

Assessment – Coming of the Light - Song

What this assessment will cover:

This assessment will test your understanding of the module entitled ‘Coming of the Light - Song’:

QUESTIONS:

- **How do you feel music has influenced your behaviour?**

Music in my life has been a substantial presence since I was very young. My Mum was a piano teacher and would play for hours a day. I shared my room with a piano. A strong memory is getting an electric upright Hammond organ and playing it for many hours. I began singing from a very young age and performed in many school and amateur theatre productions. Music has a deep reach into my being and as such I find myself rarely without music playing in my head. I know I drive faster when accompanied by high BPM music. I am aware that I will cry earlier and with greater force if a movie or TV show features music during a poignant scene. I have danced for longer, drunk faster, said many things I should not have and felt overwhelmed by emotion such that my words have not reflected my truth as a result of being carried away with music. When performing in a band, I have abused my voice trying to keep up with 45 songs a night and stayed far later than I would have like to as a result of enjoying the music. It has influenced my choices to a great extent.

- **What advantage is it to present music that does not imposed on the listener?**

This question assumes that an emotion free recording is a benefit to the listener. If it is possible to record music not from a need for recognition, not as an outlet for emotional excess and not out of a reaction to some real or imagined slight from others or the world, then could it be of benefit or at least not to the detriment of the listener? Like anything that imposes an altered state on humans, music may be considered to impose a consciousness or energy that is not true for the individual. Alcohol and other drugs are taken to alter the state of the user. Humans have engaged in this for thousands of years. Yet why? When we are young, we are able to happily play using our imaginations for hours on end and have to be coaxed back in to the house to eat and drink. What is it about us as adults that our natural state is “not good enough” and needs to be altered? The advantage of not being imposed on by a substance or outside influence then is that we are left in the state we are naturally. For some, or perhaps most, this is undesirable, boring or intolerable. If this is the case, is the answer to alter our state, or to ask a searching question of ourselves – Why do I not want to experience just being me?

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- **How do you feel when you listen to the song?**

Feedback indicates that some are grateful that the music is not overly imposing, whilst others feel that the song is empty and “goes nowhere”. Is this a metaphor for life? What is the purpose of music? We are so used to music that imposes on us now that the lack of same sends an alarm bell to the brain. The theory of ‘brain plasticity’ is highly relevant when it comes to music. There are many studies that indicate people become quickly de-sensitised to high BPM music and need faster, louder and more aggressive music to achieve the same effect after a short time. Other studies show young people are now using music so they don’t have to think about their problems. In this way and under this energetic intent, this piece would not be viewed favourably. If however, there was no reason to “check out” and if the listener did not require the music or need it to deliver an altered state, they may enjoy just feeling the loveliness of the guitar and the simplicity of the melody. Perhaps.

- **What do you feel the song is about?**

For me, the song speaks of a disenchantment and weariness with the World. It suggests the writer is highly sensitive to the fact that he is not living as himself, but living the demands, ideals, beliefs and expectations of others. This he knows to be false, however he is afraid of living his truth in the face of the onslaught.

There is also a change in the energy of how we are living, and the coming of the light indicates that there will be and that things are already changing. There is also a sense that it is the responsibility of us all to act on our own personal feelings, rather than waiting for other to do so first.

- **Why is it do you think that our society uses music as a background to so many of our interactions?**

We are now in an age where music is portable enough to have with us wherever we are. This was not the case some years ago. Anecdotal evidence points to a massive increase in the pervasive influence of music on the young. I personally have not seen a young person without a smart phone or iPod for some years. Whether they are waiting for a bus, walking to school or driving in the car, there seems to be earphone permafised to their heads. I believe music in this case is being used as a distraction for a mind that cannot be without stimulation of some sort. Computer games used to feature sound effects, but are all now accompanied by music. Music can now be downloaded by anyone for free, and we have greater access to variation than ever before. The offerings are vast and no longer limited to what is presented at the record shops and on radio, as it was when I was growing up.