1st Todai Perception Workshop

When?      Sat, July 5, 2014, 9:30am-7pm.
Where?     Nidai Hall, Floor 2, Hobun 2 Bldg, Hongo Campus, University of Tokyo.

URL: http://tinyurl.com/mms9c4h

Organiser: Richard Dietz (U. Tokyo)
**Program**

- **David Hilbert (U. of Illinois) (Keynote speaker)**
  **Perceivers, Circumstances, Seeing Color**
  
  *Abstract:* The fact that perceived color varies with both the circumstances of perception and with the characteristics of the perceiver is often thought to have important consequences for the ontology of color. The precise nature of these consequences is a disputed matter but nearly all agree that the ontological consequences of variability in perceived color are important. All such arguments, however, rely on substantial and controversial assumptions about perception and ontology. Consequently, it is possible to evade the force of these arguments by denying the perceptual and metaphysical assumptions implicit in the argument. In other words, these arguments primarily serve to highlight disagreements about perception in general and metaphysics in general and are only secondarily of significance for color. Facts about perceptual variation should take their place among the many interesting facts about color and color perception that any theory of color should account for and lose the special significance they have had in recent discussions of color.

- **Tetsuya Kono (Rikkyo U.)**
  **Change Your Ontology: From Direct Realism to Semiotic Ontology**
  
  *Abstract:* In this paper, first, I would like to defend direct realism, a philosophical position which affirms that the perceived world is real. I will explain one of the most sophisticated “naive” realisms, James J. Gibson’s theory of perception and information. I will try to clarify the ontological background of Gibson’s ecological psychology and to show the different role which the ontology gives to perception. Gibson’s theory is based on an ontology which is radically different from the Newtonian ontology that most psychologists and cognitive scientists implicitly presuppose. Gibson’s ontology can be called as pragmatic process ontology. Through the interpretation of Gibson’s theory of perception and his ontology, I will maintain that direct perception theory has to advance for a new step: the theory of perception based upon the semiotic ontology. The semiotic ontology admits that information is another force which can change things in the universe, besides four physical forces (gravitation, electromagnetism, strong and weak nuclear forces). Information can be the formal cause in the sense of Aristotle. I affirms finally that animal behaviors, including human behaviors, cannot be understood on the basis of the causal ontology of the physical science, but on the basis of the semiotic ontology.

- **Seishu Nishimura (Shiga U.)**
  **The Temporal Discontinuity of Perceptual Experience**
  
  *Abstract:* Is perceptual experience temporally extended? Under an assumption that perceptual experience consists of content and its vehicle, Barry Dainton distinguishes three possible answers to this question: the cinematic model, the retentional model, and the extensional model. The cinematic model maintains that neither content nor vehicle is temporally extended. The retentional model insists that only content is temporally extended. The extensional model affirms that both content and vehicle are temporally extended. My aim in this talk is to show that, among these models, the retentional model is most convincing. A clue for evaluating the persuasiveness of these models is the findings concerning the temporal discontinuity of the vehicle of perceptual content. I argue that these findings provide a prima facie reason for rejecting the extensional model. Furthermore, the cinematic model has a problem though it is
squared with the temporal discontinuity of the vehicle. One of the most promising variants of
the cinematic model is Daniel Dennett's multiple drafts model, according to which perception
consists of multitrack processes distributed at different places of the brain. As many scholars
point out, a characteristic of this model is that an integrated temporal episode is not formed at
the perception level; rather, it is formed at the belief level. This characteristic has been exposed
to a number of criticisms. I reconsider Dennett's model and argue that, although he is on the
right track in regarding temporal experience as a sort of judgmental states, we should not
endorse the belief theory of perception his model implies but a version of conceptualism which
amounts to a retentional model.

• John O’ Dea (U. Tokyo)
Sounds and What We Hear

Abstract: Recent thinking about the nature of sound divides into radically different accounts,
even among realists. One of the points of disagreement is the location of sounds; from
O'Shaugnessy, who argues that sounds are where the listener is, to the received view that
sounds are travelling as waves through a medium, to the more recent views of Casati,
O'Callaghan and others that sounds are at the distal sources of those waves. Matthew Nudds
argues, on the other hand, that two distinct phenomena are involved in the perception of sound:
the perception of the sound itself, which is the sound wave; and also the perception of the
source of the sound, which is the cause of the wave. Nudds argues that the different
accounts fail to properly distinguish these separate aspects of sound perception, and therefore
end up privileging one and dismissing the other. In this paper I discuss the distinction between
sound and source.

• Masayoshi Someya (Takachiho U.)
Naturalized Perceptual Intentionality: The Strategy of an Ecological
Approach

Abstract: The ecological approach to perception, initially proposed by James J. Gibson has
recently come to be appreciated by many philosophers. However, its genuine innovative aspects
seem to be little known to them. This approach differs greatly from other traditional views of
perception in that it emphasizes that what makes perception mainly possible is the
environmental structure rather than the perceiver’s ability. I set out to clarify this statement’s
implications for the philosophy of perception. First, I introduce the basic idea of ecological
optics, a unique theory of natural light, in the case of visual perception; then, I argue the
following three points: (1) Perceptual intentionality is naturalized as the lawful specificity of
optical information within an environmental medium (air); (2) Perceptual intentionality is not
attributed to the perceiver’s experience, but optical information; and, (3) Perception is defined
as bodily activity of searching for and discovering such information. As a consequence, I propose
that the traditional epistemological problem about perception of objective-outter-world changes,
and finally conclude that the philosophy of perception will develop into a new phase connected
to scientific investigation.
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- **This event is registration-free!**

- **If you would like to join the workshop dinner, please send an email to:**

  Richard Dietz (U. Tokyo)
  rdietz@l.u-tokyo.ac.jp