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DR. BEATRIZ CALVO-MERINO, EMBODIED AESTHETICS: HOW SENSORIMOTOR EXPERTISE SHAPES OUR AESTHETIC PERCEPTION

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Dr. BEATRIZ CALVO-MERINO EMBODIED AESTHETICS: HOW SENSORIMOTOR EXPERTISE SHAPES OUR AESTHETIC PERCEPTION

Playing back vocalisations and presenting visual images can give important insights into Cognitive embodiment: how sensorimotor experience shapes perception Cognitive neuroscience and philosophy have attributed a special role to our own body and actions during visual perception. The ability to internally simulate/embody external events has been linked to high performance in social relevant tasks such as action understanding or emotion perception. Here we address generalized vs fragmented embodiment mechanisms in different populations that are at opposite extremes of the embodiment continuum: sensorimotor experts (dancers), which excel in their ability for embodiment, and individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), which is characterized by difficulties in embodied cognition. I will discuss studies that explore how embodied perception similarity/differences can be detected at behavioural, physiological, and neural levels in a series of task that range from visual encoding of actions to higher functions such as emotion recognition or aesthetic perception. Overall, these studies support the idea of fragmented embodiment mechanisms instead of a generalized embodiment system.

Dr. Beatriz Calvo-Merino is a Cognitive Neuroscientist working at the Psychology Department, City, University of London. She trained at University College London (UCL) and Universidad Complutense de Madrid (Spain). Her research has focused on investigating the neurocognitive mechanisms involved in action observation, often working with sensorimotor experts (i.e. professional dancers). She employs neuroimaging methods such as fMRI, EEG or TMS. Current lines of research focus on how sensorimotor experience and embodiment mechanisms participate in other visual process such as emotion perception, visual encoding and memory of actions and aesthetic experience.