

Department of Human and General  
Physiology  
University of Bologna, Italy

European Union Commission  
FP7-ICT- 217077-EYESHOTS  
**Kick-off meeting**

**Bologna, 7-8 March 2008**

## **Joint visuo-motor features in the parietal cortex**

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Nicoletta Marzocchi, Claudio Galletti



UNIBO expertise:  
experimental (neurophysiological) approach to the link  
between perception and action

Main goal:  
experimental characterization of the neural correlates of  
multisensory 3D representation, in order to provide  
architectural guidelines for the production of  
biologically-inspired artificial intelligence systems able  
to interact with the 3D world



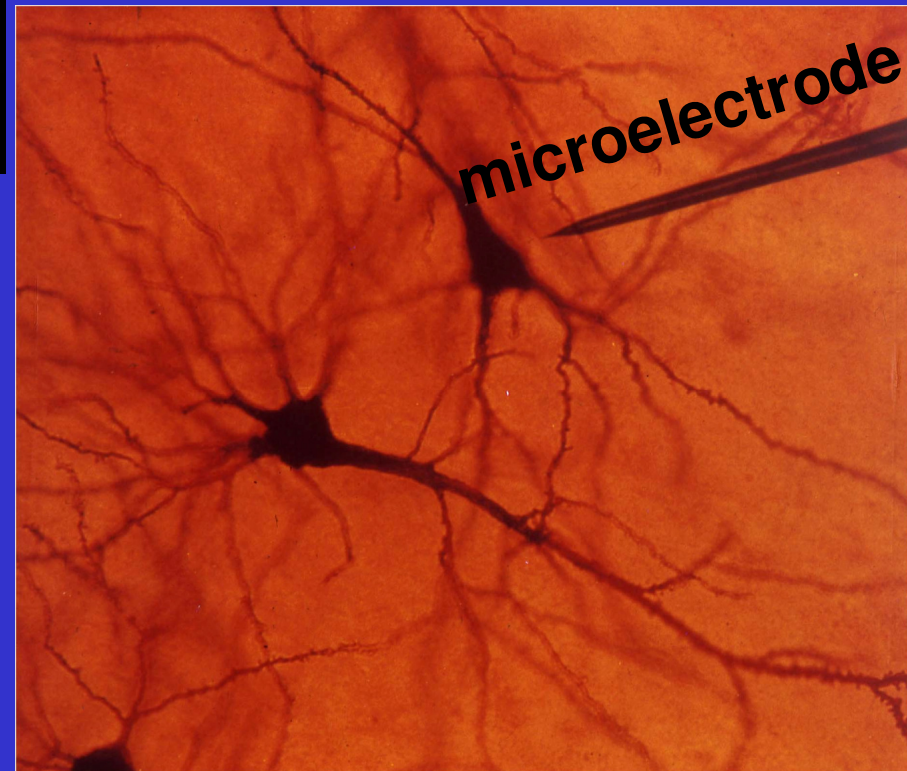
# Single cell recording



Human brain



## Extracellular recording

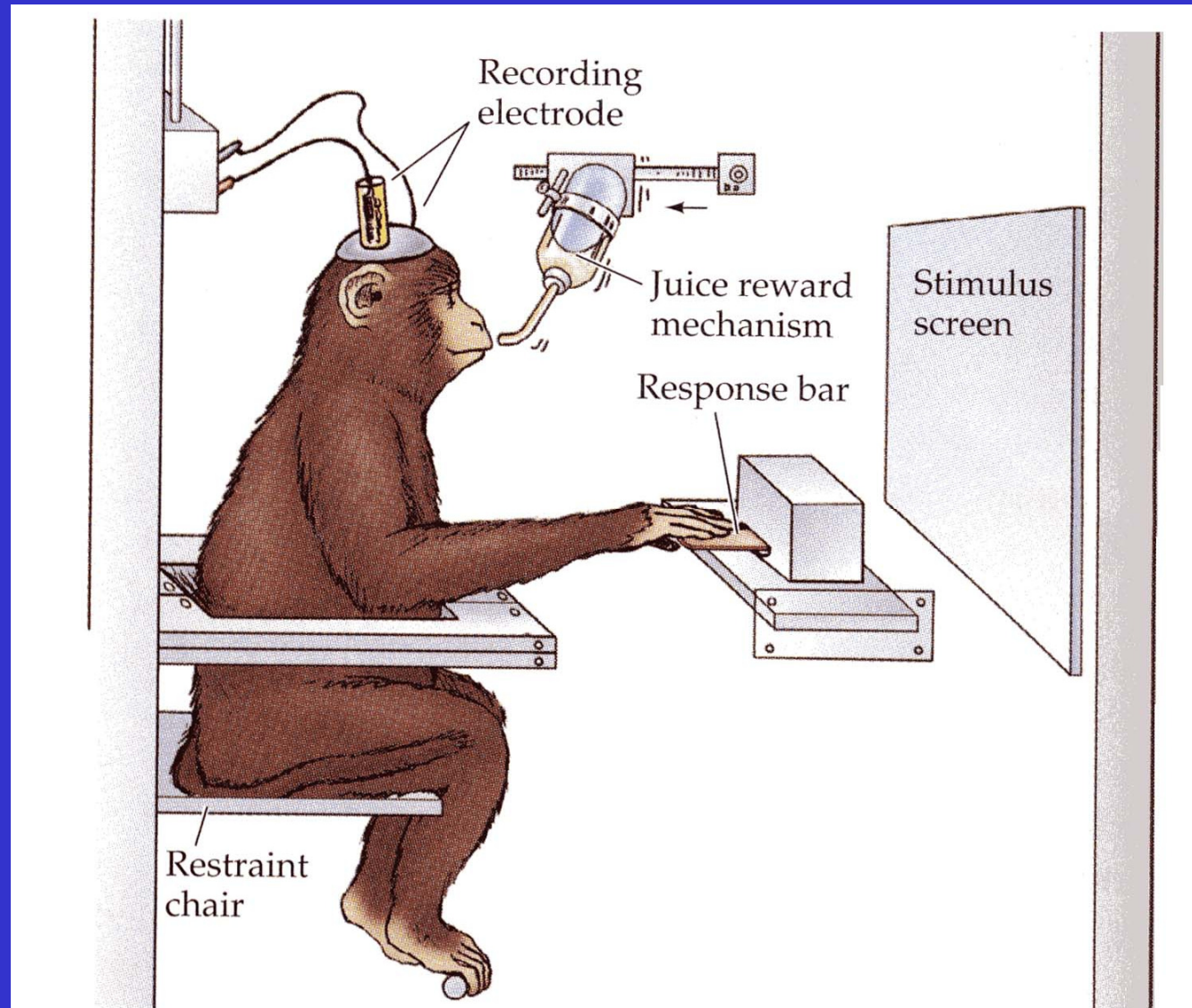






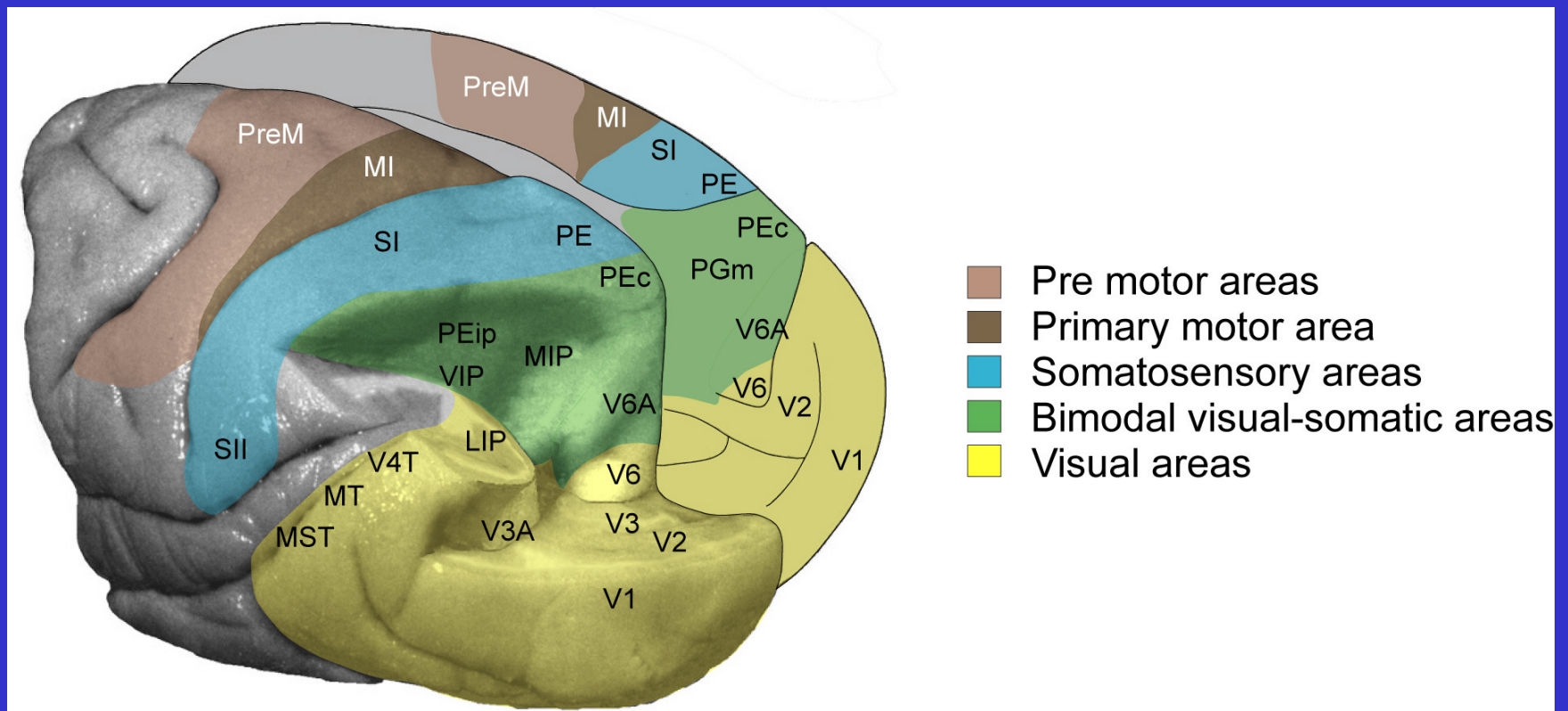


# Behavioural neurophysiology





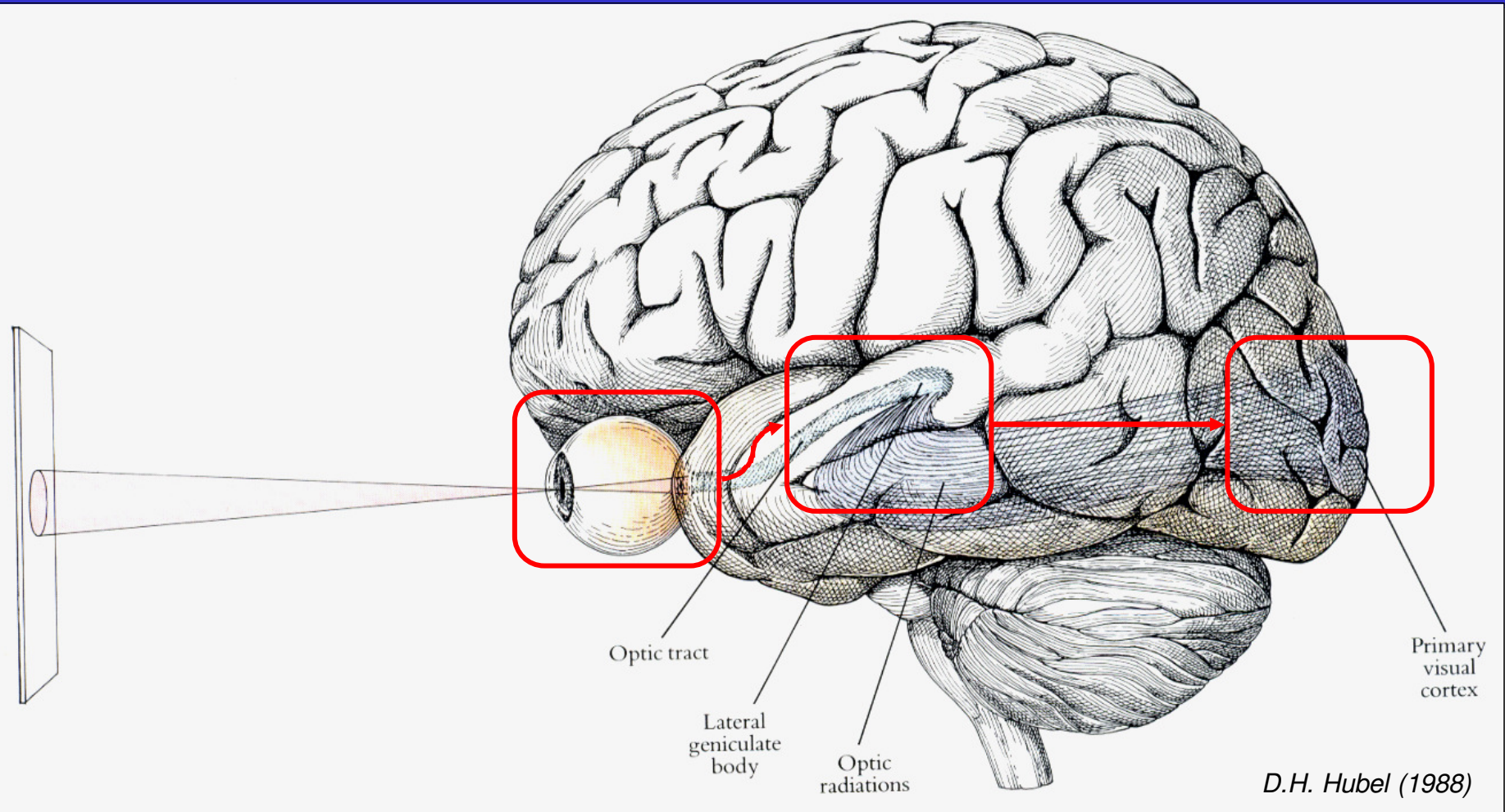
## The brain region of our interest: the medial parieto-occipital cortex





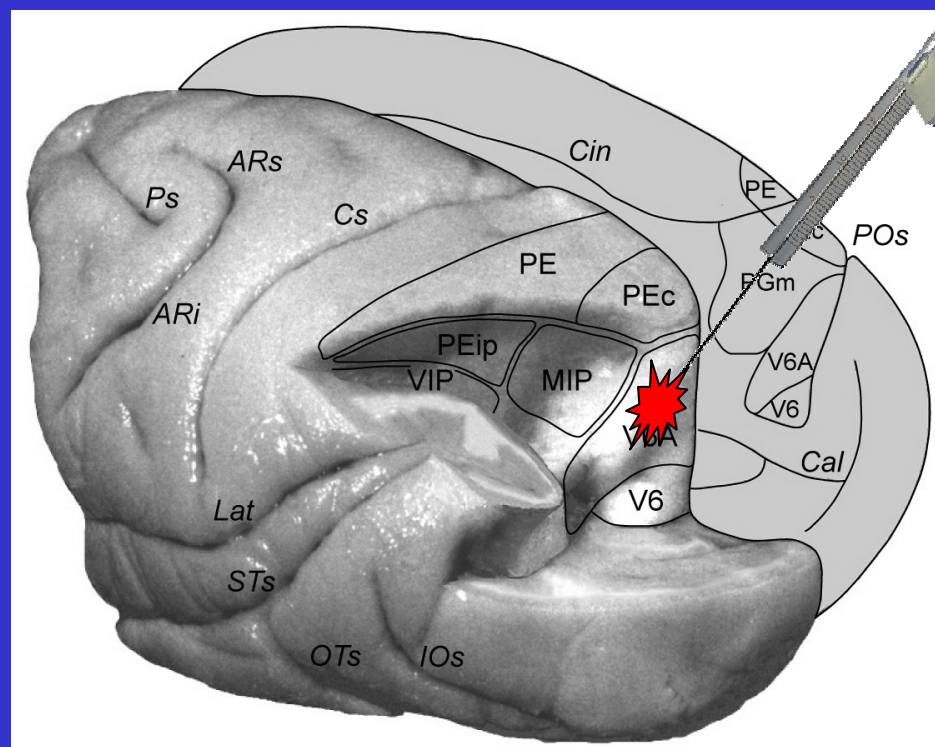
- Study of neuronal circuits involved in the process of visuo-motor integration
- Reconstruction of the region of interest and localization of neurons studied





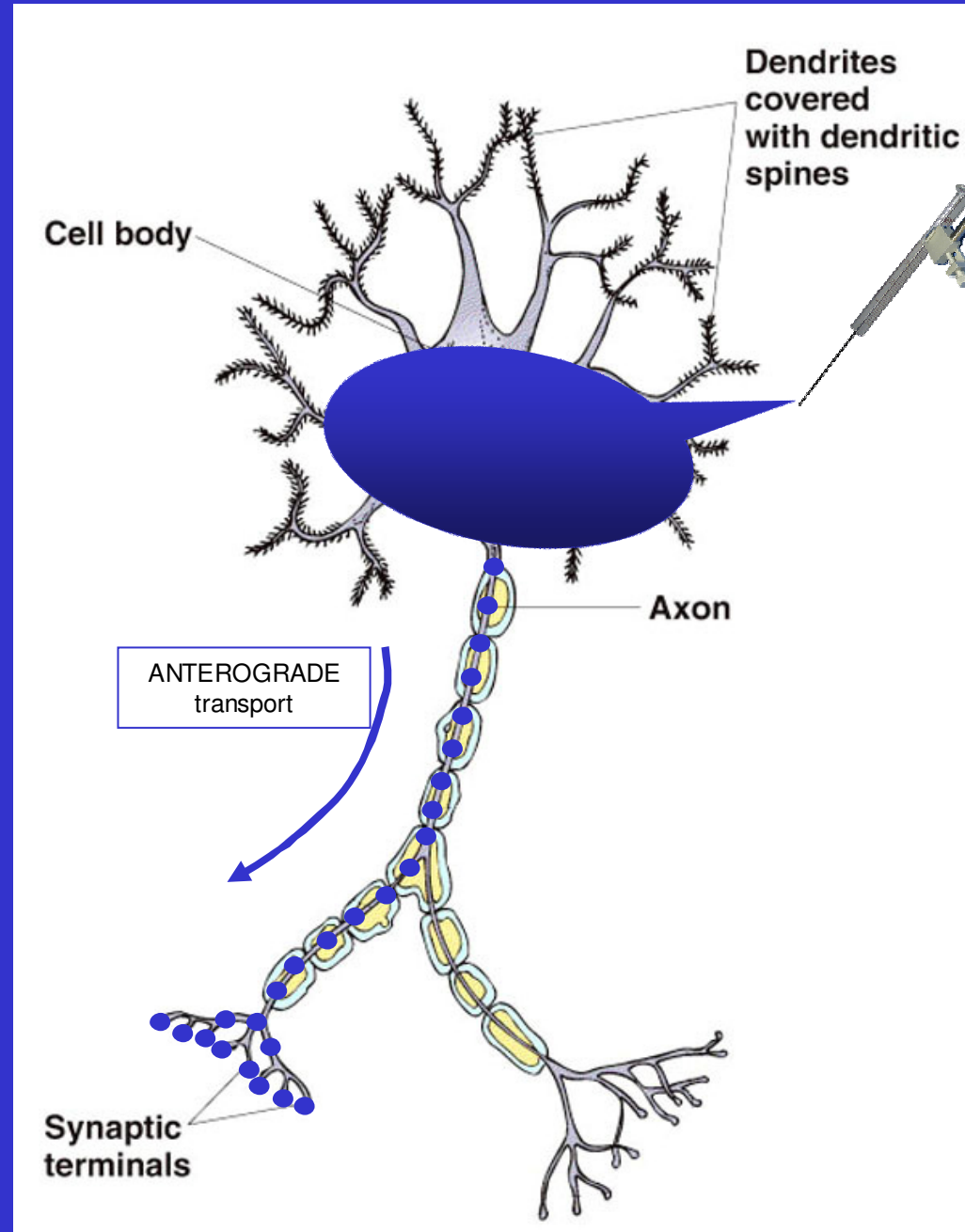


## Neuronal tracer injections





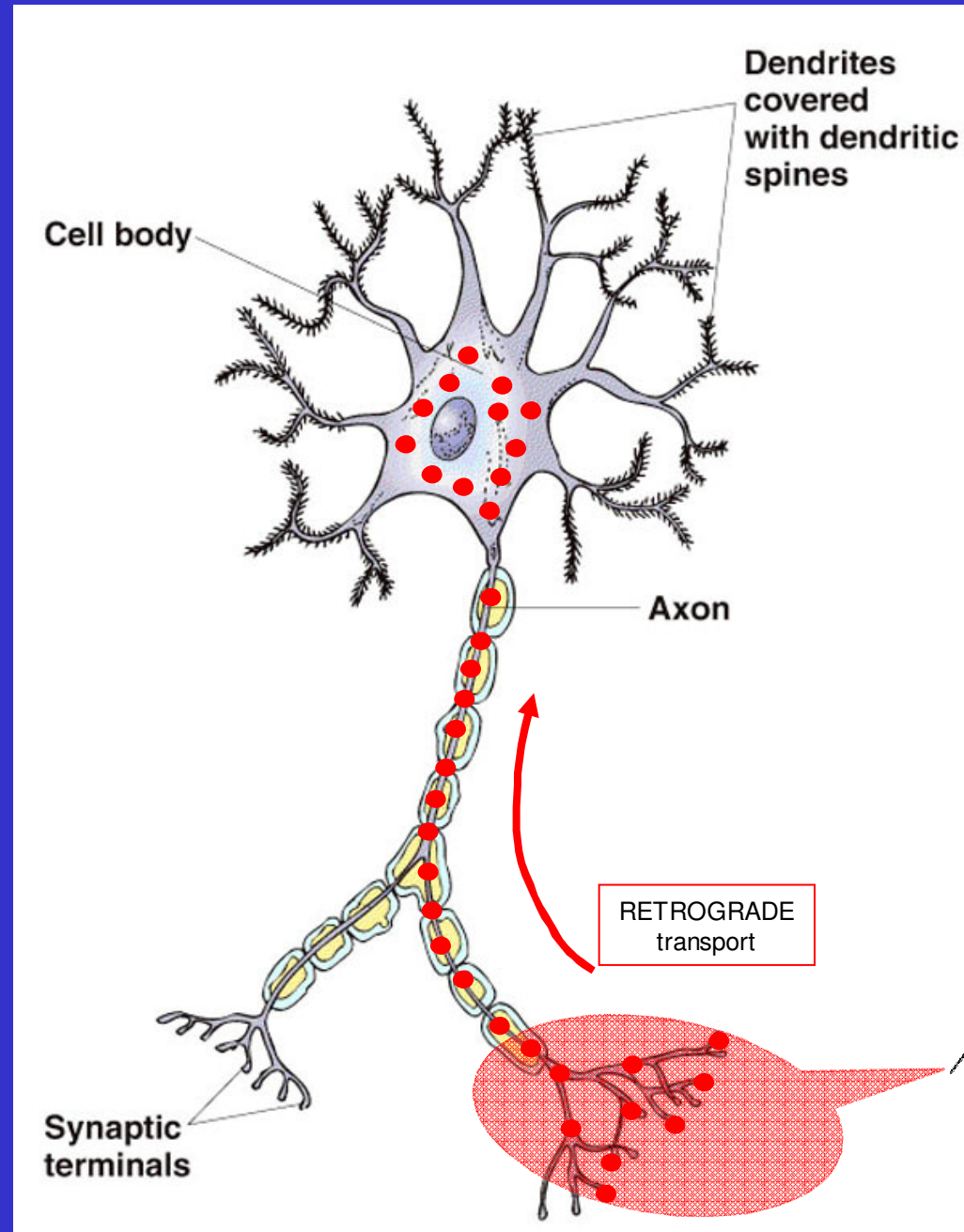
## Neuron



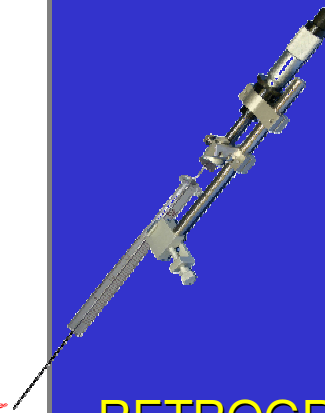
**ANTEROGRADE**  
tracer



## Neuron



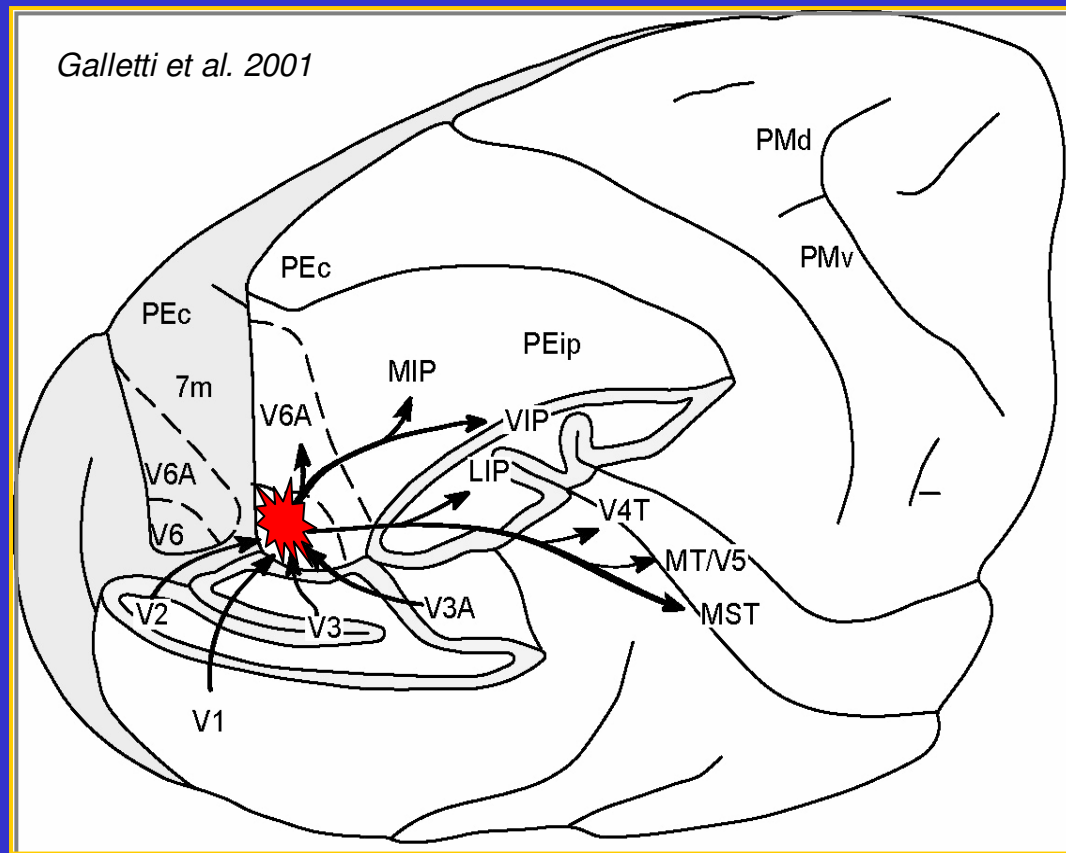
**RETROGRADE  
tracer**



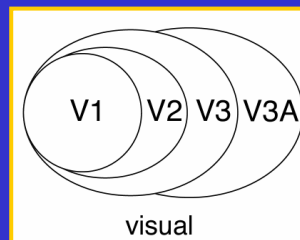


## Cortical connection of area V6

Galletti et al. 2001

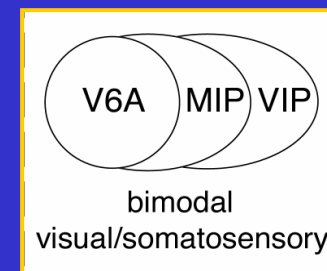


Occipital lobe  
(47 %)

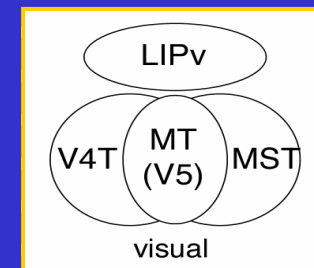


V6

dorso-medial stream (22%)



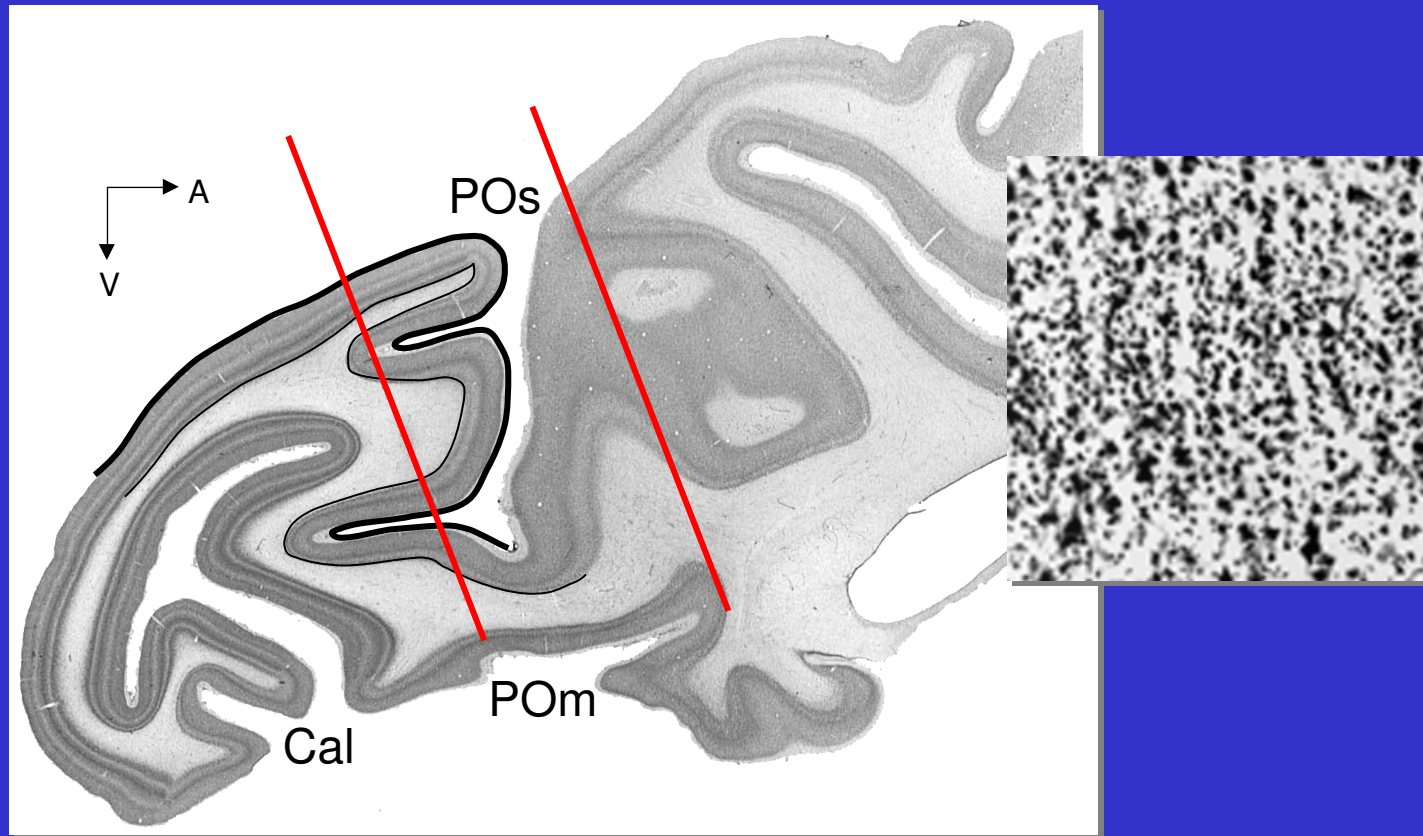
dorso-lateral stream (30%)







## Reconstruction of penetration



- 1) Microscopic observation of Nissl stained sections
- 2) Digitalization of sections
- 3) Reconstruction of microelectrode tracks

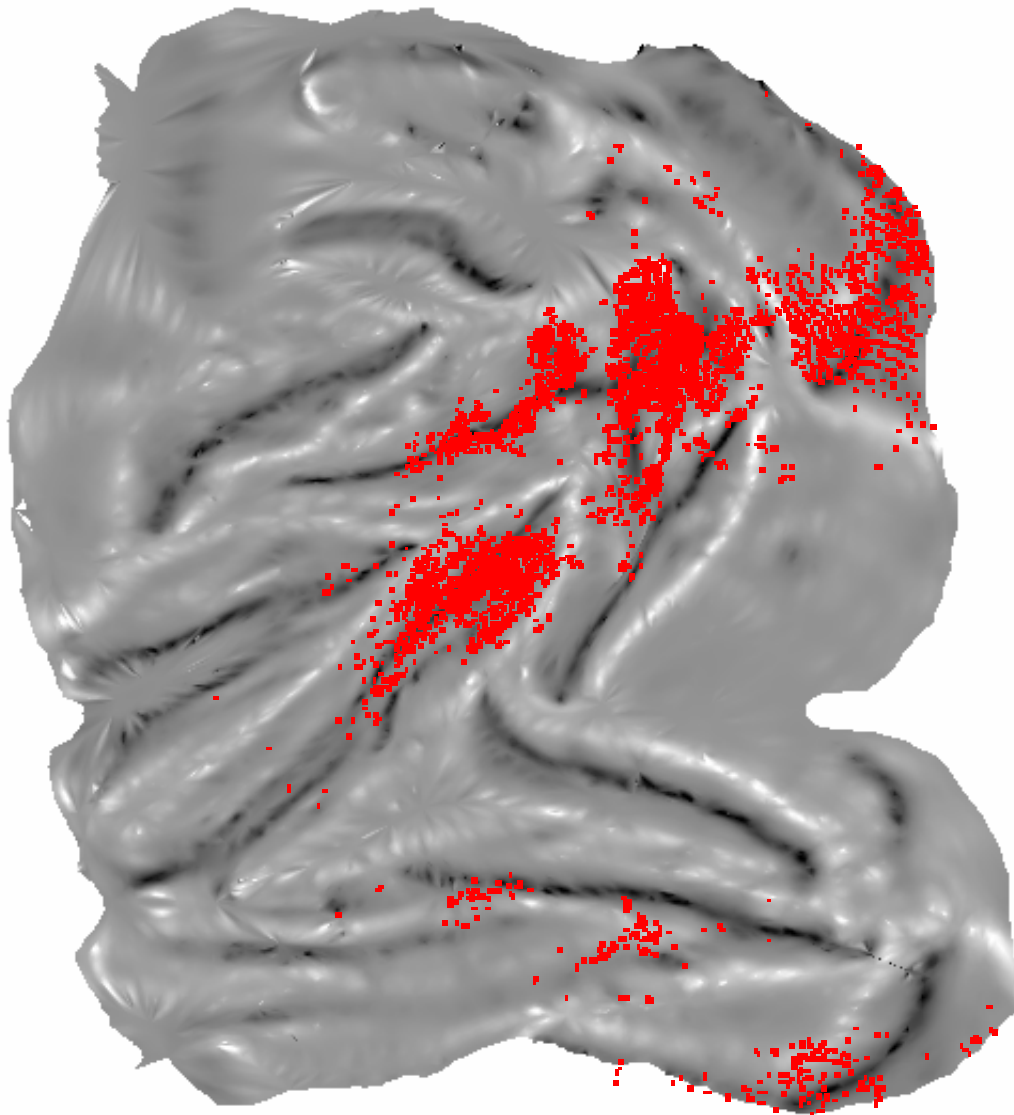


# Digital 2D-3D reconstructions

QuickTime™ e un  
decompressore Video  
sono necessari per visualizzare quest'immagine.



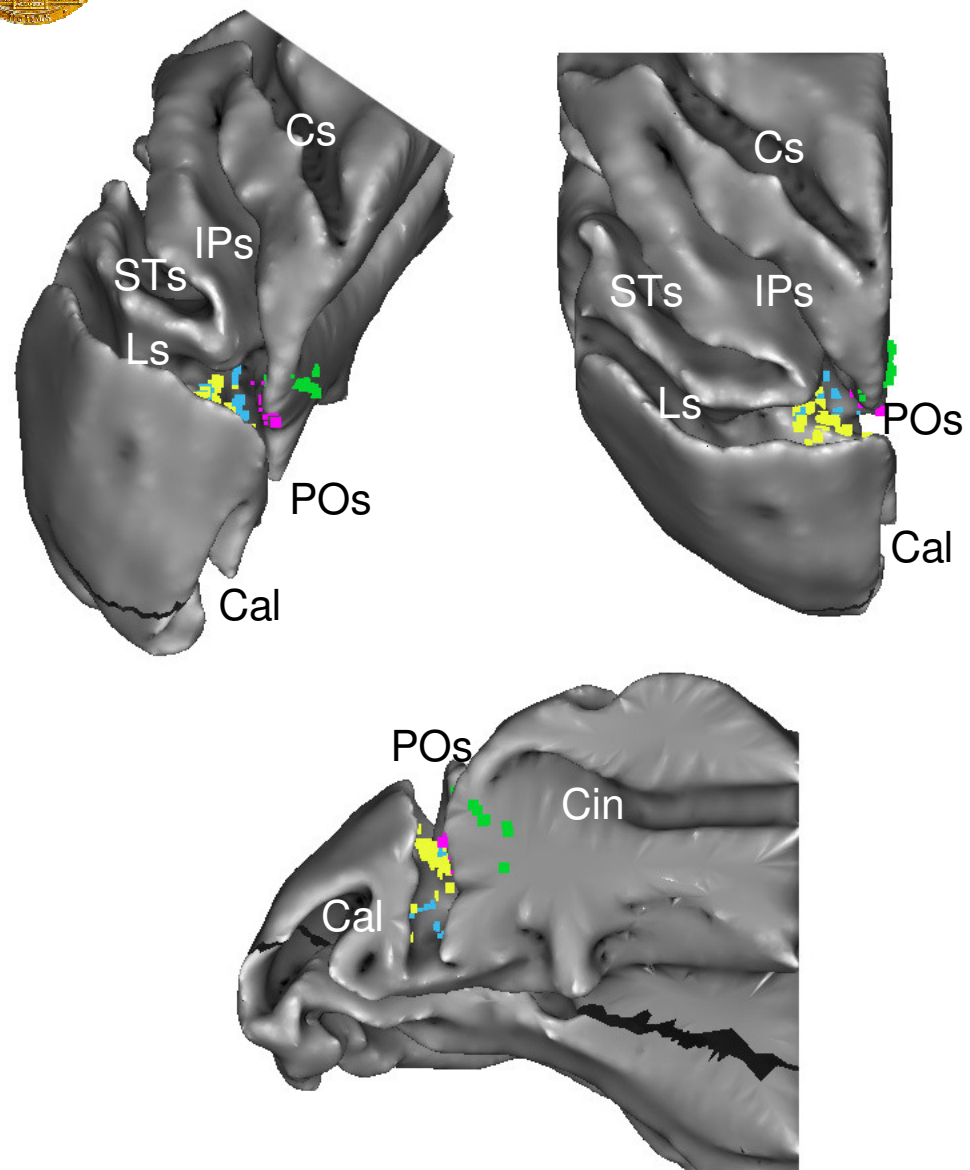
■ Retrograde labeled cells



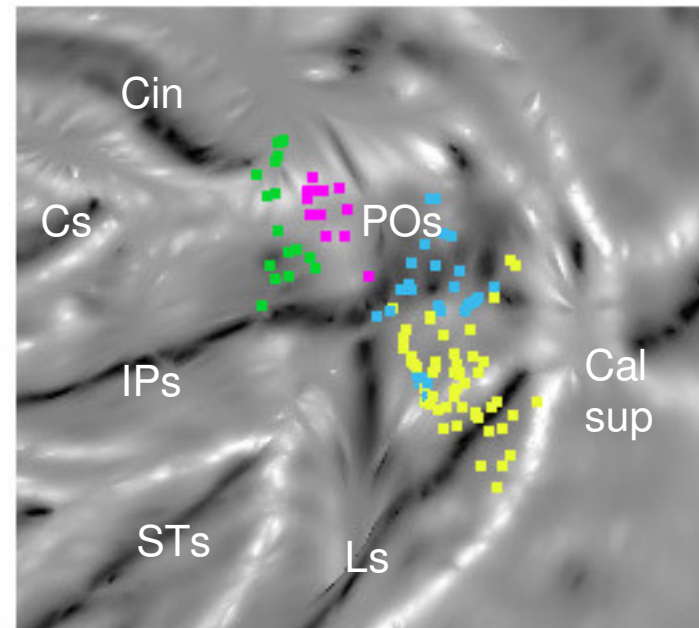
Anatomical  
data



## Functional data



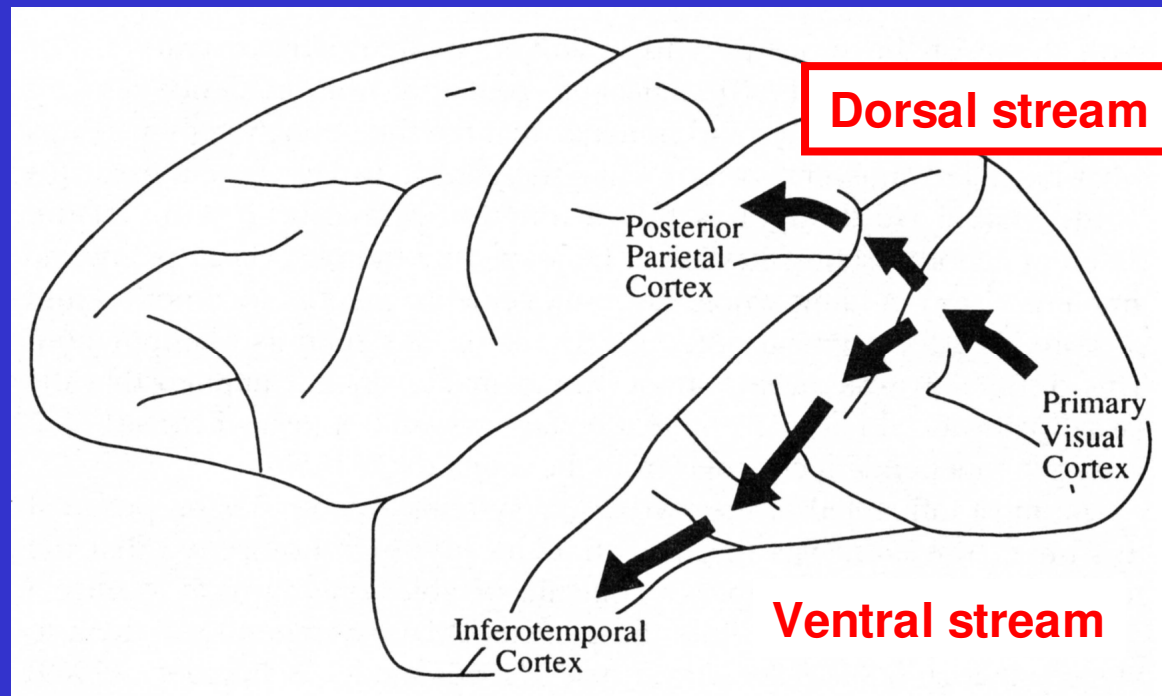
*Galletti et al. 2005*



- V6A cells
- V6 cells
- V2/V3 cells
- PEc/PGm cells



## Vision for action

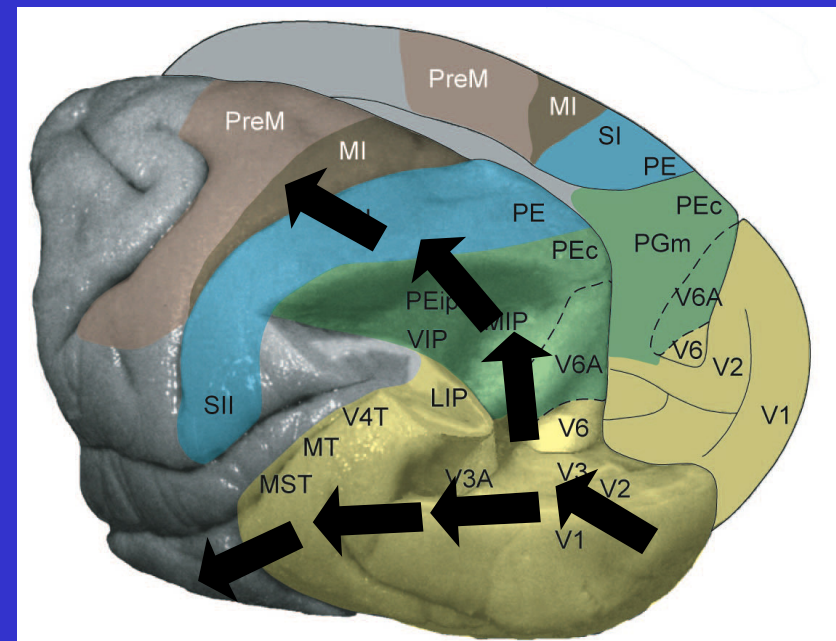
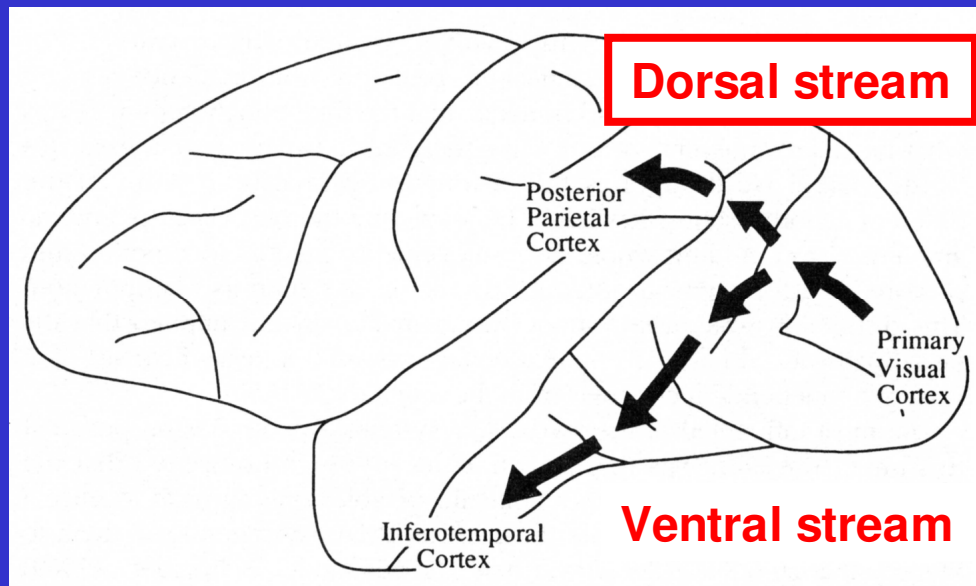


Ungerleider and Mishkin, 1982  
Goodale and Milner, 1992

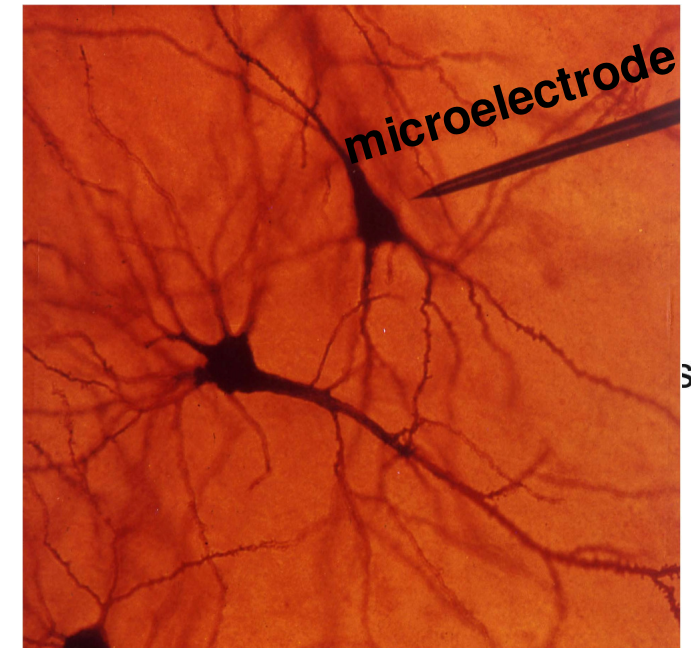
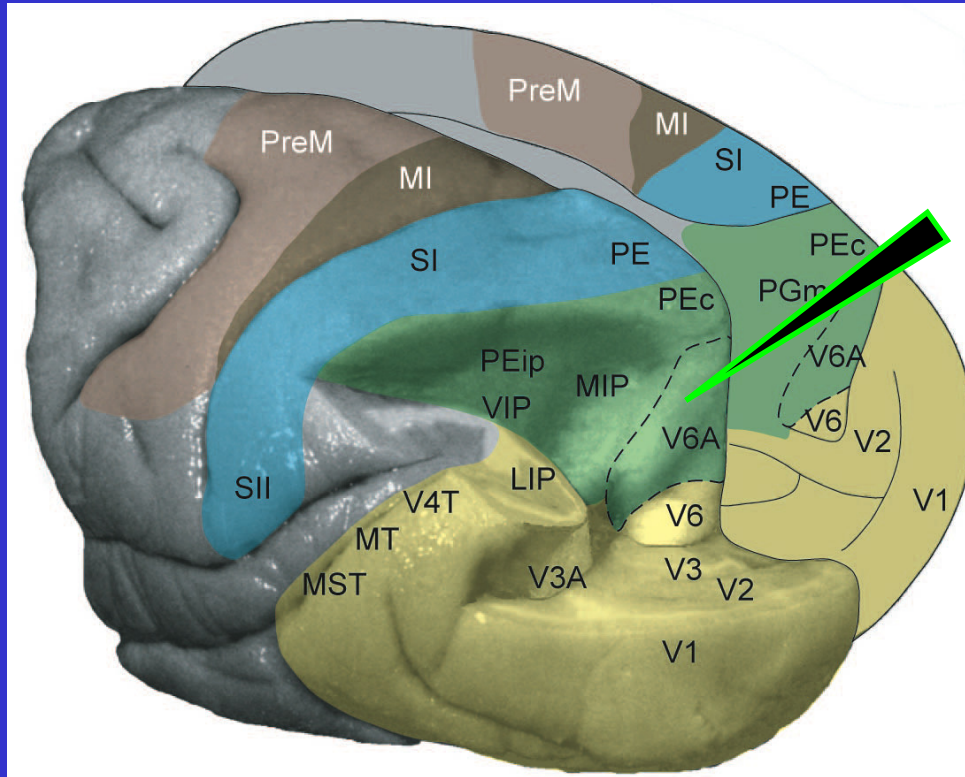




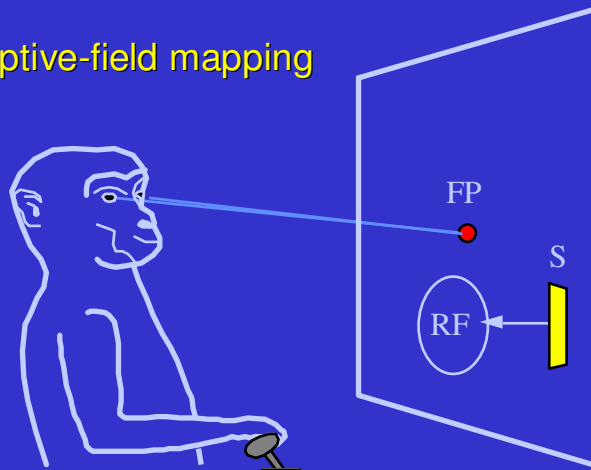
## Within the dorsal stream



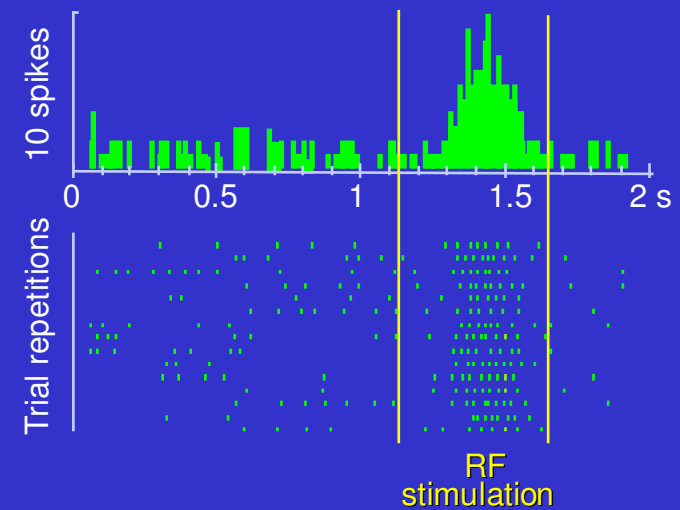
Ungerleider and Mishkin, 1982  
Goodale and Milner, 1992



Visual receptive-field mapping



Neural response to visual stimulation

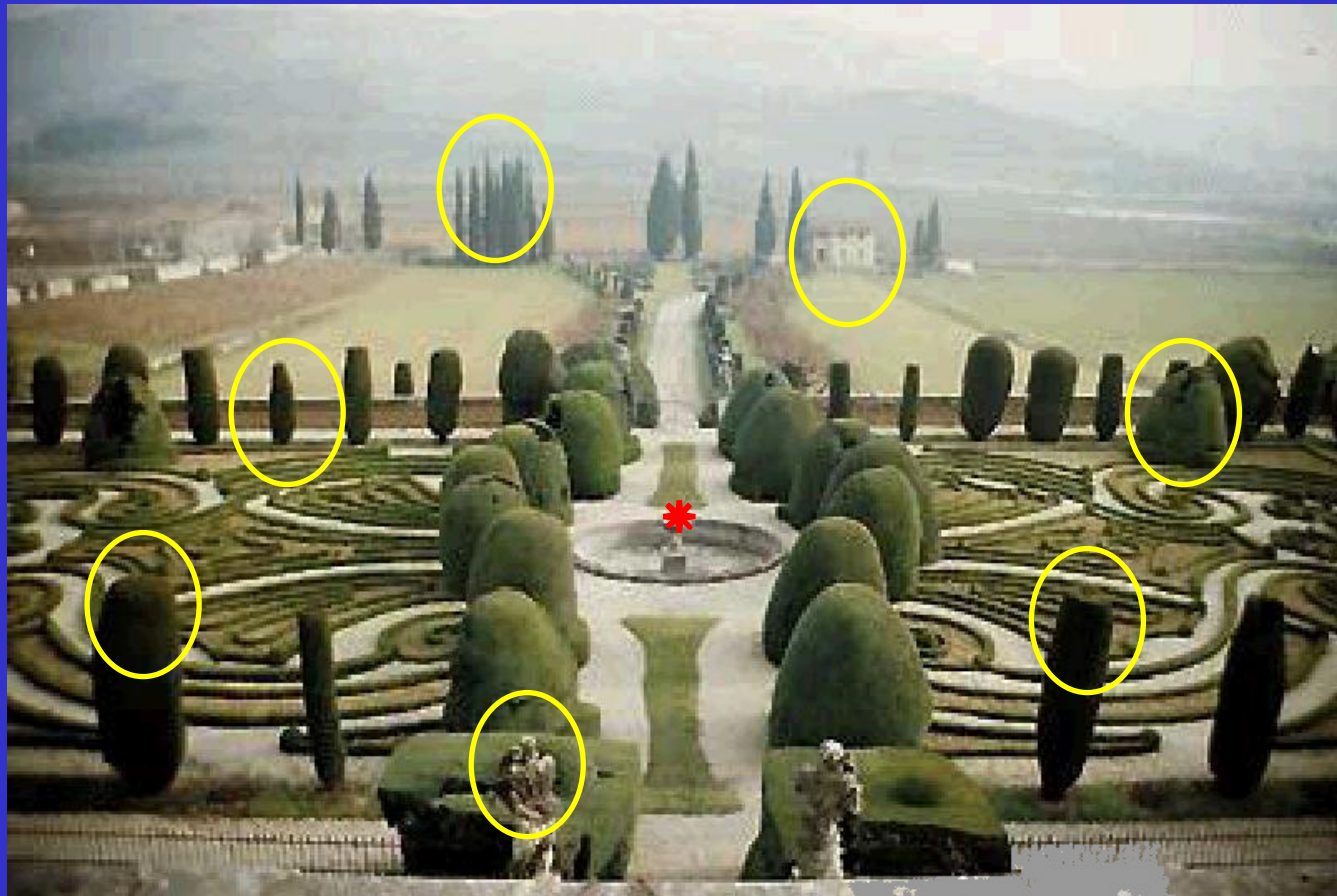




Eyes still (fixation) →

Retinal image  
location

Perception  
of object  
location



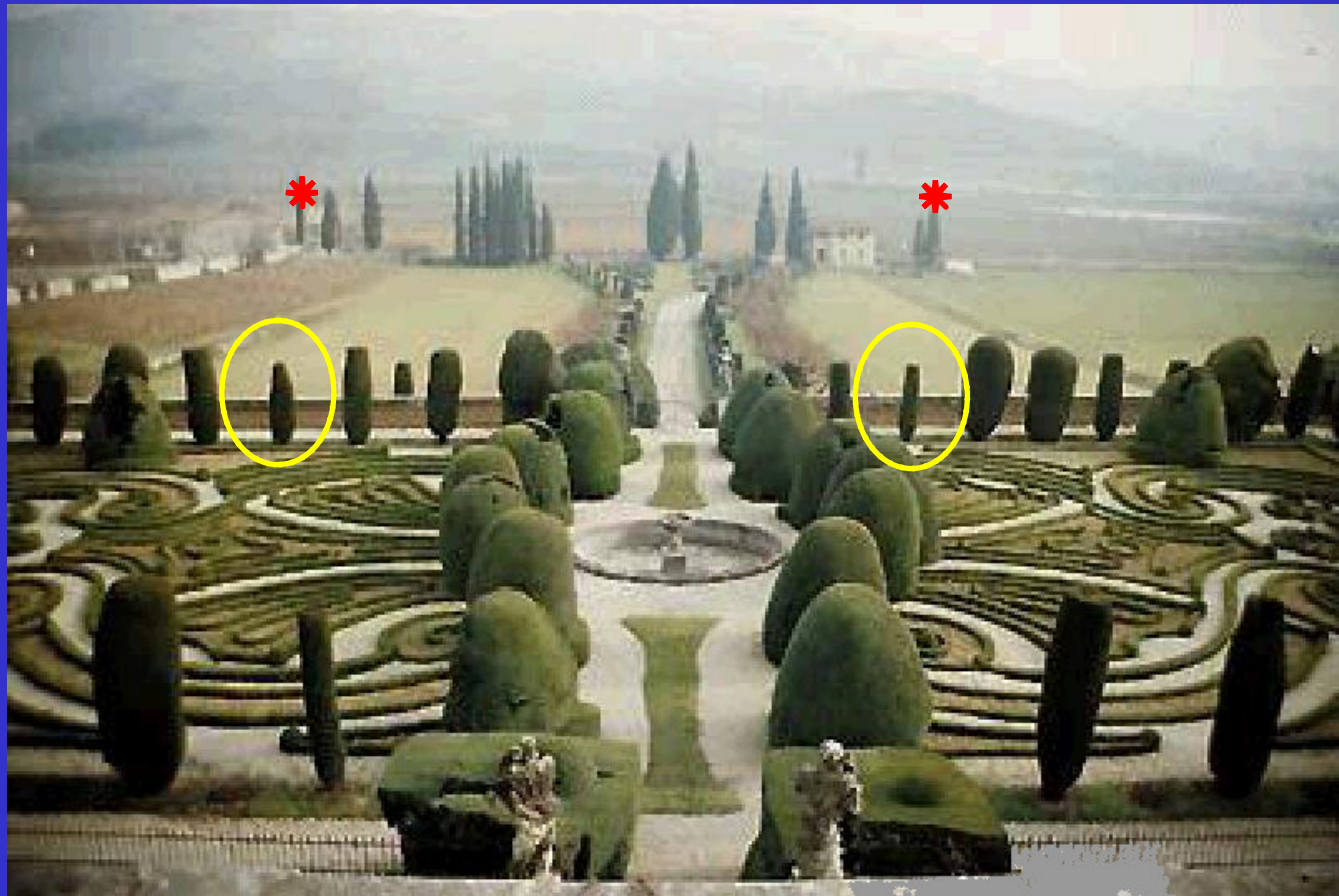
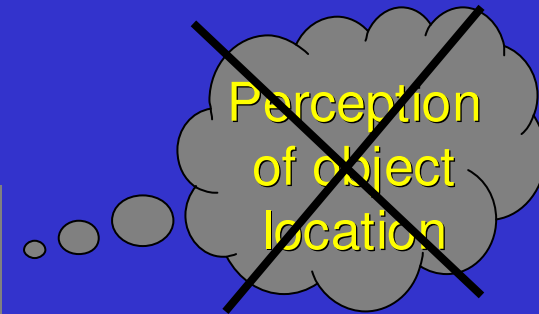




Change of  
gaze direction



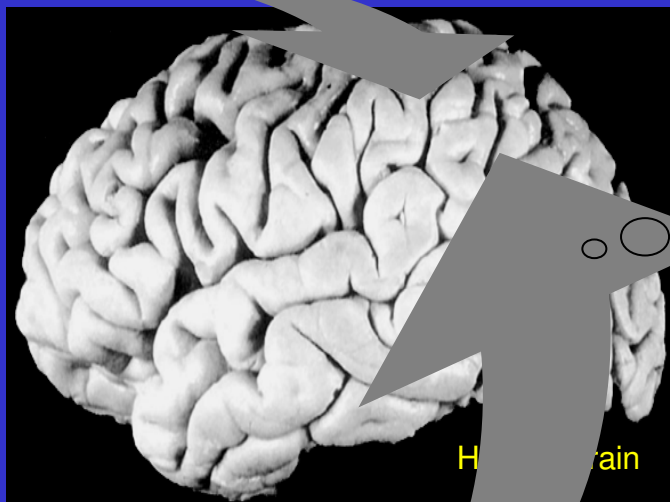
Retinal image  
location





Retinal image  
location

Direction of gaze

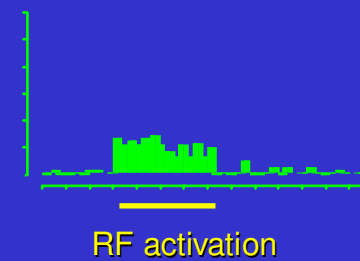
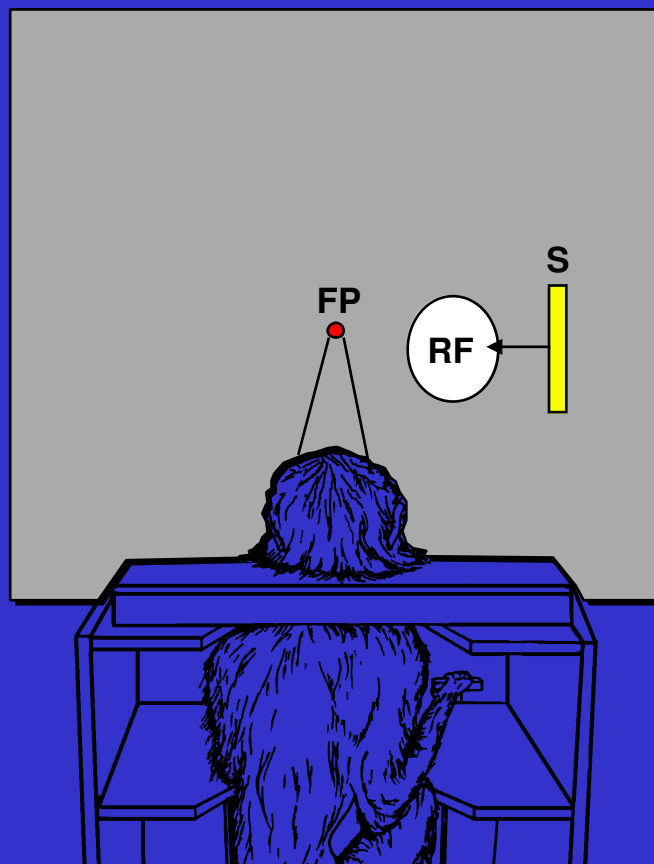


Perception  
of object  
location



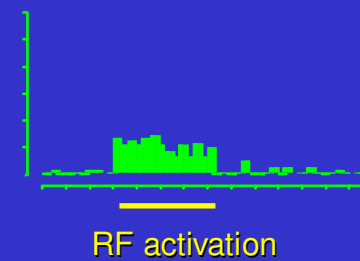
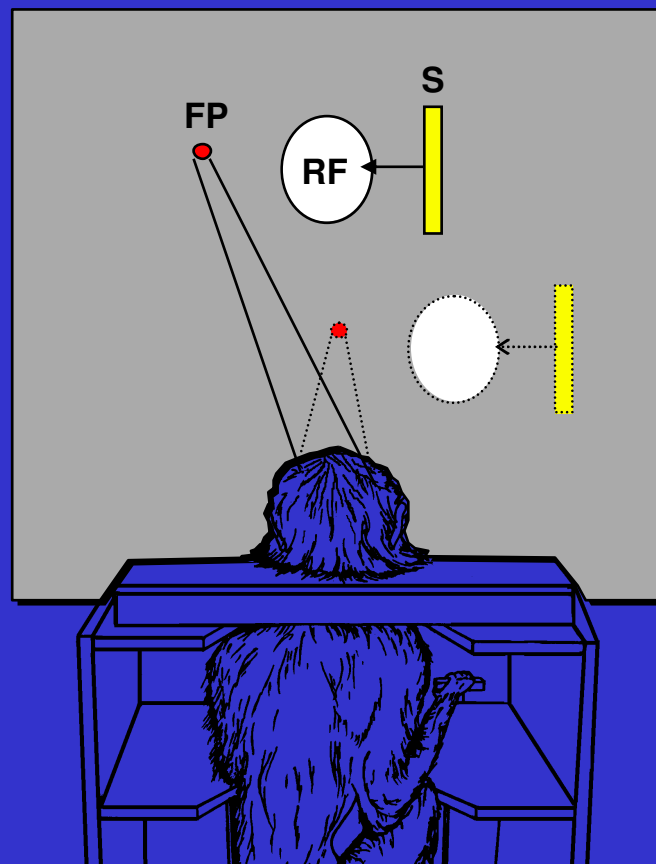
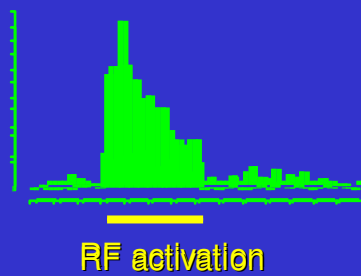


## Visual responses



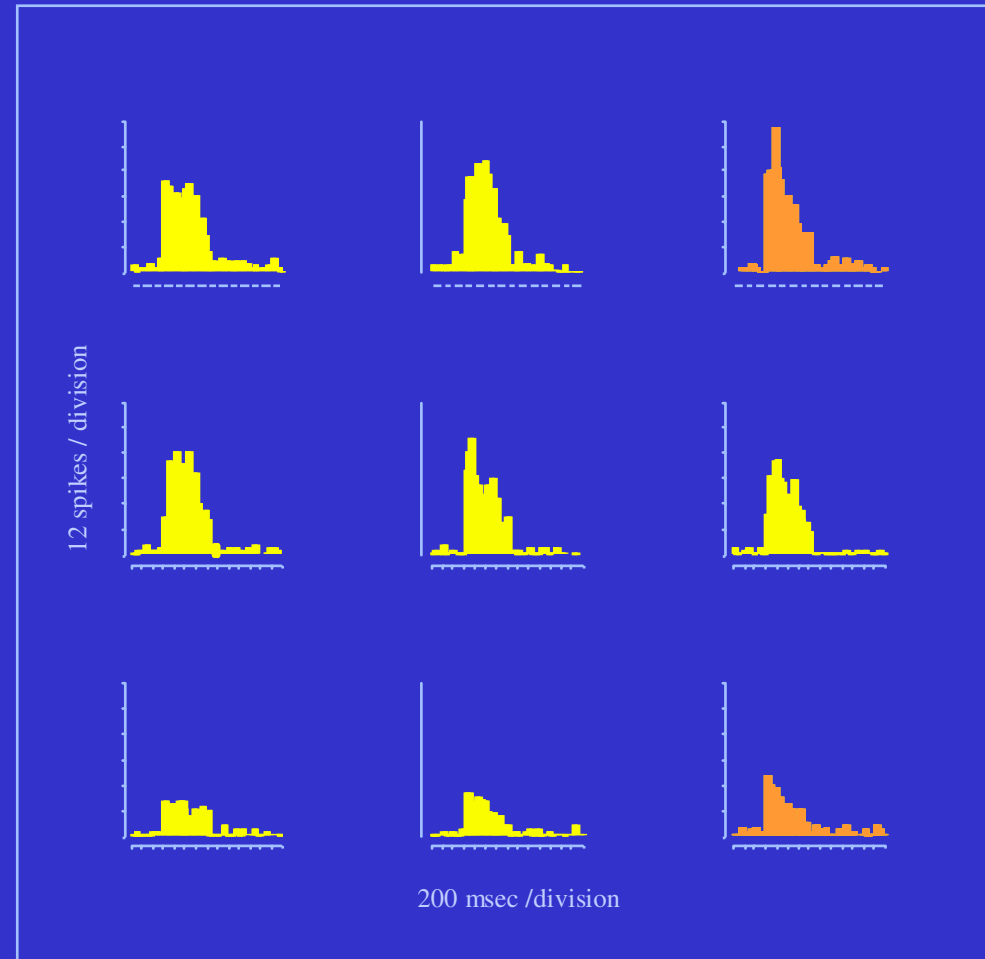
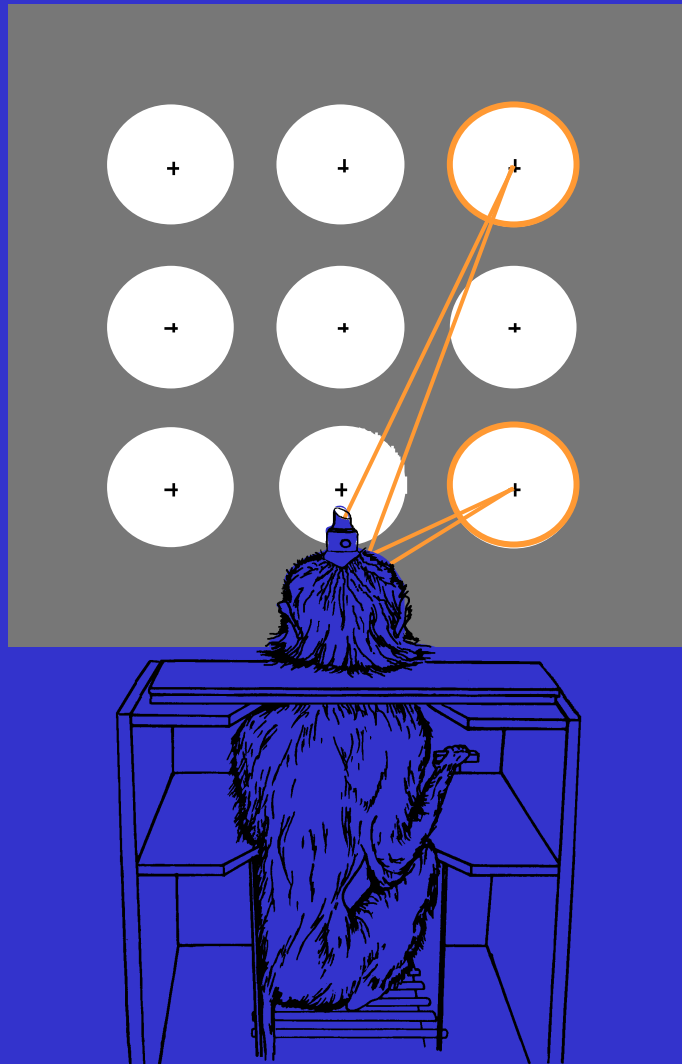


## Direction of gaze and visual responses





## 2D gain fields

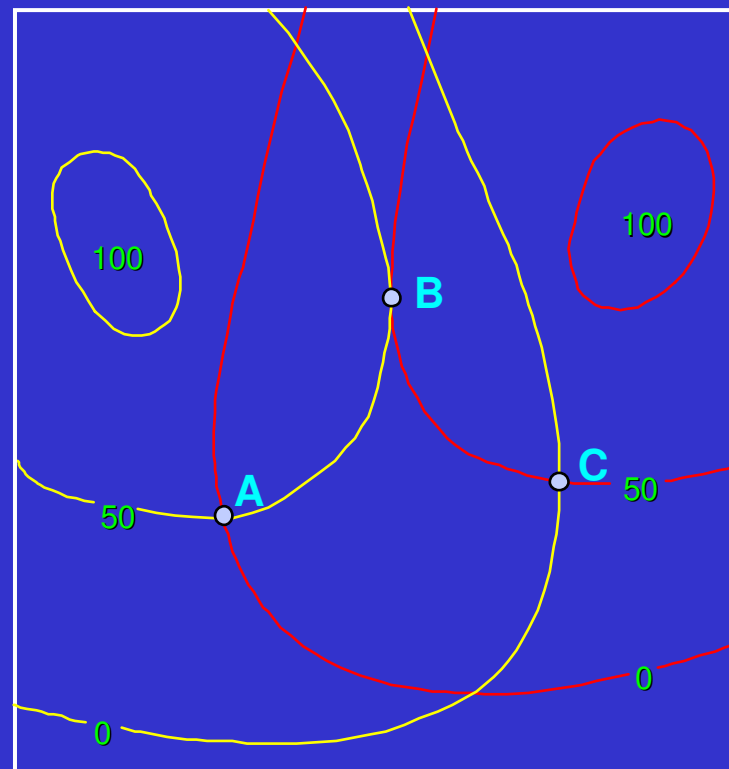
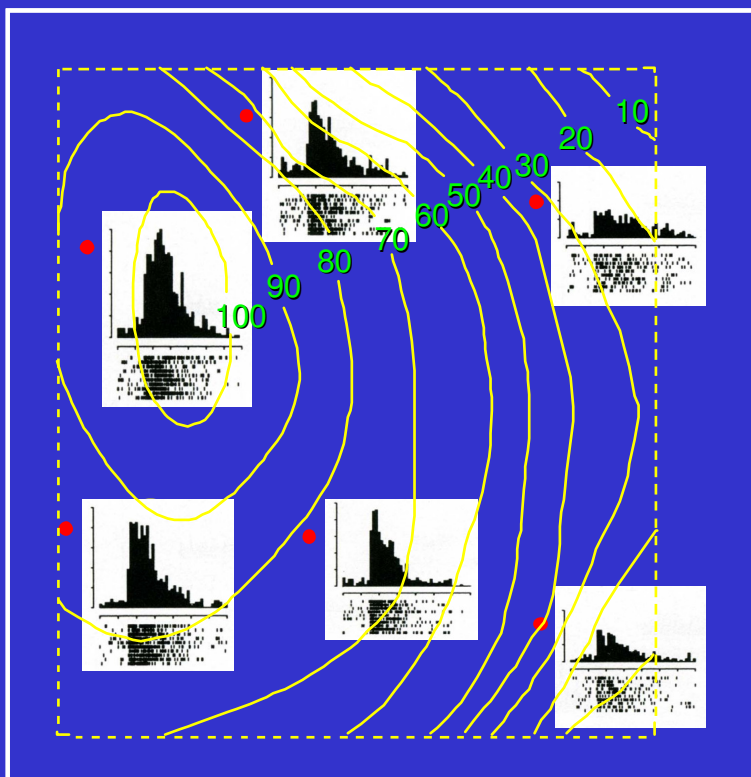


Unit 15,034

Galletti et al., 1995



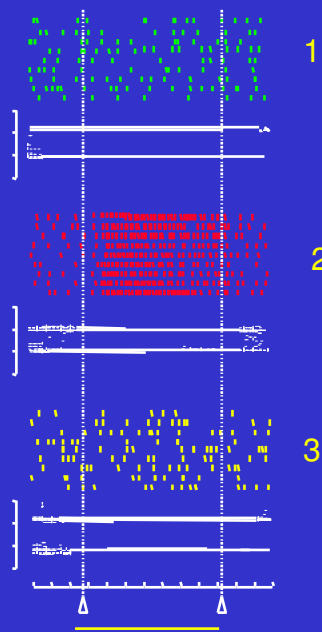
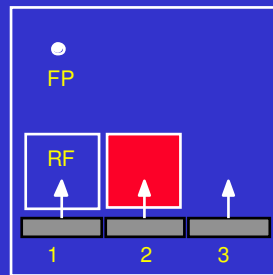
# Encoding of the visual space



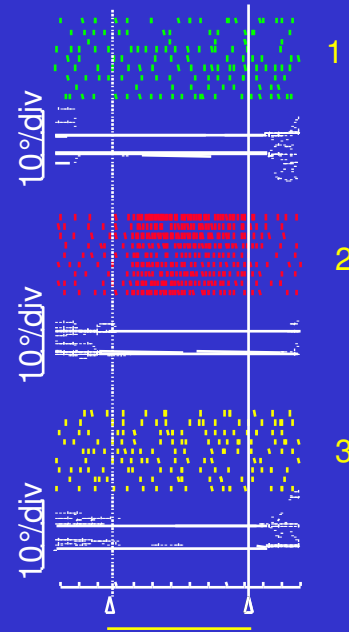
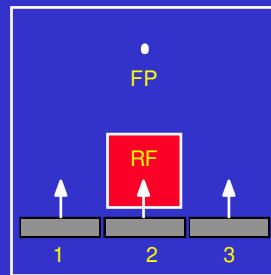


# Are there cells that encode directly the visual space ?

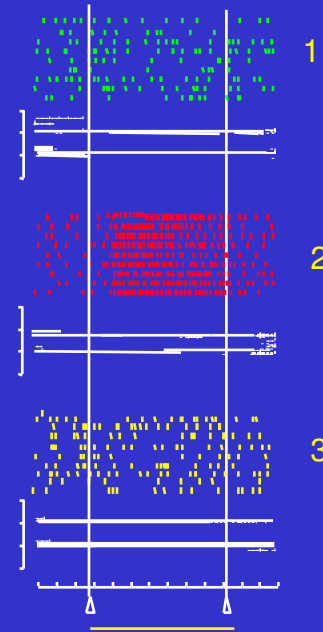
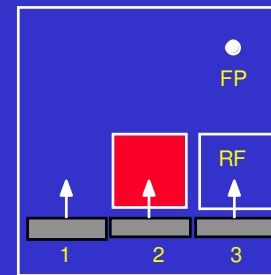
## Real-position cell



visual stimulation

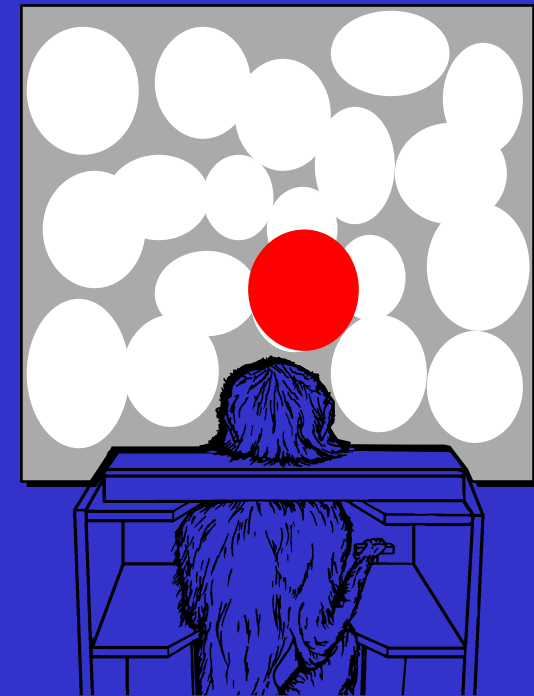


visual stimulation



visual stimulation

Encoding of visual space  
by real-position cells



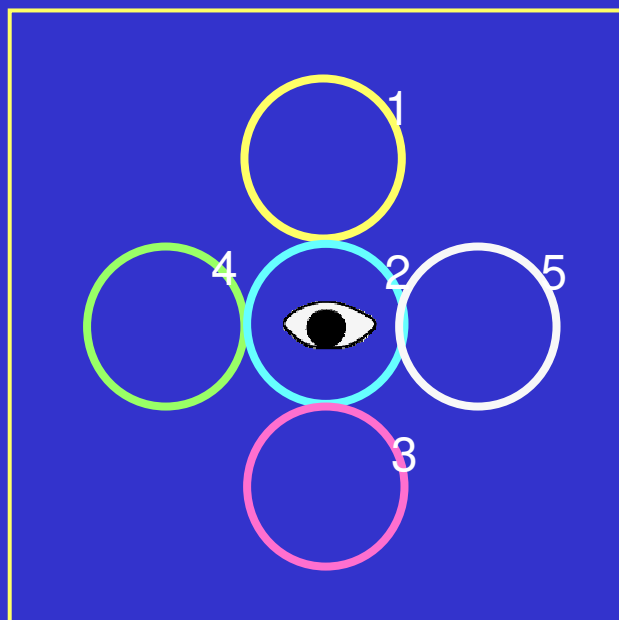
Galletti et al., 1993



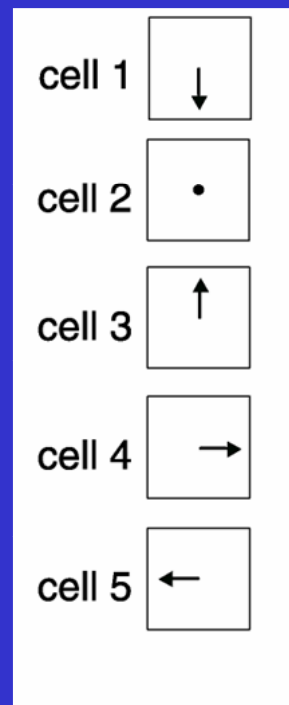


- How can the RF remain stable in space despite eye movements?
- Hypothesis: this is due to the activity of gaze-dependent cells

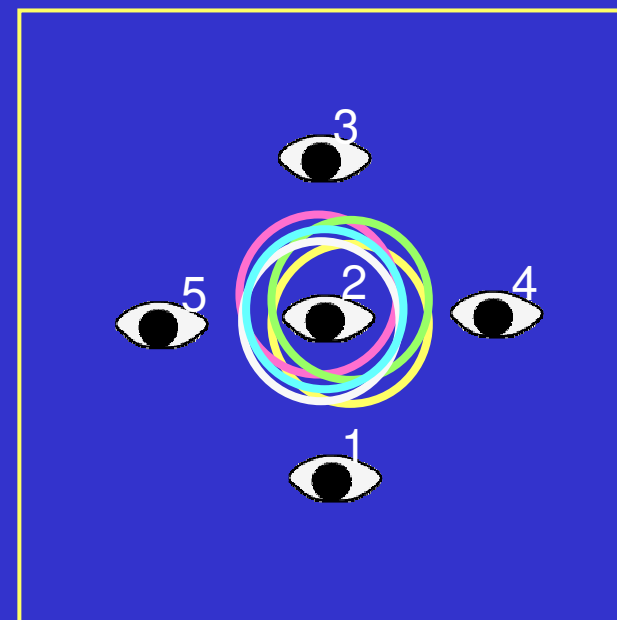
Receptive field locations



Preferred gaze directions

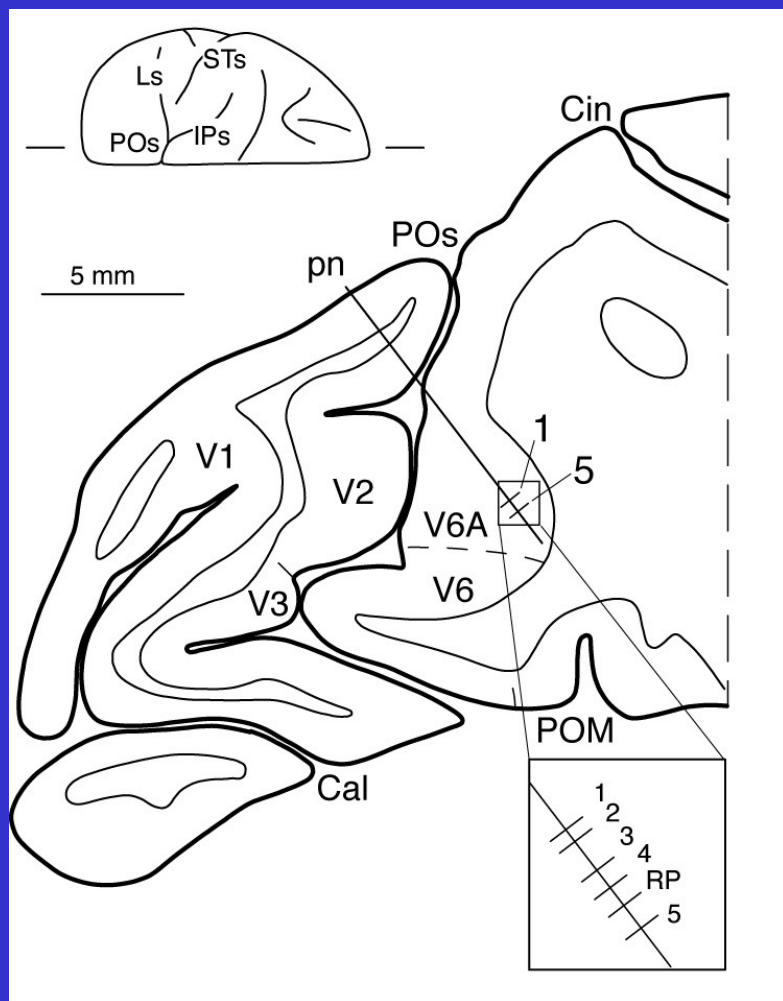


Real position behaviour





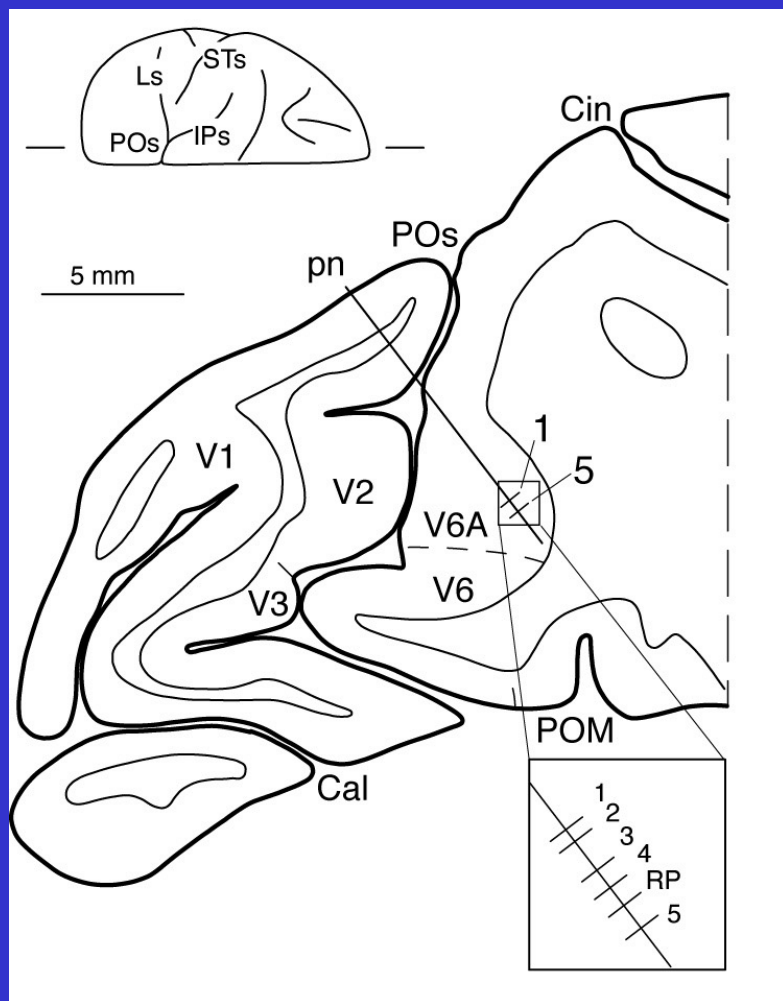
## Experimental data confirming the hypothesis



Galletti et al., 1995

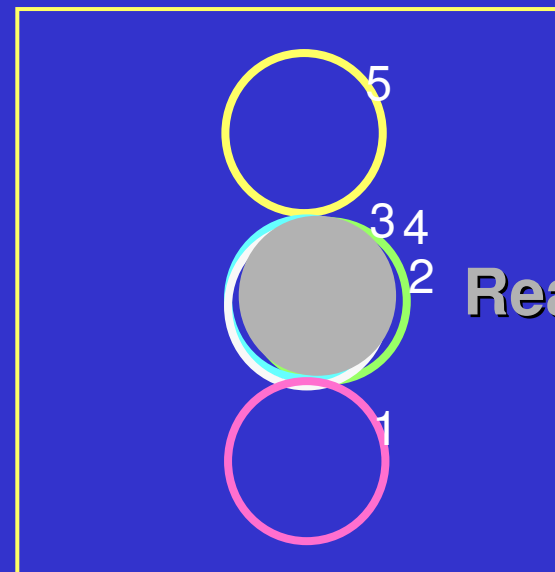


## Experimental data confirming the hypothesis

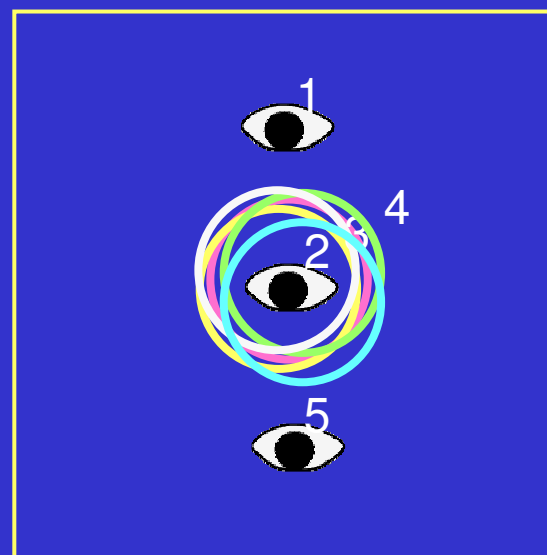


Galletti et al., 1995

## Receptive field locations



## Preferred gaze directions



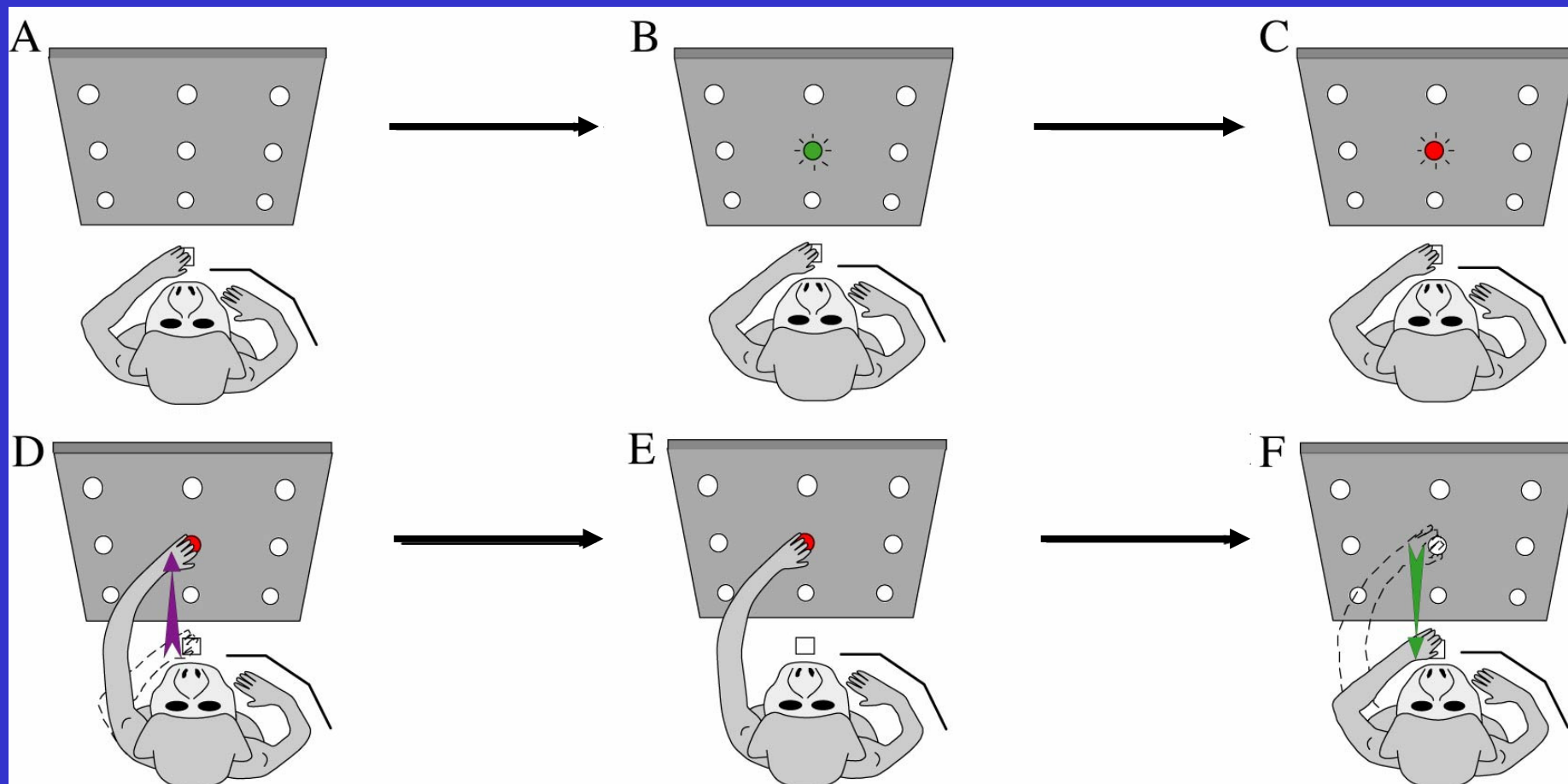


# Reach-related activities in monkey medial parieto-occipital cortex





## Instructed-delay reaching task

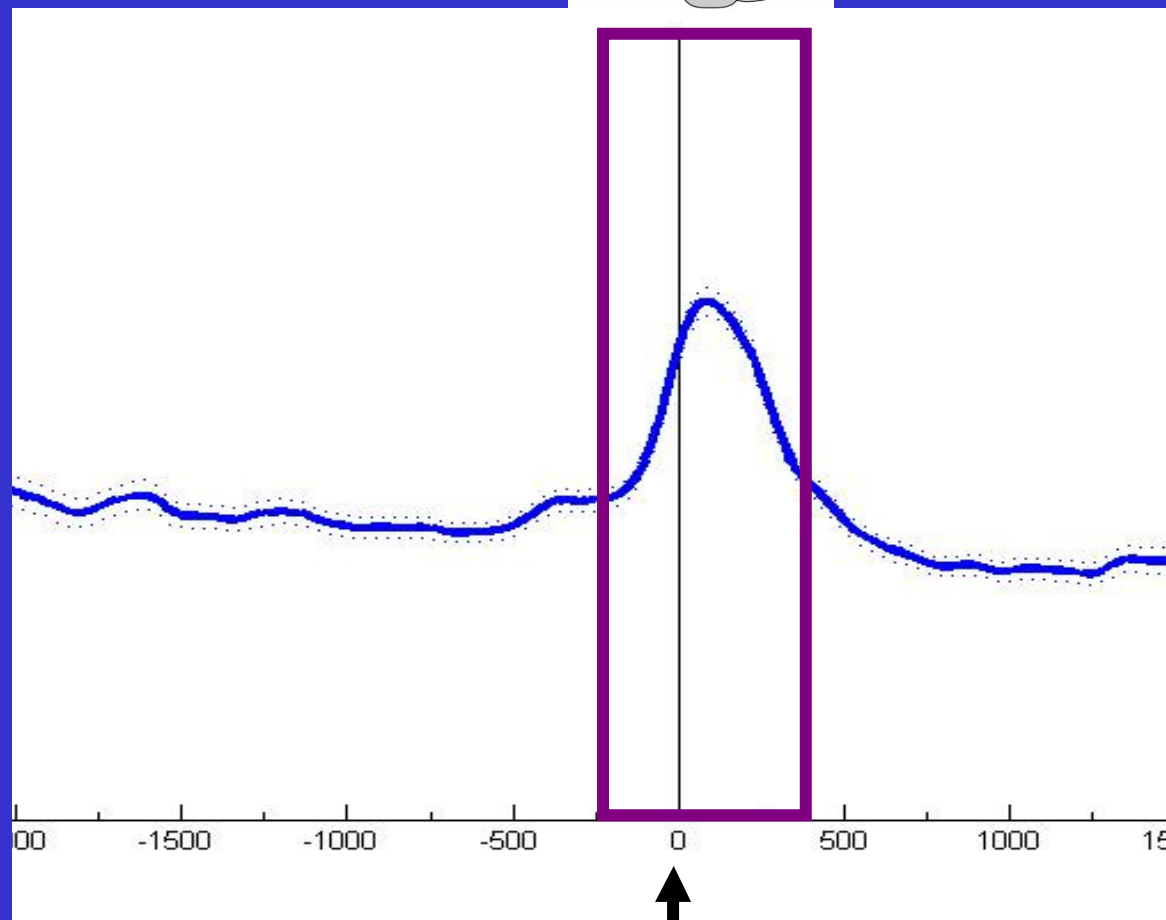
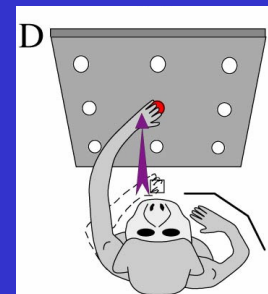


the task was performed with the contralateral arm  
in darkness



N=348 responses  
during forward arm  
reaching movement  
in at least one  
target location

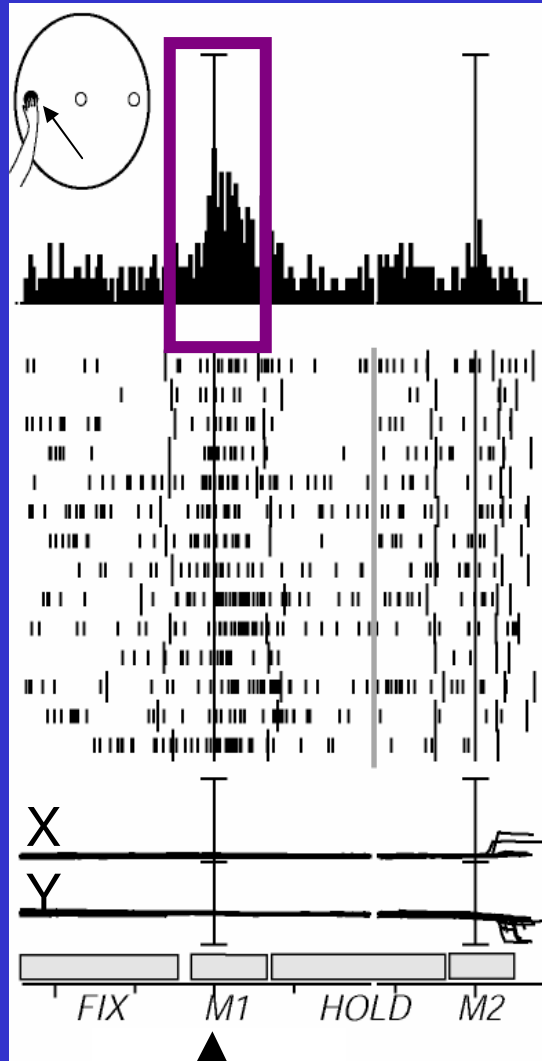
How the population  
behave



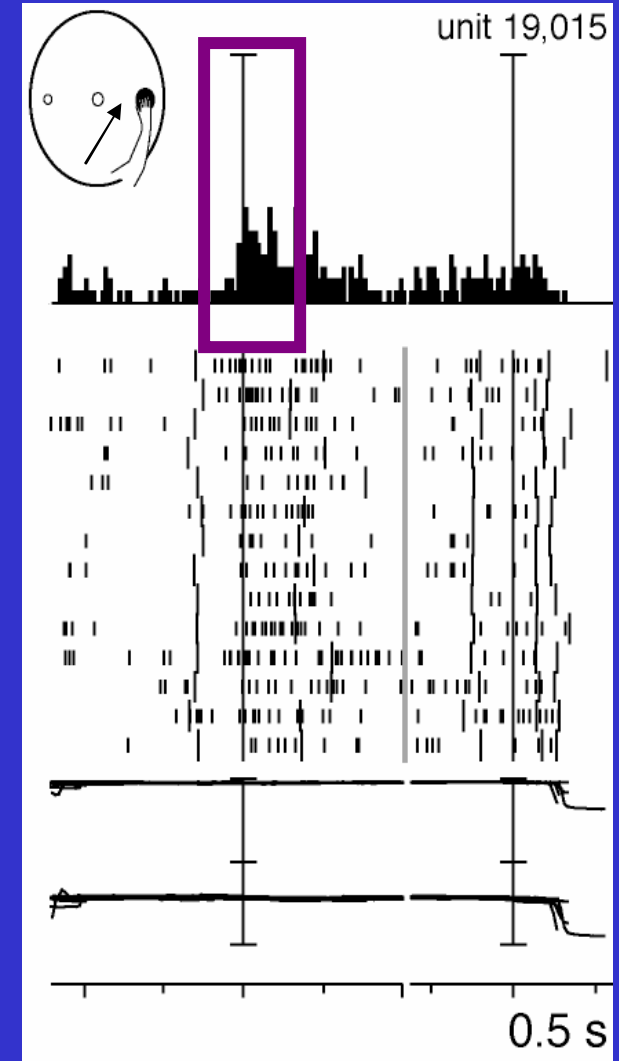
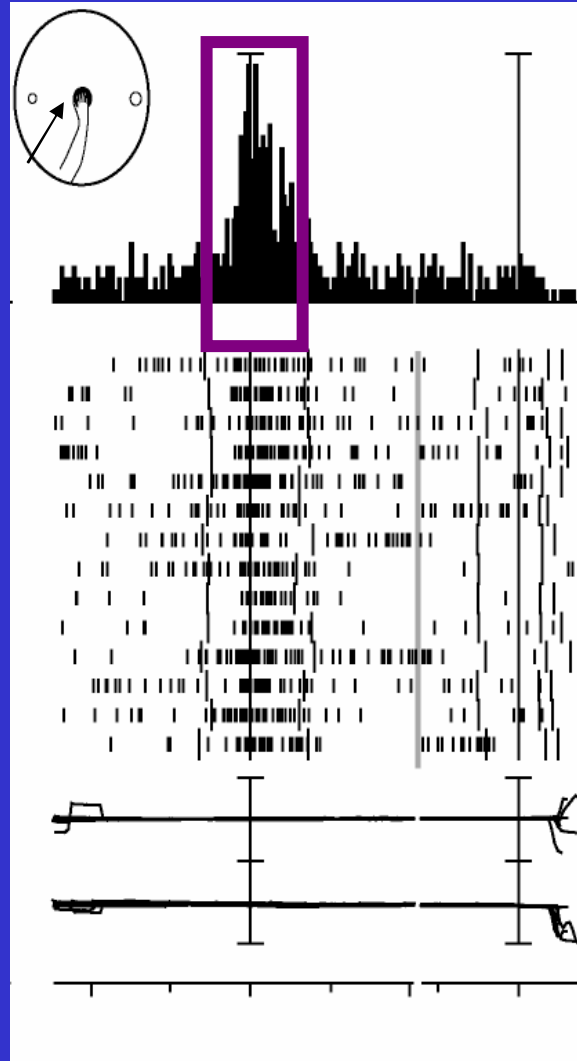
Movement  
Onset



## Example of a cell spatially tuned during forward arm-reaching movement



↑  
Movement  
Onset

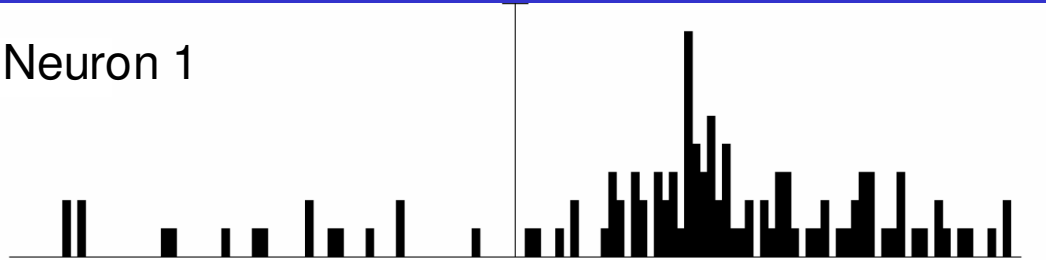


Fattori et al. 2005



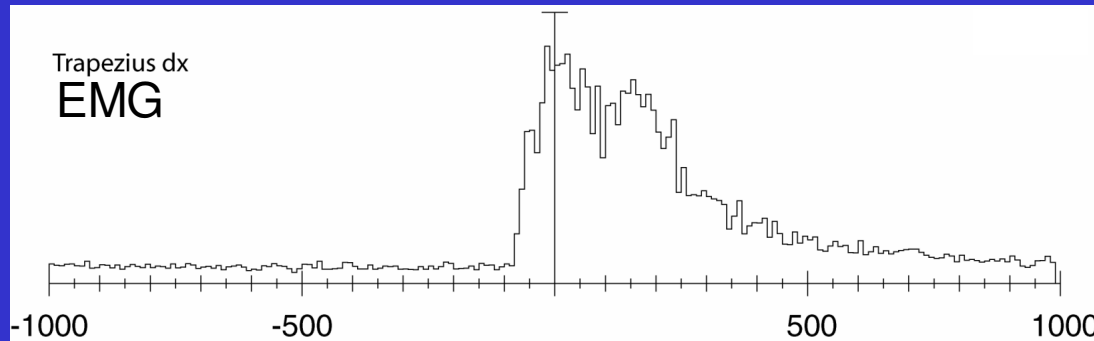
## What is the source of the arm-related discharge?

Neuron 1

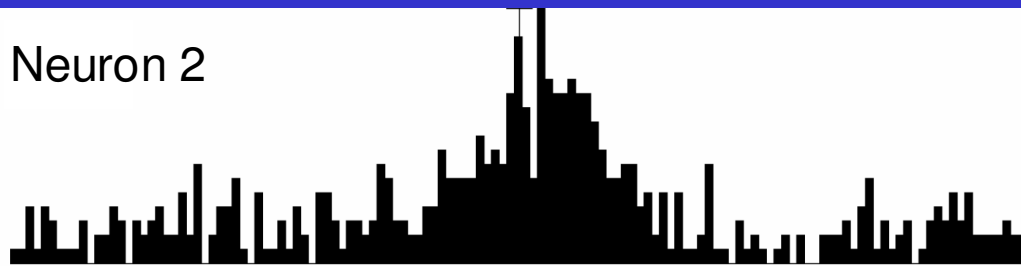


This cell started discharging after the beginning of EMG activity

Trapezius dx  
EMG



Neuron 2

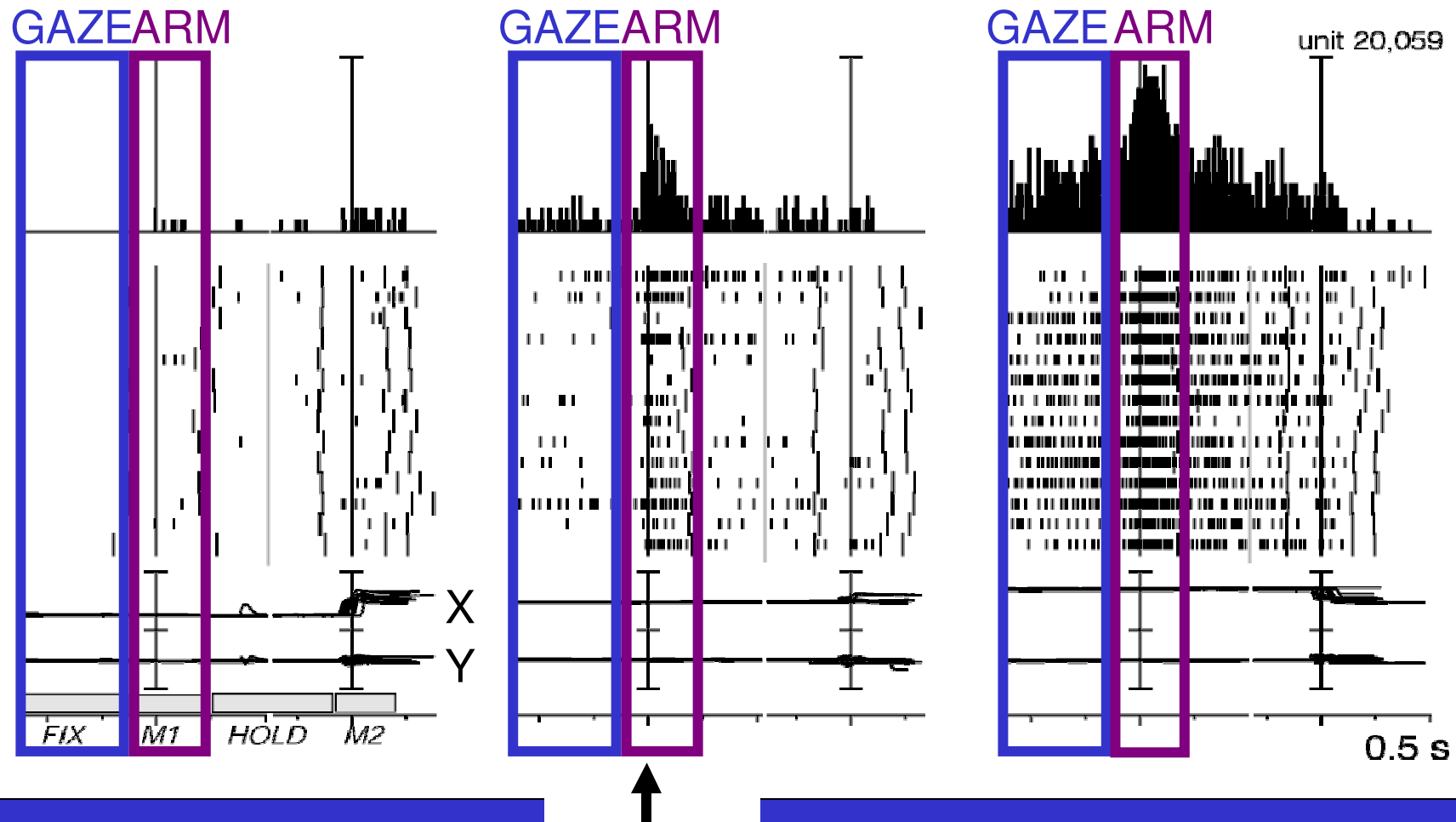


This cell started discharging before the beginning of EMG activity

↑  
Movement  
Onset



## Example of a cell receiving arm and gaze influences

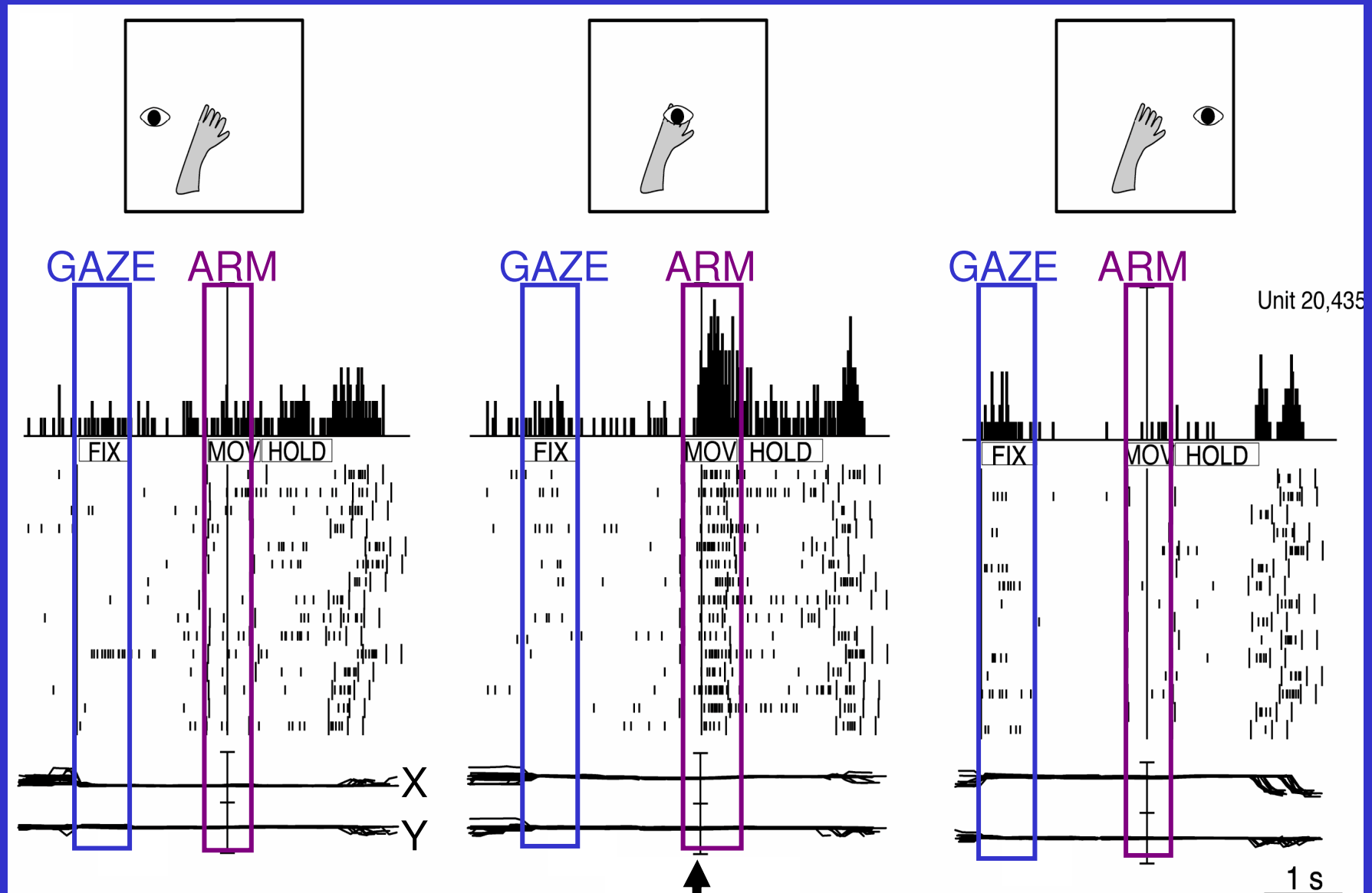


Fattori et al. 2005

Movement  
Onset

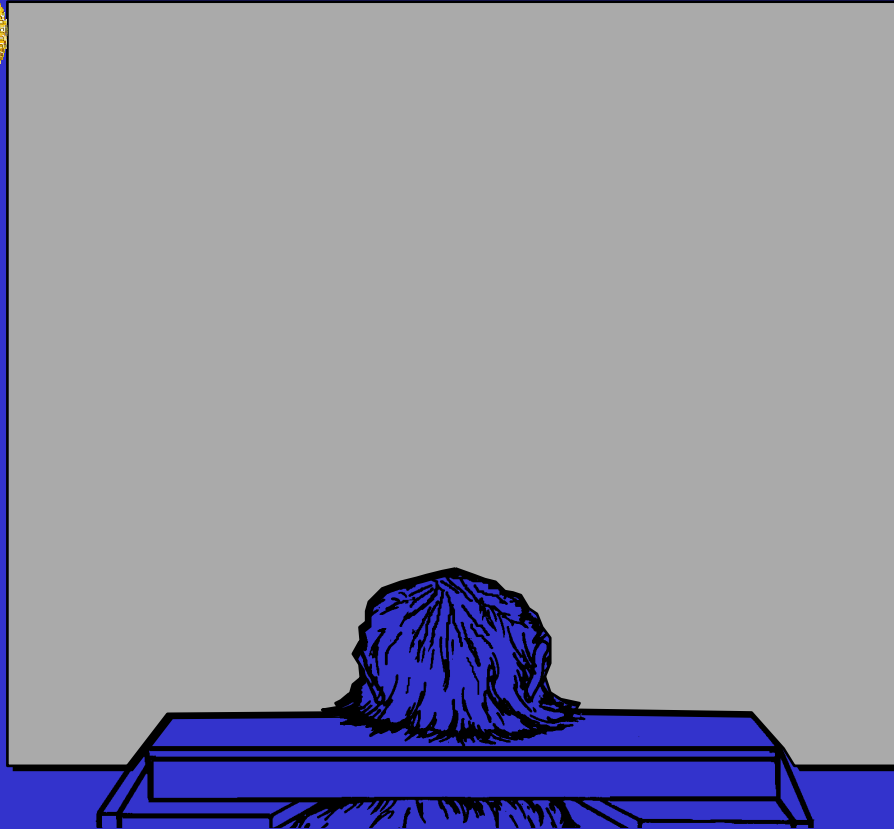


# Example of a gaze modulation of the arm-reaching discharge



Marzocchi et al. 2008

Movement  
Onset



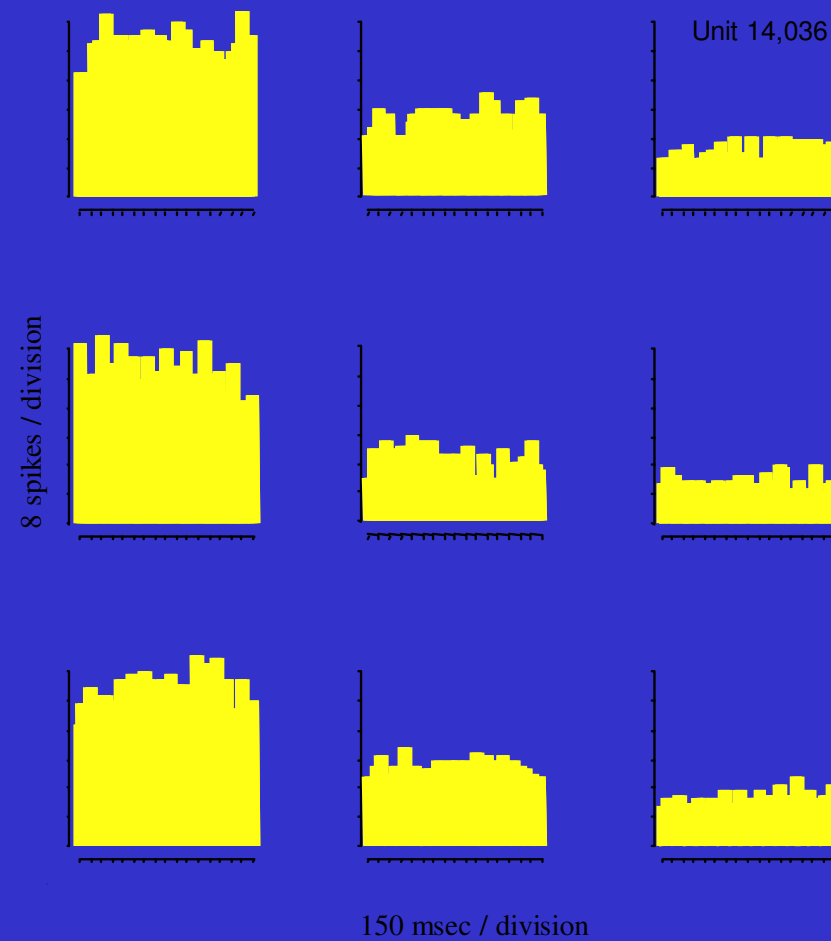
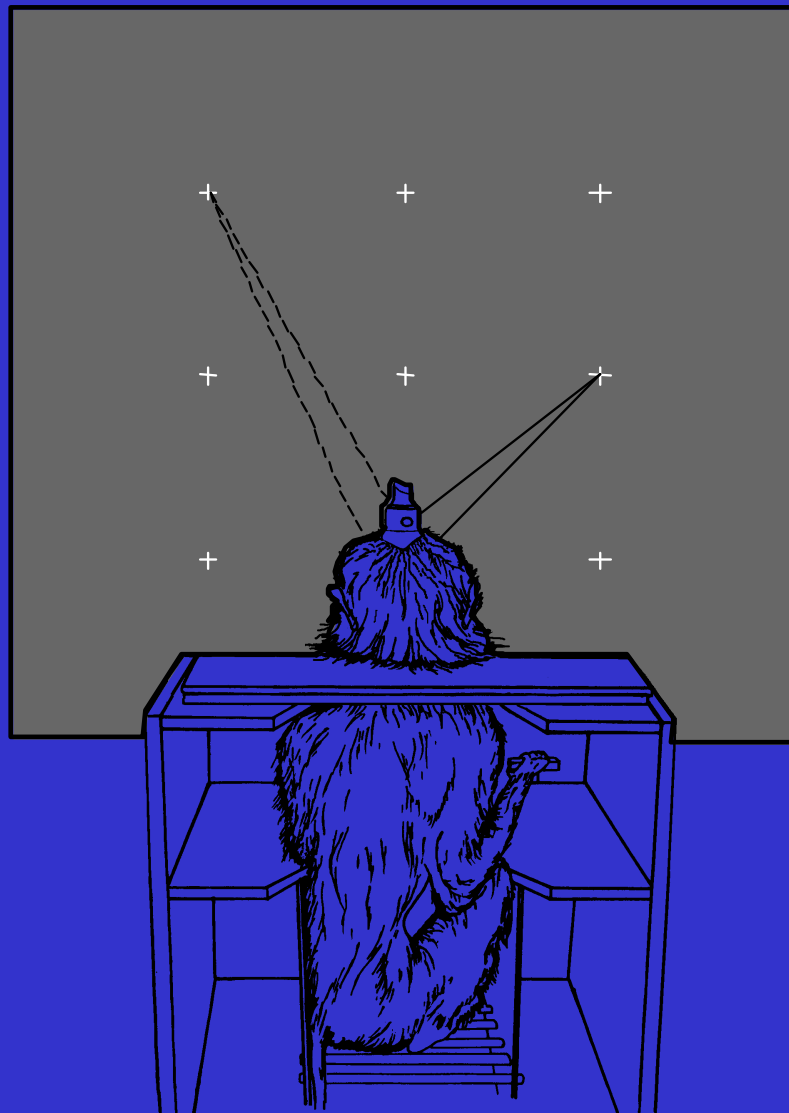
## **EYESHOTS** **planned activities**

Main goal:

experimental characterization of the neural correlates of multisensory 3D representation, in order to provide architectural guidelines for the production of biologically-inspired artificial intelligence systems able to interact with the 3D world



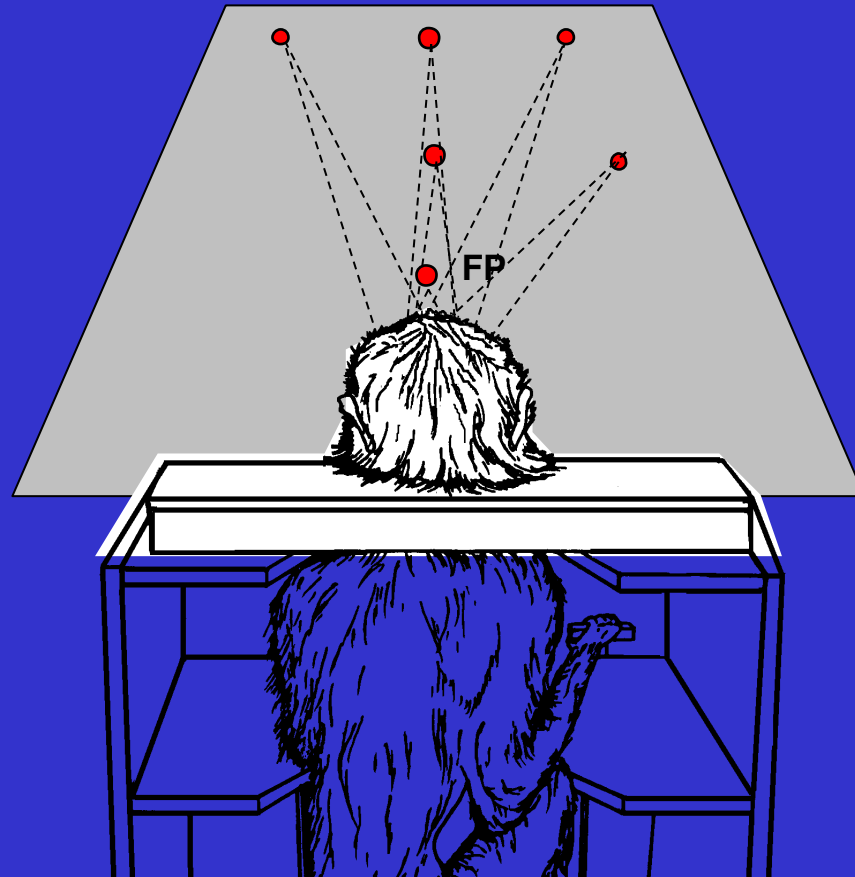
## 2D eye-position fields



Galletti et al., 1995



## EYESHOTS Task 5.1 activities

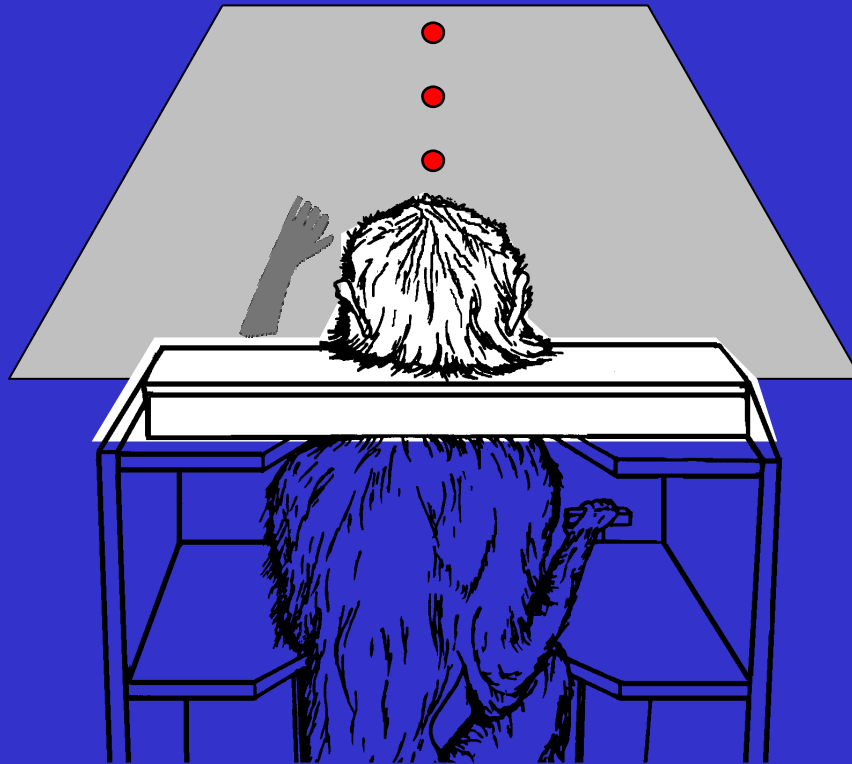


Experimental characterization of

3D eye-position fields of  
neurons of medial parieto-  
occipital cortex.



## EYESHOTS: Task 5.2 activities



Active exploration of the peripersonal space through active ocular and arm movements



