

MUSIC AS A FULCRUM OF COMMUNICATION

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the enormous effect of music on the human psyche and its communicative inherence; it deliberates on its sonorous enticing effects on repairing a broken soul, as well as on its rhythmic harsh resonance in rebuffing an unacceptable behaviour in the society. Music as an art form, like every other art, in spite of its particularity for organizing sounds, aims to communicate to its audience, to project a musical discourse from a source (singer) to a recipient (listener).

“Music is a language that doesn’t speak in particular words. It speaks in emotions, and if it’s in the bones, it’s in the bones.” — Keith Richards.

A Brief History

The prehistoric age is considered to have ended with the development of writing, and with it, by definition, prehistoric music. After it came, what we say “Ancient Music”. The "oldest known song" was written in cuneiform, dating to 3400 years ago from Ugarit in Syria. It was a part of the Hurrian songs and deciphered by Anne Draffkorn Kilmer. The oldest surviving example of a complete musical composition, including musical notation, from anywhere in the world, is the Seikilos epitaph.

Music can be defined as a pattern of varying sound frequencies played at a particular tempo and are capable of evoking emotions in living beings. Double pipes, such as those used by the ancient Greeks, and ancient bagpipes, as well as a review of ancient drawings on vases and walls, etc., and ancient writings (such as in Aristotle, *Problems*, Book XIX.12) which described musical techniques of the time, indicate polyphony. One pipe in the aulos pairs (double flutes) likely served as a drone or "keynote," while the other played melodic passages. Instruments, such as the seven holed flute and various types of stringed instruments have been recovered from the Indus valley civilization archaeological sites. In Kongthong, the whistling village of Meghalaya, the residents have communicated with each other using a unique form of whistled identity instead of names. It’s an effective way of communication because whistles have a higher frequency and can travel over long distance rather than human voice.

But this was all in the past. What’s of concern now is how these various genres of music affect the human psyche. You can be listening to Swan Lake by Tchaikovsky and actually imagine that you are viewing a picturesque lake with swans swimming around it. This has been a major area of research in recent times, and something we would like to elucidate on.

Basics

Different people have a various tastes in music. Generally it's seen that people who are into pop don't like metal and regard it as noise.

This is mainly due to the musical exposure that they get from their childhood and how their ears are tuned.

Metal songs have complicated harmony lines and have high amplitude. Priests regard metal as the sound of the devil, this is because of the presence of the tritone in metal songs.

The tritone, an interval spanning three whole tones—such as C to F#—was a forbidden dissonance in medieval ecclesiastical singing.

Conjecturing between Lamarck's theory of Acquired Characters, and differentiating between various forms of music:

Lamarckism (or Lamarckian inheritance) is the hypothesis that an organism can pass on characteristics that it has acquired through use or disuse during its lifetime to its offspring. It is also known as the inheritance of acquired characteristics or soft inheritance. Similarly from our childhood we have been conditioned to regard some music as if something bad is happening, and some music as depressing.

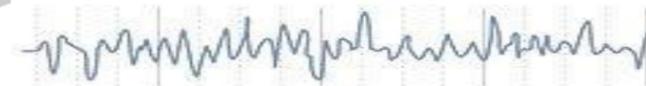
If a song is based on a major scale it will be a happy song and if a song is based on a minor scale it will be melancholic.

Conclusion

Like music, all spoken language has a rhythm to it. Within words, we have rhythms in the form of syllables and stress patterns. Sentences also have rhythm in their stress patterns. Being able to recognize and repeat rhythms is essential for natural communication.

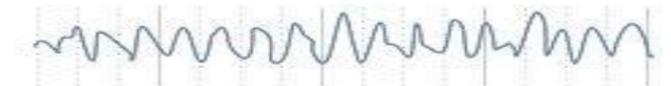
Thus we would like to conclude by saying that throughout the pages of history, music has had a profound effect on the human brain and been highly effective as a source of communication. Further research work is being carried on for advancements in this field.

Four Categories of Brain Wave Patterns



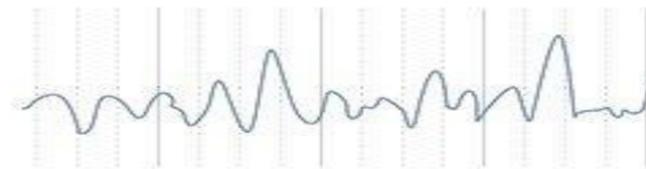
Beta (14-30 Hz)

Concentration, arousal, alertness, cognition
Higher levels associated with anxiety, disease, feelings of spartation, fight or flight



Alpha (8-13.9 Hz)

Relaxation, superlearning, relaxed focus, light trance, increased serotonin production
Pre-sleep, pre-waking drowsiness, mediation, beginning of access to unconscious mind



Theta (4-7.9 Hz)

Dreaming sleep (REM sleep)
Increased production of catecholamines (vital for learning and memory), increased creativity
Integrative, emotional experiences, potential change in behavior, increased retention of learned material
Hypnagogic imagery, trance, deep mediation, access to unconscious mind



Delta (.1-3.9 Hz)

Dreamless sleep
Human growth hormone released
Deep, trance-like, non-physical state, loss of body awareness
Access to unconscious and "collective unconscious" mind, greatest "push" to brain when induced with Holosync®