

# ***Experimental Sound - Project Proposal 2009-2010...***

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By submitting this assessment for marking I declare that I have in my possession the correct documentation for this module for this semester (Module Study Guide and Project Proposal), which I have read and fully understand \*.

I also confirm that I understand the following:

- 1) The plagiarism regulations of the university.
- 2) The assessment regulations of the university.
- 3) The implications of using copyrighted material.

*(Assessment 1, this project proposal, is required to be presented to your lecturer during week 5)*

**Project approved:**

**Date:**

## **1 Executive Summary**

*(Provide a concise description on the salient aspects of the work.)*

This project is intended to find a perceptive correlation between colour and sound during which I will create a piece of visual audio that should show if there is a certain demographical preference to a certain style of music and its key through their choice of colour.

I will survey several demographics with short pieces of visuals and audio. The results will be compiled and the over all analysis will be used as an average for each demographic area.

I will then use this data to create a visual piece of music according to the same demographics preference and test if the data will provide enough information to predict their music taste.

With this work I will then test if the theory of a color key can work in practice.

## **2 Project title**

*(Provide a working title and describe its relevance to the project.)*

### Chordal Colour

The intention of the project is to find if there is a relation between a visual pattern of colours and the notes these colours are supposed to represent. Do our visual senses affect our taste in music?

## **3 Experimental audio focus**

*(Define the experimental nature of the audio.)*

The focus of this project is to find out if we relate our visual taste i.e our taste in aesthetics, with our perception of sound and music.

Every day we visually take in a lot of colour information from around us and over time we develop our own aesthetic taste which we exercise in our art, our fashions, and even our choice of wall colour in our homes etc.

This is very much like music; everyday we hear a lot of information and over time develop our own musical sensibilities thus influencing the way we listen to music, what we listen to and even how we perceive someone's emotion through their speech. (for instance dropping in tone while speaking can exhibit anger).

Since both sound and colour affect our tastes and sensibilities so much, they could arguably be called two of the most important factors in determining our personalities and who we are.

My focus will be on trying to find a correlation between the two and finding out if one can truly effect the other.

A colour key is a set of colours that correspond to notes. It is important to realise that they are chromatic (12 tones) and that most music is diatonic (7 tones). Once a musical key has been decided it will be necessary to select the corresponding notes and cut the 12 tone colour key down to a 7 tone key.

The idea of a “colour key” has been much discussed throughout the years with different people proposing different versions. It is my intention to find out if certain colour keys can be matched to certain demographics or if there is a preference for a universal colour key.

My hypothesis is that if certain notes can represent certain colours for a particular person and if the same person has an affinity to a certain “colour key” then their musical preference could be related to their favorite colour.

For instance; if someone's favorite colour is red, they listen to minor key music and they have a natural leaning towards Scriabin's proposed scale (in which the note C is red) will they prefer to hear music in the key of C minor and? Do they subconsciously hear other notes in colour too? I would like to imagine they would.

Obviously there are a lot of factors that influence peoples taste in music of which it's beyond the scope of this project.

Therefore my aim is to reduce as many of these variables as possible while testing this theory. The composition will have to take into account these unavoidable factors, such as chord progressions and implement the resulting data into the piece.

#### **4 Project purpose, aims & objectives**

*(State the main points that you wish to achieve.)*

The projects objective is to better understand the relationship of our auditory senses in conjunction with our visual senses and compose a piece of music determined by the resulting data:

Firstly I would like to find out peoples interpretation of notes visually. For instance; what colour does the note C conjure in a persons head? I would test this by playing notes and asking people to pick the colours they think suit them best. I would also ask them their favorite colour for use later in the project.

Secondly I would find if they had a preference to any proposed colour key. I would find out through the data if certain demographics have preference to certain keys by playing a scale with the corresponding colour.

Thirdly I would like to test whether people have an affinity to a certain mode as would be expected, western listeners would probably have a preference for major or minor modes where in other countries more esoteric scales or modes such as hungarian gypsy might be preferred. This will be necessary to accurately map the colour scale (which is chromatic) to a diatonic key and will also be used to determine the musical key the piece will be in.

Fourthly I would examine chord progressions so as to determine the chordal structure of the piece. I would test several chord progressions with the participants and compose the chordal sections of the piece from the resulting data.

I would then set about making compositions resulting from the data gathered. The scale will be determined through several factors; favorite colour, affinity to a proposed colour scale and preference to musical scale type (e.g. major or harmonic minor). The result will be a musical scale with colours that represent notes or intervals between notes.

With the audio visual pieces created I would then test the theory against the demographics that should 'on paper' like the composition and also test against the demographic that showed opposite. The results should show whether there is a correlation between colour and music through the test.

The creative aim of this proposal is to allow the author to experiment in perception, creating a situation where the sound and visual worlds come into contact in an unfamiliar territory. The purpose of this experiments results is to help with answering the question, "Do colours and sound have an immediate relationship?"

On a technical level I aim to make use of indepth knowledge on composition, music theory, colour theory, editing and sequencing skills to create the final project. I also aim to learn how to use new software to create the visual side of things.

On a personal level I'm interested in this project as I have always been interested in interpretation of music as it often encourages people to think differently and critically. This project takes it one step further and looks at interpretation and tries to examine other peoples interpretations.

## **5 Project content**

*(State the nature of the material that will make up the assessment material of the project.)*

The project will consist of 3 audio visual tracks.

### **Track one:**

Will be composed for demographic 1 but will also be played to demographics of different results.

### **Track two:**

Will be composed for demographic 2 but will also be played to demographics of different results.

### **Track three:**

Will be composed for demographic 3 but will also be played to demographics of different results.

Depending on what demographic the listener falls into, they should prefer one piece over another while still correlating to the results they gave in the survey. There may not necessarily be only three demographics but the tracks will be created for demographics that show the clearest results.

## **6 Project meaning**

*(Provide an overview of the concept, narrative, story line, sub-text/s etc..)*

Different people will always interpret things differently, this is one reason a condition called synesthesia is so variable case to case. Although this project is not based on synesthesia, similar effects of perception may be seen in a less obvious way for the average person.

It in fact might be more common than we imagine; subconsciously your favorite music could correspond to your favorite colour but in such a way your brain doesn't make an obvious connection. To a sufferer of synesthesia the connection between note and colour might be blindingly obvious, but to the average person it may be more of a feeling than seeing a definite connection. There are many tales of engineers in the studio being asked for "a more green sound". Does this stem from somewhere or are they simply mad?

The scenario I am creating will hopefully show that people do in fact make these connections, be it consciously or subconsciously.

## **7 Ethical issues**

*(Set out the ethical implications the project might need to resolve.)*

An ethical issue is something that brings into question what is principally right or wrong.

This study will categorise people into groups based on experience with sound or colour effectively "labeling" them. People may consider labeling people as morally wrong and is there for an ethical issue. In this respect I doubt it will be a major concern providing the participants are willing label themselves in the survey rather than being labeled by the author. If it proves a concern to a participant this categorical data is not of vital importance and can still be used in the survey to create data formed from averages.

## **8 Copyright issues**

*(Set out the possible copyright issues that might need to be resolved.)*

The surveying software I will be using will be Lime Survey, it is open source and any data gathered will be my copyright. I will be creating all other content and thus will be the copyright holder.

In the spirit of open source I may release all information and findings under Creative Commons with an "Attribution-Non-Commercial-Share Alike 2.0 UK: England & Wales" license.

**9 Project runtime length/s**

(Provide details of the running time of the various parts / tracks etc. that you will provide for assessment.)

I will provide 3 tracks of around 3 minuets in length with a total run time of 9-10 minuets.

**10 Finished project format/s**

(State the media & formats you will be using for the final work.)

I will provide a DVD with the audio visual aspect and a CD of the same audio but listenable in a more accessible media format.

**11 Research**

(Provide details of the main areas that you expect to research.)

The nature of the project is to test the different correlations that colour might have with sound.

It will require primary research generated through a survey I will create.

This will provide a lot of detailed information which will be studied to form results and conclusions.

The project also requires a lot of secondary research through several lines of enquiry into proposed colour schemes and why they were proposed.

I am currently researching into colour correspondences at:

<http://rhythmiclight.com/archives/ideas/correspondences.html>

I am investigating authors of different colour scales shown on graph at:

<http://rhythmiclight.com/archives/ideas/colorscales.html>

Through these people I am looking into why they proposed their scale and their reasoning behind it. I will compare their reasoning with any findings I make and look for interesting patterns in the data.

I will research common chord progressions so as to best choose which options to be placed in the survey, Ideally all demographics would prefer the same one so as to rule out the possibility of the composition affecting preference.

I will also research the most common rhythms to choose which ones will be used in the survey, the answers will be used to determine the compositions rhythm.

Over all this project will require a large amount research into music theory to avoid letting music bias the results. It will also require a large amount of research into colour theory to also avoid biasing the results

**12 TVU resources required**

(Provide details of the resources required to complete the project.)

**12b (List the total access time required for each of these resources)**

|                     |   |           |
|---------------------|---|-----------|
| Books               | - Required to conduct more research                 | 100 Hours |
| Studio time         | - Required for mixing the pieces of audio           | 5 Hours   |
| DVD pro             | - Required to author my DVD media                   | 5 Hours   |
| Printing facilities | - Required to print project documentation and notes | 2 Hours   |

**13 Other (non TVU) resources required***(Provide details of the resources required.)***13b (List the total access time required for each of these resources)****13c (How will these resources be made available to you?)****Own equipment:**

|                     |   |           |
|---------------------|---|-----------|
| Pro Tools 8         | - Required for composing the audio section of the work          | 50 Hours  |
| Digidesign 002      | - Required to open Pro Tools                                    | 50 Hours  |
| Adobe after effects | - Required to create video section of the work                  | 50 Hours  |
| Lime survey         | - Required to create all the surveys                            | 50 Hours  |
| MacBook Pro         | - Required to run vital software and for conducting research on | 200 Hours |

**14 Any other information***(State any relevant issues not covered elsewhere in this proposal.)*

For the survey I intend to categorise participants according to sound/musical experience or experience with colour. For instance the groups may be divided into musicians/engineers, artists and people with experience in neither category.

This may require a certain amount of generalization. A fashion designer with a good eye for colour may be put in the artist group due to similar experience.

It will be these categories that will make up each demographic.

**15 Work hours statement***(Provide a detailed statement justifying how the 200 hour allocation for this module is accounted for by your proposed project.)***Around 100 hours:**

Research into existing colour scales, common chord progressions will be ongoing throughout the project. Though only so much needs to be done before work on other parts can be started. It has already been started.

**Around 3 hours:**

I will construct the survey questions from my conducted research.

**Around 5 hours:**

I will set about making the appropriate media that will be used in the survey and consolidating this into the survey.

**Around 10 hours:**

Finding participants for the survey and getting them to take it, this will be done online and participants can do the survey without my supervision, during which time I can learn the after effects application.

**Around 3 hours:**

Compiling the data into readable statistics.

**Around 50 hours**

Creating the individual pieces of audio visual work from the resulting data.

**Around 35 hours**

Cross examining each group with the pieces created and compare the actual results to the hypothesized results and creating a write up.

**Total of 206 hours**

## **16 Weekly schedule**

(Set out a detailed provisional plan of how you intend to use your time.)

### **Week 1-3**

Researching ideas that may be interesting and still meet the project guidelines. Checking Bitstream projects to properly assess the project workload.

Research into my chosen idea and looking for directions or “lines of enquiry” that I could follow.

### **Week 4**

Writing the project proposal and discussing the idea with the module lecturer.

### **Week 5 Assessment 1 - 'Project Proposal'...**

Preparing the project proposal presentation.

### **Week 6 Independent study (with tutor support)...**

Further research into colour scales so as to know how to create the survey so I can extract as much quality information as possible.

### **Week 7**

Construct a questionnaire, create the media clips required and consolidate into the survey.

Find participants and get them to take the survey.

### **Week 8**

Wait for survey results and learn Adobe after effects.

Compile results into readable data. Work on the presentation of the project e.g. making covers and the press release.

### **Week 9**

Compose audio tracks and create the accompanying video.

### **Week 10**

#### **The main practical work should be completed by this point...**

Compose audio tracks mix them and create the accompanying video.

### **Week 11**

Cross examine each group with the pieces created and compare the actual results to the hypothesized results and start creating a write up.

### **Week 12**

#### **The written work should be completed by this point...**

Finish write up and file properly with labels and packaging.

### **Week 13**

Finish press release brochure and package research folder.

### **Week 14 Assessment 2 - 'Project' handed in for assessment...**

Project properly packaged and delivered