



MUSIC

By Wayne Visser

~ Any music can be played, but the best music plays us ~

Think of one of your favourite songs or pieces of music.
What is it about that track or tune that makes it so special?
No doubt it moves you, but why?
Think about the first time you heard it.
Was it a particularly memorable time, or place?
Were you with someone special?

Music gets some of its power from association.
It evokes emotions, which in turn embed the memory of whatever was happening at the time.
Songs become like flags on our personal trail, markers of high points, low points and other significant landmarks in between.
They are an index to our past, bookmarks of places we revisit in our minds, triggers of holographic images on the horizon when we look back.
But association only part of music's power.
What of the music itself?

Music acts like a tuning fork, setting off a chain of sympathetic vibrations.
In other words music speaks in the language of moods.
Either it echoes our existing moods, our inner state, or it is a catalyst for changing our moods.
And when the music matches our mood, we experience a profound sense of resonance, of being in tune with an ethereal power.
The reinforcement of our emotions has an amplification effect.
We feel more deeply, reflect more clearly.

To lose ourselves in a piece of music simply means that we are in complete harmony with it.
At times like these, music is the audible outer manifestation of our inaudible inner voice.
So in reality, we find ourselves in the music.
It only feels like oblivion sometimes because you and the music are one, flowing in the same direction at the same speed with the same destination – the beat of the rain becomes the river, the sway of the river becomes the sea.

Like the river, music not only flows but tells the story of its passage.
We relate to songs because they whisper the stories of our lives.
They speak of love's yearning when our hearts are longing, they trumpet victory when we are triumphant, they sing the blues when we are sorrowful, they agitate for change when our blood is surging with revolution.

Sometimes the story of a piece of music is transparently clear.
More often than not, however, the real story has to be read between the lines. Songs are opaque narratives of a great unfolding mystery.
Each word, each turn of phrase, each tonal inflection, is a clue, one piece of the puzzle, a shape in the jigsaw of meaning.

What sentiment was the composer trying to convey?





What treasure did the lyricist hide behind the words?
What does the singer's interpretation say about their own secrets?

The real enigma of music is what it tells us about ourselves.
Does a particular tune bring you to tears?
What does that say about you?
Is there a song that lifts your spirits?
Why?
What music do your family and friends like?

These are not questions to be rationalized, but musings to be lingered over.
This is not an intellectual exercise, but an intuitive workout, a soul stretching.
Music is the key to our souls.
Therefore, your choice of music, or someone else's, is a peek through the keyhole into the most precious of inner chambers.

This ability of music to unlock the barricaded door to our hearts, to access the holy-of-holies of our souls, is at once euphorically liberating and unnervingly frightening.
It means that giving ourselves over to the art of the Muse – letting the music play us – is a risk, for we don't know what we will discover about ourselves.
But the rewards are profound – insight, inspiration and meaning.
Will you take the risk today?



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