

COLOR AND SOUND: SEARCH FOR ORDER IN THEIR COMPARISONS.

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Search for the single-valued relationship between colour and sound is a constant and unrealized dream of the mankind; it is similar to searching for philosophic stone, perpetuum mobile, and squaring the circle. Isaac Newton was the first who made the comparison between colour and sound (spectrum and octave) as the physical phenomena. Later, the French monk L.-B. Castel put forward the idea of "music of colour" based on conversion of music into colour in accordance with the "sound series - colour series" logic.

Both Newton and Castel took no account for the heterogeneous nature of these feelings that could not make it possible to have such conversion realized. Besides, the experience gained by linguistics also confirms the fact that "literal", letter by letter, conversion, even in the art of words, is of words is nothing but absurd. So, the aspiration to find an order in the system of "colour - sound" relations at level, inadequate for psychology and aesthetics, was proved to be senseless.

More attractive were the attempts of musicians to make a comparison between colour and tonalities rather than tones (sounds). Initially, there was also an intention to make these comparisons ordered. The composer A. Scriabin placed the spectrum in the form of the colour circle and compared it with the quint circle of "tonalities" (here the tonalities were arranged one by another in accordance with the principle of harmonic similarity, and, in appearance, they were arranged in their notation according to the height of alteration signs. But the problem was also understood in this case too primitively, since the human being's personality (emotions of which serve as a mediator in comparisons of colour and tonality) was here neglected. The emotions are related to the individual, subjective sphere, and the notion of "order" unjustifiably reduced here to compilation and comparison of heterogeneous structures (schematic series, circles, etc). If the emotional reactions and assessments of a man can be called "ordered", we can say that this order is not strictly single-valued, it is probabilistic in character (it is obvious that "probabilistic character is not synonymous to "chaos". We must speak here, perhaps, about a certain "hierarchy" of probabilities). The same conclusion can be drawn with respect to the psychological and aesthetical associations of "color - tonality". Using this approach we can, of course, continue to insist on the idea of conversion ("translation") of music into colour by being based on the probabilistic comparisons. But we are confronted in this case with the paradox noticed by H. Heine: "translation is like a woman: if she is steadfast, she is not pretty and if she is pretty, she is not steadfast".

As to the new art - colour music (light music) is constructed on the basis of music-colour synthesis rather than on translation. But this statement is the theme of another conference

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