

## NOTE FROM KATHY:

I can't find this article on the internet now. The link no longer exists. It is approx.. 15 years old but there is still a lot of great information here! I am sharing this without permission but for information only. If the authors or Don Campbell wish me to remove this, I will do so upon request.

Thank you so much for the fascinating insights.

From: [http://www.nexuspub.com/articles/2007/interview\\_don\\_campbell\\_julaug2007.htm](http://www.nexuspub.com/articles/2007/interview_don_campbell_julaug2007.htm)

July/August 2007

# THE EXTRAORDINARY POWER OF MUSIC

**An interview with Don Campbell**

*By Ravi Dykema*

AT SOME POINT IN OUR LIVES, each of us has been touched by the extraordinary power of music—be it a moving symphony or a snippet of a song that recalls a long-ago memory with striking poignancy. What is this power? How exactly is it that music touches us so deeply? Don Campbell—best-selling author of *The Mozart Effect* (Harper Paperbacks, 2001) and an internationally recognized authority on the transformative power of music—has made it his life's work to answer these questions.

In Campbell's view, music provides a bridge to a more creative, intelligent, healthy and joy-filled life. His self-described mission is to help return music to its place in the modern world as a resource for growth, development, health, and celebration.

Campbell's eclectic background ranges from a childhood steeped in the musical heritage of the Methodist church to training at the esteemed American Conservatory in Fontainebleau, France. He was also heavily influenced by the work of French researcher Dr. Alfred Tomatis on the intimate connection between the ear and overall mental and physical health, and the critical distinction between hearing and listening.

Campbell has written more than 18 books, including *The Mozart Effect*, *The Mozart Effect for Children* (Harper Paperbacks, 2002) and *The Harmony of Health* (Hay House, 2006). His latest book, *Creating Inner Harmony* (Hay House, 2007), was released in June. Campbell is also a respected lecturer and consultant to organizations ranging from corporations to parenting groups to symphony orchestras on how music can affect learning, healing, and other aspects of our lives. Here, he talks to Nexus publisher Ravi Dykema about the healing and transformative power of music, and how we can use it to enrich our lives.



**Don Campbell will be speaking at the Nexus Holistic Expo in Denver November 17 and 18. See end of interview for more information.**

**RD: How did you get started in your work?**

DC: I began my life as a classical musician. I was from Texas, but I spent my high school years in Paris, France, and studied with one of the foremost musicians in the world, Nadia Boulanger. I continued my studies in education and conducting in Oregon, working on my doctorate in music in Cincinnati and North Texas. Then I had a magical shift of mind in 1969. I was a minister of music at a Methodist church in Cincinnati, and I was invited on a mission project. Within a year, I was in Haiti for a six-month period. I became an organist and choral director at the Episcopal cathedral in Port-au-Prince. I also became totally infatuated with voodoo drumming, so the flavor of my music began to deepen in those years. I had already done my share of traveling and studying music in different countries. While I was in graduate school, I was doing papers on South Indian music and Vedic hymnody, as it related to Lutheran and Western hymns.

I was a child of the '60s and early '70s, and I set out to the East and lived in Tokyo for seven years, where I was director of a humanities and choral music program at St. Mary's International School. I was a critic for one of the English newspapers in Tokyo, and I had the opportunity to hear the differences between music styles in the East and West, not just as a curiosity, but as a way of life. I became addicted to gagaku—Japanese sacred court music. When I returned to the United States after traveling around the world for nine months, spending a lot of time in Israel and Russia, I looked at what I could offer in the field of music. What was it that called me into music in a dynamic and inward context? I had studied some Zen Buddhism while I was living in Japan. I was still conducting church choirs. By 1982, after serving as director of choral music for a very large choral organization in the United States, I made a commitment that I would work with health, music, consciousness and transformation. I wrote a book, *Introduction to the Musical Brain*, in 1982, which is still selling.

I also had the fortune of meeting Dr. Jean Houston, and for 10 years, I played for her, as we traveled throughout the world doing workshops, seminars and courses in human capacities. When I came to Boulder in 1988, I started the Institute for Music Health and Education, and for nine years, we developed courses in the psychology of listening, the healing aspects of the voice and composing music for the body. We also did year-long sound schools on how music affects consciousness. Being able to look at the public-at-large has always been very interesting for me, because I am not teaching music therapy. I teach the effects of music on the mind, the body and the spirit. I also look at how music affects the society in which we live—the songs we sing, the popular music we create—how does that find expression in our culture? How can we use music not only for reducing stress, but also to give us a bridge to our transformation, whether that be spiritual or intellectual? When I was doing research on the brain itself, I realized that what goes in our ears comes out of our mouth and our emotions; it is like fuel to our spirit and our movement. What is it about sound that brings transformation to us on multiple levels?

**RD: Can you explain that?**

DC: It starts with the concept of the voice. The first cry. The moan. The imprint upon the breath that gives expression, or ex-pression—outward breathing. It is that imprint that gives us a sense of “If I am here, I am a voice. I am a being.” Before anything else takes place, it is our cries, our moans, our coos. It is our passionate love sounds, our railing sounds that then developed into different forms of language. The core of music is not about art and entertainment, it is about that impetus that allows the larynx to want to imprint our exhalation, our going into this world. When we hear music, whether it be the basic breath or the drum beat or the walk or the heartbeat, we begin to organize this breath. We begin to organize things within our body—the heartbeat, the breath, the blood pressure, the skin temperature, the brain waves. We begin an incredible alchemical marriage of rhythm and tone, of voice and movement, that allows humanity to begin to find form around itself that is beyond survival. That is the language of emotion, the language that evolves into intellect, the language that is both subtle and expressive. That language then evolves into what we call music. Now, we live in a strange time. A hundred years ago, music was always live. It was never canned, it was never in the background, it was never environmental.

**RD: Wasn't it also extremely common in most societies? Almost everybody learned to make some kind of music, didn't they?**

DC: They did. It was the religion, the expression of emotion. Music became the way societies celebrated birth, grieved death or enjoyed marriage. The way you dance, the way you court or make love, all have musical, rhythmic components. A hundred years ago, the ears were very different than they are today. We had a greater sensitivity. Now, we throb our eardrums with iPods and headphones and computer sounds and cell phones. I think we've had to cut off our sensitivity to survive; there's so much auditory stimulation in our world, we've had to learn to filter sounds.

I've also focused on the impact of the voice itself. I have a new book coming out this season, *Creating Inner-Harmony* on using of the voice. In 1991, I wrote *The Roar of Silence*, based on tone. Laurel Keyes, who was a leader in this field in Denver in the '50s and '60s, wrote a wonderful book called *Toning*, to which I've added four or five chapters. I'm attuned to what the voice means, and how we can invite people to become better listeners.

Next season, before every concert of the Boulder Philharmonic, I will have the opportunity to speak to the audience on conscious listening— ten new ways to listen to a symphony concert. We are sometimes passive in our listening, and there are ways to use your ear and your brain to modify things within your body. I'll be doing workshops in the area on consciousness and health as it serves our community. I've had a wonderful ride for 40 years all over the earth, and now I want to implant this wisdom, this joy, this enthusiasm, in my community. The next year or two, my goal is to really focus on how can we use music to improve language and our whole living atmosphere.

Bright Beginnings, a wonderful statewide organization based in Denver, has hand delivered more than 70,000 CDs of *The Mozart Effect* to parents of newborns in the state of Colorado, showing them how to help their infants sleep better and how music can help reduce stress in the home. The CDs are available in both English and Spanish. Just by calling Bright Beginnings, a new parent can have someone come to their house and bring them a CD and ideas about safety, health and interesting new ways to integrate the arts, reading and language into their newborn's life.

**RD: What is “The Mozart Effect?” Did you coin the term?**

DC: Actually, “The Mozart Effect” was first used by Dr. Alfred Tomatis, who laid the groundwork for the field of how we listen. He developed the field of Audio-Psycho- Phonology (APP) or “listening therapy.” In 1958, he began doing research on music to help children and adults with head injuries and speech/communication disorders, what we now call “dyslexia” and “ADD” and “ADHD.” He found that some of the music of Mozart— the high frequencies of the violin concertos and many selected pieces— helped organize the brain. Much research has since been done on the effect of music on the brain and the intellect. For example, a study at the University of California in Irvine suggested that listening to a Mozart piano sonata temporarily increased spatial IQ of college students. Since then, there have been dozens more studies and thousands of debates on the topic. For me, *The Mozart Effect* is much broader, and is a holistic process of learning how to listen to and utilize music for our health, our well-being and our temperament. And it's not only Mozart—Baroque music, a lot of contemporary ambient music, new-age music can all fit in a music diet. So *The Mozart Effect* began with Tomatis, then evolved into a vision of how we use music and sound in a healthy context to give ourselves mental, emotional and spiritual nutrition throughout the day, every day. One outgrowth of *The Mozart Effect* was a company called Aesthetics Audio System, which now puts music in healthcare facilities all over the nation.

**RD: Did you create the company?**

DC: I did, with two partners. Annette Ridenour is an architect of interior design, and David Corbin is a fine entrepreneur. Our office is in San Diego, but one of our prime hospitals is here in Lafayette, Exempla Good Samaritan. We've put different kinds of music in various parts of the hospital. This music gives people a different sense of how time passes. In other words, in the Emergency waiting room, you may be there for 30 minutes or a couple of hours. If you are family, or visitors, in the surgical waiting room, it could be three hours to 12 hours. That's a lot of time to be in one place. If you're an outpatient in oncology, you probably have a 20- or 30-minute wait. The shorter the wait, the less you notice the power of the environment. We have found that we can shape music to work with the times of day, the amount of stress of the day, the number of people going through the environment. Every 20 to 30 minutes, we change styles entirely. We change keys in a certain way, and we change tempos. So if you go into the emergency room at 2 a.m., you'll most likely hear Native American flutes and soft, ambient music. In the administration office in the middle of the afternoon, you need a little sonic caffeine, so you'll get some

high frequency Mozart chamber music to give you energy. So this Mozart Effect concept has now evolved into very practical ways that we can put music in medical buildings. Light and beauty and sound can reduce the stress of the overall environment.

**RD: What sort of music would you use in the hallway, compared to in the emergency room, and how would you change it every 20 minutes?**

DC: First, in the hallway, it's a flow area; nobody's going to be staying there for long, so you want it light and fresh. We'll use anything from classical piano to light jazz ensemble to delicious guitar music. We change the music, because hearing the same music all day may be good for the client and the visitor, but it drives the nurses and the security people crazy. In the emergency room, we want to change the music, probably from 6 a.m. to noon, every 20 minutes, so you may have wonderful guitar and oboe music, like Nancy Rumble, or a little bit of Paul Winter, like "Sun Singer." Then we might move to some Bach piano music, then into more of a new-age reference, ambient music. If you can think of music as pressure upon the skin, some is very light and airy and free, and the other is very compact and embraces us in a way. People aren't in a hospital to listen to music; they're usually in a stressful situation, and we're trying to reduce stress. I was once in a famous hospital in Ohio, in one of the waiting rooms for heart surgery. There were three vending machines, two televisions playing two different channels and no natural light, all condensed with people about three feet apart. That's a stressful environment in any situation, but when you're in a hospital, in a heart-surgery waiting room with your family, it's unbearable. The first thing we did to change that environment was put closed captions on the TV, so you had a choice to look up at it if you wanted to, without being bombarded by the sound. The second thing is we moved the three mega vending machines that were humming away all the time behind a partition, with sound absorption behind and in front of it. Then we painted the walls a light color, put a small waterfall on the side, and brought in green plants, to give people had a sense of privacy. With a little bit of music, for a little bit of money, we changed the atmosphere and lowered the tension. I've developed over 16 programs, and I've licensed more than 5,000 pieces of music to put in our computer program.

**RD: You commission music for your company?**

DC: Yes. I go to Los Angeles and work with a company on licensing and programming the music into a very refined computer for music delivery. My goal is to have 9,000 pieces of music, so you would not hear any repetition in any section of the hospital in three days. Again, the music depends on the atmosphere we're trying to create. In some environments, like the hospital chapel, we want a beautiful, warm experience, and we're putting music in hospital chapels throughout the country. We want to create an atmosphere where people can pray versus where they meditate or walk and release stress. We're also creating some labyrinths. In Marianjoy Rehabilitation Hospital in Chicago, we installed an outside labyrinth that's wheelchair accessible. There's also a labyrinth in the basement of the Methodist church in Boulder, and one outside at St. John's Episcopal—they're kind of walking meditation areas.

At Marianjoy in Chicago, we designed a beautiful chapel. Judith Cornell inspired them to put a beautiful mandala in the meditation room, and the music in the meditation room is soft, suspended sounds. There's a chapel where people can pray. A few years ago, Margo Ananda, a neo-Tantric author and teacher, told me that Marianjoy's inspiration for the chapel was putting a spectrum of colors (the chakras) for the windows on the side of the chapel. In the center is the large, original tree that inspired the Franciscan sisters who founded this healing center.

**RD: Aside from hospitals and chapels, in what other ways can sound and music influence society?**

DC: We can get people to start chanting and singing, to listen to music and sound differently, to realize that our environment has a sound quality, and to always measure what is the most healthy input. To me, this is a part of the Mozart Effect, as important as how we can use sound and music to improve our memory and stimulate our minds. How can we use music and sound to make our lives more creative. Can you participate in drum circles or volunteer with a choir? What are the things that allow us to feel more creative, release stress, and keep us in balance? That's the purpose of music.

**RD: What about music in schools? Music programs often are on the chopping block when taxes are cut. This creates a debate over the relative value of music for elementary or middle school kids. In elite private schools, there tend to be sophisticated music programs, but public schools**

**seem to think of music training as being somewhat expendable. Isn't there a substantial amount of research about this?**

DC: There is, and I'd like to direct all of our readers to the research section on my website, [www.mozarteffect.com](http://www.mozarteffect.com), There are links to more than 500 sites for parents, teachers and musicians to learn about research into the practicality of using music. The earlier a child is involved in music, the more it enhances their rhythm, balance, coordination and ability to listen. I think there's a big difference between learning how to use music in education for the development of a more holistic stimulation and integration of the brain, and just looking at music education to give kids a music performance tool.

**RD: Do you mean the ambient music they hear around them is as important as the music they make?**

DC: Yes, and I think participation in music early in life is one of the most essential things we, as a society, can give our children. It's not about art and entertainment. It's not about becoming a musician. It is about coordination of the brain, the mind, the body, the ability to listen, language development. The primary function of the ear is not just hearing. It is balance and spatial perception. Programs aimed at very young children help educate them in the rhythm and pattern of music and in listening. In Music Together, mothers and fathers go with their two- and three-year olds to classes, where they learn songs about things that we do on a daily basis. They may learn a song like "Ride, ride, ridin' in the car, Come along, come along, come along, come along, Ride, ride, ridin' in the car, we've gotta go right now. Now hop-up, buckle-up, we gotta go, come along, come..." It's an auditory track that a 2-year-old gets a sense of, and it's stronger than nagging: "Hey, we're late, we've got to buckle up, come on, we have to go now!" It takes the same amount of time to sing a little song, and you're educating them in rhythm, pattern and listening. And it stimulates coordination and language within the brain. In elementary and middle school, music classes aren't just about learning to play an instrument. They're about working together, working in ensemble, listening to each other, tuning in, staying organized, coordinating the hands and the fingers with a whole group. That's what music is about. It is not just the concert at the end of the year. I think we build better communities and better brains by using music and the arts and movement. Later on, those who are meant to be musicians, those who have the talent and the hunger for it, find their way into the arts. But if we could make music classes available for every 3- to 10-year old, our language abilities and coordination would be better—and there are many studies that show that music enhances education.

**RD: You mentioned that you've been navigating between the conventional, classical worlds of music and science and the more cutting-edge, the fringe. You're well-known in both of those camps, and therefore you're somewhat of an ambassador between these two worlds. Can you speak to that?**

DC: For nine years, I've been privileged to be a part of the American Music Research Center here at the University of Colorado School of Music. I think that there are tremendous benefits to having musicians, both intuitive, classical and jazz musicians, dialogue about the will to make music. Nobody owns music. There's no "just one way" to interpret a Brahms symphony or to play in a jazz ensemble. And being so well-trained in classical music, I've always been enchanted by those people who have no musical background who can just create this extraordinary sense of joy and celebration. At the end of June, we created an incredible dialogue, at the University of Colorado School of Music in Boulder, between academic music making, musicology, jazz musicians, music therapists and holistic healers. The American music research center has included Ysaye Barnwell of Sweet Honey in the Rock, visionary composer Pauline Oliveras, and music therapists Barbar Crowe and Cheryl Dileo. We asked some intriguing questions: What is the music in war time that shows our unique voice as Americans? What did Bob Dylan say for us in the '60s and '70s? What did Yankee Doodle say for us in the early 1800s with our independence? What do we know clinically as the brain and the ear become more and more elevated? How do drumbeats talk to the body, as in our shamanic, indigenous heritage?

Being able to dialogue, and to be able to let go of the "There's only one way to do this, and I'm right" approach, is transformational. The more we listen with our hearts, the more we learn with our minds and dance with our bodies, the more connection there is between all of these aspects that allow us to bring beauty to life. The common ground, and the very essential thing for me, is that music and beauty give us health, inspiration and faith. And, in a noisy world, or in a world concerned with achievement, we're forgetting the beauty of just the simple songs of life: the joy with our kids, the singing of hymns, the ways that sound can give us a less stressful, more inspired and creative life.

**RD: If music can create inspiration and creativity, then it must have some opposite effect. Can some kinds of music decrease your creativity or your inspiration? Can it add to stress?**

DC: I think the brain needs sound to feed itself. It needs that charge and energy. At the same time, if the ear is forced to listen to sound for hours on end, whether it is noise or music or speech or whatever, the brain begins to get tired. For example, let's say you're meeting with someone you haven't seen in a long time, and you only have an hour and you want to catch up. If you go to a sports bar at happy hour, you have to work hard to communicate, because your ears are so busy filtering out all that sounds. However, if you met in a hotel lobby with some soft, light music in the background, you would feel your hearts connect and that you were really able to catch up. For me, the only negative or unhealthy sounds are sounds that are too loud or too divergent—such as when you have speech and music and traffic and air conditioning all in one room. Or music that is too loud; that can be pop music, but it can also be a woodwind instrument in a marching band or trombones. A certain amount of decibels for long periods of time actually bring harm to the brain. If you're jogging everyday with those in-the-ear headphones, or you're in a cycling class, for the first few minutes you love the loud sound to give you energy. But you must be cautious, because the blood, as it flows through the cochlea of the ear, makes the ear more sensitive. After you've run for 3 or 4 minutes, cut the volume down. You'll run just as well. Keeping the volume up while you're exercising is dangerous in the long run. You're not going to notice it in one day, but you're going to notice it by the time you're 40 or 50.

**RD: Can it cause hearing loss?**

DC: Yes it can. Rock 'n' roll and heavy metal musicians all wear ear plugs. Symphony orchestras are now putting Plexiglas in front of their brass players so that the other musicians don't suffer damage to the ear. In some of my new books I talk about a sound diet; it's not a matter of avoiding music you like, but sound is very much like food and nutrition. Just because it is soft and sweet doesn't mean it's good for you. You can't put cream-filled cupcakes in your ears all day long, although that's nice to have on occasion. And an occasional triple espresso won't hurt you, but you don't want to drink one all the time.

Music like Mozart keeps us centered, as do certain forms of indigenous music, bossanova and jazz. And we need silence. Evaluate every single day. If you've got sound on all day, it's going to overpower you. When are your silent times? Can you run or exercise without sound? Do you have a contemplative time, a meditative time, a yoga time? Everybody's different, but I think that the sound diet is something that we can all develop. And don't forget to add a little organic high-nutrition live music once a month or once a week.

We have so much great live music at our disposal: the Boulder Theater, the Denver Opera House, the Central City Opera. Music doesn't have to be unapproachable, expensive or arrogant. It is just a part of our heritage. Jazz ensembles, folk singers, church music, sacred harp, ancient Appalachian and New England music—you have so many choices. The bottom line is what inspires you? What releases stress? And what gives your spirit power? That is a diet that I think that we can all control in a most inspired way.