

Synesthesia and Cross Sensory Practice in Art

- 1st synesthesia art exhibition and forum in China, cross regional synesthesia survey



The inauguration ceremony of “2016 Beijing International Synesthesia Art Exhibition” and “1st Synaesthesia Art Exhibition Forum in China: Cross Regional Synesthesia Survey” was held at Beijing No.1 Art Space Gallery in Beijing Jianguo Garden Hotel on 9th Oct, 2016 with attendance of art amateurs, teachers and students from art colleges and art circles around Beijing.

The exhibition displayed paintings inspired in Chinese classical and foreign music alongside art works reflecting the sensory experience of foreign artists with synaesthesia as well as award winning video art from the international competition MuVi4, music iconography reflecting Chinese ancient art and music synaesthesia, as well as exhibition panels related to achievements in international synaesthesia research. Notably, photographs demonstrating phenomenon of synaesthesia in regional Chinese culture aroused much interests; this was linked with the upcoming cross regional programmed synaesthesia survey. The art works were rich and detailed: “...not just a colorful and beautiful pictures or paintings but a kind of new interactive experience between art work and viewer,” as commented by many in attendance.

Mr. He Jianwei, the Chinese curator of the exhibition said: “The exhibition jointly sponsored by the Chinese National Academy of Arts Lithography School No.1 Art Space Gallery, Artecitta International Foundation and Chinese Synaesthesia Alliance carried the greatest academic value in recent years held in mainland China in respect to synaesthesia. It also has received the supports not only from the International Artecitta Foundation, but also from the UK Synaesthesia Association, the International Association of Synaesthetes Artist and Scientist and US Beacon Artist Association. These artists include the Spanish artist and professor Maria Jose De Cordoba, UK artist Timothy B Layden, Italian professor in art and design Dina Riccò, American artist Carol Steen, UK artist James Wannerton, German artists Christine Soffing, Michael Haverkamp, Spanish artist Pepa Salas Vilar, New Zealand artist Raewyn Turner and Brian Harris. Meanwhile, we also received excellent support from experts and scholars of China’s Society of Music Iconology and well-known artists in China including He Wenqing, Ninghui Xiong, Mu Xi, Zhou Wufa, Yang Qing, Yuan Wenbin, musician Zhang Xiang, musician vice professor Zhong Li, poet Fang Qinggang and so on. I am also deeply impressed by the unique excellent courseware display created by Chinese artists, the synesthesia between portrait painting from He Wenqing and the Yellow River Concerto and Synesthesia Music Fishbone Diagram by Ninghui Xiong.”



In the afternoon of October 9th, 2016 at Beijing Jianguo Garden Hotel No.1 Art Space, with the chime music, the project host Maria Jose De Cordoba (Spain) and Ninghui Xiong (China) jointly unveiled for the 2016 Beijing

international art exhibition and synesthesia “1st synaesthesia Art Exhibition Forum in China: cross regional synaesthesia survey”.



Posters, panels and artworks in the 2016 Beijing International Synaesthesia Art Exhibition



音与画的联觉，你有吗？

选自熊宁辉音画联觉教学课件

1. “麒麟的麒”如何发音？是发“一”还是发“V”；“狮首的狮”如何发音？是发“一”还是发“V”

2. 如果发出“Bouba”“Kiki”的声音，A图表示Bouba还是Kiki？B图表示Bouba还是Kiki？



图A



图B (选自Ramachandran and Hubbard心读实验)

3. 请听第一段（景色描写，笛子的音色），选自《钢琴协奏曲黄河》

- A. 高山流水，泰山峻岭，松涛浪浪；
B. 溪流湍急，大雨倾盆；
C. 小鸟鸣叫，晨曦，微风拂面，乡村；
D. 鸟语花香，鸟语花香



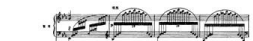
4. 请听第二段（人物描写，钢琴的旋律），选自《钢琴协奏曲黄河》

- A. 一位乡村少女；
B. 一位老农妇；
C. 一位乡村少女；
D. 老农妇



5. 请听第三段（人物描写，不同的器乐组合），选自《钢琴协奏曲黄河》

- A. 一位乡村少女；
B. 一位老农妇；
C. 一位乡村少女；
D. 老农妇



6. 都说第二段音乐是描写乡村少女的，那是怎样的少女？请在国画写实画家贺文庆老师的油画人物作品中找一找，看哪一个最接近音乐里所描写的少女？



熊宁辉-音画联觉绘画课堂练习单
Music Synaesthesia Painting Exercise Sheet

你打算从四幅联觉会“”的哪个主题开始？
Which part are you going to select for your first painting?

- 侏儒Gnomus
- 城堡The Old Castle
- 杜伊勒里宫的花园The Tuilleries Gardens
- 牛车Bydlo
- 马车的舞蹈Ballet of the Chickens in their Shells
- 两个犹太人萨子和萨尼Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle
- 里奥日的集市The Market-place at Limoges
- 墓穴The Catacombs 作者与亡友间的对话Cum mortuis in lingua mortua
- 鸡棚上的小屋The Hut on Fowl's Legs
- 基辅大门The Great Gate of Kiev

莫索尔斯基的肖像，列宾作
Portrait of Mussorgsky by Ilya Repin

联觉分析图

联觉分析图展示了不同感官之间的关联。中心是一个圆形的联觉网络，连接了味觉、颜色、冷热、亮度、情感、运动速度、形状、空间、纹理、气味、声音、触觉、线条、空间形状、运动速度、情感变化、联觉结果等。图中还包含了一些具体的联觉描述，如“味觉：酸甜苦辣”、“颜色：红黄蓝绿”、“冷热：冷热程度”、“亮度：明暗程度”、“情感：喜怒哀乐”、“运动速度：快慢”、“形状：方圆”、“空间：大小”、“纹理：粗糙光滑”、“气味：香臭”、“声音：高低”、“触觉：软硬”、“线条：粗细”、“空间形状：方圆”、“运动速度：快慢”、“情感变化：喜怒哀乐”、“联觉结果：联觉结果”。

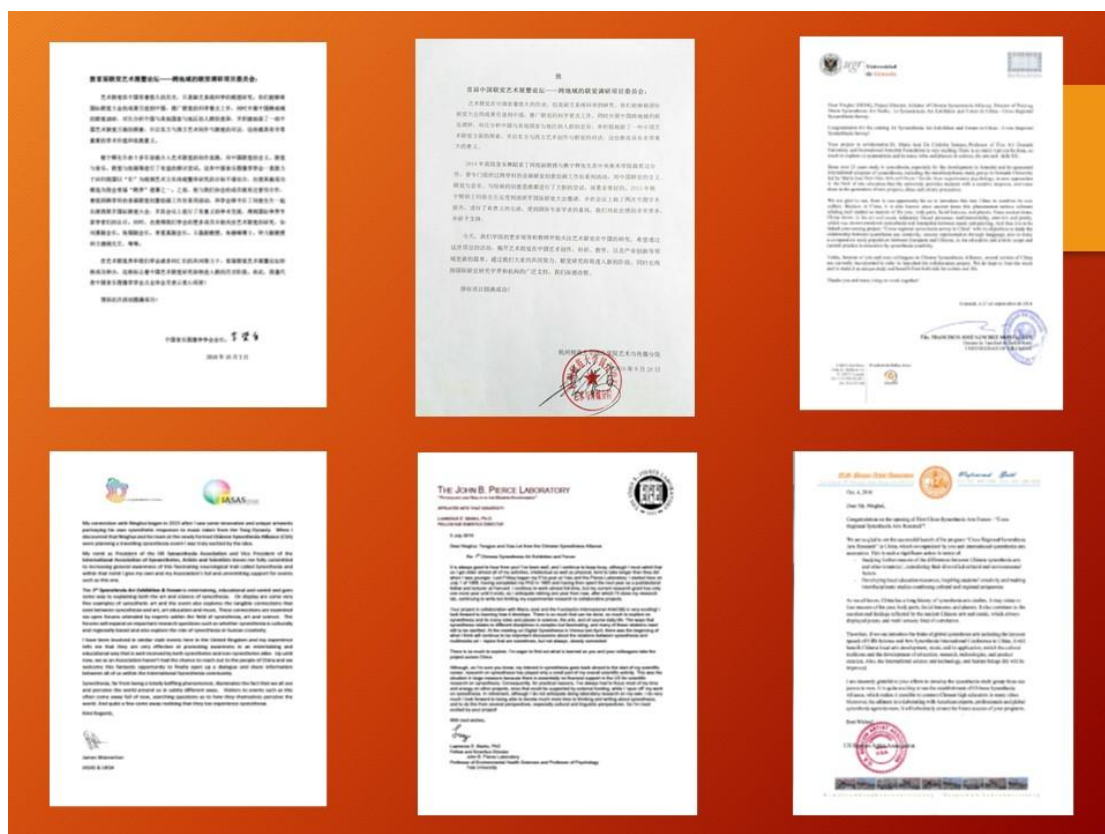
CAFA Art Museum
中央美术学院 美术馆

Courseware panels by Ninghui Xiong and his colleagues for synaesthesia in art for recent years in lecture and workshop in China.

There is a long history of artistic synesthesia in China, which has been a well known story for more than two thousand years, that Zhong Ziqi could understand the music played by Yu Boya, but it lacks systematic and scientific research. Some Chinese scholars and artists realized this and began to investigate. They have held a series of public educational programs called “Painting Music from Your Heart” in Beijing and Shanghai, with the cooperation of theatres, museums and colleges since 2009, and they also went to the schools for the children of migrant workers to teach students how to draw music. They were invited to participate V International Synesthesia Congress on Synesthesia, Science and Art in Spain in 2015 and exchanged for the first time with international synesthesia academic circles the synesthesia phenomenon in Chinese ancient art and modern art synesthesia exploration, which got great attention of international scholars and experts. They took the opportunity to set up a project: “1st Synesthesia Art Exhibition and Forum: Cross Regional Synesthesia Survey” which has received positive responses from both domestic art colleges and institutes, including the Chinese Society of Music and Image, Qianjiang College of Hangzhou Normal University, Art and Design College of China University of Mining and Technology, Central Academy of Fine Arts Museum, Beijing Yangmei-Yihua Culture Development Company, Guang Zhou Red Dragonfly Artworks Culture etc.

During the inauguration ceremony of the project, the President of China’s Society of

Music and Iconology Professor LI Yongyou, Vice Dean of Art and Media of Qian Jian College Hangzhou Normal University Professor ZHU Dan, Dean of Fine Arts University of Grenada Mr. Francisco Jose Sanchez Montalban , Fellow and Emeritus Director of the John B. Pierce Laboratory affiliated with Yale University Professor Lawrence E. Marks, President of UK Synesthesia Association and Vice President of International Association of Synesthetes Artists and Scientists Mr. James Wannerton, General Secretary of US Beacon Artist Association Mr. Ding Donghui, also sent congratulation letters to the project team.



China's Society of Music and Iconology, Hangzhou Normal University, University of Grenada, Yale University, British Synesthesia Association, International Association of Synesthetes Artists and Scientists, US Beacon Artist Association send congratulatory letters for the project launching ceremony of the "First Synesthesia Art Forum: Cross Regional Synesthesia Research" held at Beijing No.1 Art Space.

Dr. Maria Jose De Córdoba Serrano, Exhibition Academic Chair, Director of the International Foundation Artecittà, Professor of Fine Arts, Granada University said, "I do appreciate the invitation hosted by Mr. Jianwei HE at his Art Gallery with Ninghui and his friends for the great effort for the exhibition. I am very happy and excited to be able to be here for this new project in China, I do hope to learn more here

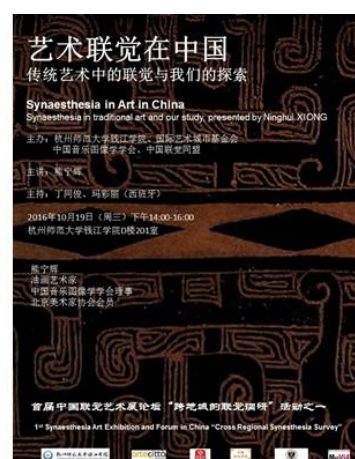
through the project because its culture and art is imbued with an exquisite sensibility, in every sense.”

Professor Li Rongyou, President of China’s Society Music Iconology said in his congratulation letter to the project team: “ Introducing the outcome of international synesthesia congress into China, promoting synesthesia in science dissemination, at the same time developing China cross regional synesthesia survey, comparing and analyzing the difference between China and the West in synesthesia, opening the dialogue between the east and west regarding art and synesthesia, all of these are very important with much academic value and benefit. More than ten years ago, Mr. Ninghui Xiong was involved in the practice of synesthesia in art, exploring the meaning of Chinese synesthesia between music and painting. This is fully consistence with our objective, which is to follow the tradition -- Music is leading total art integration. He also worked closely with other members in our society, organized series activities by interdisciplinary synesthesia painting workshops, attended the International Synesthesia Congress with Professor Ding Tongjun for culture and art communication, and organised academic circles internationally. Meanwhile, his study also gained the attention of other members of our society including Researcher Zhang Xiang, Professor Liu Yong, Li Aizhen, Wang Lei, Dr. Zhu Xiaofeng, Zhong Li and Fang Qinggang. Under our joint efforts, the First Synesthesia Art Forum will be held successfully, which will mark a new stage in the study of Chinese Synesthesia research in art.

UK artist Dr. Timothy B Layden, invited principal curator said: “I am fascinated by how human beings use resources to create new things which have the ability to alter the way they, as well as others who may or may not be artists themselves, see the world. So what is it that artists do? We manipulate resources that we learn to use to change the environment in ways that alter how it is interacted with and what we think about it. Artistic expression has the ability to unearth the rawest, truest aspects of what it is to be a living sentient, self aware being; perhaps more so than any other discipline, for it is laboured upon from the subjective point of view of individuals who have invested substantial time and effort into developing particular skills that they use despite any sense of shame or imperfection to share the most vulnerable aspects of their experience. Many synaesthetes choose to use their synaesthetic experience as the focus of much of their artwork. This is of particular interest to me as a synaesthete; I like to see how others represent their experiences and reflect upon my own as well as the diversity that exists within the immense spectrum of human experience.”

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Following the event in Beijing, the project team carried out a variety of activities in Xuzhou and Hangzhou, including art exhibitions and workshops within the university academy exchange program frame contract related to synaesthesia study. The next step will continue in Guangzhou and other cities. The lectures of “Synesthesia and Creativity” made by Dr. Maria Jose De Cordoba and “Art synesthesia in China” made by Ninghui Xiong, as well as exhibition panels related to international synesthesia research achievements contributed by international synaesthesia study experts gained great attention from teachers. “The International Conference of Synesthesia”, “synesthesia research project by Maria Jose de Cordoba”, “Scientist Lawrence Marks/Danko Nikolic talking about Synesthesia”, “Musician Jose Lopez Montes/Rudenko Svetlana /Alexandra Kirschner talking about Synesthesia”, “Exploring the shape of sound by Timothy B Layden”, “Visual Music and Synesthesia MuVi4 International Competition by Dina Riccò”, “Influence to the art creation by synesthesia experience by Carol Steen”, “Art synesthesia from taste by James Wannerton”, “Synesthesia Perception Support the Product Design by Michael Haverkamp” and so on, the content was novel, unique, innovative according to their feedback.



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In the last session, “synesthesia and cross sensory practice in art workshop” held in Hangzhou Normal University in the afternoon of October 19th, Professor Maria Jose De Cordoba guided students to make the cross sensory practice of converting sound to painting, and image to music. The activity was very interesting. The students who major in musical performance, art and design were fully involved; they expressed themselves with their hands, painting, with musical instruments and dance. The atmosphere was lively.

Maria Jose De Cordoba said, “people possess synesthetic features at an early age, when they growing up, the function of the brain controlling the senses gradually separates. Many people lose the ability of synesthesia, but through certain practices, such abilities can be restored to a certain extent.”



Ding Tongjun, professor of Qianjiang College of Hangzhou Normal University said, “These exercises are in line with what we have explored and practiced in recent years in China, including “synesthesia fishbone diagram analysis” and “Da Vinci device – music painting composition synesthesia methodology”. If we combine them together, it will help us to cultivate the ability of synesthesia, which is helpful to the cultivation of creative thinking through training. If we consciously apply the method of synesthesia and open our senses, we can break the mindset, find work needed for improvement. Therefore, synesthesia consciousness is the key. This is also the

purpose of our cooperation with international educational institutions to explore this cross interdisciplinary research”.

As a summary, the project leader Ninghui Xiong said, “it’s the first time in China for synesthesia dissemination through Art Exhibition/Forum/Survey so wide and deep. However, we have just begun, there is still a long way to go. I would like to thank my colleagues and friends in China and abroad for their consistent effort and great support, including those experts to be mentioned: Lawrence Marks, Sean Day, Sidoroff-Dorso, Danko Nokolic , Jörg Jewanski, James Wannerton, Carol Steen , Patricia Lynn Duffy, Jose Lopez Montes etc.. I knew them through V International Synesthesia Congress Science and Art hosted by the Artecitta Foundation which is an international organization leading synesthesia interdisciplinary study and dissemination in education. By working together, I am sure we will have success.”

