



ODJEL ZA FILOZOFIJU  
HRVATSKI STUDIJI – SVEUČILIŠTE U ZAGREBU

poziva Vas na predavanje

**Dr. sc. Mariagrazia Portera**

*Centre for Advanced Studies – South Eastern Europe, University of Rijeka*

## **Peacock's tails and birds of paradise: the “sense of beauty” from Darwin to contemporary Evolutionary Aesthetics**

---

Charles Darwin was one of the first scientists to advocate the existence of a genuine “sense of beauty” in nonhuman animals: as he writes in his *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex* (1871), the “sense of beauty has been declared to be peculiar to man. But when we behold male birds elaborately displaying their plumes and splendid colours before the females [...], it is impossible to doubt that the females admire the beauty of their male partners”. Moving from the analysis of Darwin’s theory of sexual selection, still today one of the main accounts for the genesis of the “taste for the beautiful” in human and nonhuman animals, my talk is primarily intended to give an overview of the state of the art in Evolutionary Aesthetics, young and lively discipline aiming at integrating Aesthetics with Evolutionary Theory. How and to what extent can evolution shed light on the human ability to make aesthetic judgements, appreciate artworks and engage aesthetically with the world? How did the aesthetic ability and the “taste for the beautiful” arise over the course of evolution?

---

**Mariagrazia Portera** is currently post-doctoral fellow at the Centre for Advanced Studies – South Eastern Europe, University of Rijeka. She holds a PhD in Philosophy (Aesthetics) from the University of Florence. Her research interests lie in Aesthetics, History of Philosophy, Evolutionary Biology.

<https://uniri.academia.edu/MariagraziaPortera>

**Predavanje će biti održano u četvrtak, 14. svibnja 2015. u 12.45, u dvorani Pula,  
glavna zgrada Hrvatskih studija, Znanstveno-učilišni kampus Borongaj,  
Borongajska cesta 83d, Zagreb**

[www.hrstud.unizg.hr](http://www.hrstud.unizg.hr)

[www.upf.hr](http://www.upf.hr)