Exploring the consequences of salient events: Linking attentional biases to single cell activity

After the abrupt appearance of an object in the visual scene, observers reflexively orient attention to its location. What happens next depends on the relevance of the object to the observer. When the event is irrelevant to ongoing behavior, they are slower to reorient attention to its locus. When the event is relevant, observers maintain attention at its locus. In my talk, I will show that these biases in attention link to changes in a sensory signal and I will propose that the widespread distribution of this cognitive signal is responsible for the appearance of a unitary attentional network.

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