

The Sonata of the Master Musician

William Meader

Summary

This article examines the esoteric implications of music and sound. Emphasis is placed upon the proposition that sound gives birth to all things and is the force that facilitates evolution itself. Specific focus is directed to the nature of sound as it moves from dissonance to harmony. This is particularly true when considering the evolutionary drama occurring between the soul and the personality. In addition, the magical nature of language is examined: how words have the power to shape outer effects, either for good or ill. Through this, support is given to the premise that human civilization is the product of ideas transmitted through the sounds imbedded within the words we use. Finally, discussion is offered suggesting that music is a principle inherent in the Universe as a whole.

Introduction

Sound gives birth to all that is. It is the power behind existence itself, and the universe is merely its outer effect. At first glance this may seem a strange notion. Yet, within Christian theology we are told that creation came forth in response to the “Word.” In the East we are given to understand that Brahman sang the universe into existence. Both these mythological views hearken to the same notion. That is, that God gave birth to existence through the power of sacred sound. No other notion is as important in the understanding of human existence than this idea. If sound is the creative force behind all things, then humanity’s use of it must be examined in this light. It suggests that the words we use and the music we create has far greater implications than normally conceived. The sounds we project into the outer world must eventually be harmonized with the

sonata being played by the cosmic symphony and the Master Musician who directs it.

Music is a force that has the power to awaken the heart. When the mind is free from its analytical tendency, the heart is then receptive to the uplifting vibrations concealed within music. Lofty music is a great transmitter of love, and its gate of entrance is the heart chakra within each of us. Indeed, the heart is the place where music (in its highest form) is destined to touch. In our society music most often reaches the masses through the solar plexus – the chakra that gives rise to emotion and desire. This is why music becomes so important as a person enters the adolescent phase of life. During that time, one’s emotional nature is becoming increasingly active, and likewise does the solar plexus. The music of one’s youth is therefore laden with emotion. Yet as one matures (and the soul becomes more influential in his/her life) music will increasingly be felt in the heart, not the solar plexus. Love will then be experienced—a thing quite different from emotion or desire. This is the true destiny of music, at least when considering its role as a force that facilitates spiritual development. It is through the heart chakra that lofty music is realized, and the heart is the outer representative of the soul hidden deep within.

About the Author

For over twenty years, William Meader has been a student and teacher of esoteric philosophy. He is also an experienced teacher of various meditation practices. He teaches in the United States, Canada, Europe, Australia and New Zealand. He resides in California, and can be reached at: www.william@meader.org

Positive and Negative Purpose

Sound can be used for both good and ill. This is most easily recognized in the words we use in dialogue with others. Human speech is a means by which we share ideas. It is the art of shaping sounds into words or lyrics that will touch others in some way. The words we speak inevitably create outer effects. When loving and wise, these words (sounds) will have an uplifting effect upon those they touch. Conversely, when motivated by lack of insight or selfish intent, language can be antithetical to the well being others, and at times even destructive. Here we see the power of sound as it is conveyed in the spoken word. In truth, this principle is at the heart of the soul's creative (magical) process. All things in civilization are the product of ideas transmitted through the power of word, song or artistic expression. Other factors, such as intonation, syntax, volume and cadence all contribute to the power of the sounds we convey through language. Wise consideration as to the words we use is therefore well advised. To shape one's language with wisdom is to conform to the larger rhythm sounding forth within creation. Evolution demands that a lesser sound must eventually harmonize with the greater sound that has given it birth. This is a spiritual principle of great importance.

The same can be said of the music we create. It too represents a "sounding forth" and therefore has either positive or negative effects. When music leads the listener to touch a deep and meaningful aspect of his/her soul, then its power is evolutionary and profound. In such cases, the listener's soul becomes the agent of the ear. An inner sense of harmony and spiritual depth is then recognized within music. However, music can also be quite destructive. One only needs to witness the nature of much (but not all) popularized music today to see evidence of this. When dissonance and dis-

All things in civilization are the product of ideas transmitted through the power of word, song or artistic expression. Other factors, such as intonation, syntax, volume and cadence all contribute to the power of the sounds we convey through language.

cord is its major theme, it will tend to create disharmonious effects. Please note the word "major" in the previous sentence. Some music will have dissonance as a feature of its expression, but its larger theme is not dissonance, but instead its resolution. When this is case, it can be a powerful creative force in support of the soul and its development. It provides the listener with an inner sense of the drama of evolution. In many ways, spiritual transformation is based on the notion that the personality and soul are slowly evolving their relationship from one of dissonance to one of harmonious rapport. It is a musical interaction occurring over the course of countless lives. Therefore music that highlights (through chord progression) the struggle to achieve harmony out of

chaotic discord is symbolically consistent with the drama of evolution itself. It therefore has great value to a human being because it shapes his/her consciousness with a sensed understanding that through crisis a higher harmony will be found.

Soul and Personality

Looked at with greater depth, esoteric literature suggests that the soul is sounding a note and is doing so for the entire duration of an incarnation. This note represents the soul's essential quality and nature. In the soul's long evolutionary journey, its intention is to sound its note through the personality as a means of serving the outer world. Interestingly, the lower self (personality) is also sounding its own independent note. By this is meant that the human personality has a quality of vibration in and of itself. The differences between people (that are most easily recognized) are largely differences evident in the notes (qualities) that their personalities represent. These notes are vibrational. What we consider a personality trait is simply our interpretation of a unique vibrational tone emitted by that personality.

For many incarnations these two notes (soul and personality) are discordant. This simply means that the personality is inharmonic with the soul's downward chant. Indeed, for thousands of lives the soul's tonal whisper is not even heard by the personality. This is because the personality's note is so loud that it drowns out the subtle sound that the soul continuously sings. Eventually there will come an incarnation when the music of the soul is inwardly sensed for the first time. When this occurs, the personality recognizes that there is a subtle sound behind what it thought itself to be. This then stages the beginning of the spiritual journey, in that the individual now struggles with the problem of how to bring more of the soul into his/her outer personal life. The spiritual journey has to do with the gradual transformation of the personality (its nature and note) so that it willingly yields to the soul's creative agenda. It is the process, slow and laborious, of blending these two tones so that their dissonance is transformed into harmony and therefore beauty. This transformation involves an adjustment of the personality so that its note begins to resonate with the soul's chanted tone. This is why living a conscious spiritual life can be so difficult. It involves a tuning up of the lower self, a thing that the personality inherently resists. In some cases it may actually require a change of key. Woven into the fabric of spiritual evolution is the fact that soulful harmony must be earned, and this, through the lessons learned as one struggles through dissonance. When this is fully achieved (and held) enlightenment is sure reward.

Music, Healing and Being

Within the Esoteric Tradition it is said that someday humanity will discover the means to use sound and music as part of the art of healing. Already it is clear that certain music can have a soothing effect on the human nervous system, which invariably is helpful in the healing process. Music is an amazing tool that can

help reduce a person's stress level. In this regard it is often used to facilitate various relaxation and meditation techniques. In the future, the therapeutic implications of music will be understood more fully from a spiritual perspective. The note of the soul will be realized as having a tremendous relationship to a person's health and well being, both physically and psychologically considered. The nature of death, and the uses of sound in support of the death process will also be better understood in time. For example, certain sounds presented within the death chamber will facilitate the departure of the soul from its containment within the human body. These sounds will have much relationship to the note of the soul, as well as the tone that is being orchestrated by the Larger Life that the soul is an "instrument"

The soul within each of us is sounding its sacred and eternal note. When the personality is willing to "change its tune" so as to resonate to that sacred note, the soul can truly shine forth within one's life.

within. Importantly, we are given to understand that the music used at the time of death needs to have a single recurring chord as an overtone that accompanies it. The art of dying is not yet understood within most Western cultures. It is probably accurate to say that we live in a death denying society. Nonetheless,

the day will come when our appreciation of death shall be as great as our attachment to life. At that time, death will be understood as an abstracting process of the soul as it yearns to reconnect with the greater melody coming forth from its cosmic birthplace. Music will then be fully understood as a means to support this departure.

As has been stated, sound is the foundation for the emergence of the universe and all things contained within it. The Greek notion of the "music of the spheres" is a reference to the fact that sound forms the matrix of existence itself. Because sound is related to the universe in this way, its attributes should have correlation to the universe as well. This it surely does. An example of this is rhythm. When we are attentive to the rhythm of music, we are participating in the experience of time, and time is a fea-

ture foundational to the universe itself. Herein is found a deep clue as to the nature of music and its relationship to the universe as a whole. Metaphysically considered, as God sounded forth the universe, the principle of rhythm immediately emerged and thus time was born.

Concluding Remarks

In this writing we have examined sound from both a practical and metaphysical perspective. Admittedly, there is much more that could be explored, and further pursuit of this subject would be well worth an individual's time. It is this author's view that a good starting point is to examine deeply the impact music has upon one's personal life. As has been discussed, music is a great force in support of human betterment. Our spiritual evolution is enhanced when we realize the sacred sound residing deep within ourselves. Through the effective use of music, the human heart awakens and the oneness of humanity is then truly sensed. Love is rooted in this fact. Esoterically understood, love emerges from the ability to sense the inner unity underlying outer diversity.

Uplifting music brings us closer to sensing this underlying unity through the opening of the heart. To touch the heart via music is to find the gate that leads to the soul and beyond. It must be remembered that creation itself is an expression of sound echoing through (and as) time and space. In truth, every entity within creation is a musical composition in the making, and a human being is no exception. The soul within each of us is sounding its sacred and eternal note. When the personality is willing to "change its tune" so as to resonate to that sacred note, the soul can truly shine forth within one's life. When the soul and personality notes are harmonized, a sacred chord is formed. And when that chord is united with the clarion sound of the cosmic symphony, the music of the spheres is truly known. The sonata of the Master Musician is then heard.