

Colored-Hearing or Chromaesthesia

“There was a piece of music by a group called Uman. The first note was grey and it was like a band of grey with a slight curve to it, and it was a gradient - light grey going to dark grey - it had gold specks on it. The background was black but it was being broken up by other colors, moving shapes of fuchsia and there was a small like a click, almost like a drumbeat, something being struck, and as it was struck, a black shape appeared, and the shapes appeared from left to right, going horizontally across the bottom of this - like a movie screen that I was watching. And the shapes were so exquisite, so simple, so pure and so beautiful, I wanted somehow to be able to capture them, but they were moving too quickly and I couldn't remember them all. And it's kind of a pity because it was a year's worth of sculpture I was seeing in a few moments.”

This is when a sound evokes the perception of a color. It has been recorded that an opera is like experiencing a painting. Sometimes each musical instrument has it's own color. In bi-directional hearing, the changing of a traffic light (or robot as it is referred to in other countries) evokes a bell-like sound.

For years, capturing color and shape of sound has become obsession that I couldn't erase the memories of some of the experiments that I used to do years before. I used to set papers on the floor of my room from one side to other and start painting until the music ends. It would make me feel as I was the paint, lines and shapes dancing and floating on white surface. With these memories and knowledge about synesthesia that I have gained in Art and the Brain class my obsession has awoken again and I have decided my final paper to be about colored-hearing/chromaesthesia. My paper will include researches about colored hearing by giving examples of lived experiences, synesthetic-art by looking at some of the pieces that are completed by synesthetic-artists(Vasily Kandinsky) and non-synesthetic modern artist (Mondrian, Malevitch), and composers(Alexander Scriabin, Sir Arthur Sullivan), some scientific experiments that are done by scientists and adventurers (Newton, Stephen Malinowski, Lisa Turetsky, Jameson, Kastner, Bainbridge Bishop, Rimington), few examples of my own that I have experimented in past and the last, if the time permits - a creation of my own – first draft of a java application to produce sound visually and audibly. (A project I would like to continue researching)

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