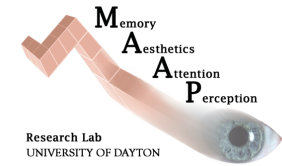




Evaluations of Aesthetics of Faces in Portraits versus Photographs

Daniel A. Hurlburt & Kaitlin E. Key
Advisors: Susan T. Davis Ph.D. & Adam J. Barnas
The University of Dayton



Background

When viewing a painting, a person experiences an aesthetic process consisting of, first, visual appraisal of the painting to satisfy cognitive functioning and, second, creation of an aesthetic appreciation for the specific display (Locher et al., 2006). In previous studies, it has been found that a person's first reaction to a piece of artwork is focused on the style, form, or expressiveness of the aesthetic display; conversely a photograph is first judged by analysis of symmetry, balance, or complexity. These latter qualities can be assessed an average of 50 ms, while the initial reactions common to artwork take at least 100 ms to form because these qualities are more detail-oriented (Locher, 2007).

The present study evaluates aesthetic preferences for the facial depiction in both paintings and photographs. The framework for describing the aesthetic experience associated with art includes five main stages: perceptual analyses, implicit memory integration, explicit classification, cognitive mastering and evaluation. Utilization of this framework results in both a measure of aesthetic pleasure and a measure of aesthetic judgment (Wallraven et al., 2009).

Hypotheses

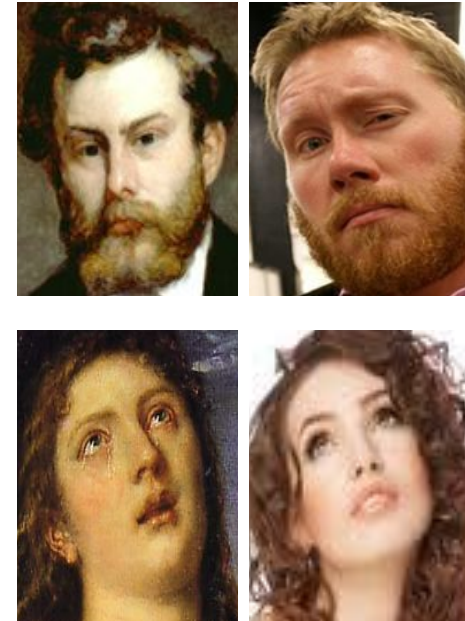
- We hypothesized that the faces in portraits would be rated higher for pleasingness than faces in the photographs.
- The higher pleasingness rating is likely due to the greater aesthetic appreciation associated with art. The greater aesthetic appreciation for the artistic representation results from a person's in-depth appraisal of multidimensional qualities of art, such as style, form, and expressiveness of the piece of art. These qualities are not necessarily appraised when a person views a photograph.

Method

- Before the main study, stimuli will be normed for likeness of the painting to the photograph. The norming data will be collected using a Likert-type scale.
- The present study will evaluate aesthetic preferences for faces, specifically relating to those influenced by art.
- Portraits and photographs of faces will be matched for variables such as gender, artistic medium, ethnicity, face shape, facial hair, hair color, eye color, and facial position (full or profile).
- Participants will be shown 30 different portraits and 30 corresponding photographs.
- Participants will be shown faces individually in separate conditions, and then simultaneously side by side in separate condition.
- We will ask the participants to rate the faces using a 1-10 scale for each condition (1 being the least pleasing and 10 being the most pleasing).
- Data will be collected using both self-report ratings and an Arrington PC-60 Viewpoint Eye Tracker, which is a device that records physiological measures such as eye movement and pupil dilation while a participant is viewing the painting and/or photograph.

Implications

- This research will have implications in marketing and product development, as well as significance in the art realm.
- This research can also provide insight into cognitive processing models, including the development of a model for the perception of art.



References

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- Wallraven, C., Cunningham, D., Rigau, J., Feixas, M., & Sbert, M. (2009). Aesthetic appraisal of art- from eye movements to computers. *Computational Aesthetics in Graphics, Visualization, and Imaging*.