



“The Neurobiology of Psychedelic Drugs: Implications for the Treatment of Mood Disorders”

The Beaumont Room, Yale University School of Medicine, 333 Cedar Street

Tuesday, February 7th 2017, 6:30 PM until 8:00 PM

New advances in our understanding of the neurobiology of psychedelics such as LSD, psilocybin and ketamine have led to renewed interest in the clinical potential of psychedelics in the treatment of various psychiatric disorders. Specifically, recent behavioral and neuroimaging data show that psychedelics interact with neurotransmitter systems and modulate neural circuits that have been implicated in mood and affective disorders. In this lecture, I will review recent findings showing that psychedelics such as psilocybin and LSD enhance empathy, reduce the neural response to negative emotional stimuli and ameliorate social pain in key brain regions responsible for emotion processing and social interactions. Moreover, I will discuss recent findings indicating that the serotonin 5HT_{2A} receptor and downstream effects upon the glutamate system appear to be critical for the lasting positive effects of serotonergic psychedelics on emotional and socio-cognitive functioning. Notably, the increasing understanding of the molecular mechanism of action of psychedelics offers a promising avenue to identify novel targets for the treatment of affective disorders.

Speaker: Franz X. Vollenweider, DR., MD, FMH Psych., Director Center for Psychiatric Research, Department of Psychiatry, Psychotherapy, and Psychosomatics, University of Zürich

Bio: Franz X. Vollenweider is Director of the Centre for Psychiatric Research in the Department of Psychiatry, Psychotherapy, and Psychosomatics (DPPP), and Professor of Psychiatry in the School of Medicine, University of Zurich. His current research focuses on the foundations of the sense of self, emotion regulation, and social interaction, relevant for human well being and for the further understanding of mental disorders related to these domains. In 1999, he founded the Heffter Research Centre Zürich at the DPPP and recently the Swiss Neuromatrix Foundation to support multidisciplinary studies into the mind-brain interface of pharmacological (e.g. psychedelic) and non-pharmacological (e.g. meditation) induced altered mental states.

Light refreshments will be served.

Please RVSP to yalepsg@gmail.com by: Sunday February 5th, 2017