

Post-task: From sound comes music

You take your hands up to the keyboard, or drums, you bring your lips to your instrument, or you open your mouth to sing. Stop for a second and think, how are you translating that creative thing within you onto your instrument?

That is both the mystery and the magic of music. Music is said to come from the muse. The muse is a mystical concept of creativity. As musicians, we create the space for the muse to express itself, by knowing our instruments, knowing our techniques, and practicing our musical ideas and feeling until the process becomes engrained in our sub-conscious. When we play like this, the muse expresses itself through us organically. It is an art form – and it comes from deep within.

This expression comes from a place of stillness and takes us back to that stillness. Sound is a powerful form of release. Don't judge yourself. And also don't judge others. Just, enjoy the process of discovery.

Systems of 7

The Solfeggio scale is known in the West through the tones “Do; Re; Mi; Fa; So; La; Ti.” The Chinese sing it “Hei; Heng; Hong; Ah; Shi; Yi; Wong.” This scale of seven unique tones, also known as the diatonic scale, is a mirror of the 7 primary colours and chakras.

If you think of it all as different vibrations at different frequencies, you can visualise this musical system of 7 with the colours of the rainbow and the chakras of the body. Let us sing or play through the system of 7:

1. The first sound, the “Do” or “Hei” is at the deepest bass-iest frequency sung in a deep guttural “UH” sound. It resonates with the base of the spine, between the genitals and the anus, where the first chakra resides. The colour visualisation to accompany this sound is a deep beautiful red, the first colour of the rainbow.
2. The next sound is “Re,” or “Heng” sung with an “OOO” sound. The colour that accompanies this sound is orange and it resonates with the second chakra, the area of your lower tummy .
3. The third chakra is the area of the solar plexus, around the belly button. It is the seat of our personal power and sometimes called the abdominal brain as there are so many amazing organs in that region. The sound that resonates with the solar plexus is the “Mi” or “Hong,” sung in a slightly higher pitch, “OH.” The colour is the third colour of the rainbow, a beautiful bright yellow.
4. The midrange of our body chakra's is the area of our physical heart. The colour that resonates with the heart is a beautiful healing green colour. The sound tone is a, “Fa” or “Ah”, sung in an “AH” sound in the midrange of our instrument.
5. The fifth chakra is the throat chakra and a very important place for expressing our natural sound. The colour that resonates with this chakra is the fifth colour of the rainbow, a beautiful bright sky blue. The tone sounded is a “So” or “Shi” sung in an “AI” sound, played in a slightly higher pitch than the midrange.
6. The next chakra centre is the brow, the third eye just between the two eye brows. The colour that resonates with this wonderful organ is a purple colour. The tone to be sounded is the “La” or “Yi” sound sung in an a nice round “AY” sound, slightly higher in tone.
7. The final chakra in the system of 7 is the crown of the head, the tip of the head. The resonant colour is a beautiful white light, visualised coming though the crown and filtering into the entire body – filling it with light. The final tone of the solfeggio scale - “Te,” is sung or played in an “EEE” sound at the highest frequency of the seven tones.

Now engage with the following post-task exercises:

1. The process of sound bathing is taking five minutes every day to listen to nourishing sounds - a calming music or nature sounds - the wind through the leaves, the birds in the trees, some running water, ocean waves, rainfall, thunder. Pay special attention and open your awareness to the nourishing sounds around you. You may even just want to retreat into a little bit of silence. Now, take a sound bath and make a written note of what you did, what it did for you and whether you intend on doing this on a daily basis?
2. On the level of the physical body, sound affects us. Fast music with a strong beat makes us alert and energised and fills us with a beta brainwave activity. It can help with exercising, for instance, when we need to be alert and energised, whilst chanting is a slow form of music that takes us to the meditative state. Can you think of the different types of music you like to listen to or perform during the day and describe what kind of effect they are having on your brain?
3. Imagine your holistic being – body, mind and soul as a great symphony orchestra . When all the aspects of us are in tune and resonating well, we experience balance and harmony. What techniques have you learnt from Steve to help keep your being in tune?
4. When Steve plays the ancient Tibetan bowl instrument, it does not produce a single tone, but a wawawaw sound - which is a combination of different frequencies created by the instrument at the same time. This is called a binaural beat frequency. These binaural beats entrain the brain waves into theta state. Are you able to describe what effect these binaural beats have on you?