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THE EFFECT OF MUSIC ON PAINTING AND PAINTERS WHO USE MUSIC FORMS

Abstract

Throughout history, just as in other branches of science and art, a relationship has been tried to be established between music and painting. Many branches of art have formed an interdisciplinary focus, even if they are not related to each other. This interaction has started to gain momentum and become stronger day by day, with the artists entering into new quests. As music is a source of inspiration for the work of painters, painting has also been a guide for composers. Research on sound and color goes back to ancient times. But especially with the 19th century, the relationship between painting and music contributed to the creation of important works in both arts. Artists tried to combine these two different branches of art with different approaches and achieved very successful results. In this study, the effect of colors and music on each other in different ways is mentioned and the painters who use musical forms in their paintings. In this regard, the illustrations of musical forms in the works of painters J. Weder (1906-1990), Mehmet Mahir (1948-...), Luigi Veronesi (1908-1998), Paul Klee (1879-1949) and Frank Kupka (1871-1957)'s paintings were examined with examples in terms of their use of musical forms. This research is a qualitative study based on a descriptive basis, aiming to reveal the existing situation based on the literature review. It is based on document analysis, which is one of the qualitative data collection methods with an interdisciplinary point of view.

Keywords: Painting, Music, Interdisciplinary interaction, Musical Forms, Color

RESİMDE MÜZİĞİN ETKİSİ VE MÜZİK FORMLARINI KULLANARAK RESİM YAPAN RESSAMLAR

Öz

Tarih boyunca diğer bilim ve sanat dallarında olduğu gibi müzik ve resim arasında da bir ilişki kurulmaya çalışılmıştır. Pek çok sanat dalı birbiriyle ilişkili olmasa da disiplinler arası bir odak oluşturmuştur. Bu etkileşim, sanatçıların yeni arayışlara girmesiyle her geçen gün ivme kazanmaya ve güçlenmeye başlamıştır. Müziğin ressamın eserlerine ilham kaynağı olduğu gibi, resim de bestecilere yol gösterici olmuştur. Ses ve renk üzerine yapılan araştırmalar çok eski zamanlara dayanmaktadır. Ancak özellikle 19. yüzyıl ile birlikte resim ve müzik ilişkisi her iki sanat dalında da önemli eserlerin oluşmasına katkı sağlamıştır. Sanatçılar bu iki farklı sanat dalını farklı yaklaşımlarla birleştirmeye çalışmışlar ve çok başarılı sonuçlar elde etmişlerdir. Bu çalışmada renklerin ve müziğin farklı şekillerde birbirleri üzerindeki etkisinden ve resimlerinde müzikal formları kullanan ressamlardan bahsedilmiştir. Bu bağlamda ressam J. Weder (1906-1990), Mehmet Mahir (1948-...), Luigi Veronesi (1908-1998), Paul Klee (1879-1949) ve Frank Kupka (1871-1957)'nin resimleri, müzikal formları kullanımları açısından örneklerle incelenmiştir. Bu araştırma, literatür taramasına dayalı olarak var olan durumu ortaya koymayı amaçlayan, betimsel temele dayalı nitel bir çalışmadır. Disiplinlerarası bir bakış açısıyla nitel veri toplama yöntemlerinden biri olan doküman analizine dayanmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Resim, Müzik, Disiplinlerarası etkileşim, Müzikal Formlar, Renk

Introduction

The subject of color and music encompasses many relationships between color and form, light and music, color and sound, painting and music. At the same time, cosmological considerations exist throughout the history of such relationships, from ancient times to the 20th century. The ancient Greeks made a color scale consisting of seven parts for the first time with the association of the seven known planets and paired each color with one of the seven known sounds. In this color scale known as Aristotle's "Color Theory" (Figure 1), all colors were obtained from the mixture of black and white, and the tonal ranges in music were transferred to colors. Color theory was valid in the 17th century and different colors were associated with different tonal ranges. Greek theorists thought that color had the same value as sound in terms of thickness-thinness. In this context, Aristotle stated that colors come together in a similar way to sounds, that light and dark are equivalent to the sound being muffled and clear or thin and deep. Plato, on the other hand, defined the concept of "melody" in a language called "color". Many thinkers, painters and musicians who think about the color of music have put forward color theories or developed colored keyboards. (Figure 2)

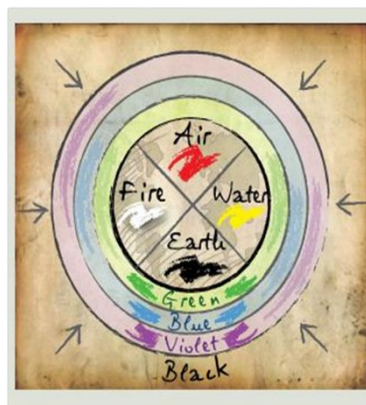


Figure 1. Aristotle Color Theory

In the 19th century, interest in music increased and people's awareness of realism towards music was awakened. As a result, a subjective point of view has emerged in the works created. The changing perspective has led to the emergence of the awareness that the art of painting is not just visible objects, and instrumental music, which is not limited to words, has gained importance in music art. With instrumental music coming to the fore, a wide area of freedom was given to the composer.

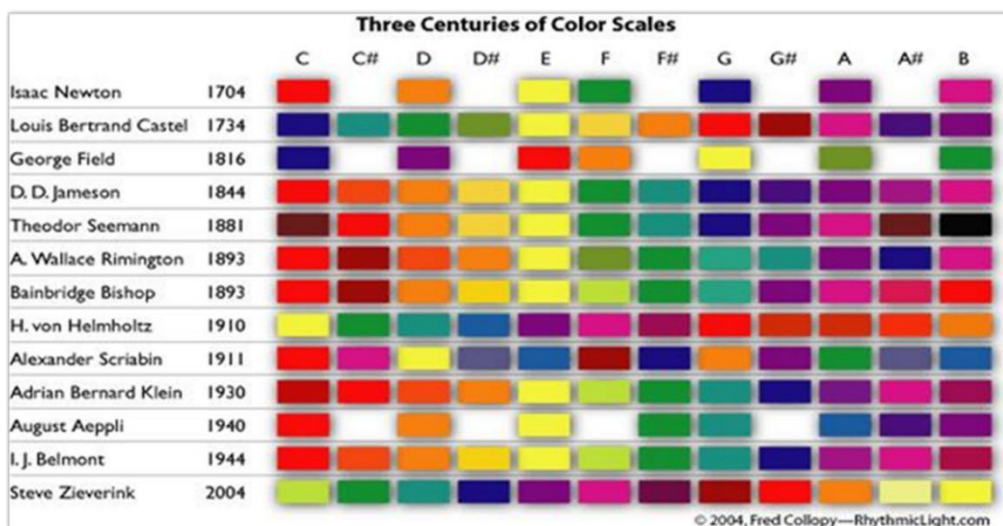


Figure 2. Color Scales

The most well-known colored instrument of the 19th century is the "Color Organ", which was patented in 1893 by Alexander Wallece Rimington (1854-1918). Rimington introduced this new instrument at a demonstration in London in 1895, attended by a thousand people. (Figure 3) In the same year, he accompanied the works of Wagner, Chopin, Bach and Dvorak with this instrument in four different concerts. (Ashton, 2004: 402).



Figure 3. Color Organ

By referring to the exchange of colors and notes with this instrument; It is seen that the works of the composers are reproduced simultaneously with the colors while they are being performed.

While these developments were taking place in the art of music, Schoenberg, who had many oil painting and charcoal works, also produced works in the field of expressionist painting in this period when painters turned to visualizing music. Kandinsky, Klee and the "Blue Readers" Group, influenced by Schoenberg's works, created a parallel harmony with music with the effects of color improvisations consisting of abstract forms. Similarly, Piet Mondrian produced many works in which jazz motifs were seen. In addition, the musical structures in the works of Johanne Sebastian Bach were included and reproduced in the works of many modern painters as subject, form, content and structural elements. At the same time, the terminological approaches related to music such as color orchestration and harmonic composition were also used in painting, as well as giving names to their works such as fugue, sonata, symphony. It has been seen that musical data are reproduced in the art of painting.

Paul Klee (1879 – 1949)

He was born on December 18, 1879, in Münchenbuchsee, near Bern, the second child of a German music teacher father and a Swedish singer mother. He started playing the violin at a young age. Klee, whose family moved to Bern in 1880, became interested in art at an early age, but was torn between music and painting for a long time. He moved to Munich in 1898 and began painting there. Leaving school in 1901 to protest Stuck's traditional method of education, Klee spent six months in Rome with the sculptor Haller, where he could work with Renaissance-era masterpieces. He moved to Munich in 1906, marrying musician Lilly Stumpf. He opened his first exhibition in 1910 and others followed. In 1924 he founded the Blaue Vier group with Kandinsky and in 1925 he

participated in a surrealist demonstration in Paris. Between 1921 and 1931 he taught at the Bauhaus. He taught at the Düsseldorf Academy of Arts from 1931 to 1933. While working there, Klee was expelled by the Nazis and his works were taken to the "degenerate art" exhibition in 1937, where he was excluded from "German art". He died on June 29, 1940 in Locarno-Murano.

Paul Klee's travels to places such as Tunisia, Egypt and Italy contributed greatly to his development in the art of painting. Influenced by painters such as Robert Delaunay, Vincent van Gogh, Cezanne and Matisse, Klee has an important place in the abstract painting works of the twentieth century. He tried different techniques to use line, tone and light in new ways. He created works that combine with color, shape, nature and music, define the space in a different way, and try to convey the spiritual significance of objects with their inner realities.

The most striking aspect of Klee's paintings is synchronicity. He sought the simultaneity used in music in his paintings and tried to create a parallelism between music and painting in this way. All artists who struggle with synchronicity in their works have been influenced by Bach's art and simultaneous music. Interested in music and many other areas of the arts, Klee has a strong interest in Bach.

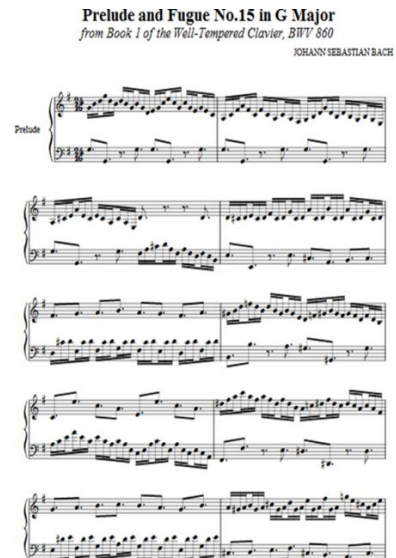


Figure 4. P. Klee, Figue in Red, 1921

Klee presented music in his paintings by gaining a different perspective. He created the form in his paintings by taking music as his main starting point. The simultaneity of painting and music has brought a new intuitive dimension to the artist's creativity. The communication of notes with words has turned into a poetic interiority in his paintings. "Some of the color palettes Klee chose are like a musical key. Usually using complementary colors, Klee reflected the musical connection by sometimes using incongruous colors. The fact that the artist is also a poet has fed the stylistic change in his paintings. Klee achieved the lyricism he wanted with the poetry he tried to give in his compositions. "Motion", "Rhythmic movement" and "Development" are seen closely in every painting he paints with the influence of music.

Klee has a number of early paintings influenced by the fugue. Images of geometric shapes of various sizes and colors show a fast or slow movement in the horizontal or vertical direction. He creates pictures that are reminiscent of musical notes, which started in the same period and continued until his last years, divided by horizontal colored lines on the painting surface. In these paintings, composition produces forms with changing rhythms over horizontal color fields.

Klee's linear structures are unique in that they are rich in complex lines imposed on a system such as musical notes. In his compositions created with horizontal lines, separate or structural forms are illuminated with colors, giving a rhythmic form with a special quality.

The painting "Main Road and Side Roads" is an example of the musical structure produced with this approach. According to D cthing, octave patterns in music are defined by the rise and fall of the arrangement and the varying intensity of colours; The repetition of a certain theme, which is one of the most important shaping elements used in Bach's fugue themes, by reducing or enlarging the note values, giving the theme at the same time with different values in different frets, used it in a certain order, as when dividing the numbers. (D cthing, 1997: 23-24).

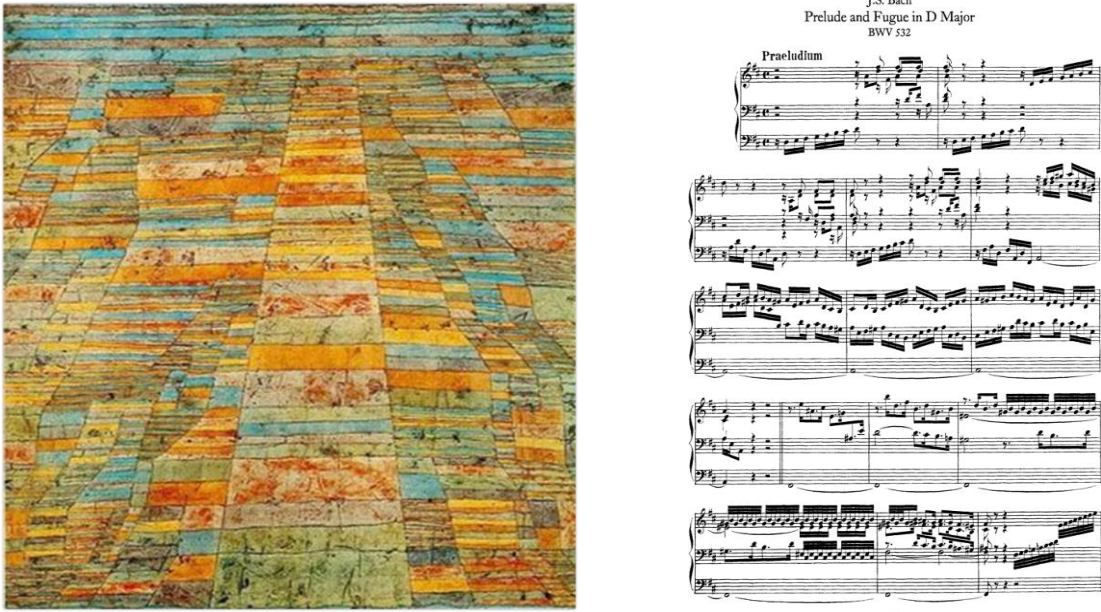


Figure 5. Paul Klee, Highway and Byways, 1929

We can say that Klee is the artist who transfers his musical knowledge to the canvas in the best way possible. Especially Bach has an important place in Klee's life. He has many paintings created by the visual and emotional effect of Bach notes and fugue form.

Jacob Weder (1906-1990)

Jakob Weder (1906-1990), an almost unknown Swiss artist, painted 51 works entitled Farbsymphonien (symphonies of colour). Twenty-eight of these are based on the music of Bach and nineteen on the compositions of Brahms, Gluck, Haendel, Schubert and Schumann. Visually impressive are all non-figurative paintings that suggest a completely new relationship between the visual arts and music. "I have long wanted to create symphonies with colour, just as with sound music." (Weder, 1985)

Weder's work combines music and mathematics to create a color scale that offers almost infinite hue and scale within an optical frame.

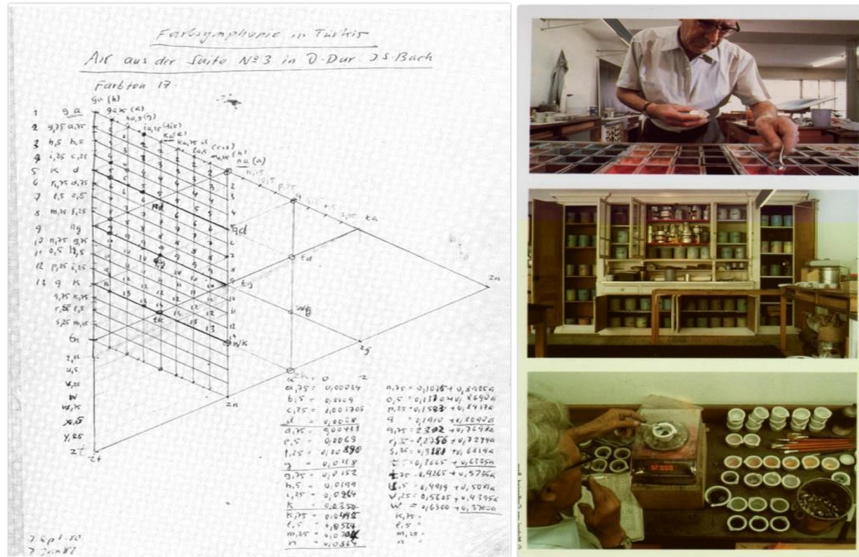


Figure 6. Jacob Weder's Mathematical Calculations

He was the first to relate the range of the color spectrum to the chromatic order of the scale, following the theory of counterpoint and harmony. The color spectrum is electromagnetic energy that corresponds to the range that our eyes perceive as light or color. When white light is passed through a prism, each wavelength can be split into other wavelengths with components of different frequency. This is perceived by the eye as a different color. Recognizing the musical character of color, Weder's use of this in his paintings helped him develop his own theory of contrast, harmony and color balance in a highly rational system.

Weder prepared the color palette completely based on scientific methodology. The model of the color system was the rules of tonal music, particularly inspired by the understanding and coherence of Bach's Well-Tempered Clavier. This collection of 24 Preludes and Fugues demonstrates the potential of equal temperament (dividing the octave into twelve equal semitones) enabling modulations to distant keys as well as more complex harmonic and counterpoint relations. In addition, Bach's compositional technique achieves the synthesis between the horizontal and vertical dimensions of music: flowing melody and polyphonic instruments are in balance with harmonic tension.

Weder combined the hues and calculated the corresponding pigment weight for each color space:

From the eighties onwards, Weder developed his main group of paintings called Farbsymphonian with this color keyboard. Almost half of these paintings, which are based on musical notes, are the works of JS Bach.

While making his paintings, he starts with the preparatory drawings and figures, then calculates the pigment mixture through mathematics. After the calculation, it goes

to paint application. The "Color keyboard" he created is based on equidistant relationships and its structure is similar to a hardened tonal system. However, its purpose is not just to paint the notes, to color them. At the same time, he benefits from the aesthetic idea that music has developed for him in his own art style.

Luigi Veronesi (1908- 1998)

When we look at music in Veronesi's art, we encounter a much more scientific analysis. He examines music neither emotionally, nor in terms of its effect on it, nor from a structural point of view. His interest in music differs greatly from the way other artists study music. This review is a scientific analysis. Music is transferred to colors and made readable through color. He says that sound and color are made up of waves, and the common denominator between them leads him to a scientific conclusion. In Kandinsky, he found a connection between color and sound and detected their transformation into each other. He also brought two different phenomena together at a common point and transformed them. But Kandinsky used his intuition in this transformation. He subjectively transformed the effects of color and sound on each other. In this transformation, Veronesi acts completely scientifically without using his intuition. Kandinsky makes all his art through music readings. On the other hand, music is limited in Veronesi's art. Veronesi is a versatile artist. In addition to film, photography, photogram, stage costume, stage design, painting studies, he is also interested in music. He does not have any musical education, but this interest in other branches of art leads him to a serious scientific research and scientific analysis. In his analysis, he measures the notes, proportions them and determines the corresponding colors. It determines the closest color for each note. It is removing the notes he makes from symbolism and transforming his visuality into color. Since each note represents the closest color to itself, musical reading can also be done on the note corresponding to the color. He is of the opinion that music can be read over the system he has established by basing his studies on scientific investigations.

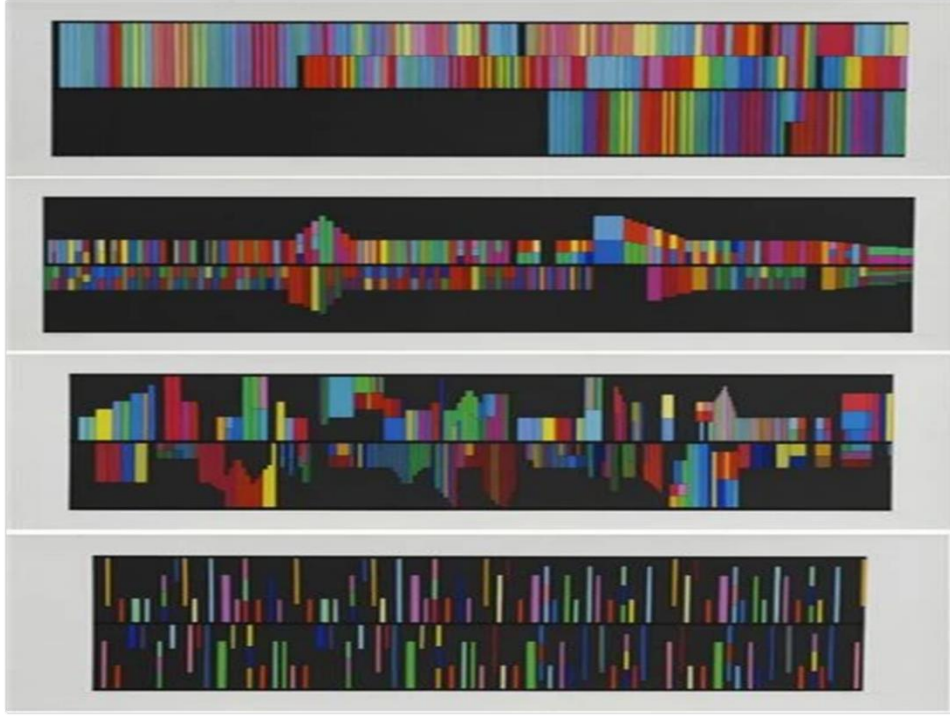


Figure 7. Veronesi, Bach, Satie, Schoenberg, Webern (1979)

When we look at the artist's studies on music, the result is similar to the notation system. The musical notation system is a symbolic system of signs created for everyone to understand. It is a new sign system based on the painting made by Veronesi! In Veronesi's system, a musical composition can be read, but it does not provide an innovation as it cannot go beyond what is reached with the existing system. Nobody wants a new system when there is already a way that can be implemented and everyone knows. However, it is a study that can be evaluated differently as a scientific research.

There are Bach works that the artist visualized through the analysis created by assigning the color that comes closest to the notes. These fugues are fugues handled in a different way. Other artists who deal with music generally analyze music by examining the structure of music or conveying its spiritual effect. Veronesi is an artist who has dealt with musical forms from a purely scientific point of view.

Mehmet Mahir (1948)

The artist, who studied at the Higher Painting Department of the Istanbul State Academy of Fine Arts between 1973-1978, was appointed to the Painting Department as an academician in 1979. After transforming from Istanbul State Academy of Fine Arts to Mimar Sinan University, the artist became proficiency in art in 1983, associate professor in 1989, and professor in 1996. He resigned from his position after working as the Head of the Painting Department at Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University for a while.

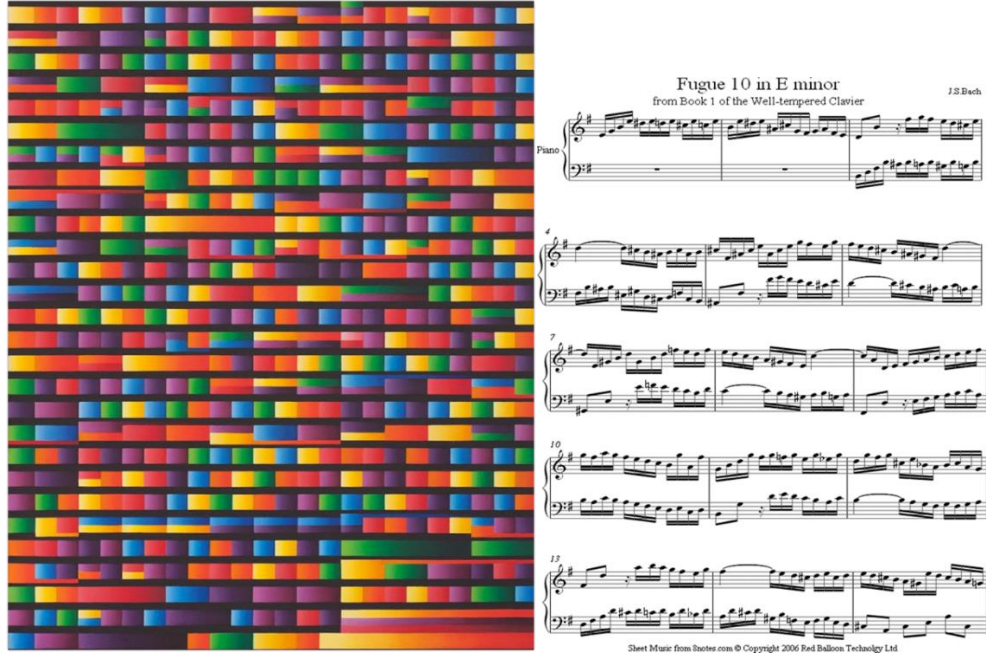


Figure 8. Mehmet Mahir, Bach Fugue, 1996

In addition to the two solo exhibitions he opened in Istanbul in 1982 and 1993, the artist participated in many group exhibitions in Turkey and abroad, and received various awards in the competitions he participated in. Mehmet Mahir, who has been using the theme of chess in his paintings since 1989, has made paintings that aim to transform the notes of the works written by Bach for piano into visuals since 1992. There are works that transfer Bach's Preludes and Fugues to painting from their exact notes.



Figure 9. Bach 1001 Violin Sonata

We can say that Mehmet Mahir uses the color-sound identity based on the musical notes of Bach's works. Mahir's method of painting music is similar to that of Jacob Weder and L. Veronesi. Unlike these artists, Mehmet Mahir painted his paintings without a scientific point of view by assigning colors to the notes. For example, the artist, who gave gray in his first paintings according to the effect of Do voice on him, later used purple for this voice. The artist chooses a color for the first note, regularly assigns the other colors in the color spectrum to the other notes, and arranges the colors horizontally in two separate strips for the right and left hands of the piano piece. The colors are applied in the form of rectangular areas, proportional to the duration of the notes. It is shown by horizontally dividing the rectangle in the strip where the third sounds resonating at the same time are located. Mehmet Mahir did not use color transitions in his first paintings, but applied chromatic transitions to colors in his later paintings.

Frank Kupka (1871 - 1957)

He was a Czech painter and graphic artist. He was a pioneer and co-founder of the abstract art movement and the early stages of Orphic Cubism. Kupka's abstract works were born from the foundation of realism, but later evolved into pure abstract art.

He studied at the academies of Prague between 1889-92 and Vienna between 1892-93, settled in France after 1895 and spent the rest of his life in Paris. Influenced by Symbolism and Fauvism in painting, he also worked on illustration. The colors and rhythm he used in his paintings brought him closer to music. Kupka described himself as a color symphonist while signing some of his letters.

Kupka expresses his interest and pursuits in music and Bach with these words: "I'm still groping in the dark, but I think I can find something between sight and hearing and create a fugue with colors, just as Bach did with sounds." Kupka is an artist who feels the influence of music very strongly. Kupka's fascination with music made him feel its influence very strongly. His aim was to create a Bach effect in painting by analyzing the music and fugues of Bach, which he was very impressed with. İpşiroğlu mentioned in his review article on Kupka that the artist has synesthesia sensitivity. This is proof that his interest in music is not just because he is a good listener.

The Fugue work of the artist is an abstract work that follows the music. Here, the artist tries to make the fugue, one of the musical forms, visible through painting. Fugue refers to successive repetitive sounds. Kupka also approaches his painting from this perspective. He accepts how effective the fugue form is in the art of music and tries to capture the same effect in the language of painting. The artist's "Two-Color Fugue" painting is the pursuit of two colors on the canvas surface. As in the case of simultaneity in his works, two colors chase each other, catch up, move away from each other, approach each other and finally reach unity on the picture plane. The artist devoted a lot of time to these similar studies and sketches on the two-color fugue.



Figure 10. F. Kupka, Fugue, 1912



Figure 11. F. Kupka, Fugue in Two Colors, 1912

As a result, we can observe that many painters throughout history have painted with the influence of music and have attempted to portray music in their works. This is sometimes due to synesthesia, sometimes owing to the artist's passion for music, and sometimes due to the desire for originality. The reproduction of musical material in a painting by painters has resulted in the development of new structures and emotive components. The fugue structure has long been connected with repeats and adaptations in certain paintings that have many common elements that can be clearly noticed despite the works covered in this review's varied styles and methods. Because repeats suggest the shapes and forms on which the painting's composition is built, visual artists have used the fugue as a form rather than a method in their works. Artists who believe it is suitable to transfer Bach and the fugue form as a form to painting have carved a place for themselves in art history through their inventive efforts and left us with extremely beautiful works.

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