

# 1st International NHS Dialogue: Neuroaesthetics and Cognitive Poetics

6-7 June 2014

Monastero dei Benedettini, Piazza Dante, 32 - Catania

All the recent discoveries in the field of neuroscience and cognitive science have produced a deep change in methodology, research and all epistemic concepts, particularly regarding the process of art production and fruition. The research group NeuroHumanitiesStudies at the University of Catania (Italy), organizes a series of interdisciplinary meetings with some of the leading researchers in the field of neuroscience and humanities. The aim of these meetings is to achieve a real dialogue between sciences and to give to researchers of various fields and nationalities the possibility of taking part to a challenging discussion.

The first of these interdisciplinary meetings will take place in Catania on the 6th and 7th of June 2014 at the Department of Humanities of the University Catania and will focus on the dialogue between the English neurobiologist Prof. Semir Zeki (UCL) founder of the new research field of Neuroaesthetics and Michael Burke professor of Rhetoric at the Humanities Faculty of UCR, Utrecht University in Netherlands. A group of invited researchers will contribute to the dialogue as respondents and will lead an open roundtable on the second day.

Official language: English

**Michael Burke** is professor of rhetoric at the Humanities Faculty of UCR, Utrecht University in Netherlands. His research interests range from rhetoric to neuroscience. He is member of several international projects about pedagogical stylistics, cognitive literary science and rhetorical pedagogy. Chair of the international Poetics and Linguistics Association (PALA) and member of many other research associations. His recent book, *Literary Reading Cognition and Emotion: An Exploration of Oceanic Mind* (2011) has broken a new path in the linguistic research field.

<http://www.ucr.nl/about-ucr/Faculty-and-Staff/Academic-Core/Pages/Prof--Dr--Michael-Burke.aspx>

**Semir Zeki** is a British neurobiologist who has specialized in studying the primate visual brain and more recently the neural correlates of affective states, such as the experience of love, desire and beauty that are generated by sensory inputs within the field of neuroesthetics. Professor of Neurobiology, since 2008 he is professor of Neuroesthetics at UCL, his last three books, *A Vision of the Brain* (1993), *Inner Vision: an exploration of art and the brain* (1999); *Splendors and Miseries of the Brain* (2009) have opened the way to a new trans-disciplinary approach to art fruition and brain functions.

<http://www.vislab.ucl.ac.uk/>

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## Program

### 6th June 2014 - Monastero dei Benedettini

9.00 - Opening and welcome speech by the Dean of the University Catania and the Chief of the Department of Humanities

9.30 - Prof. **Renata Gambino** and **Grazia Pulvirenti**, Introducing the Network program NeuroHumanitiesStudies

10.00 - Distinguished Invited Lecture: Prof. **Semir Zeki** (UCL)

11.00 - Discussion

11.30 - *Coffee break*

12.00 - Prof. **Mario Zappia** (UNICT)

12.30 - Discussion with respondents

13.00 - *Lunch*

15.00 - Distinguished Invited Lecture: Prof. Michael Burke (UCR)

16.00 - Discussion

16.30 - *Coffee break*

17.00 - Prof. **Alexander Bergs** „Coercion in Linguistics and the Arts - new insights from neuroscience“

17.30 - Discussion with respondents

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## 7th June 2014 - Monastero dei Benedettini

9.30 - Prof. **Gerhard Lauer**, The future of neuro-cognitive and Humanities Studies in Europe.

10.00 - Discussion

10.30 - **Salvatore Arcidiacono**, Introducing the web site [www.neurohumanitiestudies.eu](http://www.neurohumanitiestudies.eu)

11.00 - Discussion

11.30 - *Coffee break*

12.00 - Roundtable with respondents and guests

Impulse speeches (each max. 10 min.) with respondents: prof. **Massimo Salgaro**, prof. **Gaetano Lalomia**, prof. **Alberto Biuso**, prof. **Silvia Bonacchi**, prof. **Lorella Bosco**, prof. **Alexander Bergs**, prof. **Thomas Eder**, prof. **Gerhard Lauer**.

17.00 - Guided tour of the Monastery