

Almond Blossom Day

belongs to a type of musical work that lends itself to a radically different way of looking at music, known as INDIRECT listening. The volume control stays on moderate to LOW and the sound is left to unfold while no particular attention is paid to it. A subtle change in the atmosphere of the environment – of work or relaxation – thus becomes possible.

This way of enjoying MUSIC is diametrically opposed to the recent general trend of using popular music as a means of ego-assertion through an abundance of technological sophistication – often to a point of acoustic warfare – contemplative music relies entirely on the STATE of feeling on the side of the musician during production and is thus meant to induce a similar state in the listener.

The idea that a minimalist soundscape with few intimate highlights could be emotionally more rewarding than one with a technically sophisticated and more complex structure is, as yet, not very popular. However, the underlying PRINCIPLE is simple: music with a complex structure, consumed at high volume, will automatically aim at the rational, the outer mind, while it is actually supposed to reach the CENTRE. If the volume, however, stays low, the corresponding perceptory agents in the PSYCHE remain open, while a high volume listening experience immediately does the opposite: it creates an automatic defensive reaction in the nervous system.

If SOUND is allowed to create its own momentum in an unhindered manner, unobstructed by a “composed” piece of music, there is a likelihood of it unfolding into a SUBTLE kind of euphoria with a lasting effect. This can be compared with the working of homoeopathic medicine which addresses the human metabolism with a specific subtle code that may result in a dramatic change in a person’s wellbeing.

Any musical work of this kind is perceived and designed to break down the existing pattern of nervous restlessness in the listener while creating SPACE and enhancing imagination. It refuses to submit to and confirm restless vibration patterns and to supply any consumer product of entertainment that one may reach out for in the occurring situation.

There is, therefore, an element of SACRIFICE in this type of listening experience. However, since many consumers of music are becoming weary of the egoassertive aspects in music, they are prepared to take on this listening experience as a refreshing exercise which may be compared to REMOVING furniture, rather than adding new items of furniture to a room in the pursuit of comfort. The reward lies in tapping inherent areas of emotional refinement; the effect is one of RELEASE and general GRATITUDE.

The idea that, in this new age, any person may express themselves musically by means of the electronic media, is to be welcomed. The divide between the general audience and a genuine ARTIST lies not in virtuosity and the amount of sophisticated machinery that artists have at their disposal, but in their access to more intuitively interesting and expanding areas of thinking and more exquisite states of personal EMOTION.

And since unstructured sound may well replace the "song-concept" of composed music within the next hundred years or so, one would be well advised to become acquainted with the far reaching effect sound has on ones wellbeing, once the "right buttons" have been pressed, in terms of electronics and in terms of intuition ...

Al Gromer Khan Almond Blossom Day 1999