

MUSIC THAT MOVES US

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Today we are going to experience music that moves us.

As you have no doubt experienced, music can move us on many levels. It can move us physically, for example, when we can't help but tap our toes or sway to the beat.

Researchers have found that people perceive and make sense of what they hear by mentally simulating the body motion thought to be involved in the making of sound. So, when we tap our toes to music, it's actually our brains trying to make sense of the sound.

A good example of this occurs when listening to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's "Eine Kleine Nachtmusik."

It's almost impossible not to move to that music, isn't it? That movement is our brains trying to process the sound.

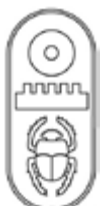
Experts have found that, when runners listen to music, they often match their stride to a particular beat, which can help them regulate their pace. If they listen to music with a faster beat, they will run faster. This is called auditory motor synchronization. The same applies to

marches that inspire and motivate soldiers to keep moving, even when they may be exhausted or disheartened.

Music can also help to create rhythmic heartbeats that then affect our brain waves, creating a feeling of tranquility that we experience throughout our entire being.

Almost one hundred years ago, H. Spencer Lewis noted: "Unconsciously a great many persons have become attracted to certain songs that they find themselves humming or singing many times a day. Usually they think it is because they like the tune, or like the melody, or perhaps like the words. The fact of the matter is, they have unconsciously noticed that the music is soothing or beneficial to the nervous system, perhaps to the entire system, and that is why they continuously sing or hum such songs."

The technology of modern devices such as a Garmin or Apple watch can measure the physiological effects of music, such as heart rate variability, which is a measure of the beat-to-beat changes in heart rate. This is what H. Spencer





From the collection of the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum. At left are a bell and a flute, and at right are castanets, all of which are thousands of years old.

Lewis was referring to, decades before the technology to measure this was invented.

While using a Garmin device, I have listened to a lot of music noting which pieces create the most heart coherence for me. There is one particular piece that immediately soothes my nervous system, according to my Garmin device and according to how I feel. You may find a similar effect, although each of us has our own heart coherence music. It is Vivaldi's "Four Seasons, Spring, Largo."

Please breathe slowly and rhythmically while listening to this music.

There is evidence to suggest that music also moved some ancient people in extraordinary ways. Some songs connected ancient people with the spirit world.

For the Australian aboriginal people, Dreaming or Dreamtime represents the relationship between people, plants, animals, and the physical features of the land; the knowledge of how these relationships came to be, what they mean, and how they need to be maintained in daily life and in ceremony. It is a magical realm that connects us with the source.

Today these aboriginal people still use music and movement or dance to enter or attune with this realm.

In ancient Egypt, images were drawn on temple walls showing musicians and

dancers. In your museum, the Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum in San Jose, we have castanets and flutes and other musical instruments used by the ancient Egyptians more than 5,000 years ago.

The ancient Egyptian goddess of music, love, beauty, dancing, and joy was Hathor, the cow goddess. She was one of the most popular and powerful deities and a protectress of women.

The Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum displays several *sistrums* – a musical instrument that imitated the sound of Hathor rustling through the reeds. The word *sistrum* is Greek; the Egyptians called this instrument *shh, shh, shh, shhhh*, which was the sound that it made.

Today, during their most mystical ceremonies, some South American shamans use an instrument made of palm fronds that makes this same rustling sound – *shh, shh, shh, shhhh* – moving their initiates deeper into the mysteries.

Pythagoras used music for healing, as did the Therapeuti and the Essenes. At the Pythagorean School in Crotona, they played invigorating music each morning and soothing music each evening.

Some pieces of music move our emotions too – some move us to sadness and others to happiness. We all have our favorites. Two songs that many members

are familiar with are “La Vie en Rose,” performed by Soror Edith Piaf, and “What a Wonderful World,” performed by Louis Armstrong.

Devotional music can also move us and is used in almost every religion. The following are some examples of devotional songs from three different traditions.

First is the Christian hymn “Amazing Grace.” The lyrics to this song were written in 1772 by former British slave trader John Newton, who claimed that his life was spared by the mercy of the Divine, during a storm at sea. He later became an abolitionist and preacher. It’s a message that forgiveness and redemption are possible regardless of the sins we have committed and that the soul can be delivered from despair through the mercy of the Divine.

I particularly like the version of the song recorded in 1947 by Mahalia Jackson, one of America’s greatest gospel singers and someone whose grandparents had formerly been enslaved people.

Here are the lyrics: “Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now I’m found, was blind, but now I see.”



Mahalia Jackson.

Another piece of inspirational devotional music is a Sufi song entitled “Chaap Tilak,” with lyrics from a poem by an Indo-Persian Sufi mystic, singer, musician, poet, and scholar named Amir Khusro, who lived in the thirteenth century. A notable performance of this song comes from Abida Parveen and Rahat Fateh Ali Khan.

Abida Parveen is Pakistan’s most accomplished singer of devotional music. She is an expert on Sufi music worldwide. Sufism is Islam’s esoteric tradition.

The theme of this song is the transformative power of a mere glance from the Divine, a central theme in Sufi mystic literature.

Some of the lyrics include: “I give my life to you, Oh my cloth-dyer, You’ve dyed me like yourself, by just a glance.”

Now we will consider a recently released song from Snatum Kaur, whose sacred chants are part of an ancient practice known as Kirtan. This chant includes the phrases “I am” and “Sat Nam.”

In the ancient language of the Sikhs, *Sat* means truth and *Nam* means name. Together, *Sat Nam* has a deeper meaning: “I am truth,” or “Truth is my essence.”

Our final piece of music to consider is a song that moves many of us in profound ways – the “Rosicrucian Chant,” written by our dear frater H. Spencer Lewis.

Here are the lyrics:

O, love, that knoweth of no fear,
A love, that sheds a joyous tear,
O, Love, that makes me whole and free,
Such love shall keep and hallow me.

So Mote It Be!

Note: If you would like to see a playlist on Apple Music of all of the songs mentioned in this article, click [here](#).

