

Can Neuroscience Help Us Understand Art?

Abstract:

What is art? Why is it so important? What does it tell us about ourselves? These days it is tempting to look to neuroscience for answers to these questions. But for the most part neuroscience has yielded no insights. In this talk, Noe tries to explain why this is the case. Rather than use neuroscience to help us to better understand art and its place in our lives, he proposes that art can help us frame a more plausible conception, even a more plausible biological conception, of ourselves.

Bio:

Alva Noe is a philosopher of mind, whose research and teaching focus on perception and consciousness as well as the theory of art (with special attention to dance as well as visual art). Other interests include phenomenology, Wittgenstein, Kant, and the origins of analytic philosophy, as well as topics in the philosophies of baseball and biology. He is a weekly contributor to National Public Radio's science blog *13.7: Cosmos and Culture*.