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MUSIC: A MEDIUM OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN MAN AND SPIRIT?

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Abstract

The world is inherently musical, and music has an inherent propensity to God, man and animals, plants and other spiritual beings. Humans of all ages, sexes, religion and nationalities have their music, and music is a language with universal component. In respect of this topic, the solution to every problem begins by identifying the problem. Music has the power to bring solution to man's needs beginning with man to man contact, the man to God (the highest spirit being), and man to other spirit beings. If a man is musically talented and disciplined, his talent can take him very far in life. Music melts hearts and grants a man access into the spirit world. The problem is that many people are yet to understand what the power of music can do for man physically how much more spiritually – (a) in communication with man (b) in communication with man and God (c) to pave the way for man in his quest to gain divine attention. This research is poised to bring to the foreground the power and influence behind transcendent communication as it is made possible through the power of music. Right from creation, we have always cherish the belief that God created man in his own image and likeness.

Key Words: Angels; Communication; Man; Music; Spirit.

INTRODUCTION

Music is usually simply regarded as sound or a group of sound that is organized professionally or sometimes intuitively by man. It could be vocal or instrumental depending on the mood, place event or time that inspires the music.

The Encyclopedia Britanica – last edition of June 11th 2019 defines music as an art combining vocal or instructional sounds for beauty of form or emotional expression usually according to cultural standards of reading, melody and in most western music, harmony.

The New International Websters' Comprehensive Dictionary of the English language (Encyclopedia Edition) defines music as the science

and art of the rhythmic combination of tones, vocal or instrumental embracing melody and harmony.

Music is a composition or mass of compositions, conceived or executed according to musical rule or spirit. Music is a great source of joy which affects our feelings so easily. It can be used in many ways to shape the attitudes, moods and demeanours of an audience (seen or unseen). Music is one of the best, if not the best gift given to humanity by divinity. It is rapidly becoming the common tongue of the modern world. People today spend more money, time and energy on music than books, movies and sports. The most popular cultural icons of the present day class of celebrities are not statesmen, politicians or even church leaders but musicians. Music is a child of divine love whose grace, beauty and mysterious healing powers are intimately connected to heavenly order and the memory of our origin and destiny. For many people, music is the bridge between life and death. Death and near death experiences have frequently been accompanied by stories of a mysterious tunnel of light and sound – musical sound where a type of celestial illumination or sacred magnetism guides the spirit on its journey. Music remains an indispensable and integral part of man's life and activities. It is widely said that music accompanies man from the womb to the tomb. Archeological evidence suggests that primitive man made music using bones, drums and flutes long before the last Ice Age. Awake magazine (August 2011 Edition) states:

Music has a very long history. For example, Archeological evidence indicates that centuries before our common Era, African tribes played drums, horns, and bells.

The word communication is derived from the latin word "*communis*", meaning "to share". It is the exchange and flow of information and idea from one person to another. It involves a sender, who transmits an idea, information or feeling to a receiver. According to Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia, in Ogenyi (2006).

Communication is the process of sharing ideas, information and messages, with others in particular time and place. Communication includes writing and talking ----visual communication ----, and electronic

communication (telephone calls, electronic mails, cable television or satellite broadcasts).

Okpoko (2009) observes that communication is certainly crucial to man's effort to live a greater and quality life because it affects his productivity, personal experience, social needs and aspirations. It is therefore not an over statement to say that communication is inevitable in the social existence of man.

Beyond the Physical World

Music makes it possible for man's communication to transcend beyond the physical environment. There are certain needs, yearnings and aspirations of man that cannot be met or satisfied in the physical environment. Such needs can only be met by the intervention of spiritual entities – divinity – that is God, the entire heavenly host or from the gods. Ordinarily, such intervention or attention from the spirit world does not come to man. Music has a way of provoking it and making it possible for the spirit beings to give attention to man's needs. Music has an irresistible power of influence on every creature including humans, spirits, animals, trees, oceans, seas and even a foetus in the womb. Music is the most irresistible and powerful means of man's communion and communication both in the physical and spiritual firmament.

Historically, God is the originator and creator of music. First and foremost, God created everything both in heaven, on earth and even beneath the earth. God performed his creation by spoken words, which is sound, and sound when properly organized or arranged becomes music. It is a known fact that most musicologists and music historians began their study of music around the third century A.D., at the earliest, overlooking four millennia of music history and ignoring the origin of music completely. Some bible professed scholars even ascribe the origin of music to Jubal, a descendant of Cain (Genesis 4: 21). Those who proclaim to follow Christ should indeed subscribe and live by "this world" and teachings of the bible since "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" – (Mathew 4:4) and Timothy 3:16) respectively. The bible indicates that the earliest man knew and practiced music. This implies that music existed long before man. When God was talking to Job in Job 38:4:7, he asked a question that gives an insight into the history before the creation of the earth. "Where was thou when I laid

the foundations of the earth – when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” from this, it is understood that God created the angels before the earth and, the angels shouted and sang for joy regularly. In the book of Ezekiel 1:24, Ezekiel heard the “noise” of the great Cherobin. The book of revelations records the lyrics of the angels shouting and singing around God’s heavenly throne. Music took on a more institutionalized form in heaven when God created the angels with initiate musical ability in them. The chief of this angelic musical creation was the Archangel, Lucifer, the great cherub. Lucifer, was endowed with extraordinary musical talent. His virtuosity was beyond human capability. Lucifer was the music director of the angelic choral ensemble which sang continuously round the throne of God, a position he held with great honour until he rebelled against God and was cast down from heaven (Isaiah 14: 12-16). Scientific discovery shows that heavenly music bellowed out by the sun’s atmosphere and that was the sun’s coronary magnetic sound waves similar to those of musical instruments. (Space com, April 18, 2007). The Bible indicates that God created sound waves to emanate from all creation in an organized fashion to make certain music perceptible at least to Him. God’s work of creation is seen by many music theorists and analysts as a musical composition. Musicologists describe it as a perfect musical master piece. Perhaps even the smallest particles are vibrating and resounding in lovely music that God can hear and enjoy. A careful study of the bible, the book of psalms in particular reveals that music was a vital and an integral part of proper worship to God. Angels have been worshipping God before the creation of man and the NINE choirs of angels have been in existence right from the creation of man.

The NINE choirs of angels include:

1. **Seraphims:** They are love angels of the purest love. They reflect Gods goodness and absolute holiness (even in their songs and choruses).
2. **Cherobims:** They are the protectors of the inner chambers of divinity, their music is meant to protect the inner chambers of divinity.
3. **Thrones:** They are angels of pure humility – (They sing songs that reflect humility to the most high). The lower choirs of angels needs the Thrones to access God, for whoever that comes to seek the face of God must be humble in his heart and entire being.

4. **Dominion:** They are angels of leadership; their music reflects leadership examples.
5. **Powers:** These are warrior- Angels against evil; they defend the cosmos and humanity through their music.
6. **Virtues:** They are known as the spirit of motion and they control the elements, they govern all nature. Their songs reflect governance upon nature.
7. **Principalities:** They are administrative angels. They sing and guard over nations, towns, cities, villages and provinces.
8. **Archangels:** These are emissaries of the principalities. They have the most special and protective love, for all people on earth. Their music reveal God’s special love-protective love for mankind – as can be seen in most books of Psalms.
9. **Angels:** They have the capacity to access any and all other angels, at any time. They are the most caring and readily available angels to assist any one who asks for help. They intercede for humans before God, singing sonorous tunes to the most high to appease him to have mercy on humans (Isaiah 6:2, 6 Psalm 80:1, Colossians 1:16 and [http://www.wangelfire.com/h13/heaven angels](http://www.wangelfire.com/h13/heaven%20angels)). It therefore means that music has its origin and beginning from God.

Futher Practical Relationship between Man and the Spirit World

Majority of the human world are yet to understand what the powers of music can do for man physically as well as spiritually. Music affects and moves human and spirits differently. It is believed that the music which human beings make has a way of attracting supernatural attention, thereby making it possible for man to enjoy communication with spiritual entities living beyond the physical realm.

This enables this research to concentrate on the following aspects of music and how man can use them in communication:

- (1) Religious Music (Worship Music)
- (2) Cultural/Traditional Music
- (3) Contemporary Music
- (4) The role of music in man-spirit relationship
- (5) Music in conflict Resolution

Religious Music (Worship Music)

Religious music, which is an aspect of sacred music is the type of music usually composed and performed during religious ceremonies, celebrations and rituals. It has a way of connecting a people with their God or gods in worship. This can also be referred to as Worship Music. It creates an atmosphere of unity, love and oneness among worshippers (David Haward (2013) observes that:

Listening to religious music is often an important part of religious life. People who attend worship services more often will have stronger emotional reactions to religious music. Individuals who are more emotionally involved in religious music will be more likely to feel a close sense of connectedness with other people and whosoever feels more closely connected with others will be more hopeful about the future; and individuals who feel more hopeful will be more likely to rotate their heart favourably overtime.

Music is usually an integral part of every religious worship either in churches or in some other places of worship. In Christian worship for instance, music usually features from the beginning, where people express their personal or communal belief regarding Christian life and faith in God. Praises, worship, penitence and lamentation are common themes of religious music. In all these, worshippers express their feelings to God. Some feelings and thoughts which they do not easily communicate to God in words are communicated through music and songs without difficulty, and in the end, there is usually an atmosphere/feeling of joy, quietude and absolute peace as a sign that God has heard (or hearkened to) their praises, forgiven their short-coming and granted their requests. It could be an individual or collective experience. Some church adherents interviewed in Enugu metropolis revealed that music remains indispensable during their worship hours within their liturgy, particularly in the liturgy of the Catholic Holy Mass. The amount of prayers will equal the praises and worship session because using the words of St Augustine "he who sings well prays twice", as quoted by Rev. Fr. Peter Oforji (2018) of St Mary's Parish Uwani Enugu, "Music is the fastest way of communicating with the holies of heaven which is presided over by God. Every church is departmentalized and the church whose music department is lacking in quality praise and worship will

definitely deny her entire congregation access into the uppermost chamber he added. Pastor Steven of Glory Assembly, Enugu has this to say,

I cannot imagine a church in Enugu without music. How do you run such a church? Apart from attracting people to the church, its communicative power supersedes that of prayer because it moves God easily. In many churches we do not joke with music. Some people are in this church today because of the good music we play: common prayers move God so much as praises (music) does. Music moves God so much that music has the key to unlock every door of heaven and usher in the heavenly lost in honour and glory when the people gather to worship Pastor Steven (2018).

In the same vain, traditional worshippers also testify that their worship begins with some "active and conscious enchantment which is usually musical without which they would not make any request or communicate with their gods.

The Role of Music in Man – Spirit Relationship

The Bible in the First Book of Samuel, chapter Sixteen contains an account of David's relationship with Saul, the King of Israel in his time. Having fallen out of favour with God as a result of disobedience, King Saul was tormented by an evil spirit from God. He lost every sense of human until David, a talented and skillful musician was invited to rescue him. As David played the harp, the evil spirit departed from Saul and he recovered. The musical sound was simply interceding to heaven on behalf of Saul and that was communication between man and God which brought about the King's healing. A careful study of the bible, the Book of Psalms in particular, reveals the level of communication man enjoys with God. The psalmist, David, for instance, was full of praises to God in his Psalms. In times of trouble or changes, he called upon God by singing or chanting a popular Psalm, expressing confidence in his God. In Psalm 23, David simply testified of his confidence in God when he declared. "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want ..." During a missionary journey in Philippi, a colony, and Chief city of Macedonia, Paul and Silas were imprisoned. There in the prison, the Bible in the Acts of the Apostles, Chapter Sixteen. "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God and the

prisoners heard them. And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were open and every one's hands were loosed". The missionary duo believed in the philosophy which says. "When prayers fail, turn to praises". They also understood that, he who sings well prays twice. They simply communicated their difficult situations to God through music, knowing that it was, and still remains the fastest way of petitioning to God and receiving answers from him. The walls of Jericho were recorded as the strongest walls in the bible times, but as the children of Israel communicated to God through praises, the same walls collapsed and fell down flat.

In ancient Greek Mythology, the story of Orpheus and Uridice (www.grecka.com and wwmythwebcom) shows that it is possible for a mortal man to visit the land of the dead (the spirit world), have his request granted by the spirit, and return to the land of the living harmless. Devastated by the sudden death of his new wife, Orpheus, son of the great Olympian God, Apollo and a talented musician, made up his mind to visit the land of the dead to seek the soul of his dead wife retrieved back to the land of the living. He said to himself, "with my song, I will charm Demeter's daughter, I will charm the lord of the Dead, moving their hearts with my melody. I will bear her away from Hades". He took the fearsome journey to the underworld. There he struck his lyre and at the sound, all that vast multitude (in the land of the dead) were charmed by stillness and their hearts melted including that of Hades, the king of the dead. As the overseer of the underworld, Hades whose heart was as hard as steel could not resist the melodious tunes coming from Orpheus and he came out, beseeching Orpheus to make his request.

Orpheus was glad and then began:

O gods who rule the dark and silent world, to you, all born of woman needs must come. All lovely things at last go down to you. You are the debtor who is always paid. A little while, use tarry up on earth. Then we are yours forever. But I seek one who came to you too soon. The bud was plucked before the flower bloomed. I tried to bear my loss. I could not bear it. Love was too strong a god, O king, you know, if that old tale men tell is true, how once the flowers saw the rape of Proserpine, the

weave again for sweet Euridice – life's pattern that was taken from the loom too quickly. See, I ask a little thing, only that you will lend her to me. She shall be yours you will lend her to me. She shall be yours when her years' span is full.

This is not the whole story, though it ended in suspense, but the significance is that Orpheus succeeded becoming the "only human" to penetrate Hades' heart, and had his request granted. All who made similar moves to the land of the dead before Orpheus failed because they did not have the key – music – to unlock the stony heart of Hades, the king and overseer of the spirit world.

In Nigeria in Igbo land particularly, some worshippers pray to God or gods, using *Oja* (a wooden flute). *Oja* is a surrogate that follows the tonal inflection of Igbo language. It is the instrument that speaks or talks the language which the spirits of the land also use.

Onyekwelu (2011) states that: "the communicative tendency of *Oja* extends beyond the physical world to the spiritual realms. That is why the elders and chief priests use it to invoke the ancestors and deities for their activities. Nwankwo Agualusi, the chief priest of *Ojita* deity in Nimo town, uses *Oja* on a daily basis to pray at the early hour of the morning. Agbalokwu Onuora, a renowned *Oja* player also from Nimo, reacting to his neighbour's protest that he was disturbing their early morning prayers with his flute was quoted in Onyekwelu (2011) as responding thus:

"The sound of my flute gets to God before your prayers. Why not wait until I finish" The language of *Oja* is well understood by the spirits. "By the spiritual power of *Oja*, the spirit manifest or masquerade could draw impulsive powers from the universe to inspire him to jump over a high wall or climb a tree. The *Oja* blower as a professional applies proper melodic phrases to control the masquerade" Onyekwelu (2011).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The origin and starting point of music is certainly traced to God, the maker and creator of all things. It is far older than man and language. Long before life arose from the planet earth, nature made provision for the bases on which music took place. The murmur of running waters, whistle of the wind, hisses of the flame, rumbling of the earth and the

thunder of the sky, constituted the rudiments of sound from which speech, no less than music developed.

Among all arts and science, music stands as the oldest as well as the most universal in character, and sensual in its appeal. Musical appeal is often more intellectual and abstract, unlike in other aspects of arts.

Communication and civilization are to society what the nervous system is to man. An oratorical speech by an eloquent speaker, no doubt, creates an indelible specter on the mind of man. However, music, the most primitive savage as well as the most civilized, makes man – young and old, and all other creatures – beasts, reptiles, birds, whales and dolphins, trees and plants respond. Music does not depend on any material medium for expression; it is the most ethereal of all arts.

Judging by its numerous qualities from prehistoric antiquity till date, universality of appeal, intellectual, moral, aesthetics, spiritual influence, educative, social and unifying virtues and all conquering powers, ethereal and ideal features, music can be regarded as a phenomenon whose glory and uniqueness remains unsurpassed forever.

In conclusion, music is the only communicative medium which succeeds where language or spoken words fail. It is commonly said that “water has no enemy”. Why? Because it must be used for one reason or the other – bathing, drinking, washing, among other things. Also individuals have their choices of music. While some prefer gospel, pop, hymns or cool music, others prefer hip pop, blues, jazz, high life, Afro beat. Every individual or group is known by one particular style and/or choice of music or the other.

In this research, mention has been made of how the power of music moved a human being to go to the spirit world in the dead of night to achieve his aim. The power and charisma of music made it easy for Orpheus to succeed and his request granted. The power of music made it easy for David to rescue King Saul who underwent series of torments for disobeying God.

Today people have taken it upon themselves to pray with sincerity and concentration to achieve what they want from God. There is no genuine prayer which God does not answer if one really speak to God in the proper way. Music happens to be one of the ways if not the most important or powerful way.

The inspiration that came to George Frederick Handel to utilize the body and life of Christ as a theoretical framework to produce the *Oratorio-Messiah* is highly a spiritual relationship between man and spirit with music as the medium. The impact of the *Oratorio* on humanity since it was composed and produced has proved so. Having discussed in detail the nine chorus of angels that performs non stop in heaven, one is free to ask this question as Obinna Okonkwo – the organist of St Mary’s Church Uwani Enugu put it during a choral seminar on 15/8/2018. “Is it not music that really made God what he is”? This is a highly meditative question to answer. That is why the bible tells us that one who sings prays double. Such a person relates closely with the supernatural. The *Marvelous work*, a master piece by Joseph Haydn where he used God’s work of creation as another theoretical framework is another exemplary piece of composition. The story behind the *Oratorio – Creation* which penetrated Joseph Haydn spiritually provided the framework on which another great work “*The Heavens are Telling*” was composed. “*Jesu Joy of Mans Desiring*” by Sebastian Bach is another exemplary composition that went through the same process.

This work is therefore a strong recommendation for man to maintain a strong relationship with the supernatural using music as a medium. That is the best if not the only way man can achieve all he requires in the spiritual and physical hemispheres. It is therefore a well known fact that the great music composers in history penetrated the spiritual hemisphere in one way or the other before they could come up with powerful compositions we hear and cherish today.

There is nothing music cannot achieve for man. Music is not just a means used to the end of communicating something, it is a medium in which a different or extraordinary quality of communication occurs, achieving results which transcends the usual, physical laws and activities of man. This is one of the reasons musicians gain access into the King’s chamber, and it is commonly said that “musicians dine with kings” which include those in the spiritual world.

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