

Xmas 2002/Manifesto

Christmas is a time when we are especially invited to experience the magic of life. Indeed, to help put us in touch with that magic, tradition has provided us with a rich mix of inspiring rituals to choose from. The practice of these time-honored routines is important because, through them, we invoke the presence of symbologies energetically connected to higher dimensions of being. When we immerse ourselves in these symbolic environments, we can feel them resonating in distant corners of our selves, locations in our personal geographies of which we are normally ignorant, to which we are normally insensitive. As we consciously appreciate the higher-dimensional resonance of these symbols, our understanding, both of the mundane world, and the world of the heart is enhanced; the wisdom and strength of it radiates from above downward through many dimensions of being, like a warm, bright light. The symbols loose us from the spellbinding attractions of the material world by directing our attention to our personal multi-dimensional self, the self who permanently resides in that magical world, the self we visit too seldom. The language of music provides us with a wonderful vocabulary of symbols, whose activated syntax creates a bridge from the physical dimension to higher dimensions.

I am not speaking from faith here. In my 51 years I have still been unable to come up with definitive conclusions, through personal experience, about most of the big religious issues such as immortality of the soul, reincarnation, or extraterrestrials. However music has taught me beyond all doubt that there are qualitatively different modes of being, and quantitatively distinct levels of ego resolution. Furthermore, I have concluded that my own habitual immersion, in the library of archetypal symbols which constitute the language of music, has:

- 1.) made me strong in ways I would not otherwise have been strong,
- 2.) made me receptive to things I might not otherwise have seen, and
- 3.) sharpened my ego resolution by constantly subjecting it to the shaping and molding action of wholesome, high-vibratory forces.

Music not only represents aspects of personal identity, it transmits the consciousness of personal identity. Music is not just a mausoleum for the dead ideas of dead men, it resurrects those ideas in conscious, living,

archetypal forms which are not mere scratches on the sidewalk, but incarnations of living energy—energy capable of creating enlightened experience and dynamic transformation in the personalities of those who drink from the proffered cup. This energy has many names, but regardless of the name it bears from its higher-dimensional origin, when it merges its being with the musician here in the material world, its name becomes "I".

The ability to experience, at will, the consciousness of self in the self of another, is a first step in learning to appreciate the many higher dimensions of your own self; to achieve total identification with the energies in a piece of music is to experience self at a much higher than normal ego resolution. It is through this experience of ourselves at a higher-than-normal vibratory rate, that allows music to offer us this unique opportunity:

- 1.) to be absorbed into the higher consciousness, the symbolic language, of great men (living or dead), and
- 2.) to be absorbed into the corporate consciousness of the other players in your group.

As we all simultaneously identify with the consciousness of the composer, we all automatically identify with each other; we all cease to be our small individual selves, and become one big conscious self. It is a mistake to think that personal consciousness extends only to the boundaries of the physical body; much personal experience has taught me that consciousness can reach outward, amoeba-like, to absorb many people at once. Of course, great gurus can enter meditative states of consciousness in which they can identify with all being—I cannot say that I achieve oneness with the universe when I play music, but I think music offers me a chance to achieve something like it, although admittedly on a smaller scale—I feel that music allows me to become one with the people I'm playing music with, and with the people I'm playing to. (Then again, maybe that's not such a small thing).

Thus, we think that putting on a Christmas concert is a good thing; all that intense effort and concentration was worth it because we have brought a beautiful thing into the world. "Much labor," as the poet says, has enabled us to take some of humankind's most inspired collective symbols, invested with some of its most transforming qualities of higher-dimensional energy, and transmit them back to you; and through you to the rest of the world to do

good where it may, in quantities of manifestation incalculable to the mind,
and limitless to the heart.