

VAST Discussion: The Plan

Text: [Editorial Team](#) | Section: [On ‚Art and Science‘](#)

Summary: The discussion led by experts on the Visual Aesthetic Sensitivity Test (VAST), developed by Karl Otto Götz in the 1970s, will take place in four rounds from July to October 2020.

In March 2020, w/k published the articles [Karl Otto Götz as Psychologist](#) by Karin Götz (also known as Rissa) and [Discussion with Karin Götz about VAST](#), a conversation with Peter Tepe. In the weeks following these publications, together with experts w/k organised a discussion on the *Visual Aesthetic Sensitivity Test* (VAST) developed by Karl Otto Götz. The discussion comprises four rounds.

Round 1

Round 1 will take place in July 2020; only psychologists and psychology-related scientists will take part in it. The participants (in alphabetical order) are: Roy Behrens, Herbert Fitzek, Thomas Jacobsen, Riccardo Luccio, Nils Myszkowski, Gerhard Stemberger. Participants were given the following task:

We are curious as to whether today, after so many years, there is renewed interest for the *Visual Aesthetic Sensitivity Test*, and whether the discussion around it as well as the idea it pursues could become fruitful. w/k aims to evoke a technical discussion in written form surrounding the test, the questions it poses and its implications, and to review its relevance and potential. Is Götz' test, developed in the 1970s, still relevant to psychology today and if yes, how so? The scientists' texts will be short and concise, meaning no more than one A4 page. w/k aims to make its articles on science and art *as accessible as possible to the general public*. Therefore, the submitted texts should also be accessible to a broad readership. Any essential technical terms should be accompanied with a short explanation.

The six one-page statements will be published in the order that we receive them. In order to ensure a level playing field for all, the statements won't be shared with the other participants before publication. *After* publication, the participants can then react to each other's texts in the comment section. All texts should be in the form of a *direct reaction* to the VAST as well as to the two w/k articles.

Round 2

The second round will take place in August 2020: Karin Götz will react to the statements from round 1.

Round 3

The third round is planned for September 2020: Taking part will be the psychoanalyst Brigitte Boothe, the art historians Raimund Stecker and Ian Versteegen, as well as the communication scientist and linguist Silvia Bonacchi.

In this case, the question is left more open, because tests in the sense of test psychology barely play a role in the disciplines involved here. Is the test developed by Götz in the 1970s relevant for

psychoanalysis, art history, communication sciences and linguistics? If yes, how so?

Round 4

Round 4 will take place in October 2020: Karin Götz will react to the statements from round 3.

The main reason we separate rounds 1/2 from 3/4 is that the texts would otherwise exceed the maximum length for w/k articles. The VAST-Discussion will first appear in the German section of w/k. However, the texts by Roy Behrens, Riccardo Luccio and Nils Myszkowski will be published in English, which is possible by way of exception according to w/k principles. All four rounds will also be published a little later in w/k's English section.

Picture above the text: Test image from the VAST (1970–1981). Photo: Till Bödeker.

Tags

1. Karl Otto Götz
2. psychology
3. Rissa
4. Visual Aesthetic Sensitivity Test (VAST)