

The relationship between Positive Art and the mood

Geneva, April 2015



A mood is an emotional state. Moods differ from emotions, feelings or affects in that they are less specific, less intense, and less likely to be triggered by a particular stimulus or event. Moods generally have either a positive or negative valence.

According to the American philosopher Noël Carroll and his book « art and Mood : Preliminary notes and conjectures », Art has something to do with feeling is a common place, not only among plain viewers, readers, and listeners, but also among theorists, dating back at least to Plato and Aristotle, iterated maybe most vociferously by proponents

of Romanticism, and argued, as well, by Tolstoy, Collingwood, and Langer. Outside the western tradition, the rasa system of Hindu aesthetics echoes the conviction that art and feeling are intimately joined. Thus, the connection between art and the emotions has been an article of faith for a long time, not merely in the minds of common folk, but in addition, for theorists.

Positive Art emerged from the reflections of the artist Dean Ildefonse in 2012, following an interaction with a person prone to emotional disorders. Gradually, the positive art, inspired by positive psychology, neuroscience and spirituality, was made from shapes (people, landscapes, objects, nature) colors, words and positive phrases with a dual aesthetic and therapeutic purpose. The artwork must create something pertaining to the psychic reaction of the beholder. The idea is that we give the person the artwork as a visual stimulus, and we provide a therapeutic plan of action to put in place to remove the unpleasant and to promote the pleasant. The objective is to lead that person within a positive psychological environment. Positive art can be both general (an artwork created for everyone) or individual (an artwork created for one specific person with an objective of psychic result defined between the artist and the patient). The goal is to increase the sensory information of the artwork in areas of the brain that will activate a connection related to memory of something pleasant that was experienced or imagined. The artwork must therefore act as a stimulus that pleases the person at first sight. Furthermore, if the pleasure effect is effective, the same artwork will act as a repetitive stimulus to install a sustainable well-being.

Overview of the study we have done before.

This is our second study around Positive Art and Moods. The first one was realized in June 2014. This study was based on the influence of art on people's positive moods, while comparing this potential change of mood to that elicited by chocolate consumption. We would also like to know if chocolate consumption can promote a positive experience when observing visual art. To do this, we invited our participants to describe their mood before and after observing the positive works of art and / or after having eaten Favarger dark chocolates.

Result of the June 2014 study :

% of participants with enhancement, no change or deterioration in mood.

	Number of participant	Mood enhancement	No change in mood	Mood deterioration
Four works	22	50%	22,72%	27,27%
One work	15	20%	20%	60%
One work + chocolate	22	50%	13,63%	36,36%
Only chocolate	20	75%	25%	0%

(Graphic 1)

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Overview of the present research

Overview of the present research By proposing a Positive Art artwork, with calm inspiring elements, we tend to propose a visual stimulus to favour the good mood of the viewer. Willingly, the artwork is simple, minimalist. The visual memory should only keep in mind the essence of serenity, a vision of well-being and a strong connection with nature. Logically, in the artwork, there is nothing to hurt the person or their inner balance. For sure, the more one accepts this idea of positive stimulus toward his/her inner joy the more the work will enhance his/her good mood and their wellbeing in the present moment.

Method

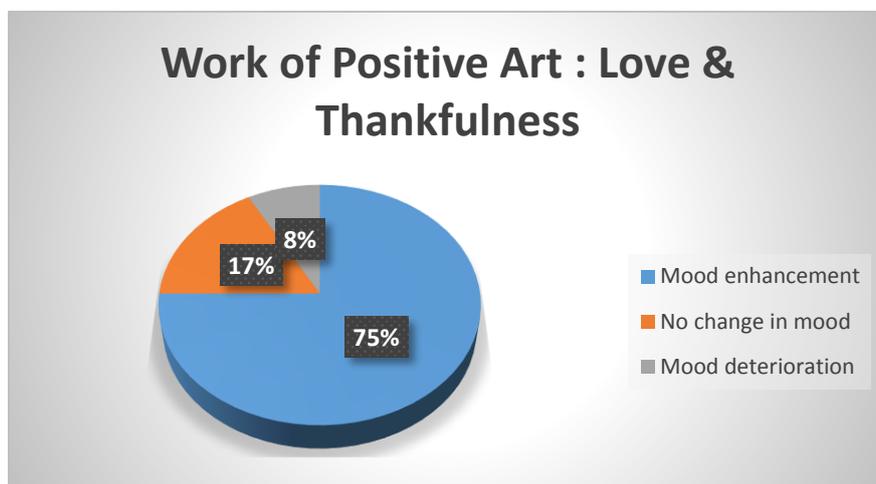
I have requested 120 persons to my LinkedIn contact to ask them if they'll have 3 minutes to fill the questionnaire. 22 of them accepted 15 females and 7 males. By the way, i renew my gratitude to all of them for having participated. The request was to measure their mood at the present moment, to behold Positive Art artworks, to rate their emotion while observing the work and in the end measure their mood after having viewed the artwork.

Results

The visual content of the artwork showed a high mood enhancement with 75%. This result equalizes our first study with the enhancement of the mood after eating Favarger Dark Chocolates. Which is rather encouraging for forthcoming studies and for the wellbeing of viewers and owners of Positive Art artworks.

	Number of Participants	Mood enhancement	No change in mood	Mood deterioration
Work of Positive Art : Love & Thankfulness	22	75%	17%	8%

(Graphic 2)



(Graphic 3)

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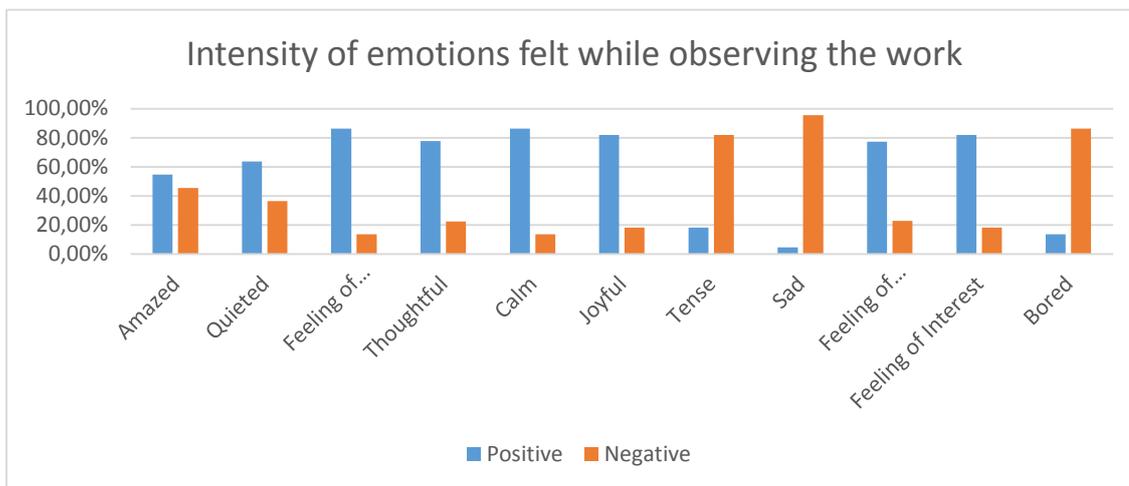
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Intensity of emotions felt while observing the work

	Positive	Negative
Amazed	54,55%	45,45%
Quieted	63,64%	36,36%
Feeling of tenderness	86,36%	13,64%
Thoughtful	77,77%	22,23%
Calm	86,37%	13,63%
Joyful	81,82%	18,18%
Tense	18,18%	81,82%
Sad	4,55%	95,45%
Feeling of Harmony	77,27%	22,73%
Feeling of Interest	81,82%	18,18%
Bored	13,64%	86,36%

(Graphic 4)



(Graphic 5)

Discussion

The main result of this study shows that simply watching this positive artwork improves people's mood significantly. This is consistent with the results of a previous study showing that 84% of respondents believe that the positive art acts or may act positively on the well-being of individuals, as well as 59% believe that positive art is necessary in today's society to facilitate people's inner wellbeing. Still referring to the our first study that showed a significant deterioration in mood (see graphic 1), it could be that the work used in this experiment has been too complex (too many symbols, efforts of interpretation by the participants) to have a positive effect on the public.

In this study, it is also likely that the aesthetic emotion lived by people surveyed across their computer screen is not as important as if guests had been able to physically see the work in its original monumental format.

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