



# InCognito

For your monthly study-related needs and feeds.

April 2015

Suggestions, feedback or comments? Let us know at [newsletter.cognito@gmail.com](mailto:newsletter.cognito@gmail.com).

## Graduations & Congratulations!

Three times a year there is a graduation ceremony for students from our programme. Such an important event deserves recognition and congratulations, so from now on we will congratulate recent graduates.

Congratulations to: Isac Sehlstedt, Laury van Bedaf, Pia Haver, Rebecca Sier, Rianne van Rooijen, Andrew Sutjahjo, Michelle de Haan, Bauke van der Velde, Ben Germain, and Leonie Dühlmeier!



## Chaimae Chomrik in Japan

Hi everyone!

The idea to go to Japan – progressive in science and a very interesting culture – for an internship came to my mind several years ago. On the 15th of January, I was finally able to see that dream become reality. Around 20 hours of traveling, no sleep and a jet lag later, I arrived at the RIKEN Brain Science Institute in Wako-shi, a town just outside of Tokyo. First things first: settling in, which meant grocery shopping. Adding a 5 kg bag of rice, because I couldn't wait to be truly Japanese, was however not the smartest thing to do, as I had to carry it back myself. At least I was able to impress my lab members with my homemade bento (lunchbox) on my first day.

With the help of my supervisors, I was able to set up my project for the next six and a half months pretty quickly: checking in the lab-generated

mouse model for autism-associated genotype and behavior. During the first month, I have basically been given a crash course in lab work, after which I was given free reign.

It is something quite known that Japanese are hard workers. Still surprising though is that working at night and during weekends is considered normal! Fortunately, I am able to play the “gaijin - foreigner” card and I have spent my weekends roaming Tokyo instead. I have been amazed by the beauty and serenity of both Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples, visited a Japanese sword museum, attended a Japanese tea ceremony, and have taken strolls in some of the many gardens and parks. The end of March and beginning of April actually marks the cherry blossom bloom and Japan has been painted white/pink for the past week. Another of my main activities

in the past months has been exploring the Japanese cuisine. I must say it's been a very good experience thus far. The amount of sushi I have already digested is actually both amazing and embarrassing. I am also very happy to be still alive after eating Fugu – the pufferfish. You won't see me touching any Nattō – fermented soybeans – anytime soon, though.

Immediately after arriving, I enrolled in Japanese language courses. It makes playing tourist and shopping a lot easier. Japanese tend to panic a bit when addressed in English. Plus, being able to speak the slightest bit of Japanese makes them very happy. I was taught the Japanese word for “bill” – very useful, because asking for it in English will get you a beer instead as Japanese don't differentiate between the “l” and “r” sounds. I was also at least able to apologize in Japanese when I entered the fitting room with my shoes on, because you actually remove them before entering. And even though English is pretty easily used in the lab to communicate (although the accent has caused some miscommunications before I got used to it), joking in English sometimes doesn't work.

So, as you can read, I have been thoroughly enjoying my stay in Japan thus far. I have met some great people, Japanese and internationals alike. And I am looking forward to the following months. It definitely is an experience I'll never forget.



Chaimae surrounded by colleagues and cherry blossom. Top: a view of the Imperial gardens.

## AGENDA

### Drinks @ CREA

Every Tuesday, 21:00-late

### Awesome IT Conference

10 April, 9:30-16:30, Studio K  
Speed and capabilities of computer systems, how to deal with growing data, quantum computing, augmented reality. See: [the facebook event](#).

### Cognito Poker Night

11 April, 21:30, Maslow  
Friendly poker, and beers for € 1.80!

### Symposium about sleep rhythms “Klokje rond”

13 April, 9:00-17:00, CREA  
In Dutch only. Hoe spelen biologische ritmes op het metabolisme in? Wat gebeurt er als je slaapt? Is het onregelmatige studentenleven echt zo ongezond? En zijn biologische ritmes in elke cultuur hetzelfde?

### International Talent Event Amsterdam

17 April, Hotel Casa 400  
Workshops, meet & greets, career opportunities, with international companies, networking. For people interested in internationally orientated internship in Amsterdam, looking for a first professional job, or hoping to pick up tips and advice to develop a career in Amsterdam.

### ABC Symposium: Decision-making

21 April, 12:30-18:00, Vlaams Cultuurhuis de Brakke Grond

### Microsoft tour

24 April, 9:00-13:00, Microsoft NL  
Morning programme with talks about doing a traineeship / working at Microsoft NL and a tour through their office close to Schiphol (possibly including lunch). Limited number of spots. Registration mandatory, see the [sign-up form](#).

### ABC Colloquium: Integrating perception and action

24 April, 16:00-17:00, Diamantbeurs 5.01

### ABC Neuroimaging Symposium

28 April, 14:00-17:00, Vlaams Cultuurhuis de Brakke Grond

### Cognito's “Guilty Pleasures” Symposium

8 May, 15:30-19:30, Doelenzaal UB Co.07  
Talks on reward processing of sweet food, sex and disgust, and catchy music. Limited number of spots. Register using the form emailed by Cognito (also available on the Facebook page).

### Ace Venture Lab Entrepreneurship Bootcamp

11-15 May, Science Park  
Team of Silicon Valley specialists and startup experts mentor you on transforming tech or science concepts into a successful business. Application required before 1st of May. For questions contact [info@ace-vlab.nl](mailto:info@ace-vlab.nl)

# Alumnus profile: Anna Bennis



**Anna Bennis**

Graduated: October 2011

Track: Cognitive Neuroscience

*What is your current occupation?*

PhD student (at the AMC, ed.)

*How did you end up there?*

A friend of mine forwarded an email with the vacancy. It was internal mail, so the vacancy was not public. Then I applied and had an interview.

*What do you like about it?*

It gives me the opportunity to focus on very specialized kind of work. Also I am fascinated with stem cells. It is such a new field, which makes it exciting and risky at the same time because there is so little known about these cells that it can

make it hard to control them.

The lab work is fun work and sometimes it feels like solving a big puzzle.

*What do you dislike about it?*

The system we have now to assess the quality research, to determine whether somebody is good at conducting research is wrong in my opinion. Publish or perish. What does a publication mean: it means that your results were conveniently enough new and exciting. What about studies with very high quality that are not publishable? Might contain very solid experiments!

Meaning that the quality can be high. Also negative or confirmative results are valuable. In stem cell work it would be surely much appreciated to know whether a differentiation protocol can be repeated, because often it can't. When a protocol is used successfully by multiple labs it means that it is quite robust and therefore very useful!

*Did you feel prepared by the master, and do you still regularly use things you've learned in the master?*

Yes, mostly because of the two internships. But the cours-

es are needed to have an idea of what interests you. And it helps develop a scientific way of thinking.

*Looking back, what would you've done differently in order to end up where you are now?*

To end up here? If I would have done something differently chances would be that I would not have ended up here, right?

*What is your ultimate advice to the current students?*

Take time to think about what kind of practical work you want to do (the topic is for cell level work not that much influence on day to day work because looking at gene expression related to Alzheimer's or Parkinson's is the same in principle). And try to find an internship giving you experience with that kind of work, because you will need this experience when you apply for a PhD.

*What are your next plans?*

Do not know yet but I will probably not continue with a post doc. I still want to be challenged in my job, but not necessarily in academia. I'm excited to try something new!

## BOOK REVIEW: SPLENDORS AND MISERIES OF THE BRAIN

Semir Zeki (2009). *Splendors and Miseries of the Brain: love, creativity and the quest for happiness*. Singapore: Wiley-Blackwell.

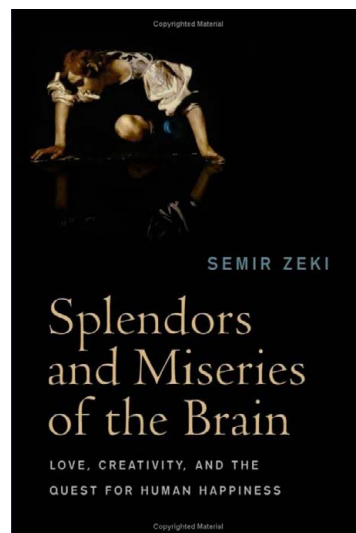
Review by Artoghrul Alishbayli.

The main function of the brain is to gain knowledge about the world and this is done through forming concepts. Thus it is important to understand how we form concepts, and in this book, one of the founders of the field of neuroaesthetics, Semir Zeki, argues that there is a whole body of evidence which neuroscientists can examine to give us insights about concept formation.

Through an intriguing and enjoyable discussion of concepts such as love and beauty

as depicted in works of artists from Michelangelo, Cézanne, Zola to Wagner and Thomas Mann among many others, he shows how artworks can be seen as evidence that can shed light on common mechanisms of concept formation. How can we explain concepts such as unity-in-love (lovers' desire to be united) or unreachable ideal of beauty that seem to have inspired many great works of art, from different cultures and at different times? By combining his top-down analysis of artworks with bottom-up approach of evaluating available neuroscientific findings he sketches highly speculative but nevertheless interesting and original image of how brain creates concepts that helps us understand the world. Splendors and Miseries of the Brain

is a highly readable and interdisciplinary (!!!) book that not only provides insights about the topic from philosophical and scientific perspectives, but also directs readers to many great works of art.



## BIRTHDAYS

**Yvette de la Fosse**  
1 April

**Ilva Grond**  
**Tara van Viegen**  
2 April

**Joëlle Lafeber**  
5 April

**Jonathan Krikeb**  
12 April

**Benjamin Germain**  
16 April

**Daniel Lindh**  
17 April

**Katharina Müller**  
23 April

**Annemarie Horn**  
28 April

**Rick van Dorp**  
29 April:

## HOROSCOPE



**Taurus**  
20 April – 20 May

As a Taurus, you are persistent and stubborn, and you indulge in materialistic desires. This month, you will cross paths with an object that brings out the worst in both your stubbornness and your indulgent desire. One day, you will walk past the local Japanese shop, and through the dark window, you will notice a cubic watermelon—a rare fruit native only to the land of the rising sun. Even though the shop is closed, this precious and expensive specialty product will enchant you and your bull-headed craving. After repeated attempts to bash open the door with your head, the squared watermelon will shimmer even brighter with the light of an emerald gem, mocking you with unbearable temptation. After one final charge forward, you will break open the door in a mad fury, trampling into shelves like a bull in a glass shop. At long last, your persistence has paid off, and you will stomp through the broken tea pots and chopsticks strewn about the floor, only to find that the object of your obsession now lies on the floor in heaps of red seedless flesh. Holding up the remains, you will give a defeated cry as the juice runs down your arm.

Lucky numerical constants:  $i, \delta, \Omega$   
Lucky texture: white sand  
Lucky beans (Christopher Columbus edition): lima, pinto, Santa Maria

## Cognito proudly presents: the Cognito website!

Since a few weeks, you can now let Cognito in on your life via a new medium, our website! You can find out about Cognito's history, committees and upcoming events on [www.cognito-uva.com](http://www.cognito-uva.com). There is also the possibility to check out all the pictures that were made during past events, such as the Halloween party, Sinterklaas event and Brain Slicing. You'll need a password to do so though. If you're interested in receiving this password, send an email to [cognitouva@gmail.com](mailto:cognitouva@gmail.com). Take a look at Cognito's debut on the World Wide Web and feel free to refresh all day long!

## Advertisement & sponsorship

Did the recipe get you hungry but don't feel like cooking? Then you'll be glad to hear about our first sponsorship contract! On Monday the 23th of March we signed a contract and shook hands with Raoul from café Maslow.

Their aim is to be the living room of the Science Park, making it the perfect place to relax after a long day of internship or lectures, and they serve great food as well! Luckily, you don't have to wait for us to organise events, because Café Maslow itself organises a lot of events every month.



## FOOD FOR THOUGHT: CRAIME

Israeli recipe by Jonathan Krikeb: craime, fish in spicy sauce. The recipe is probably Moroccan in origin.

### Ingredients

1 chilli pepper, whole  
1 pack of coriander  
Half head of garlic, peeled  
Half cup of sunflower oil  
Tablespoon paprika powder  
Teaspoon hot paprika powder or chili powder  
Teaspoon cumin  
Black pepper  
Pieces of filleted Tilapia or Cod fish  
1 can tomato puree

Note: other kinds of fish can also be used.

### Instructions

Tie the coriander in string and toss with all the spices into the pot with the oil.

Mix them all together while heating and then add the tomato puree, the pieces of fish, and water until it is about 3mm above the fish.

Bring to a boil and then let simmer on low heat for 20 minutes.

Can be served with rice, with the sauce on top (the chilli pepper and coriander can be disposed of after cooking).



## COMIC: THE PRICE OF SCIENCE

Comic by Marco Heuvelman and a million hours in MS Paint.

# Words inCognito: cryptic crossword

A cryptic crossword is somewhat like a normal crossword puzzle, except all clues are riddles in themselves. An example of a typical cryptic crossword clue is "Disguised as a newsletter," which would be 'in cognito', the title of this newsletter and a synonym for 'disguised'. Good luck on this MBCS-themed brain teaser!

Unfortunately, last month no one sent in the correct solution to the cryptic crossword puzzle. This illustrates how big of an achievement it is when you do manage to finish the puzzle! And also, how big of a chance you have of winning when you send in your answers. You may even be the only one, or one of the few smart kids. There's not only the prize at stake, but also a lot of honour!

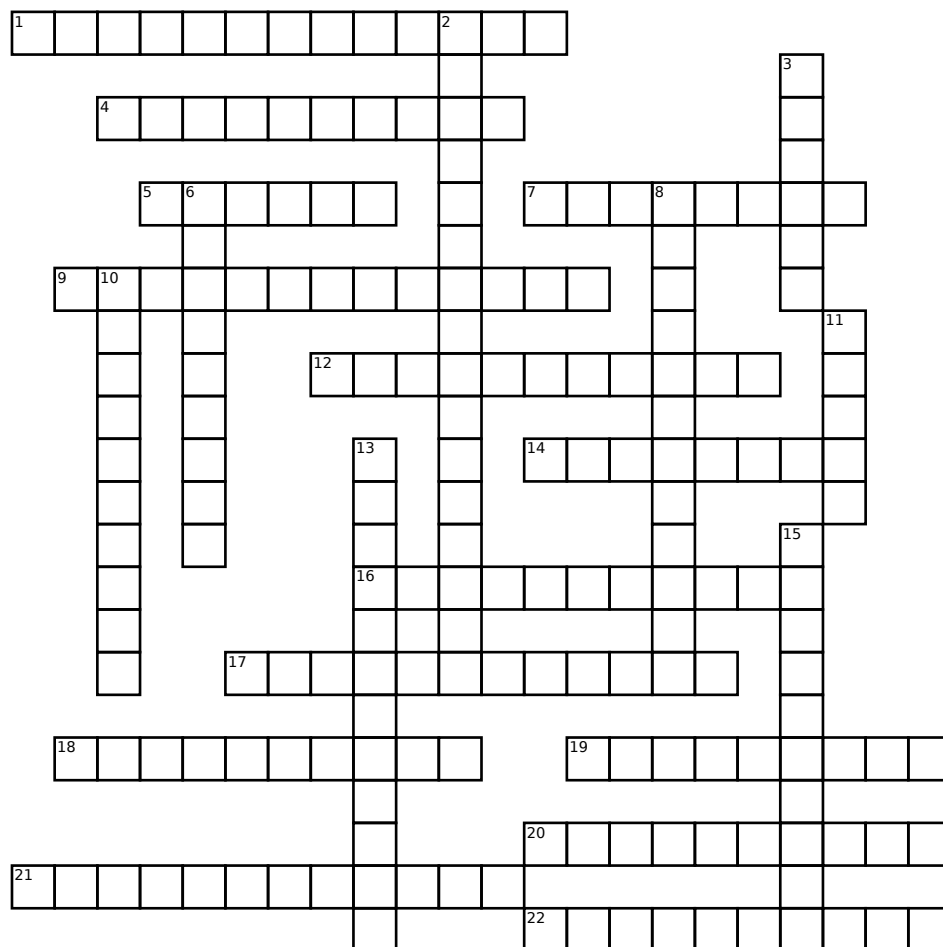
Because no one won the book "Generic - The Branding of Modern Medicine" last month, it will be this month's prize again!

## Across

1. A Flashback of when I was still employed (7,6)
4. Studying insignificant magnetic flux densities because you want to leave academia? (5,5)
5. This holiday is not celebrated in the west (6)
7. A royal daye (8)
9. The wildlife is caught using chains of amino acids (5,8)
12. You look pale, what's wrong? (5,6)
14. I'm sick of grass (8)
16. In our society you go to prison when you commit a crime (4,7)
17. Spring cleaning of the body (5,7)
18. Euphoric as well as depressed people are welcome at the playground (4,6)
19. The trunk has a regulatory function (5,4)
21. Hypothesis about how the brain works (6,2,4)
22. The weekend should be celebrated on a tropical island (4,6)

## Down

2. Flashing lights in the middle of the cages (2,3,6,5)
3. Excessive tau causes bewilderment (1,4)
6. The dumbass forgot which month it is?! (5,4)
8. The element increases in size (6,6)
10. I'm not at ease about the fiber (5,5)
11. Organises surfing and skating activities (5)
13. The number of days it takes teachers to reply to an email (8,4)
15. Decreased pushing makes me sad (10)



Answers to last month's puzzle:

Across: 2. Phantom pain, 5. Review, 7. Blood brain barrier, 9. Pyramidal cells, 11. Alpha wave, 12. Rouge test, 13. Stroke, 15. Network code, 17. Statistical test, 18. REM, 20. Go no go, 21. Stroop task, 22. Animal model

Down: 1. Brain slicing event, 3. Default network, 4. Research master, 6. Alcohol abuse, 8. Day light saving time, 10. Feather brain, 14. Nature, 16. Dies Natalis, 19. Spring,