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Measuring beauty through the brain**04. Dezember 2014, 17:00, Hörsaal HS G
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Neuroaesthetics does not try to explain what beauty is. Instead, it tries to address a more limited, but important, question: what brain mechanisms enable us to experience beauty? In this talk, I will show fMRI experiments suggesting that a single neural characteristic is heavily involved in the experience of beauty: activity in the medial orbitofrontal cortex (mOFC). This area becomes active whenever subjects—regardless of age and cultural background and also regardless of stimulus modality and property—report that they perceive a stimulus as beautiful. The experience of something as beautiful implies making a judgment on it, and there is evidence that certain brain systems are apparently specific for aesthetic judgment, which includes the mOFC, and other systems that aesthetic judgments share with other perceptual judgments (such as brightness). Finally, I will show the latest results of an experiment designed to address whether two distinct experiences—beauty and sublimity—have different neural correlates.