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Tim Shepard and Anne Leonard (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Music and Visual Culture*, New York–London, Routledge, 2014. 391 pp, ISBN: 978-0-415-62925-6; 978-0-203-62998-7

Problems related to the interrelations between music and visual have always been treated in musicological studies, but have been particularly in focus since the last decade of the twentieth century in relation to the visual culture paradigm. *The Routledge Companion to Music and Visual Culture* published in 2014 seems like an invitation to a critical confrontation between the traditional approaches and the possible new theoretical visions, to building new problematizations and perspectives of the interpretation of music and the visual. The book's main idea is that the focus on the relations between the musical and the visual was born equally from the contemporary hybrid artistic forms as from the theoretical multiplication process in the humanities that started in the seventies of the 20th century and which, according to the editors, remained a permanent characteristic of the humanities today. The authors of the texts come from the fields of musicology, art theory and art history, as well as visual culture. A total of 44 texts is divided in five chapters: 1) Starting Points; 2) Methodologies; 3) Reciprocation (The Musical in Visual Culture – The Visual in Musical Culture; 4) Convergence (Convergence in Metaphor – Convergence in Conception – Convergence in Practice) and 5) Hybrid Arts.

The review's introductory text indicates that a need to extend the limits of the music iconography toward the formation of a cross discipline has appeared in musicology and that such need was formed in the last ten to fifteen years. "Although the fields of musicology and art history have not been total strangers to each other in the academy, it is nevertheless only rather recently that they began to affirm shared interests, areas of study, and methodological approaches. It is quite recently, too, that their formerly sovereign territories – the musical and the visual – have found new students with new agendas right across the amorphous landscape of the modern humanities." (1) It seems that the existence of such perspectives that the review editors wish to point out actually refers to an invitation to the researchers to stop exploring the musical and

the visual as separate, sovereign territories, but to explore the musical and the visual as relief forms of a single territory, the territory of culture. The editors and the authors of the texts identify *culture* as a concept that can allow the researchers today to move through the amorphous landscape of the contemporary humanities and thus open new research perspectives. For example, the representation of the basic points in the performance study or in the new media theories within the specialized texts (Laura Cull, "Performance Studies"; David Neumeyer, "Studying Music and Screen Media"; Fabian Holt, "Music in New Media") seems as pointing out the potentials of these theoretical fields that could be used in the future research. Such research would transpose the problem of the relation between the musical and the visual tangibility from the *music and visual arts* field to the *music and visual culture* field, or, it would reposition that problem from the episteme of the autonomous art disciplines into discovering music and visual arts as tangibility of a single phenomenon – culture. This, modified epistemological position is announced by the choice of terms in the review's title – instead of the *visual art* term, the *visual culture* was used which obviously points out that the discovery today is directed toward the research of the performance practices of the various cultural texts through the musical and/or visual materials.

Emphasis on culture as a concept from which the artistic practices exploration starts today and, therefore, emphasize its role in the construction of a certain social identity, implies that the art is no longer seen based on the *history of an art discipline* model, but based on the *cultural history* model and within it, through the differently, sensuously formed musical and visual tangibility. This means that the musicologists and the art historians still deal with the questions belonging to their areas of expertise since they refer to musical, i.e. visual forms of culture and art. They, however, put their research methodologies in action as a *nomad movement* through the territories of the contemporary humanities, i.e. they *occupy* the already conquered areas of knowledge, objects and theoretical optics as their own current research positions. In other words, the choice of texts and problems brought by the *Routledge Companion* indicates that today's perspectives do not consider only the knowledge deriving from a single specialized humanistic discipline. On the contrary, the hybrid knowledge should be favored, framed by a single researcher who moves intentionally and freely through the registers of the theoretically differently formed studies of culture, and thus its musical, i.e. visual forms of tangibility paying equal attention to both *listening* and *seeing* music. That is the reason why perhaps the most significant aspect of the contemporary research that went a step further from the existing interdisciplinary images of musicology and art history is contained in the phenomenon of resisting the withdrawal of each discipline into that sphere of sensory experience unique to it. It is indicated that the traditional procedures and techniques of seeing and listening were inseparable from the process of building the modern subjectivity and that the specialization of the senses and the discipline of the body followed the ideologically construed idea of an autonomous art. In relation to this, it is not a coincidence that the review is opened

by two texts that present the concept of “seeing music“ (Richard Leppert, “Seeing Music”), i.e. of the synaesthesia (Simon Shaw-Miller, “Synaesthesia”).

Another important theoretical platform presented in several papers in the *Routledge Companion* refers to the *space theories* (Tim Shephard, “Musical Spaces: The Politics of Space in Renaissance Italy; Laura Moretti, “Built Architecture for Music: Spaces for Chamber Music in Sixteenth–Century Italy; Abigail Wood, “Urban Soundscapes: Hearing and Seeing Jerusalem”). The potentialities of this theoretical platform for the contemporary research of music and the visual are contained in the very fact that they allow a theoretical confirmation of the theory that the musical and the visual are not only forms placed in the cultural space, but are intervening forms of tangibility that confine the concrete geographical areas and, therefore, materialize an identity of a society. This is how the relationship between music and the visual can be placed in focus today with equal validity both as problematizing the musical representations in the art space, and as problematizing of forming the geographical area with particular sound texts.

The Routledge Companion encourages framing those relations between the musical and the visual that generate culture which, until now, remained invisible to the European-American positions of modern era art historicizing. The texts contained in this companion seem as potentialities that could be a starting point in a future conquest of new perspectives of musicology, history and art theory. These perspectives should be materialized as a possibility to ‘occupy’ the territories of the contemporary humanities, of their already conquered areas of knowledge, of objects and theoretical optics in order to index all that was absent until now from our perception and reception of musically and visually formed cultural texts.