

Jelissa Bueza A11326071

Professor Wade

VIS 145B

25 April 2016

Sound and Color

For this project, I really wanted to explore the concept of synesthesia / chromaesthesia, or how some people associate sounds with colors and vice versa. An example of this would be if one were listening to a sad melancholic tune, those with chromaesthesia would see in their minds a certain color like blue or green (Odd One Out). I got the inspiration actually last quarter when I was still taking 145A. I wanted to explore this, but did not have the knowledge as to how to do it. But now, I am finally able to do so. My initial idea was to make it so that a user would click on a color, and then the board would change to that color and a sound associated with it would begin to play. However, I found difficulty in animating it so I put that concept to the side. Now, with the concept of boids I made it so that it depends on mouse position for the work to create the connection between sound and color.

The project essentially takes a set of rectangles and as you move it up the window, the color goes through the spectrum of the rainbow. As it goes up the window, the sound one hears in the background changes as well to some sound/song I personally associate the color to. I myself do not have synesthesia or chromaesthesia, but I do understand the concept of associating certain colors with certain melodies, so although this is not directly what someone with this condition really goes through, it is inspired by it. In addition, as you move the mouse to the right of the window, the volume increases, and so does the amount of squares the user sees.

I tried to limit the amount of colors, since it is easier to feel the effect and still have it seem clean that way. I also prefer the look of simplicity so that the focus is on the sound. When trying to find out what sounds I saw with each color, I thought about the mood that each color elicits. For instance, when I see the color red I think of anger and so I made it play heavy metal music. It was difficult to also find audio that isn't copyrighted to play with each color. I personally associated each color with a specific song, so it was hard to not simply download that song. I also made the decision to keep each sound short since most people nowadays have very short attention spans, and ten seconds is short enough to keep people attentive while also being long enough to feel the association between sound and color.

In regards to cybernetics, I think this project does emulate the ideas of it. Cybernetics is focused on reflexivity and loops. Here, in this assignment, I think that the user input creates a feedback loop. The user moves the mouse to their desired location and thus the artwork reacts and changes because of it. This is where the reflexivity comes in as well. As said before, you change a single factor (in this case the mouse position) and the whole work changes completely. When you move the mouse up and down, it changes the color and the sound, with each specific area designated to a specific color/sound association. When you move it left to right, you change the amount of rectangles seen and also the volume. The more rectangles, the louder the sound gets. In this case, I wanted it to be that way so that there is an association with volume both in amount and sound.

If one notices, the sound only plays when the mouse moves from the bottom up, but not from the top down. It sometimes just plays a single song for the entire time and other glitchy noises. At first, this was unintentional; it was an error in the code but then I realized I liked the

concept of it. It provides two different perspectives on it in that going down (how one would normally go) there is no sound correlation -- at least a proper one. However, when going up (which in a sense is backwards and different) that's when you hear the associated noise. I struggled to fix this "mistake" but ended up liking the fact that it was there. It also helped me learn to work with what I have. This work proved challenging and rewarding to me overall because of this.

Works Cited

Hobbs, Valerie. "Chromaesthesia." *Odd One Out*. Wordpress, 08 Dec. 2007. Web. 20 Apr. 2016.

Pangaro, Paul. "Cybernetics." *Paul Pangaro, PhD*. N.p., 2013. Web. 20 Apr. 2016.