Individual differences in aesthetic preferences for Interactive Objects: a Q-methodology study.

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Beauty plays an important role in everyday life. When we shop, for example, our preferences often rely on aesthetic evaluations. This decision-making process is rooted in our brain and is often based on the stimulation of multiple senses at once. To investigate how each of our senses contributes to the overall aesthetic experience Soranzo et al. (2018) studied the aesthetics of the Interactive Objects (IOs); which are objects supplied with electronics that react when handled; e.g. by vibrating, sounding or lightning-up. It emerged that people prefer objects exhibiting a "behaviour" over quiescent objects. Furthermore, interesting different aesthetics "mindsets" emerged: Some people based their aesthetic judgments on the IOs' behaviour only and other also considered a combination of IOs' texture and shape. These individual differences are important as the aesthetic response is a subjective and a whimsical experience. To further explore the individual differences in multiple stimulations, in this project we used the Q-methodology (Stephenson, 1953) together with behavioural methods. The results suggest that people can be clustered into different groups based on their aesthetic mindset. These clustered preference groups have shed more light on individual differences in aesthetics, which paves the foundation for future research.