Collective effervescence mediates the effect of individual emotion on spectators’ enjoyment of theatrical performances

Ondine Simonot-Bérenger¹ ² ³, Victor Chung¹ ², Julie Grèzes¹

¹ Laboratoire de Neurosciences Cognitives & Computationnelles, INSERM, ENS, PSL University
² Institut Jean-Nicod, CNRS, EHESS, ENS, PSL University
³ Laboratoire SACRe, PSL University

BACKGROUND

➢ Theatre is a multisensory and transcultural social aesthetic experience known to elicit intense emotional experiences in the audience.

➢ Yet, we do not know whether both the collective and emotional dimensions of the play contribute to the audience’s enjoyment of performances.

➢ For this purpose, we investigated the relationship between individual emotion, collective effervescence (the subjective feeling of connectedness and sacredness during a social event (Rimé & Paez, 2023; Gabriel & al., 2020)), and enjoyment of the play.

➢ Does the collective dimension of theatrical events contribute to the audience’s enjoyment of the play?

➢ Do individual emotions & traits influence the spectators’ feeling of collective effervescence and/or enjoyment of the play?

METHODS

Le Dragon
14 representations (450–900 spectators/rep.)
N = 416
66.1%, M_Age = 43.0 ± 18.3
84.1% Accompanied

Allosaurus
20 representations (= 120 spectators/rep.)
N = 205
59.5%, M_Age = 43.4 ± 15.8
90.7% Accompanied

BEFORE
Emotional state (PANAS)
Demographics
Empathic traits (short IRI)

AFTER
Emotional state (PANAS)
Emotion during the play (SAM)
Collective Effervescence (CES)
Enjoyment of the play

RESULTS

INDIVIDUAL EMOTION & EMPATHIC TRAITS PREDICT COLLECTIVE EFFERVESCENCE

COLLECTIVE EFFERVESCENCE PREDICTS ENJOYMENT OF THE PLAY

➢ All models were created through iterative stepwise addition & backward stepwise elimination based on the LRT.

STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELS

CONCLUSION

➢ Collective effervescence elucidates the interplay between spectators’ emotions and their enjoyment of the play, and is related to empathic traits.

➢ This confirms that the collective dimension of theatrical events contributes to the audience’s enjoyment, even when accounting for individual traits.

➢ This study offers promising grounds to shed light on the complex social nature of the performing arts, and hereby deepen our understanding of collective emotional dynamics among large groups in ecological settings.

ondine.simonot@ens.psl.eu

REFERENCES
