

The Synaesthete: A Case of Synaesthesia Personified

Summary

In the present article, the concept of synaesthete taking form in the current culturologic and anthropologic academic discourse is employed for a new interpretation of Čiurlionis's works as a representation of unique and authentic experience of a synaesthete. In cultural establishments and against the background of aesthetic ideas and works of art, the synaesthete emerges as a material location of synaesthesia, as an integral entirety of interaction of synaesthesia and human existence. Although the synaesthete is most often schematically and hypothetically perceived and seen as an aspect of the expression of synaesthesia itself, a new concept is gradually taking root in contemporary humanities: the synaesthete is a certain entirety of a person, where the synaesthesia manifests itself in the existence of a particular person as the power shaping the perception of reality and being in it. Several essential steps of theoretic thought are seen in the path of this insight: at first it was perceived that synaesthesia cannot be dissociated from the whole sensing body; later on, the theoretic shift no

longer sought to separate the synaesthesia from the daily existence of the experiencer. Thus, the concept of the synaesthete has first acquired the anthropological shade by soaking up the peculiar patterns of human population and also the culturologic one by looking for these persons of peculiar structure in different cultures, times, and accumulations of creative activities of a man. Being a synaesthete is considered to be the inherent biological phenomenon, which manifests itself in the testimonies, works, and introspective descriptions of the synaesthete. Namely, the introspective descriptions of synaesthetic experiences often used for the research of synaesthesia, disconnected from the psychology, which has become experimental, are anthropological documents of extraordinary charm and value and reveal the dimension of human experience that expands even the perception of humanity itself. In case of M. K. Čiurlionis, all his creation, including painting, music, and literature as well as his epistolary legacy provide a clear traceability of the structure of synaesthete's personality.

Key words: synaesthete, synaesthesia, interaction of arts, person, synesthetic experience, Čiurlionis.