

Pathways of the Mind

Exploring Sympathetic Resonance - second series

"having gone there in my mind,
I saw the celestial spirits"

RgVeda, 3.35

"Space is the companion of awareness ...
its generative force."

Machik Lapdron

Much of my work, perhaps most, is informed by Buddhism. I state the case this way simply because I'm subject to other influences, other inspirations; feelings and thoughts that derive from other sources. In considering Buddhist pursuit however, there are I believe, as many paths to take as people to take them. And being situated as I am, well short of an enlightened state, the experiences I have as a person living in this world of ours, or, most of these experiences anyway, register, to a lesser or greater degree, as a result of consciousness.

But most of us from time to time experience a happening, one in which in some form or another we participate; one that makes us aware that there are modes of being that don't just register as normal, conscious experiences. We sometimes find ourselves thinking or saying, for example, "How did that happen?" or "Did I do that?", or "Where did the time go?", etc. Sometimes we wake up from a dream, one that seems to have been more real than reality itself, and it takes us a minute or two to get a handle on our waking reality. And sometimes things just seem to "fall into place", as the saying goes, without our intervention or predetermination.

I don't presume to know why these happenings are as they are. There are many questions to ask and indeed, Buddhist literature is brimming with them. The same literature often proposes answers, or solutions, or methods; ways to try, ways to explore, techniques to master, and so on. No doubt these often serve in beneficial ways. But I, for one, am in no position to make judgement about any of this. One thing is fairly clear however, the Buddha, Shakyamuni, after six years of absolutely devoted effort, found the way that worked for him. And no matter how I find myself looking at and considering all this as the sentient being I am, I keep seeing mountains of, what as key concepts might be simply referred to as *Truth, Faith, and Trust*.

This *Pathways of the Mind* project seeks, via the medium of improvisation, to explore ways of communicating that lay open a space in which we might find ourselves being in a state of *sympathetic resonance*, and this, through, for example, the spirit of *Trust*. I'm not so bold as to suggest that the spirit of *Trust* explored in this way might lead us to enlightenment. However, given that musical language as it is rendered in the *Pathways* project is, for the most part, open to interpretation, *sympathetic resonance* enabled through *Truth, Faith, and Trust* might at least give us something to think about. This is certainly true for myself.

When communication happens that doesn't depend on common linguistic formula, I am lead to reflect upon and consider the constituents and possibilities that were, or might have been, at play; elements open to human experience that can't be simply labelled by common "knowledge". In this regard we are left on our own, with our own interpretation; to acknowledge or ignore exchange; possibly to engage or otherwise on the premises of *Truth, Faith and Trust*; to open a door on the unknown and welcome what it has to offer. It may be little, it may be much. There are no guarantees, no ways that justify predetermination, and no predictable results.

Resonance 4: I had the great fortune of first meeting Laurie Bennett and the late Keith Kersey during the 1960's. Other than both these men being percussionists they also have in common a gentle, caring nature. Where most serious musicians are beginning to find their way by their late teens or early twenties, I was still floundering on my instrument like a young child hardly able to speak. The only thing on my side was enthusiasm.

Laurie, himself a very fine musician, took me under his wing and, in what seems to me to have been a fairly short span of time, Laurie had me making friends with the drums in a way that, to this day, continues, to wit, an instrument with which one creates music. My time with Laurie was not just musically rewarding but also a memorable, personal pleasure. Laurie showed me true kindness.

During the '60's Keith was performing the difficult task as head person for the Musician's Union of Australia. After retirement Keith actively resumed his love for playing percussion and it was during this period that I had occasion to work alongside of him. And a pleasure that was too. Our many conversations lead, as if inevitably, to his giving me several old, but nonetheless, most magnificent instruments. Keith extended this wonderful gift with the words: "Phil, I've no doubt you'll make music on these." That was over twenty-five years ago and it is these instruments that form part of the sound-world from which *Resonance 4* emerges. Indeed, in certain respects the *Resonance 4* sound-world is built around them. Keith showed me true generosity.

Where words might fail to thank these two kind and gentle men, I hope the music, at least in part anyway, communicates my sincere and deeply felt gratitude.

Without the help, cooperation, and creative input of many people this project would not be possible. Sincere gratitude and heart-felt thanks are extended to: All the staff members at Koryu Hall, Miki HATTORI, Miki KIDO, Takashi KANEMASA, Makoto NAKATA, Norihiro MORI, Hamish STUART, John SHAND, and all those who were in attendance and whose energy and focus contributed to the music being as it is.

This CD reproduces a solo percussion concert I presented with a live audience on August 31, 2006 in Ishikawa Kenritsu Ongakudo, Koryu Hall, Kanazawa, Japan. Although entirely improvised, prior to the performance I designed three sound-worlds to be explored through spontaneous music-making. All the instruments are acoustic and some of these I made. No sound reinforcement (amplification) was used.

In the CD production minimal EQ (equalization) and reverb have been added. Editing consisted in cutting the first piece and the encore from the program as presented live and reducing the time between program items. Applause has been cut from between the first and second movements of *Resonance 3*. Consistent with the *Pathways* project, this *second series* presentation identifies each program item as *Resonance 1 ~ 5*.

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