

The Genealogy of Genius – Brainpower & Creativity



Given the fervour surrounding the current series 'Genius' on the National Geographic Channel, plus Cheltenham Science Festival's focus on the brain and mastering memory, this illustrated talk investigates the interaction between the brain and nervous system within the realm of the Arts. Perception and memory are often keyways to creativity in painting, music and literature. This is subject to a unique wiring of the right and left hemispheres of the brain, which allows access to reserves of creativity in the prefrontal cortex in particular.

A treatise on the 'Genetic Studies of Genius' provides a rationale for genius by tracing lineage. More recently this has culminated in 'The Leonardo Project' tracing genealogy in the consummate Renaissance Man. In tracking down da Vinci's DNA and scrutinising his genetic make-up, specialists intend to replicate or clone his posthumous precocity.

Autistic artist Stephen Wiltshire and blind autistic jazz pianist Derek Paravicini make for fascinating paradigms in investigating the phenomenon of genius. What is the 'Mozart effect' or Musicolepsia? How does Savant Syndrome manifest itself? And where are we now in terms of Artificial Intelligence, as we teach robots motor-control skills? Come and find out and enjoy the debate.