

UNIVERSITATEA DE ARTĂ ȘI DESIGN
CLUJ-NAPOCA

TEZĂ DE DOCTORAT ÎN DOMENIUL
ARTELOR VIZUALE

SINESTEZIA
ÎN ARTA CONTEMPORANĂ

CONDUCĂTOR ȘTIINȚIFIC:
PROF. UNIV. DR. ALEXANDRU ALĂMOREANU

DOCTORAND:
ROXANA MARIA BURDUCEA

CLUJ-NAPOCA
2014

SYNAESTHESIA IN THE CONTEMPORARY ART SUMMARY

Historically placed in the context of a dynamic socio-cultural present, the theoretical investigations belonging to the PhD thesis entitled ‘Synaesthesia in the Contemporary Art’ capture and elucidate the perceptive transformations of the artwork, all of them circumscribed by the field of visual arts.

As reflected from the title itself, this PhD thesis aims at reuniting two concepts that are apparently very different: the synaesthesia and the contemporary visual art. A general definition of the first concept – that of ‘synaesthesia’ – refers to the proper neurological phenomenon where, at a perceptive level, a single stimulus can trigger a series of sensorial responses in the receiver (for instance, for a synaesthetic person, a certain colour unexplainably influences the olfactory sense, creating the sensation of a smell that does not exist within that particular environment). But, given the fact that the theme of this PhD study is not a medical one, we would like to emphasize the fact that the concept of synaesthesia includes two more meanings that do not belong to the field of neurology. The first meaning, being also the most popular one, stems from literature and is an attribute of the 19th century Symbolist poetry. The second meaning, formulated by Dr. Hugo Heyrman, is represented by *the created synaesthesia*, since the Belgian professor observed the fact that artworks by important visual artists take aesthetic shapes that suppose a multi-sensorial reception in the case of early 20th century. This concept is the one becoming relevant from the perspective of the contemporary age, especially in the context of the emergence within the world of visual arts of a multi-sensorial genre called installation. The existence of synaesthesia and of the visual arts is directly influenced by the human perception which thus becomes the common denominator justifying the approach of the two concepts in the PhD thesis.

In fact, the study *Synaesthesia in the Contemporary Art* is outlined following the methodological investigations of four interconnected elementary notions: the created synaesthesia, the perception, the visual art and the installation art. Thus, the moment when the sensorial becomes part of the art realm is a primordial one, meant to offer the path for the implied message. In art, the analogy is the result of a sensorial symbiosis, of certain connections between the stimuli, and the presence of such links anticipates interdisciplinarity as a contemporary inspiration. Including interdisciplinarity in the creative process approaches the field of technology to that of art, especially through the sensorial opportunities offered by

the 21st century's most widespread 'toy': the computer. Interacting with this object as a contemporary source of information requires a participation involving all senses of the human being. Visually, auditive and tactile, one finds himself absorbed by the virtual performance.

The thesis has a structure comprising five chapters, each of them participating in the establishment of the aesthetic relations between the created synaesthesia, the perception, the visual art and the installation, following its historical unfolding since the late 19th century.

The first chapter, entitled 'Perception in the Contemporary Culture', as one can guess from the very title, is dedicated to the phenomenon of perception as relevant part of the artwork reception generally. It consists of the subchapters 'Perception as a Synaesthetic Experience in the 19th Century Culture' and 'Perception with Synaesthetic Dimensions, from Medical, Neurological Study to Artistic Experience'.

The second chapter - entitled 'Forms of Synaesthesia in Visual Arts' and comprising the subchapters 'Transgression Towards a Synaesthetic Art', 'The Synaesthetic Potential of Visual Arts from a Perceptive Standpoint Before 1900', 'Synaesthetic Landmarks During the First Decades of the 20th Century', and 'Cinematography – the Relevance of This Innovative Medium from a Synaesthetic Perspective' aims at clarifying the created synaesthesia, a term that is less known, as well as the concept of virtual space in visual art. The chapter includes certain historical landmarks that are incipiently synaesthetic, and where the visual illusion tends towards the third dimension, turning into a potential virtual space, in a relation close to perception and to contemporary installation, too.

The third chapter, 'The Created Synaesthesia in the Visual Culture of the 20th Century. Focus on the evolution of the installation', continues the enumeration of the aesthetic premises that contributed to the emergence of the installation and of the multi-sensoriality in the visual arts throughout the 20th century. The chapter includes five subchapters formulated as follows: 'Installation Art – Premises and Evolution in the 20th Century. Clement Greenberg – Relevant Oppositions for the Necessity of Created Synaesthesia', the second subchapter 'Installation Art – Premises and Evolution in the 20th Century. Marcel Duchamp and the Readymade', 'The Postwar Influence of Marcel Duchamp. Synaesthetic Passages: the Assemblage', 'The Emergence of the Environment Concept', and the last subchapter 'The 60-70s Instauration of a New Visual Art Concept: the Installation Art'.

Using examples, this subchapter emphasizes the fluency and the progressive interest of visual artists for the relation artwork/visitor at a perceptive level, a fact supporting the created synaesthesia phenomenon and leading towards a consolidation of the installation as a specific

field in visual arts, but also as an expression of multi-sensoriality.

Following the historical analyses meant to emphasize the interdependence between the created synaesthesia, perception and installation art as part of the 20th century avant-garde, the fourth chapter presents the created synaesthesia phenomenon in contemporary art bringing examples of installations belonging to well-known visual artists. This chapter, entitled *Synaesthetic structuration in contemporary installation* is divided into three subchapters: ‘Concepts and key directions’, ‘Space-time interventions and multi-sensoriality’, and ‘New media installations and their synaesthetic trajectories’.

The last chapter of this thesis, entitled ‘The synesthetic potential of textile materials in the 21st century. Textile art and installation’ focuses on a special category of installations: the one resulting from the union of the expressive fabrics and textile techniques with the space-time analyses discovered in the installation. The resulting projects contribute to the evolution of textile arts and offer a new aesthetic dimension to these materials that were until recently placed in the field of design.

The pages dedicated to the first chapter – ‘Perception in the Contemporary Culture’ – present certain historical considerations that are essential in understanding the importance of perception in art. Simultaneously, this chapter mentions the relations between synaesthesia as a neurological phenomenon and the created synaesthesia, both of them depending on the subjective human perception.

The subchapter ‘Perception as *synaesthetic experience* in the 21st century culture’ centers on the neurological phenomenon as a source of interest for art. Whatever its nature might be, art is being ‘deciphered’ depending on the receptive public. The act of creation itself involves the activation of the perceptive functions of both the creator and the receiver.

‘*Synaesthesia is seven times more common among artists, writers and poets – individuals with a creative potential generally*’, claims the scientist Dr. Ramachandran, and ‘*artists often possess the ability of connecting areas unconnected until that moment, they have the power of metaphors and the capacity of interweaving realities.*’ The neurological synaesthesia can give birth to the created synaesthesia.

In the 19th century, the French poet Charles Baudelaire stands out and, although one cannot claim for sure that the poet was synaesthetic, his poems and writings prove the fact that he possessed a special perception of the surrounding reality. In one of his theoretical writings, Baudelaire stated: ‘*It would be truly surprising to discover that sound cannot suggest colour, that hues cannot evoke the idea of a melody, or that sound and colour are*

*inappropriate for transposing ideas, observing the fact that things have always found their expression through a system of mutual analogy.*¹(Charles Baudelaire, from the volume *Pictorul vieții moderne și alte eseuri/The Painter of Modern Life and Other Essays*). Oriented towards his own sensibility and perception, Baudelaire transposes into his poems a superposition of sensations, while the surrounding environment receives a deeply perceptive feature through an entire arsenal of tropes. His poems are the ones introducing the concept of *synaesthesia* in literature.

In the 19th century culture, sensorial symbioses brought together music and fine arts through Alexander Wallace Rimington's invention of a keyboard instrument that produced beams of coloured light while performing musical pieces.

In the meantime, Romantic composer Richard Wagner (1813-1883) established, theoretically and practically, the concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk* ('total work of art'), too. Through his 'total works of art', he sensed that rhythm can approach movement in order to establish a connection to the visual, that the melody approaches the text uttered by the performer's voice, and that the sound succession can be accompanied by a chromatic one due to the scenographic atmosphere. What Wagner wanted from his public was a better reception of his compositions, and even a breakthrough regarding the temporal limits imposed by the relation auditorium-masterpiece by means of accessing a space-visual dimension, and thus a fixation in memory that would be deeper and closer to the act of visual contemplation.

In the late 19th century, the Impressionist movement spread the wind of change concerning the perceptive level of the visual art. We notice a relation that is probably not accidental, between painting and music, and we can support the idea of the existence of an analogy between composing colour surfaces and the succession of keys in a musical composition during the Impressionist and Pointillist movements. The Impressionists discovered dynamism due to the division of the brush touch; they observed the influence of light on colour in its natural environment, and its circuit on the surface of the painted subject, while the colour came back to the fluid aspect it had in its natural milieu, even on the two-dimensional canvas.

These examples of 19th century artistic creativity prove the cultural and aesthetic preoccupations dominated by the interest for perception and for the created synaesthesia. 'For a synaesthetic person, synaesthesia is an inherent part of his senses (a true synaesthetic)', Dr.

¹ Charles Baudelaire, quoted by Dr. Hugo Heynman in the article "*Extending the Synesthetic Code: connecting synaesthesia, memory and art* ", March 2007, Antwerp – Belgia, <http://www.doctorhugo.org/synaesthesia/art/index.html>

Hugo Heyrman stated. ‘For an artist, synaesthetic art is the result of an artistic intention (a form of synaesthesia created by an individual).’

The subchapter ‘Perception with synaesthetic dimensions, from medical, neurological study to artistic experience’ concisely presents aspects of the sensations’ formation, as well as studies on perception as a function enabling both the cognition of the environment and the reception of the artwork.

During the 18th century, German philosopher Alexander Gottlieb Baumgarten(1714-1762), renowned for his contribution as a founder of aesthetics, studied the dissociation between sensorial knowledge and the rational one which is intellect-connected. The philosopher Immanuel Kant added a new category to the sensorial knowledge – that of the union of the aesthetic senses (*‘sensus communis aestheticus’*), a perception that offered to the analysed subject not only the existence, but also the integration in the field of aesthetics. In other words, not only the knowledge of the fact that that subject existed, but also a certain valorization of it as an aesthetic subject – a valorization as personal as the perception itself.

Throughout the first decade of the 20th century, the relations between chromatics and sound are included in the Futurist manifest. The assumptions concerning this direction are traceable in Wassily Kandinsky’s (1866-1944) artistic vision, too – an artist manifesting a special interest for the analogies between abstractionism in visual art and musical creations, expressing his belief inside the volume *The Spiritual in Art*. At a perceptive level, visual and auditory sensations, although so different one from another, act together in forming a representation as faithful to reality as possible, and in placing it in space and time.

Just as the perception as an instrument of knowledge brings together all senses in order to build a subjective version of the surrounding milieu, the aesthetic theories mentioned in this subchapter state the existence of certain connections between the arts, resulting precisely from studying the perceptive mechanisms between the senses.

The second chapter, "Forms of Synesthesia in Visual Arts ", restricts the circle of research to Visual Arts, the early stages of defining created synesthesia. Thus we discover a synesthetic potential in virtual spaces based on optical illusions, where the trend towards playing the third dimension makes references to installation art. "[...] the virtual reality is part of the essence of the human relationship with the image", Oliver Grau said, aware of the increasingly pronounced intervention of illusion and of the virtual in contemporary art.

The chosen examples will continue initially on the path of synesthetic approach at a conceptual level, relatively fragile as insight, heading for optical illusion and at the same time constrained by technological social and historical patterns.

The illusion of the third dimension is a first step towards recreating the complex virtual sensations of the twenty-first century. The Renaissance proposed the emphasis of the tridimensional space, hence the illusion of the third dimension, through the insertion of geometric perspective in small works and grandiose decorative frescoes. The "trompe l'oeil" technique serves mainly to represent a descending visualization and gives you the opportunity to position yourself in a higher level, like a spectator at a theatrical performance. Renaissance's representation of space contributes to the transgression to synesthetic Visual art, aggregation of sensory experiences favorable to total immersion of the art lover.

The effect of illusion introduced by Renaissance's artists by means of trompe l'oeil continues in the next centuries through the interest showed for panoramic images. The artists who gave birth to the panoramic images between the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century contribute to the development of the visual image according to the representation of a complex atmosphere, where aspects of visual perception trigger a series of connections from other senses also, hence an image of atmosphere with deliberate synaesthetic potential.

The epoch of the Impressionist movement presents the environment as an "exchange of forces between man and the world of things"², the work of art approaching to the meaning of the dynamics of human existence as a form, but also as a subject. In the 20th Century we notice an accentuation of the interest in the relationship between the viewer, the artwork and the environment.

The landscape series with water lilies, painted by Claude Monet between 1915 and 1917, preserves the panoramic effect and retains the illusion of immersion in the two-dimensional plane of the paper. The dimensions chosen by Monet (12.75 x 2 m) contribute to the creation of the effect to the same extent as the semicircular arrangement of panels designed to be uniform.

The increasing intervention of the visual in the first decades of the 20th Century was possible due to the popularisation of photography and cinematography, a phenomenon leading to a change in the use of image representations. The role of recording historical data would thus be taken by photography or even by cinematography, freeing the segment of visual arts that used to be occupied by painting and sculpting from the realistic representation of certain

² Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception. A Psychology of the Creative Eye*, Chapter VIII *The Movement*, Polirom Publishing, Iași, 2011, p.365.

pre-existing images. This way, the artists of the age would tend to express states of mind or emotions following a series of personal and subjective rules, aiming for the independent condition of music and sound, following the compositional relations between sound-colour-shape-movement, or even associating the two genres into synaesthetic artworks.

In this respect, we mention the artist and stage designer Enrico Prampolini, member of the Futurist movement, who analysed the potential of the stagecraft's visual effects on the spectator, in the case of theatrical representations, and abolished two-dimensionality in scenography. Prampolino's creations evolve on the previous interventions of the stage designer Adolphe Appia.

With a versatility specific to the Bauhaus School, Moholy-Nagy remarks himself in areas such as photography, sculpting, painting, graphic arts and industrial design, a fact that offers an overall perspective on materials and on their aesthetic potential. 'The light and space modulator' (1922-1930) proves undoubtedly Moholy-Nagy's skilful fluctuation between the realm of fine arts and that of design, but also the beginnings of kinetic art.

In the case of cinematography, the expressive possibilities become obvious and efficient, despite the fact that, initially, it did not possess the ability to capture sound, too. Timeless, the message could be presented repeatedly, irrespective of the transformations of the eternalised subject and, even more than that, the subject could be reinvented. The cinema lover of the early 20th century was fascinated by this new direction of the visual creations that were so synaesthetic perceptively.

If theatre and scenography influenced the evolution of the installation art, cinematography opened a long series of experiments where culture, digital technology and multimedia reunite in order to form a new generation, a new art, a new synaesthetic illusion.

In the third chapter, entitled 'The Created Synaesthesia in the Visual Culture of the 20th Century. Focusing on the Evolution of the Installation', the study emphasizes the aesthetic concepts participating in the formation of the installation as an artistic genre. Synaesthetic visual art is mostly to be found among the parameters of the genre called 'installation', emerged and acknowledged towards the late 20th Century.

The artistic movements of the 20th Century offer the premises of an innovative spirit and the ideological fundamentals upon which contemporary visual art is built.

Simultaneously, the impact of technology, too, alters the forms and the ideologies of art, those Lev Manovich wrote about in his book, published in 2008: 'Briefly, during a single decade, the computer turned from a technology that was invisible from a cultural standpoint

into the new engine of culture.³ The enthusiasts of these innovations, accessible to the masses around the 90s, would name the intervention of the digital 'the IT revolution', similar to what had happened in the 15th century, when Gutenberg invented the print, simplifying this way the reproduction and the access to information.

The emerging post-war ideologies reconfigure the perspective on visual arts. Clement Greenberg develops in this theoretical discourse *Towards a Newer Laocoon* his preference referring to abstract art, but also that situation of symbiosis between the various fields of art, justified by the need for an expressive and sensorial immediacy. Yet, Greenberg denigrates the tendencies towards symbiosis, comparing it to a 'confusion of the arts' lacking unity and stylistic or formal purity as opposed to the ideology launched by Marcel Duchamp.

The phenomenon of stylistic symbiosis between the art genres begets the created synaesthesia, and the artist is aware that, from a sensorial point of view, the human body resembles an interface between the artwork and the viewer's sensibility. In 1957, Marcel Duchamp presented 'an important lecture, *The Creative Act*, where he defended the idea that «the artwork is not accomplished solely by the artist»⁴. The readymade detaches itself as a technique through 'the display of certain (assemblages) of usual objects, «ready made»'⁵. Duchamp changes the relation between viewer and the artwork by transforming the serial object into an exception from its own seriality, eliminating its usefulness. Artworks such as *Bike Wheel*, *Comb*, *With Hidden Noise*, *Corkscrew*, *Water and Gas on Every Floor*, *Box in A Suitcase*, *Green Box*, and , of course, his most renowned and controversial readymade, *Fountain*, state a direction towards anti-art, but also towards opening the technical possibilities in art.

Clearly influenced by Duchamp's 'readymades', the *assemblage* is made also as an object oriented collage. It creates most of the times the atmosphere of a consumption goods cemetery, extracted from their functional meaning, this form of art preceding also installation. Organized as two-dimensional collages, as Robert Rauschenberg chooses to express himself, or composed in tridimensional sculptures, this form of art, comparing with the installation that will succeed it, initiates the principle of accumulation of conventional objects connected physically and conceptually by message, atmosphere and the sensory side.

The New French Realism and the Pop Art, sometimes clearly accepted, sometimes controversial because of the images belonging to the mass culture, acquire a critical spirit on

³ Lev Manovich, "Software Takes Command", an edition published electronically on November, the 20th, 2008, www.softwarystudies.com/softbook

⁴ David Hopkins, "After Modern Art 1945-2000", published by Oxford University Press, 2000, p. 42

⁵ <http://dexonline.ro/definitie/ready-made>

the new social values and something from their ‘visual excitement and visceral energy’⁶. Attractive and full of paradox, Arman’s works are casts and accumulations of objects in Plexiglas cases or cement structures.

On an imaginary axis between Europe and America we can observe the thematic and temporal correspondences regarding Arman’s *Accumulations* related with sculptural works of Claes Oldenburg. The themes of the latter maintain a direction towards the introduction in elevated art forms images borrowed from mass culture. If Arman emphasized the tendency of the increasing numbers of objects and waste among population, Claes Oldenburg oversized the same ordinary symbols of the consumption, from clothes to furniture, inviting nourishment, electronics or the commonplace bags of tea, all being described just on the line between naturalism and a floppy style, even raw. The objectified sculptures fully reflect the image of some unsuccessful copies, and of course, something from the popular ‘kitsch’, but they succeed to dominate the viewer by their oversizing, absorbing space and the delimitation of the horizon.

In parallel with the ‘assemblage’ technique of the ’60s appears a second term which will influence substantially the contemporary installation art and the term is that of ‘environment’. The concept of ‘environment’ establishes numerous crossovers between the ‘aesthetic space of art and the social space of the world that surrounds us’⁷. The wish of including aspects of everyday life acts constantly over artistic creation as a process, as a conceptual purpose, as perception of the viewer and, not last, as exhibition space. The ‘environment’ proposes to visual art a step further of what has represented the ‘assemblage’, transferring to the entire exhibit space the attributes of an artwork. The term of environment was thrown out by Allan Kaprow. Among the first attempts of environments are included projects like *Merzbau - The Cathedral of Erotic Misery* (1933) by Kurt Schwitters, *Horse Galaxy* (1954) by Frederik Kiesler or *Sky Cathedral* (1958) by Louise Nevelson.

Influenced by the musician John Cage, Allan Kaprow eliminates the limits between the artistic creation and the participative audience in projects like *The Yard* (1961) and *Words* (1962). His environments integrated the first attempts of interactivity.

In the volume *Installation Art A Critical History*, Claire Bishop argues that installation art is different from installation of art considering the importance given to the elaboration of the works according to the environment in which they are exhibited.

⁶ Jamie James, *Pop Art*, Phaidon Press Ltd, 1996, p. 5

⁷ Nicolas De Oliveira, Nicola Oxley, Michael Petry, *Installation Art*, Ed. Thames & Hudson, Londra, 1994, p. 11

‘An installation of art is secondary in importance to the individual works it contains, while in a work of installation art, the space and the ensemble of elements within it, are regarded in their entirety as a singular entity. Installation art creates a situation into which the viewer physically enters, and insists that you regard this as a singular totality.’⁸

‘The augmentation of the viewer’s sensibility’ as Claire Bishop said it, will be solved by created synaesthesia and by the interactivity during the entire 20-th Century.

Even if in the modern time numerous artists implement in their works important principles of the contemporary installation, the ideology that contributed at the apparition of this artistic discipline intervenes during the postmodern eclecticism, after a mix of many preexistent fields, revealed by Claire Bishop in the following text:

One reason for this is that installation art does not enjoy a straightforward historical development. Its influences have been diverse: architecture, cinema, performance art, sculpture, theater, set design, curating, Land Art and painting have all impacted upon it at different moments.’⁹

The concept of *synaesthetic artwork* includes both the creative process and the personal experience of the viewer, which has become visitor and participant.

Finding a starting point in the Robert Morris’s statement ‘the simplicity of form is not necessary a simplicity of the experience’¹⁰, Minimal Art tackles the principles of the essential and of serialism being helped by a synthetic visual language. In his artworks Dan Flavin discovers the potential of chromatic spatiality because of the light which floods the plane areas and participates at the immersion of the viewer.

In the XXI-st century, the Minimal Art is reconsidered and its part in the evolution of installation is clearly outlined, one of the main opinion in this matter belongs to Kenneth Baker (*Minimalism: Art of Circumstance*): Minimalism becomes ‘the drive to clarify the terms in which art takes a place in the world’¹¹.

The theories of Maurice Merleau-Ponty formulated in the volume *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945), exceeding the borders of Europe, will offer a new perspective on the interaction work of art – viewer in case of the Brazilian artists Lygia Clark (1920-1988) and Hélio Oiticica (1937-1980).

Unique in their approach about the participative theme ‘they contributed to the development of an original vocabulary of interactivity. Clark, merging the body/mind duality,

⁸ Claire Bishop, *Installation Art A Critical History*, Ed. Tate Publishing, Londra, 2011, p.6.

⁹ Claire Bishop, *Installation Art A Critical History*, Ed. Tate Publishing, Londra, 2011, p.8

¹⁰ Robert Morris, in *Minimal Art* edited by Daniel Marzona, Taschen Publishing, 2004, p 76

¹¹ Kenneth Baker, *Minimalism: Art of Circumstance*, Abbeville Press, 1988, p. 67

focused primarily on the subjective and psychological dimensions of sensorial experimentation, while Oiticica engaged in sensorial explorations involving social, cultural, architectural and environmental spaces.¹²

Lygia Clark's works between 1940 and 1988 assign clear directions towards abstraction, Neo-Concrete art movement and towards participative art. Starting with geometrically abstract creations with organically interconnected shapes (*Bichos – Animals* 1960-1966), Lygia Clark elaborates artistic projects like *Sensorial Masks* (1967), *Glasses for Dialogue* (1968), *Abyssal Mask* (1968) or the installation *The House is the Body* (1968).

In *Tropicalia* from 1967 Hélio Oiticica assembles a multisensory description of the Brazilian urban space, the installation changing into 'tropical scenario, [...], with plants, parrots, sand, pebbles'¹³ on which he superposes the culture of the poor districts (favelas) present in the Rio de Janeiro metropolis.

The experiments in the installation art zone continue with promoters like David Medala (*Cloud Canyons*-1963, *Cloud Windows*- 1966, *Cloud Fruits* - 1971), Edward Ruscha (*Chocolate Room* -1970) and the feminist current. The latter artists were presenting the image of the woman as historical evolution and resettlement from the perspective of a fair equality between the sexes. Louise Bourgeois (*The Destruction of the Father*, 1974), Judy Chicago (*The Dinner Party*, 1979) or Mary Kelly (*Post-Partum Document*, 1973-1979) adopt in their projects features specific to the contemporary installation.

Getting back on the concept of multisensoriality as a frequent attribute of the art of installation, we will direct our attention to the spatial compositions in the 1970-s belonging to Bruce Nauman, Robert Irwin and Dan Graham. These three American artists emphasize in their installations the impact of some destabilizing physical stimuli upon the psyche of the viewer.

The fourth chapter 'Sinaesthetic structuration in contemporary installation' is a subjective selection of some works included in the category of installation, belonging to contemporary artists such as Cildo Meireles, Ilya Kabakov, Judy Pfaff, Rosie Leventon, Richard Wilson, Ann Hamilton, Christian Boltanski, Damien Hirst, Anish Kapoor, Ernesto Neto, Olafur Eliasson, Rudolf Stingel, Jason Rhoades, Nancy Rubins, Rachel Whiteread,

¹² Simone Osthoff from the article *Lygia Clark and Hélio Oiticica: A Legacy of Interactivity and Participation for a Telematic Future* from <http://www.leonardo.info/isast/spec.projects/osthoff/osthoff.html>

¹³ Hélio Oiticica, *Tropicalia: March 4, 1968*, text from the volume edited by Patrick Frank, *Readings in Latin American Modern Art*, Yale University Press, New Heaven and London, 2004, p.178.

Felix Gonzalez-Torres, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Ai Weiwei sau Tokujin Yoshioka. The elaboration of a creative concept nowadays implies the assimilation of the new installation technologies which thus get the attributes of synesthesia with the help of new media components (for example Carsten Holler, Angela Bulloch, Mariko Mori, Janet Cardiff&George Bures Miller, Federico Diaz, Jason Bruges Studio, Random International, Brian Knep or Zimoun).

The last chapter ‘The Synaesthetic Potential of Textile Materials in the XXI-st Century. The Textile Art and Installation’ is dedicated to installations with textile materials and techniques. The textile fiber bears a long tradition in its history from the prehistoric times up to the present, evolving towards a varied range of interdisciplinary connections. It was initially regarded as a material adequate for the field of design, with a small consideration for its artistic potential.

The XX-th century, with its multiple changes at the level of aesthetic concept, creates this opening towards technical experiments in the field of visual arts. Contemporary artists such as Gabriel Dawe, Chiharu Shiota, Elana Hertzog, Do Ho Suh, Beili Liu, Tomas Saraceno reconfigure spaces, sometimes monumental, with the help of extended textile surfaces. Prevalingly textile installations offer a new perspective on the space, the thread turning into an element of tridimensional artistic language, while the woven surfaces become constructions intended to volumetric delimitations.

The illustrations on the theme of installation art prove that the textile material is a widely-spread medium in art. Regarding this aspect from the point of view of an artist interested in the aesthetic potential of fibers and textile constructions we consider that the including of this type of material in complex spatial compositions generates a high appreciation of the expressiveness and of the richness of significances that lie in the apparently prosaic piece of thread.

As it has been stated in the content of this thesis, from one period of time to another, the desideratum of some multisensory creations has had an ascending trajectory, being supported by the metamorphosis of the aesthetic, social and technological ideologies. From its feeble attempts (the virtual space obtained with the help of perspectival studies and the ‘trompe l’oeil’ techniques, Alexander Wallace Rimington’s coloured organ or Charles Baudelaire visual poems) the created synaesthesia has stood out, getting closer to the complicated contemporary installations.

The synaesthetic phenomenon in the visual art maintains a special relationship with the expression that has become a motto for quite a lot of artists ‘life into art’ (the inclusion of

life into art). Transposing this principle in artistic projects implies an extrapolation of the sphere of interest towards subjects extracted from veridical experiences, thorough scientific studies and everything which is connected to the human existence as a possible and reproducible experience. Therefore the simulation of the circumstances and of the human experiences does not occur at the visual level only, through images reproduced ad infinitum benefitting by the technological evolution (digital image and mass-media influence); it also occurs as a synaesthetic experience during which the viewer is absorbed by the medium created and activated by means of interactive scenarios. On these terms we may consider that the created synaesthesia contributes to putting into practice some concepts spread in the contemporary art such as: simulation, interactivity, multidisciplinary, relational aesthetics, new media, etc.

The created synaesthesia remains a concept and a method of mediating the aesthetic emotions towards a direction identical to reality, even easier to obtain with the help of new media artistic techniques.