014). International Colloquium organized by the Swiss Center for Affective Sciences and the Geneva University of Music on the production and the perception of gestures in music. Information on http://www.affective-sciences.org/Inscription_Colloquium_MusicalGestures

International Summer School in Affective Sciences (ISSAS 2013) (August 3-13, 2013). The fifth edition of ISSAS took place at the Château de Bossey around the topic "Emotion, Morality and Value". Leading scholars in psychology, philosophy, literature, classics, sociology and neuroscience from Europe, Canada and the US met with 31 young researchers from 12 different countries to investigate the relationship between emotions and values by focusing on the role of emotions in our moral lives. <http://www.affective-sciences.org/issas>

Workshop on Affective Brain Computer Interfaces (aBCIs) (September 2, 2013). The third workshop on affective brain-computer interfaces was co-organized by Guillaume Chanel, Christian Mühl, Brendan Allison and Anton Nijholt. This third edition explored the advantages and limitations of using neuro-physiological signals as a modality for the automatic recognition of affective and cognitive states, and the possibility of using this information about the user's state for applications in the domains of health, the arts, and entertainment, among others. The workshop successfully brought together researchers and practitioners to present state-of-the-art progress and their vision about the future of aBCIs. Didier Grandjean was the invited speaker of the workshop and presented his work on "Brain waves in aesthetic and emotional experiences". <http://hmi.ewi.utwente.nl/abc2013/>

International Conference on Affective Computing and Intelligent Interaction (September 2-5, 2013). After Beijing in 2005, Lisboa in 2007, Amsterdam in 2009, and Memphis in 2011, over 200 researchers converged in Geneva on September 2-5, 2013 for the 5th biannual ACII conference. This ACII edition was organized by several members of the Swiss Center for Affective Sciences including, Thierry Pun, Guillaume Chanel, Theodoros Kostoulas, Inès Mehu-Blantar, Marc Mehu, and Marcello Mortillaro. The ACII conference series has become the premier international forum for research on affective human-machine interac-

tion and intelligent affective systems. This ACII edition strived to emphasize the humanistic side of affective computing by promoting research at the crossroads between engineering and human sciences, including biological, social and cultural aspects of human life. <http://www.acii2013.org/>

PENS-IBRO Summer School for Training in Brain Imaging (August 25-September 13, 2013). Patrik Vuilleumier, Sophie Schwartz, and other researchers in the neurosciences and affective sciences organized a series of courses and lab workshops to train an international group of students on various neuroimaging techniques (MRI, EEG, TMS, etc.) applied to cognition and emotion studies. The summer school featured several lectures by leading experts in the brain sciences.

Dreams, Sleep, Emotion Workshop (September, 13, 2013). François Jaquet co-organized, with Clare McCumhaill, the Thumos international workshop "Dreams, Sleep, Emotion" at the University of Geneva.

Film, Emotions, and Affective Computing (October 3, 2013). The interproject Affective Computing and Film Highlights (Patrizia Lombardo, Thierry Pun, Guillaume Chanel and Theodoros Kostoulas) organized an ecological experiment at the Grütli Theater. The physiological and behavioral reactions of more than 35 spectators were recorded synchronously while watching the movie "Taxi driver" by Martin Scorsese. The goal of this event was twofold. First, disseminating the activities of the Swiss Center for Affective Sciences by demonstrating the kind of research carried out at the Center. Second, collecting a data corpus in an ecological situation to answer the research questions of the inter-project. <http://agenda.unige.ch/events/view/7078> and <http://www.affective-sciences.org/events/film-emotions-and-affective-computing>

Contempt/ le Mépris (October 18-19, 2013). Colloquium co-organized by Patrizia Lombardo (Project "Contempt in Literature") and Damien Nelis (Project "The Translation of the Emotions: From Greece to Rome"). <http://www.unige.ch/lettres/philo/thumos/Thumos/Contempt.html>

Penser le cinéma (November 29, 2013). Colloquium organized and directed by Patrizia Lombardo and Julien Zanetta (Project "Contempt in Literature"). <http://agenda.unige.ch/events/view/7970> ■



Grants received and major achievements

Selma Aybeck (Project ‘Brain Networks of Emotions and their Influence on the Cognitive Processes’) obtained an Ambizione postdoctoral fellowship, a UNIGE “Boursières d’excellence” and a Leenards Foundation grant to work on emotion-motor interaction in hysterical conversion disorders in collaboration with Patrik Vuilleumier.

Elena Cañadas (Project ‘Power and Emotion Recognition Accuracy’) was awarded the Early Career Publication Award for her paper entitled «Social Categories as a Context for the Allocation of Attentional Control» published in the Journal of Experimental Psychology. The award was announced in August 2013 by the European Society of Cognitive Psychology.

Julien Deonna and Fabrice Teroni (Project ‘Emotion, Attention and Value’) were awarded a 3-year (2013-2016) SNF project entitled “Sensing as Activity: Its Impact on the Structure of Perceptual and Emotional Experience”. A new postdoctoral researcher will be hired for 3 years.

Judith Dominguez-Borras (Project ‘Brain Networks of Emotions and their Influence on the Cognitive Processes’) obtained an Ambizione postdoctoral fellowship for a project on emotion processing in temporal lobe epilepsy in collaboration with Patrik Vuilleumier and Margitta Seck (HUG).

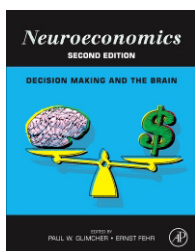
David Sander (Project ‘Affective Relevance: Nature, Determinants and Effects’) was awarded the National Latsis Prize 2013. Worth 100,000 Swiss francs, the National Latsis Prize is one of the most prestigious scientific awards in Switzerland. Each year, the Swiss National Science Foundation awards the prize on behalf of the Latsis Foundation to researchers under the age of 40, in recognition of their special contribution to science in Switzerland. Further information can be found in the latest edition of the Swiss research magazine “Horizons”: www.snsf.ch

Norbert K. Semmer (Project ‘Work and Emotions: Experiencing and Regulating Emotions, Issues of self-involvement, and Relationships to Well-being and Performance’) was appointed member of the scientific advisory council of the German “Bundesanstalt für Arbeits-schutz und Arbeitsmedizin” (German equivalent to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, NIOSH).



New books

Ernst Fehr (University of Zurich) and Paul Glimcher (New York University) served as editors for the handbook *Neuroeconomics: Decision Making and the Brain, second edition*, Academic Press: London, 2013 (<http://store.elsevier.com/product.jsp?isbn=9780124160088&pagename=search>)



Dr Iona Latu, Prof. Marianne Schmid Mast and Prof Susanne Kaiser have edited *gender and Emotion, An Interdisciplinary Perspective*. This book is published by Peter Lang, <http://www.peterlang.com/index.cfm?event=cmp.ccc.seitenstruktur.detailseiten&seitentyp=produkt&pk=67175&cid=539> ■

Knowledge transfer activities

Continuing education for vocational school principals (September 2-3, 2013). Franziska Tschan and Norbert K. Semmer gave a workshop on 'Communication and Conflict' at the Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training.

Interactive music performance, ACII 2013 artistic event (September 4, 2013). VoXP is a "musical laboratory" composed by four musicians, vocalists/performers (Sarah Jamali, Herve Adrione, Landry Biaba and Claire Trouilloud) from different cultural origins and musical backgrounds. Using the various sounds from their voices, they create improvised music ranging from experimental noise to strange unknown melodies. Mood Conductor is a web application developed by Mathieu Barthet, George Fazekas and Matthias Georgi allowing members of the audience to send emotion-related directions to the performers using their smartphones, by selecting emotions in the two-dimensional Arousal/Valence space, characterized by mood tags. The combination of VoXP performances with the Mood Conductor Interactive application results in unique improvisations driven by real-time visual feedback of emotion trajectories using clustering and color. Pictures and a video of the event will be available at: <https://www.facebook.com/VoXPerformance>

Continuing education for medical experts in the field of blood transfusion (September 6, 2013). Norbert K. Semmer gave a talk on "Patient Safety" at the "Swiss Transfusion" conference.

« Qu'est-ce qu'une émotion? La logique du cœur » and « Les émotions face à la fiction » (September 22, 2013). Federico Lauria and Amanda Garcia took part in the

« Etats Généraux de la philosophie », an event which presents the vitality of Swiss philosophy to its academic and non-academic audience: <http://www.philovaud.ch/eg.html>

12-14 de l'égalité, University of Geneva (September 27, 2013). Anita Konzelmann Ziv animated a round table on the question: "Indignez-vous!" – De quoi et pourquoi? <http://agenda.unige.ch/events/view/6984>

Swiss Nurse Directors Association (SVPL) (October 19, 2013) Nicola Jacobshagen gave a presentation on "Appreciation at Work: New Findings".

Le sommeil des enfants et des jeunes: Neurosciences et santé publique (October 29, 2013) Sophie Schwartz organized a day of continuing education for teachers (elementary and secondary) on the importance of sleep in children and adolescents. Distinct facets of the role of sleep in learning and emotion regulation were presented. A visit to the Brain and Behavior Laboratory of the University of Geneva was also organized. The event was also an introduction to a larger educative and research project on sleep in children and adolescents that started in November 2013 <http://neurocenter.unige.ch/sommeil.php>.

Analysis of driving and passengers' comfort in public transportation (October 2013). The goal of this project is the assessment of the comfort experienced in public buses, based on bus accelerometry and passengers' electrodermal responses. The project, entitled, "Adaptive Emotion Awareness Tools for Computer-Mediated INTERactions" is a collaboration of the Center with the HEPIA (Applied University, Geneva) and the TPG (Transports Publics Genevois). ■

Staff changes

Catherine Barsics joined Martial Van der Linden and Arnaud D'Argembeau's project on Emotional Future Thinking as a postdoctoral researcher on October 1, 2013.

Ursula Beermann joined Klaus Scherer's project on the Computational Modeling of Appraisal Theory of Emotion as a postdoctoral researcher on July 15, 2013.

Ana Cubillo joined Ernst Fehr's project Training Self and Emotion Regulation: Neurobiological Foundations and Behavioral Consequences as a postdoctoral researcher on September 1, 2013.

Richard Dub joined the project Emotion, Attention and Value as a postdoc within Deonna's SNF Professorship for the period 09.2013 - 09.2014. He works on the philosophy of psychopathology.

Natalia Fernandez joined Patrik Vuilleumier's LABNIC (Lab in Neurology & Imaging of Cognition) for a PhD on the effects of music training on cognitive and affective functions.

Nadège Foudon re-joined the project Interests in the Making as a postdoctoral fellow with Prof. Fabrice Clément on November 1, 2013.

Christa Gfeller left the project Work and Emotions to take a job at Postfinance.

Morgane Gramont joined the project on Adaptive Emotion Awareness Tools for Computer-Mediated Interaction as an intern for the Affective Computing focus. He works on enhancing the Affective Tetris game for better emotional adaptation (01/08/2013 – 31/09/2013).

Staff changes

Maria Kottwitz left the project Work and Emotions to take a job at the University of Giessen, Germany.

Audric Mazzietti joined David Sander's project on Affective Relevance in order to work on the effects of perceived facial attractiveness on attentional capture.

Céline Mühlethaler left the project Work and Emotions to take a job at the Zürich University of Applied Science (ZHAW).

Hichem Naar joined the project Emotion, Attention and Value as a postdoctoral researcher within Deonna's SNF Professorship for the period 09.2013 - 09.2014. He works on emotional dispositions.

Elena Patsenka left the project Brain Networks of Emotions and their Influence on Cognitive Processes for a new postdoctoral position at Wisconsin University, Madison, to work with Prof. R. Davidson.

Marco Pedrotti was hired in the project Interest in the Making by Prof. Fabrice Clément to work on eye-tracking experiments. He started on January 1, 2014.

Vanessa Sennwald joined David Sander's project on Affective Relevance in order to start a PhD on reward processing (liking and wanting) in sexual desire.

Emma Tieffenbach ended her post-doc position in the project Emotion, Attention and Value on August 31st, and begun her Marie-Heim Vöglin project on economic values on September 2013.

Lingdan Wu joined Klaus Scherer's project on Computational Modeling of Appraisal Theory of Emotion as a postdoctoral researcher on August 15, 2013.

Completed PhDs

Elizabeth Clark-Polner successfully defended her PhD thesis on "How state and trait percepts relate: How emotion and social judgment interact to influence perception and behavior" on December 20th, 2013 at the University of Geneva, under the direction of David Sander.

Sven Gross successfully defended his PhD thesis on "Kurzfristige Stressreaktionen und langfristige Stresspathogene" (Short-term stress reactions and long term stress pathogenes) on October 4, 2013 at the University of Bern, under the direction of Norbert K. Semmer.

Anita Keller successfully defended her PhD thesis on "Development of job resources and personal resources among job newcomers" on October 3, 2013 at the University of Bern, under the direction of Norbert K. Semmer.

Céline Mühlethaler successfully defended her PhD thesis "Task-related achievements at work: Conceptual background and empirical associations with subjective well-being" on September 27, 2013 at the University of Bern, under the direction of Norbert K. Semmer ■

Upcoming events

Concert and Dance events (February 1-2, 2014). The Geneva Emotion and Music Lab (Gestème) (<http://cms2.unige.ch/fapse/neuroemo/gemlab/research/gesteme/>) will organize two public events at the BFM (Bâtiment des Forces Motrices) in Geneva to launch their new series of experiments on music gestures and emotion.

Vagaries of Desir (February 14, 2014). Workshop organized by the project on Emotion, Attention and Value.

Annual Research Forum (ARF). The NCCR's Annual Research Forum will take place on February 13-14, 2014. All researchers are expected to come and present their latest results.

Festival Musiques et Sciences (April 2-6, 2014) The second edition of this Festival is entitled "Composer le Geste". It is organized by the University of Geneva in cooperation with the Geneva University of Music and the Geneva Grand Théâtre. The program will include an international scientific symposium, workshops, master classes, educational activities and demonstrations, as well as concerts.

Montreux Jazz Festival (July 4-19, 2014). The NCCR Affective Sciences will organize workshops on Music and Emotion, in collaboration with the Haute Ecole de Musique de Genève (HEM).

Nuit de la science "Tout ce qui brille...n'est pas or", July 5-6, 2014. The NCCR Affective Sciences will participate in the next « Nuit de la science ». As usual, an exhibition stand and workshops will be planned. We are looking for people to be involved in this event. Note that it is a great opportunity to do surveys and inquiries with the general public. If you are interested, please contact Carole Varone at carole.varone@unige.ch

International Summer School in Affective Sciences (ISSAS 2014) (6-14, July 2014). The sixth ISSAS will take place at the Château de Bossey around the topic "Emotion Meets Action" <http://www.affective-sciences.org/issas> ■



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Affect & Emotion

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For further information on our work, see our website
www.affective-sciences.org