

ROYAL CONSERVATORY THE HAGUE

JAZZ DEPARTMENT

‘MUSIC IS LIFE’ OR ‘LIFE IS MUSIC’

(BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT)

MASTER RESEARCH

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MARCH 2009

‘MUSIC IS LIFE’ OR ‘LIFE IS MUSIC’

(BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT)

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1. MOTIVATION

This research started as a very individual and personal own self-study and observance (as a musician and human being) of myself and other people experiences to be able to achieve a certain degree of *physical, psychological, and philosophical* (and even *spiritual consciousness*) for reaching a personal development through the process of analyzing mistakes and learning from my own negative and positive aspects. Trying to find a result of feeling comfortable, positive, efficient and focused during music performing, music practicing, and even during life itself. So then, the goal of this text is to simply give a description and exposition of the information that has helped me (and still does) to really get that point previously described of *acceptance, positiveness, and wish to develop* in a musical and personal context.

The most of the information that I include here is the one that really fits with my own musical and human personality or taste, but also some information is only exposed as a general subject for everybody who is interested on it: each person has their own true of life, what means that everybody know what it is the best thing for them, what do they like, etc... but I think that some of my own experience on this subject (as well on the music and life) could be similar to others experience, and it could give some ideas for the people who experienced the same situation and didn't know in which ways they could fix that situation, or even it could just remind it to people who know about this subject, and they forgot (it's quite difficult to be conscious during every moment in the life, and as somebody said, human people we use to forget a lot of vital things for the wellness of the life, and we just live in our small daily world of daily activities and patterns, sometimes even it closes us up away from living with certain freedom). So mostly the things that I talk about is something that we have already present inside ourselves (so the Miracle and the value of living and having a body, playing music, being in a school, having clothes, money, food, and being who we are...), and we don't notice them, so we decide to get more from outsider.

For a clear division of subjects, I just decide to divide this research in 3 parts: Physical, Psychological and Spiritual (**body, mind and spirit**) (although they are very interrelated one with each others):

- Physical (body)
- Psychological (mind)
- Spiritual (Spirit)

In the **PHYSICAL SIDE** chapter I talk about the science of Yoga, but I also include a lot of psychological even spiritual information on it, but mostly focused on the Yoga side, including some physical exercises as “Sun Salutation”, breathing exercises, description of the Yoga,...

In the **PSYCHOLOGICAL SIDE** chapter I talk about Meditation, different types of meditations, (not really getting very deep in the subject, but I explain a bit the Mindfulness meditation which personally helped me quite often during life). In the last place, I

recollected a lot of information about Spirituality in relation with the music (**SPIRITUAL SIDE** chapter), mostly about Jazz musicians, so I describe the feelings that every musicians had with a certain religious, doctrine or philosophy, and I give a short description of those disciplines.

The reason why I wanted to choose this subject was due I passed some period with some difficulties to be able to make music, (reflected this difficulties as well in my personality and daily life). So I took this information which was and still is very worthy to help me to feel good and to learn and understand certain aspects that help me to participate in what we call the life and the music.

1.1. How did it start?

My name is Rodrigo Parejo Mateos, I was born the 5th of July of 1981 (maybe this means something and it's related to the way I am as a person and my way of life, or maybe not?) this is one of these questions that sometimes we ask ourselves, or at least myself, but for sure, we all know that every human being adopt a certain type of personality with a big influence of the surrounding where he/she grew up (so can be a familiar, cultural, professional surrounding for instance). But I think I just grew up in a normal family and way of life.

There was one day when casually I started playing music at the age of 8 years old, all by proposition by my parents, accepting, and just letting go and studying everyday during a big quantity of years until I realized that I loved music...so music become a big part of my life (friends, rehearsals, lessons, concerts, trips, excursions...), I enjoyed a lot but at the same time I had another personal friends with who I spend lot of time playing other types of music as rock, pop,...

After long time of studying classical music, and later coming to the jazz world, still under the big enjoyment of the music without too many problems, there was one moment when I started finding difficulties in music performing, not that long ago; so I tried to find solutions to feel good, because I wasn't sure if it was about the music itself, about the life, or just simply a related combination of both sides, so mainly all depended on my own perception, on having a flexible attitude, and the understanding and acceptance of the facts:

So in that moment of difficulties, I had some lessons with a classical flute teacher, and we worked a lot about breathing, body posture (very related to the science of Yoga, but also another, therapies, philosophies like Tai Chi, Qigong, Alexander Technique,..), Then I started getting interested by Yoga, and I started reading books for myself, watching videos, Internet, lessons with a teacher...; after a while, I observed that Yoga was very related to another sciences like Ayurveda (traditional ancient system of medicine in India), Eastern philosophy, religions, psychology, meditation,...and a lot of these things were very related between each others (in the same way the Eastern religion Buddhism sees a very real interconnection between every thing), so I started getting very curious about all these subjects.

About the flute playing and the music, I noticed that the difficulty to play was reflected in the sound, maybe even the people couldn't recognized it or just didn't want to tell you, but in my own perception I could really see, hear and feel that the sound and the way how I played

music was not really the way how I could feel very happy and satisfied because I knew that something was going wrong in the music playing, so I could see that the sound was not steady, and there were difficulties in control de sound creating tension in myself through the body, the quality of sound, the thoughts...(I didn't feel comfortable playing music). So I discovered inside myself that still was not fixed the connection between **music-sound-rhythm-breathing-energy-mind...**; (the lack of sound came because there was a lack of deep and controlled breathing, and this was caused to some kind of stress in my mind that made my muscles tenses, specially the abdomen that doesn't let you breath fully and relaxed in those stressful situations (which were mostly all this typical students examples as the quick feelings of playing good music, exams, but even affected as well by life difficulties, social affairs,...) . So it was that kind of mental noise in the head, that kind of little pressure against your natural state what made the mind work busy and hard, making tense the body, and making difficult the process of breathing, so creating unnatural effects on the body (something that for playing music is very contradictory).

So after this time of realizing and being conscious about the problems around the life itself and the music, I needed some understanding and some searching to feel good, so searching for positive things, as well for a meaning for music playing also life. So I got really much in Yoga practice, and a bit of philosophy and psychology reading, but also interested in how the body, the mind works and got lot of ideas by **Dance** performances (getting inspiration from it, but also observing a kind of relationship with yoga and tai-chi, self-expression, acting/performing, space/movement, rhythm feelings, direction of the music through the body (similar to orchestral conducting), health, discipline of the Dancers...).

Firstly when I started practicing Yoga, in the beginning was about the breathing, the posture, ...and later on, I started feeling curiosity for the philosophy behind Yoga, so I read some Buddhist philosophy, Hindu even Christian texts, and I saw that something positive I could find in any religion, but I found really more interesting things personally in Buddhist philosophies, helping me as a person and a musician as well. So at the end it was clear that I saw that there was an important connection between *the physical, the mental and the spiritual*, and I decided to search for it, to have the wish of feeling good.

2.-PHYSICAL SIDE (Body)

2.1. Yoga

2.1.1. Definition and types of Yoga

Yoga is an ancient (more than 5000 years ago) school of thought of the Hindu religion and a system of mental and physical exercises sometimes practiced, especially in the west, without the spiritual goals for which they were designed. The term yoga comes from a Sanskrit word “yuj” which means *yoke or union (To unite or integrate)*. Traditionally, yoga is a method joining the individual self with the Divine, person’s own consciousness, and the universal consciousness. Ancient Yogis (followers of the yoga philosophy) had a belief that in order for man to be in harmony with himself and his environment, he has to integrate the **body, the mind, and the spirit**. For these three to be integrated, emotion, action, and intelligence must be in balance. Physical and mental exercises are designed to help achieve this goal, also called self-transcendence or enlightenment. On the physical level, yoga postures, called **asanas**, are designed to tone, strengthen, and align the body. These postures are performed to make the spine supple and healthy and to promote blood flow to all the organs, glands, and tissues, keeping all the bodily systems healthy. On the mental level, yoga uses breathing techniques (pranayama) and meditation (dyana) to quiet, clarify, and discipline the mind.

Under the supervision of a guru, the yogi (follower of the yoga philosophy) goes through eight stages as set forth in The Yoga Sutras: **yama**, negative rules of moral conduct-that is, rules of a sort similar to those of Moses' Ten Commandments about what one should not do; **niyama**, positive rules for livings having to do with self- purification; **asana**, bodily postures such as the lotus position; **pranayama**, control of breathing; **pratyahara**, control of the senses; **dharana**, concentration; **dhyana**, meditation; and **samadhi**, cosmic consciousness.

Breathing techniques were developed based on the concept that **breath is the source of life**. In Yoga, students gain breathing control as they slowly increase their breathing. By focusing on their breathing, they prepare their minds for the next step - Meditation.

There is a general misconception that in Meditation, your mind has to go blank. It doesn't have to be so. In Meditation, students bring the activities of the mind into focus resulting in a 'quiet' mind. By designing physical poses and Breathing Techniques that develop awareness of our body, Yoga helps us focus and relieves us from our everyday stress.

The purpose of yoga exercise is to bring awareness of the soul. The various Systems of Yoga differ only in their starting point. Their essence and their goal is always the same: **perfect self-knowledge**. This goal, however, can only be reached through unconditional **self discipline**. Hence, the various systems of Yoga first teach us **self control**. But there Yoga systems which proceed by disciplining the mind; there are systems which begin with the control of the feelings; and there are others which take the body as the starting point, etc... So every type of Yoga has a different name:

2.1.2. Six branches of Yoga

- **Hatha Yoga** or Yoga of Postures

Hatha Yoga is perhaps the path of Yoga you are most familiar with since this is the most popular branch of Yoga in the West. This branch of Yoga uses physical poses or Asana, Breathing Techniques or Pranayama, and Meditation to achieve better health, as well as spirituality. There are many styles within this path - Iyengar, Integral, Astanga, Kripalu, and Jiva Mukti to name a few.

If what you want is a peaceful mind and a healthy body to go along with it, Hatha Yoga may just be the path for you.

- **Bhakti Yoga** or Yoga of Devotion

Bhakti Yoga is the path most followed in India. This is the path of the heart and devotion. Yogis who practice this branch sees the "One" or the Divine in everyone and everything. Bhakti Yoga teaches a person to have devotion to the "One" or to Brahma by developing a person's love and acceptance for all things.

- **Raja Yoga** or Yoga of Self-Control

Raja means "royal". This path is considered to be the King of Yoga and this may be due to the fact that most of its practitioners are members of religious and spiritual orders. Raja Yoga is based on the teachings of the Eight Limbs of Yoga found in the Yoga sutras.

- **Raja Yogi** sees the self as central, and as such, respect to oneself and for all creation are vital to this path. They achieve self-respect by first learning to be masters of themselves.

If you wish to learn discipline, then Raja Yoga would perfectly suit that need.

- **Jnana Yoga** or Yoga of the Mind

Jnana Yoga is the path of Yoga that basically deals with the mind, and as such, it focuses on man's intelligence. Jnana Yogis consider wisdom and intellect as important and they aim to unify the two to surpass limitations. Since they wish to gain knowledge, they are open to other philosophies and religion for they believe that an open and rational mind is crucial in knowing the spirit.

- **Karma Yoga** or Yoga of Service

Karma Yoga is the path of service for in this path, it is believed that your present situation is based on your past actions. So by doing selfless service now, you are choosing a future that is free from negativity and selfishness. Karma Yogis change their attitude towards the good and in the process, change their souls, which leads to a change in their destiny.

- **Tantra Yoga** or Yoga of Rituals

Perhaps the most misunderstood of all the paths, Tantra Yoga is about using rituals to experience what is sacred. Although sex is a part of it, sex is not the whole of it since this path aims to find what is sacred in everything we do. Tantra Yogis must possess certain qualities like purity, humility, devotion, dedication to his Guru, cosmic love, and truthfulness among other things.

There are still a lot of misconceptions about Yoga, for instance, Yoga being a religion. Yoga is not a religion. It is more of a set of techniques for us to find spirituality. In fact, Yoga is being practiced by a lot of people from different religions like Christians, Jewish, Buddhists, and Muslims.

Another misconception is that Yoga is an exercise, a way for us to keep fit. It is partly true, but if you think that Yoga is just that then you are greatly mistaken. Yoga develops the body since a weak one is a hindrance to spiritual growth. It does not simply focus on the physical but on the mental and spiritual aspects as well.

2.1.3. Hatha Yoga ^{1 2 3 4 5 6}

“By constant study the dullard becomes learned. The constant movement of a rope, cuts the stone”.

Hatha yoga is the most widely practiced form of yoga in western world. It is the branch of yoga which concentrates on physical health and mental well-being. Hatha yoga uses bodily postures (**asanas**), breathing techniques (**pranayama**), and meditation (**dyana**) with the goal of bringing about a sound, healthy body and a clear, peaceful mind. There are nearly 200 hatha yoga postures, with hundreds of variations, which work to make the spine supple and to promote circulation in all the organs, glands, and tissues. Hatha yoga postures also stretch and align the body, promoting balance and flexibility.

Our body is enlivened by positive and negative currents, and when these currents are in complete equilibrium, we enjoy perfect health. In the ancient language of Orient, the positive current is designated by the letter “Ha” which is equivalent in meaning to “SUN”. The negative current is called “Tha” meaning “MOON”. The word YOGA has a double meaning. On the one hand, it is equivalent to “joining” while the second meaning is “yoke”. Thus “Hatha Yoga” signifies the perfect knowledge of the two energies, the positive sun and negative moon energies, their joining in perfect harmony and complete equilibrium, and the ability to control their energies absolutely, that is, to bend them under the yoke of our “Self”. This system is unique in the entire world, since it consciously perfects the body, compensates for any physical defects, and fills it with glowing life force, so it brings harmony of body and soul. The body reacts at the slightest impulses of the mind, and the state of the mind is powerfully influenced by the condition of the body. It is also a practice of how to lead the consciousness into every part of the body.

¹<http://www.experiencefestival.com/yoga>

²(Book: “Yog Rashmi” by Rameshwar Dass Gupta)

³(“Yoga and Health” by Yesudian and Haich. Harper and Brothers publishers-New York)

⁴http://www.adherents.com/adh_fam.html

⁵<http://www.artistshousemusic.org/articles/yoga+for+musicians>

⁶http://www.adherents.com/adh_fam.html

Hatha Yoga^{7 8} is a preparation for a higher spiritual Yoga. In a sick body it is very difficult to develop consciousness and quicken the mind to a higher level of activity. For this reason, we should first get acquainted with the forces acting within our bodies in order to be able to use and control them properly later. Then our body is no longer an impediment during our climb up to higher mental and spiritual, so the goal could be the Liberation from the prison of material and physical world, so its goal is to bring the physical body into a perfect state of health so the soul has an appropriate vehicle of expression to work through.

Hatha Yoga embraces many practices, including physical postures and breathing exercises (pranayama), which also act upon the physical nervous system and etheric body. It helps bring the vital energies of the physical and etheric bodies under conscious control. It also brings self-confidence.

2.1.4. Pranayama ^{7 8 9}

One essential part in our life is breathing, what at the same time is one of our involuntary acts in the body (it happens whether you think about it or not, if you are alive) we can also control the breath to some extent. Pranayama is a serie of Yoga breathing exercises that take a very important part in the Yoga practice, learning ways to calm or invigorate the body through the breathing. Gain breath control, such as breath retention and deliberate methods inhalation and exhalation for specific mental and physical benefits are called pranayama.

Pranayama is a word that means "lengthening of the prana or breath". The word is composed of two words, Prana, life force, or vital energy, particularly, the breath, and ayama, to lengthen or extend, or self control. It is often translated as control of the life force (prana). When used as a technical term in yoga, it is often translated more specifically as "breath control". Another literal translation could be "suspension or regulation of breath". It is one important part in the Yoga system, intended to lead the aspirant to a state of perfect concentration. The immediate goal of pranayama is to reduce breathing to an effortless, even rhythm, thus helping to free the individual's mind from attention to bodily functions, rendering multiple health benefits for mind and body. It is used in yoga as a separate practice to help clear and cleanse the body and mind. It is also used in preparation for meditation, and in asana, the practice of postures, to help maximize the benefits of the practice, and focus the mind.

⁷ <http://www.yogasimplified.com>

⁸(Book "*Yoga and Health*" by Yesudian and Haich)

⁹ <http://www.yogasite.com/pranayama.htm>

There are different types of Pranayama exercises, I did not practice personally all of them, but I recommend some of them as the most important. First thing that we should know, is the first rule and most important rule for right breathing, which it is: ***“Breathe through the nose!”***.

2.1.4.1. Pranayama exercises

A. Nadi Shodhana - the sweet breath:

Also try the Alternate Nostril Breath or Nadi Shodhana Breath. This is a very relaxing, balancing and calming breath. It is a great breath to help calm the nerves and the mind, and reduce stress and anxiety. It also helps to balance the right and left hemispheres of the brain promoting clear thinking. Start in a comfortable seated position with your spine tall..

How to do it:

* Hold your right hand up and curl your index and middle fingers toward your palm. Place your thumb next to your right nostril and your ring finger and pinky by your left. Close the right nostril by pressing gently against it with your thumb, and inhale through the left nostril. The breath should be slow, steady and full.

* Now close the left nostril by pressing gently against it with your ring finger and pinky, and open your right nostril by relaxing your thumb and exhale fully with a slow and steady breath.

* Inhale through the right nostril, close it, and then exhale through the left nostril.

That's one complete round of Nadi Shodhana --



*** Inhale through the left**

*** Exhale through the right**

*** Inhale through the right nostril**

*** Exhale through the left**

Begin with 5-10 rounds and add more as you feel ready. Remember to keep your breathing slow, easy and full. When to do it Just about any time and any where. Try it as a mental warm-up before meditation to help calm the mind and put you in the mood. You can also do it as part of your centering before beginning an asana or posture routine. Also try it at times throughout the day. Nadi Shodhana helps control stress and anxiety. If you start to feel stressed out, 10 or so rounds will help calm you down. It also helps soothe anxiety caused by flying and other fearful or stressful situations.

B. Another easy breathing exercise is:

Begin taking an inhalation with a duration of 10 seconds, then keep it inside for 10 seconds again, and at the end, just exhale during 15 seconds. (Repeat 4 more times). This exercise is worthy getting more energy through the breathing, to have the sensation of slow and more control during any specific situation that seems stressful. It gives a lot of oxygen to the body.

2.1.5. Body Physical exercises (“Sun Salutation¹”) (Check table of positions)

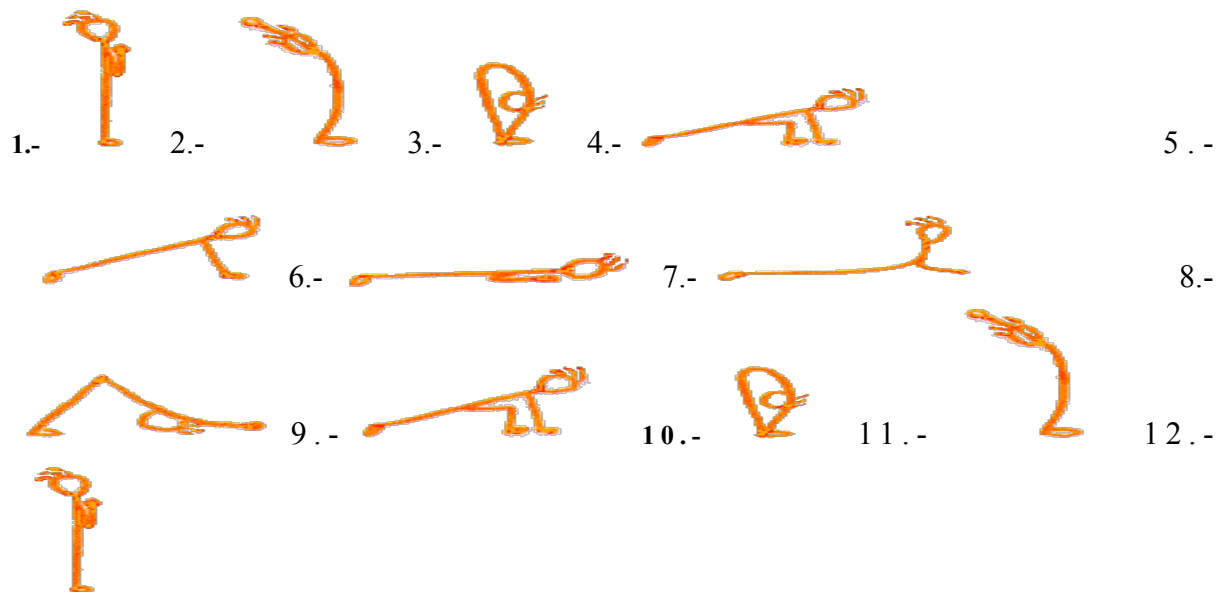
Surya Namaskar, the Sun Salutation, is a series of 12 postures performed in a single, graceful flow. Each movement is coordinated with the breath. Inhale as you extend or stretch, and exhale as you fold or contract. The Sun Salutation builds strength and increases flexibility. Different styles of yoga perform the Sun Salutation with their own variations. However, the flow presented below covers core steps used in most styles.

For the series below, a single round consists of two complete sequences: one for the right side of the body and the other for the left.

On days when you think you have no time for yoga, try and do at least one or two rounds of the Sun Salutation. You'll feel the difference.

¹ <http://yogasite.com/sunsalute.htm>

Sun Salutation (table of positions)



1. Mountain

Begin by standing in Mountain pose, feet about hip width apart, hands either by your sides or in prayer position. Take several deep breaths.

2. Hands up

On your next inhale, in one sweeping movement, raise your arms up overhead and gently arch back as far as feels comfortable and safe.

3. Head to knees

As you exhale, bend forward, bending the knees if necessary, and put your hands to rest beside your feet.

4. Lunge

Inhale and step the right leg back

5. Plank

Exhale and step the left leg back into plank position. Hold the position and inhale.

6. Stick

Exhale and lower yourself as if coming down from a pushup. Only your hands and feet should touch the floor.

7. Upward Dog

Inhale and stretch forward and up, bending at the waist. Use your arms to lift your torso, but only bend back as far as feels comfortable and safe. Lift your legs up so that only the tops of your feet and your hands touch the floor. It's okay to keep your arms bent at the elbow.

8. Downward dog

Exhale, lift from the hips and push back and up.

9. Lunge

Inhale and step the right foot forward.

10. Head to knees

Exhale, bring the left foot forward and step into head-to-knee position.

11. Hands up

Inhale and rise slowly while keeping arms extended .

12. Mountain

Exhale, and in a slow, sweeping motion, lower your arms to the sides. End by bringing your hands up into prayer position. Repeat the sequence, stepping with the left leg.

2.1.6. Yehudi Menuhin (Violinist) and Yoga

- *“There is no external peace without inner peace”*. That’s one of the reasons I practiced Yoga.
- *“The silence is the most important music, it is the condition to the music. It allows the meditation, the acceptance of the universe by the being contemplates who it. Without a previous silence, there is no music. I have always thought from boy that the first melody started in the semi-darkness of the dusk on a lake in which there was nor no a wind blowing”*.

Yehudi Menuhin was keenly aware of the benefits of Yoga, especially for musicians. So during the early 1950’s he met the Yoga guru **B.K.S. Iyengar** during a concert tour in India, moment when he developed some muscular pain. He become a regular practitioner of Yoga, inviting to Iyengar to come travel through Europe in 1954 for his first Yoga demonstrations. Menuhin considered Iyengar as his *“Best violin teacher, even he was not a musician”*.

“Yoga is a technique ideally suited to prevent physical and mental illness and to protect the body generally...” (Y.Menuhin) ¹

2.1.7. Chema Vilchez: Yoga-music relationship ^{2 3}

There are exercises of energetic control through breathing that you can notice in not even 5 minutes. The continued practice transforms to you and that transformation impregnates all your activity. In the measurement that you less mechanic and you have less fear you are more gracious and conscious, freer and in music, at least, it seems fundamental to me. To play and to compose with open mind. Free mind and technical and formative preparation that allows to play everything that you hear in your head, are essential.

Yoga helps to connect with your essence. First it is like a *psychoanalysis* in which you face with yourself, your fears, your desires, your limitations. Time by time you are taken off masks and you are finding yourself. I believe that this is helpful for a musician and one of the best ways to improve. On the other hand yoga provides a great capacity of concentration and a state of ideal relaxation to play, to feel your mind and your hands to flow freely. For composing music it is fantastic because it helps you to enter in deeper levels of consciousness and the ideas arise with naturality

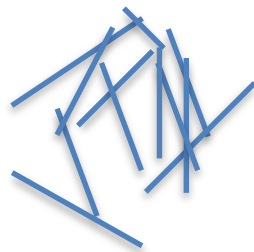
¹ <http://www.stringsmagazine.com/issues/strings90/PractMus90.html>

² http://www.macuarium.com/cms/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=356&Itemid=98

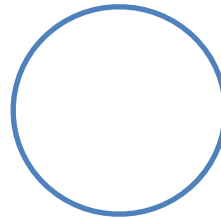
³ http://www.tomajazz.com/perfiles/vilchez_chema_2005.htm

3. PSYCHOLOGICAL SIDE (Mind)

3.1 Meditation ^{1 2 3}



Before Meditation



After Meditation

3.1.1. Definition

Meditation is one of this terms that results difficult to define, so some short definitions could be *“self regulation of attention” or “to reflect upon or to contemplate”*. It is a practice of concentrated focus upon a sound, object, visualization, the breath, movement, or attention itself in order to increase awareness of the present moment, reduce stress, promote relaxation, and enhance personal and spiritual growth; it can be done though walking, doing repetitive actions, singing a mantra, observing an object, observing the breathing, visualization,...

It can clear your mind and raise your consciousness. It increases creativity and intelligence, improves memory and learning ability, and it improves energy and promotes inner calm and peace. Our muscles and nervous and endocrine systems have a kind of "memory" in that they store the hurts, fears, upsets and sadness that you may experience throughout the day. Meditation helps dissipate this. The end result is that we are healthier and happier.

Meditation helps you to understand how your mind works, so then you can improve your ability to objectively analyze your emotions, mental states, thought patterns, and responses to events that occur around you, and be able to improve in certain aspects of the life, through the regular practice. The result becomes a cleared and more focused mind, so it improves the quality of life and can guide the people setting better and wiser goals in life.

There are also numerous benefits for the physical body. Studies have shown that the regular practice of meditation can assist one in lowering blood pressure, decreasing stress, improving memory, and bring in a host of other health benefits; also you can achieve a deep relaxation through controlling all the mental chatter, or mental noises. Meditation reverses the negative

¹ <http://yoga108.org/pages/show/108-meditation-definition-and-benefits>

² <http://www.answers.com/topic/meditation>

³ <http://www.theantiagingdoctor.com/44meditation.htm>

effects of stress and diminishes all worries, anger, frustration, fear, aches and pain, generating happiness, confidence and memory improvement. Else than the psychological and physical sides, there are also meanings for spiritual, religious or philosophical contexts.

There are different types of meditation depending on what is the main focus during the meditation:

3.1.2. Types of Meditation

It's very difficult to classified the different kind of meditation techniques, but depending in some sources, we could say that it can be grouped into 2 (or more) techniques o groups:

Concentrative Meditation: focuses the attention on the breath, an image, or a sound (mantra), in order to still the mind and allow a greater awareness and clarity to emerge. This is like a zoom lens in a camera; we narrow our focus to a selected field.

The simplest form of concentrative meditation is to sit quietly and focus the attention on the breath. Yoga and meditation practitioner believe that there is a direct correlation between one's breath and one's state of the mind. For example, when a person is anxious, frightened, or agitated, the breath will tend to be shallow, rapid, and uneven. On the other hand, when the mind is calm, focused, and composed, the breath will tend to be slow, deep and regular. Focusing the mind on the continuous rhythm of inhalation and exhalation provides a natural object of meditation. As you focus your awareness on the breath, your mind becomes absorbed in the rhythm of inhalation and exhalation. As a result, your breathin will become slower and deeper, and the mind becomes more tranquil and aware.

Mindfulness Meditation: “involves opening the attention to become aware of the continuously passing parade of sensations and feelings, images, thoughts, rounds, smells, and so forth without becoming involved in thinkin about them”. The person simply witnesses whatever goes through the mind, not reacting or becoming involved with thoughts, memories, worries, or images. This helps to gain a more calm, clear, and non-reactive state of mind. Mindfulness meditation can be likened to a wide-angle lens. Instead of narrowing your sight to a selected field as in concentrative meditation, here you will be aware of the entire field.

Some of the specific Meditation techniques that we could find:

- Breath Watching: Observing the breathing inside the body
- Empty Mind Meditation: Trying to keep only one thought in the mind,
- Walking Meditation: Consciousness about the steps, breathing...
- Mantra Meditation: through chanting a sound
- Observing a flame of a candle

Meditation has a long history in the religious practices of Buddhism and Hinduism, but has only recently achieved widespread adoption in the West as a way to invoke the body's natural relaxation response. And socially, Meditation also is a powerful stress reliever that can be harnessed to help achieve a state of relaxation, and to control stress in your life.

3.2. Mindfulness meditation

Mindfulness meditation is a particularly effective at relieving stress, anxiety, depresión, and other negative emotions (sometimes we are always reacting or responding to something else, and we have no time to really be, so always doing, working, thinking,...). The goal of mindfulness meditation is to experience and focus on the present moment, without concerning yourself about the past or future consequences. You engage in the present without analyzing the experience, by concentrating on your thoughts, emotions, sensations, and your surroundings. The challenge is not to be bored and allow your mind to wander, and not to be distracted by any one of the sensations or thoughts you experience.

Over time, you should become aware of your emotions without reacting to them.

You can use mindfulness meditation in the middle of a hectic day, for example, while sitting at a traffic light. Many people find it best to devote a regular time to this meditation, and adopt a tradicional meditation pose in a quiet room free of distractions.

3.2.1. Yoga, Mindfulness and Music Performing relationship

By practicing yoga, we can acquire certain positive feedback in the physical, health, psychological side,...

In the Yoga practice (or even during daily life) **Mindfulness** is the most important thing, and it is about learning to keep the mind relaxed, just focusing in one thought (usually we think too fast, so we have a lot of different thoughts at the same time in our mind, so we'd probably feel certain tension and stress, and our body would feel that too, so tension in the abdominal muscles avoiding breathing very naturally, tension in the shoulder, neck, arms,...). Then during the yoga session we learn to be focused, centered, mindfulness,...and we should try to control our mind, not only during the yoga lesson, but also for any moment during our life, so for instante, when we are eating, waiting to the bus, listening music, talking with somebody, walking, washing the dishes,...It looks simple and easy, even non worthy, but most of time we don't know how to focused (sometimes it's easy , other times is difficult, and then our ego doesn't let us to make the activity), for instance, sometimes we try to practice a certain thing but then we got another idea, another thought, and very often we follow that new thought, and leave out the old thought; after the second appears a new one, and we leave the second again, and so on... so at the end we practiced a lot of things but at the end we didn't assimilate everything, so it becomes not worthy. By learning to focused the mind, we can have one example during eating some food: sometimes we are just eating a simple orange, and we are thinking about our next lesson, next appointment...so at the end we are not in the present moment, so we are not right there, and this means that we are just eating

our thoughts, and not really the orange itself (the same happen with practicing or even performing: sometimes we are playing a concert and millions of thoughts happen during the playing, so probably as much thought we have more stressful situation could be, and then, almost for sure we are not in that wonderful present moment that the sound of the music is giving, so we get involved in our thoughts, and at the end we don't play really focused, or we just play what we are thinking, or all those thoughts are making to ourselves.

SO THIS MINDFULNESS EXERCISES COULD BE VERY IMPORTANT TO LEARN, and they are at the end something really new for us, like just eating, listening music...it's something that it's there but we are not conscious of it because we already saw and did it for too many years (what happen when we go to a new city, where we don't know nothing, and we get lost?? We really get a level of consciousness bigger than in our daily way from home to work, but even if we get lost in that city, probably we feel more save in the center of it at a certain time during the afternoon, than in another part really dark, with dangerous people, at 4 o'clock during the night, so probably our heartbeat, our breathing is faster, but our senses are more open and sensitive as well.

One way of focusing ourselves is to really observe our breathing, feeling how does it get in and out, from our nostrils to the belly, and in the other way around, so in that moment we forget about other things, and we just focused on the breathing itself (so it's a physical consciousness). But also some people, some cultures,...use certain work as a meditative aim, as in Japan the ceremony of making tea, gardening, esgrima, arch art,...so for practicing the music we could use the same way, sometimes by just practicing for a few minutes, but trying to be really focused and conscious about what we are really doing, not thinking about the next exercise, the next gig,... so usually practicing mindfulness (as in the yoga) is the most successful way of practicing anything for life (it needs discipline and regularity to be mastered); in the beginning the discipline is difficult because we feel lazy, tired,...(but sometimes because our mind says that, not our body, and it looks for a certain excuse to avoid practicing), but after a while when we achieve te be disciplined with the task, and we do it regularly, it becomes a habit, and becomes easier to practice, ...so it's a kind of control of our mind and our bad habits (in the other way around , when we keep having bad actions, bad practicing,...then it becomes a habit as well, so it's hard to put it right again, and it needs to start again to be able to master it. So sometimes we need to forget about feelings and to just do the things in a grade of consciousness, in the same we as another people who work in a kitchen, plumber,...have to work as well, doesn't matter if they are happy or not, but they just work and try to work well. It's very understood that sometimes if we feel good we could do the task very good, but the opposite happen when we feel bad, and the task becomes very difficult, we should try to avoid our ego, and to just try to start from zero again in that day (everyday is different our mind, our body, our energy, so we have to live with it and to learn to accept it). And the life is just a sucesión of seconds, minutes, hours, days, years,...until we disappear, so if we want to have a good future, we only need to focused in our present moment, in our task,...(in this way we make the future, and already the past is gone, as the Buddhist say), One good approach is to become better, moment to moment, day by day, but never thinking to become good, because the perfection doesn't exist and we 'd never could reach it. Does happen with yoga, and for sure with a lot of different things in our lives.

Another point to mention about the similarity between yoga practicing and music, is about the ***discipline in practicing*** in a certain order such as when we practice some stand position in yoga, we should learn to do it step by step, and without being in a hurry, then we'd probably not fall down if we keep the concentration on every step (one day we will master it).

Through yoga, we can get also a certain ***self-confidence***, yoga really ***balances*** the body, mind and spirit. Starting describing about body balance, it means that all the tensions from our body mostly disappear, so it puts all the balance of the body in a natural position by working on that. About the mind, as we said, all the thoughts disappear and we just focus on the posture that we are doing. About spiritual subject, it's something difficult to talk, but they usually say that you should master the body in combination with the mind in case you would like to reach the spiritual field (you should have a healthy, strong body to have inside a pure soul). We cannot work the body without the use of the mind to control certain muscles,...but we also need the body for the control of the mind while we are making the asanas, if we keep a quiet mind, then the breathing is slow and the body muscles get relaxed so we can achieve the stretching of certain part of our bodies much easier.

3.2.2. Book: “*The Miracle of Mindfulness*” . A Manual on Meditation (Thich Nhat Hanh)

(A Zen Master's method of meditation, concentration, and relaxation...opening the gate of wisdom).

It is now obvious to most Westerners that we have much to learn from Eastern meditation about getting in touch with ourselves. You don't need no particular religious (or political or intellectual) orientation to understand the wise, and gentle words by the Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh, who was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1967 by Martin Luther King, Jr. on motive of the Vietnam War peace defense.

Nhat Hanh talks about “***mindfulness***” referring it to keep one's consciousness alive to the present reality, so one must practice right now in one's daily life, not only during meditation sessions;

A very good example about Mindfulness is for example: a magician who cuts his body into many parts and places each part in a different region –hands in the South, arms in the East, legs in the north, and then by some miraculous power lets forth a cry which reassembles whole every part of his body. Mindfulness is like that –it is the Miracle which can call back in a flash our dispersed mind and restore it to wholeness so that we can live each minute of life.

Mindfulness frees us of forgetfulness and dispersion and makes it possible to live fully each minute of life.

Another examples are the one from eating a tangerine while the person is thinking something else (at the end the person is not enjoying the present moment of tasting a tangerine, and just she/he is eating his/her thoughts, instead that food). The same happen with lot of situations during daily life. So he recommends us to use and to learn how to breathe properly, for

achieving a relaxation, at the same time that he explains the *breathing* as the vehicle to unite body and mind and to open the gate to wi

3.2.3. Mindfulness affirmations ^{1 2}

There some sentences that can help to understand Mindfulness:

- I am open to the experience of the present moment
- I sense my BODY, whether eating, cooking, cleaning, talking, sitting, standing or lying
- When I notice an absence of mind, I gently return to the experience of the here and now
- I am able to love, trust and appreciate myself
- I pay attention to the psycho-social conditionings behind my actions
- I see my mistakes and difficulties without judging them
- I feel fully connected to my experience in the here-and-now
- I accept and embrace all unpleasant experiences
- I am kind and friendly to myself when things go wrong
- I watch my thoughts, feelings, emotions and impulse without getting lost in them
- In difficult situations, I can pause and reflect without immediately reacting
- I experience moments of inner peace and ease, even when things get héctico and stressful
- I am patient with myself and with others
- I observe how experiences arise and fade away
- I am able to smile when I notice how I sometimes make life difficult
- I am relax, calm and peaceful in the presence of here and now

¹ http://nl.youtube.com/watch?v=gbwZ_fe623E

² <http://www.learnmindfulness.co.uk/videos>

3.2.4. How to recognize that your mind is turbulent

These are some of the most common signs of turbulence:

<i>Impulsiveness:</i>	You don't have patience and you want it quick.
<i>Anger:</i>	You don't tolerate the difference of opinion. You think that you are always right.
<i>Dejection:</i>	You get unhappy when there are some blocks in the fulfillment of your desires.
<i>Criticism:</i>	You like it when others are seen to have faults.
<i>Interference:</i>	You like poking your nose in others' business.
<i>Superiority:</i>	You feel that you are the best and you like saying it also.
<i>Inferiority:</i>	You have low self esteem and you tend to cringe in front of others.
<i>Procrastination:</i>	You don't like facing problems head on. You prefer postponing.
<i>Fear:</i>	You are scared of the future, or certain situations, or people.
<i>Yelling:</i>	You cannot tolerate people around you and you take them for granted.
<i>Revenge:</i>	Even if you don't say it, you like when somebody you don't like gets hurt in some manner.
<i>Hatred:</i>	You cannot forgive. You don't feel compassion for some people.
<i>Frustration, Depression, Lying, Adultery, Showing Off</i> etc. are some other problems showing that you mind is very restless.	

3.3. Book 'Effortless Mastery' by Kenny Werner

This is a very important book that can help to a lot of jazz students with certain difficulties to reach easily and naturally in the music playing, but also can be interesting to other musicians, even just any kind of people; it can bring knowledge to solve a problem, or even just information to know, and to be conscious and inspired of that.

He uses some meditation exercises for the students to bring self-confidence, relaxation, philosophy and understanding why to play music,...

3.4. Book ‘Amo hacer música’ (‘I love making music’) by Gloria Ruiz Ramos(the performer, his characteristics, his problems; analysis and prevention)

This book is dedicated to those people who are reflected with certain human and musical phenomenons that happen along every chapter from this book, and they try to develop. It could be called as “the process to become a musician”. She explains that the work system that it propose to know oneself, it requires **discipline** (compromise) and **will force**_(energy and wishes). To performs and to be a performer is something is something complex. This way of working happens in a silence work in our bodies, so we discover an ***Inner Master***, the only one who can go onstage with us, and respecting the other masters, is the only one able to know all our doubts, insecurities, destinies of our wishes and efforts, and mostly, the one who gives us the solution for every momento (OURSELVES).

She explains how is that important for the performer him/herself to know all his/her **capabilities, limitations and risks**, so she dedicates some pages about the training of **self-observation and self –consciousness**: She analyzed different kind of human patterns respect to the music environment in schools, competitions, orchestras, auditions, performances,...But she acknowledges that it is important to face regularly situations that brings fear and insecurity to become familiar with it.

She also developed for musicians:

mental attention

relaxation

recognizing and modification of posture habits

gesture codes

postural asymmetries with instruments (throughYoga)

works in a muscular, respiratory, osseus level...

feelings and expressivity as well.

She brings some Oriental philosophies, disciplines, martial arts examples to work on the musicianship or human behaviours as the Judo philosophy for instance, that she uses it for learning about the musical career or life (so first to learn to fall down or to fail, then to balance, and then learning to take action). But also the Buddhist philosophy explaining how to not be in the comfort zone always, as well as she talks about the ego in human behaviours. She also makes a relationship between human breathing and Martial arts. In this book we can find a lot of inspiring quotes to understand and give us ideas; for example I can mention this one from the Martial Art “Aikido” that says:

“To be like the bamboo: firm and flexible”

Bamboo is strong against external elements. Its hollow constitution allows to not offer resistente keeping its identity but flowing flexible. So she explains about how the musicians

and orchestral conductors should have this same attitude or emptiness (ego) but strong directional meaning or goal in the performing.

Another Eastern elements which she talks are: KYODO (archy), TAI-CHI (works with the balance), Qi-GONG (technique of consciousness during movement), PHYSICAL YOGA and MEDITATION TECHNIQUES (Absolute immobility techniques)

She divides the book in:

I.- PROFESSIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- 1.- Physical aspects of the performer
- 2.- Psychological aspects of the performer
- 3.- Real and hard aspect: Talent doesn't mean Success
- 4.- Sutil aspect: Capacity of Communication and Interpretation
- 5.- Essential aspect: space of Creativity, the authentic dimension of Art.

II.- THE PREVENTION

- 6.- The road with return: Yoga Therapy, total treatment, science of inner unification

III.- TECNIQUE

- 7.- System and Practical Work Tables
- 8.- Respiratory Section
- 9.- Postural Practical Section
- 10.- Specific Postural Tables
- 11.- Prevention of Asymmetric Postures
- 12.- Specific Techniques
- 13.- Inspiration Exercises
- 14.- Preparatory Exercises for going to the Podium
- 15.- Exercises for the Habits Modifications and Roles: Chidakasha
- 16.- Vital Hygiene of the Interpret
- 17.- Another complementary helps: Acupuncture

4. SPIRITUAL SIDE (Spirit)

4.1. Spirituality under Jazz surface ^{1 2}

Since humans first discovered music it has been a source of mystery, joy and magic. The earliest music was ALL for spiritual and magical purposes because it directly affected the nervous system of the listener. With no language or special skills necessary the shaman/trance-musician could invoke experiences of joy, sentimentality, passion, war, sadness or transcendent.

As humans progressed music became more ritualized and increasingly Stripped of its function of moving the soul and opening the heart. Music was discovered to be a means of anchoring memories to certain experiences, and propelling various physical activities, aka church music, work music, music for dancing and social gatherings, advertisement jingles, etc. Still very good music for what it is designed for, but stripped of most of the psychic and spiritual content.

So during the history we see that a lot of musicians in different times and cultures, used the sound and music as a connection with God or universal realization; and we see that also classical musicians as Bach, Mozart, Beethoven,...they also wrote for God, and they believed in that. They got inspiration of that during Baroque, Classical, Romanticism,...periods.

If we look to jazz music, we see that Jazz music is also one of this musical styles where certain number of musicians have been involved in practicing some religions or some spiritual doctrines. So when we take a look to the beginning of Jazz, so from the roots that start on the late 1800 with those styles as **RAGTIME, BLUES, GOSPEL** and the **BLACK SPIRITUALS**, we see that still has been a lot of connection with the style of jazz that has been happening in every era. There's a longstanding, ongoing relationship between gospel and jazz; and we can mention for example *Louis Armstrong*, one of the father of jazz who included very often gospel in his repertoire. Other jazz musicians could be *Duke Ellington*, one of the best composers in 20th century, who wrote pieces inspired in gospel music, also putting titles about God, church, Christianity; he even described himself humorously as "messenger boy from God". Another important person involved in religious faith was *Mary Lou Williams* who left music for a few years, but was convinced by priests and fellow musicians to return because they said that she could serve God best through her music; she composed jazz, gospel, blues, cantatas and hymn pieces. In spite of a flourishing career, she remained closely involved in numerous outreaches –including heading up a ministry helping addicted musicians to get straight, and managing thrift stores in New York City.

¹ <http://www.canadianchristianity.com/bc/bccn/0308/22deep.html#articletop>

² http://www.miqel.com/jazz_music_heart/jazz-spirit-evolution.html

Other musicians who were involved in the church were **Gene Krupa, Hampton Hawes, Grant Green, ...** else than other people who sometimes wrote music influenced by gospel music as **Horace Silver, Dave Brubeck, Stan Kenton,...**

Charles Mingus and **Ornette Coleman** were also influenced by backgrounds on the church; Coleman spent time playing in the church, and Mingus connection is more apparent in his compositions as “Wednesday Night Prayer Meeting” (1960)

The sixties saw a cultural sea change that included an unprecedented openness to spiritual matters, fact that lasted into the seventies and was reflected clearly in the jazz community. In the first years we can mention to **Donald Byrd, Duke Pearson, Lou Donaldson, and Hank Mobley** because their inspired compositions on church, gospel, God,... But then, the **FREE JAZZ** movement came with a big influence on spirituality: **John Coltrane** and **Albert Ayler** followed rigid spiritual paths that incorporated Christian and Eastern elements, and owed much of their sound and approach learned in the church. Ayler’s discography is full of titles about religion and spirituality, but Coltrane made a profound impact to subsequent generations (since his death 40 years ago, nobody has come closed to impacting the scene so profoundly), specially after making the recording “*A love supreme*” (1964) a four-part spiritual opus dedicated to God. (such impacted caused that even there is a Saint John Coltrane church located in San Francisco. Another musicians from the sixties with spiritual characteristics were **Pharaoh Sanders**, and later with the soul jazz music **Cannonball Adderley** (with some gospel influences), **Rahsaan Roland Kirk** and **Stanley Turrentine**; also **Archie Shepp** recorded a composition of spirituals and black folk songs (“*Goin’ Home*”, 1977).

The seventies brought about the fusion movement, mixing high energy rock with jazz chops. Many of the groups as **Santana, Mahavishnu Orchestra, Return to Forever....**were very directed in promoting spiritual agendas, although in almost every case the religions spoused – **Scientologic, Eastern Mysticism, Chanting** –rejected traditional Christian doctrine.

Already since the eighties, the cultural environment become more conservative, and only a few musicians incorporated spiritual references, but also there were some notable exceptions as **Oscar Peterson, Charlie Haden,...**(who composed some spiritual songs)

4.2. Different examples of religions, philosophies and jazz musicians involved

As a first part in this chapter of SPIRITUALITY, could be interesting to make a short list of jazz musicians who believe or follow some of these philosophies or religions, some of them did it for a while, others still do,....:

Buddhism

Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter, Tina Turner, Sting, Sonny Rollins, Buster Williams, Charles Lloyd, Harold Land, Michael Brecker, Nestor Torres, Larry Coryell, Meshell Ndegeocello,...

Christianism

John Coltrane, Carlos Santana, Eric Harland, Bobby McFerrin, ..

B'Hai faith

Dizzy Gillespie, James Moody, Flora Purim, Cindy Blackman, Mike Longo...

Islam

Art Blakey, Billy Higgins, Ahmad Jamal, McCoy Tyner, Billy Higgins, Yusef Lateef, Rashied Ali, Idris Muhammad, Nasheet Waits, Jaki Byard, Walter Bishop Jr., Jackie McLean, Kenny Clarke, Steve Berrios, Steve Davis, Larry Young,...

Scientology

Chick Corea, Isaac Hayes, ..

Freemasonry

Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Count Basie, Eubie Blake, Nat "King" Cole, William C. Handy, Lionel Hampton, ...

Sri Chinmoy (Hinduism)

Carlos Santana, John McLaughlin, Roberta Flack, Clarence Clemons, ..

Judaism

Bob Berg, Dave Samuels, Mike Manieri, Mike and Randy Brecker, Uri Caine, Eddie Daniels, Bela Fleck, Stan Getz, Benny Goodman, Lee Konitz, Mark Levine, Herbie Mann, Buddy Rich, Mel Torme, Artie Shaw, John Zorn, Herbie Mann, ..

Others

Pharoah Sanders, Leon Thomas, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Sun Ra, Archie Shepp, Dave Liebman, Tisiji Muñoz, William Parker, Frank Wright, Rahsaan Roland Kirk or Albert Ayler, were also people involved in spiritual aspects.

I would like to focus mostly in certain musicians who are spiritual practitioners, mainly during the periods of 60's and 70's, and the philosophies that they follow; but as a starting point I would like to begin with some information about the Islam movement in America between jazz musicians, from the *Dizzy Gillespie's autobiography*, where we could also see some "contradictory" information about spirituality:

4.3. Islam: Muslim movement in America during 40's ¹

During 1940's in New York City, a lot of jazz musicians were introduced to Islamic teachings of the "*Ahmadiyya movement*", but many of these musicians were more interested in the

¹ <http://www.jazzdiscography.com/fitzgera/muslim.htm>

social aspects of Islam rather than the spiritual teachings. Some scholars actually trace the roots of the Blues back to Muslim West African slaves who adapted the call to prayer to their new environment. Some of these musicians who initially converted (or reverted as Muslims call it) to Islam did not remain strict followers of the faith, but many did. Dizzy Gillespie talks in his autobiography about Islam:

"Rudy Powell, from Edgar Hayes's band, became one of the first jazz musicians I knew to accept Islam; he became an Ahmidyah Muslim. Other musicians followed, it seemed to me, for social rather religious reasons, if you can separate the two.

"Man, if you join the Muslim faith, you ain't colored no more, you'll be white," they'd say, "You get a new name and you don't have to be a nigger no more." So everybody started joining because they considered it a big advantage not to be black during the time of segregation. I thought of joining, but it occurred to me that a lot of them spooks were simply trying to be anything other than a spook at that time. They had no idea of black consciousness; all they were trying to do was escape the stigma of being "colored." When these cats found out that Idrees Sulieman, who joined the Muslim faith about that time, could go into these white restaurants and bring out sandwiches to the other guys because he wasn't colored, and he looked like the inside of the chimney, they started enrolling in droves.

Musicians started having it printed on their police cards where it said "race," "W" for white. Kenny Clarke had one and he showed it to me. He said, "See, nigger, I ain't no spook; I'm white, 'W.'" He changed his name to Arabic, Liaquat Ali Salaam. Another cat who had been my roommate at Laurinburg, Loiver Mesheux, got involved in an altercation about race down in Delaware. He went into this restaurant, and they said they didn't serve colored in there. So he said, "I don't blame you. But I don't have to go under the rules of colored because my name is Mustafa Dalil."

Didn't ask him no more questions. "How do you do?" the guy said.

When I first applied for my police card, I knew what the guys were doing, but not being a Muslim. I wouldn't allow the police to type anything in that spot under race. I wouldn't reply to the race question on the application black. When the cop started to type something in there, I asked him "What are you gonna put down there, C for me?"

"You're colored, ain't you?"

"Colored? No."

"Well, what are you, white?"

"No, don't put nothing on there," I said. "Just give me the card." They left it open. I wouldn't let them type me in W for white nor C for colored; just made them leave it blank. WC is a toilet in Europe.

As time went on, I kept considering converting to Islam but mostly because of the social reasons. I didn't know very much about the religion, but I could dig the idea that Muhammad was a prophet. I believed that and there were very few Christians who believed that Muhammad had the word of God with him. The idea of polygamous marriage in Islam, I didn't care for too much. In our society, a man can only take care of one woman. If he does a good job of that, he'll be doing well. Polygamy had its place in the society for which it was intended, as a social custom, but social orders change and each age develops its own mores. Polygamy was acceptable during one part of our development, but most women wouldn't accept that today. People worry about all the women with no husbands, and I don't have any answer for that. Whatever happens, the question should be resolved legitimately and in the way necessary for the advancement of society.

The movement among jazz musicians toward Islam created quite a stir, especially with the surge of the Zionist movement for creation and establishment of the State of Israel. A lot of friction arose between Jews and Muslims, which took the form of a semi-boycott in New York of jazz musicians with Muslim names. Maybe a Jewish guy, in a booking agency that Muslim musicians worked from, would throw work another way instead of throwing to the Muslim. Also, many of the agents couldn't pull the same tricks on Muslims that they pulled on the rest of us. The Muslims received knowledge about themselves that we didn't have and that we had no access to; so therefore they tended to act differently toward the people running the entertainment business. Much of the entertainment business was run by Jews. Generally, the Muslims fared well in spite of that, because though we had some who were Muslim in name only, others really had knowledge and were taking care of business.

Near the end of the forties, the newspapers really got worried about whether I'd convert to Islam. In 1948 Life magazine, published a big picture story, supposedly about the music. They conned me into allowing them to photograph me down on my knees, arms outstretched, supposedly bowing to Mecca. It turned out to be a trick bag. It's of the few things in my whole career I'm ashamed of, because I wasn't a Muslim. They tricked me into committing a sacrilege. The newspapers figured that if the "king of bebop" converted, thousands of beboppers would follow suit, and reporters questioned me about whether I planned to quit and forsake Christianity. But that lesson from Life taught me to leave them hanging. I told them that on my trips through the South, the members of my band were denied the right of worshipping in churches of their own faith because colored folks couldn't pray with white folks down there. "Don't say I'm forsaking Christianity," I said, "because Christianity is forsaking me - or better, people who claim to be Christian just ain't. It says in the Bible to love they brother, but people don't practice what the Bible preaches. In Islam, there is no color line. Everybody is treated like equals."

4.4. Spiritual experiences in jazz musicians during the 1960's

So after a period of jazz and historical happenings during 40's and 50's we get into the 60's, period when the spirituality and the music were quite close to each others, together with the cultural and social environment. The rebellious youth culture sought in music an outlet for expression freed from the rules and boundaries set by previous generations. A newly self aware African-American community sought in music a reconnection to African roots and heritage, as well of the forging of new cultural identities. And finally, dissatisfied by religious institutions that seemed ossified and abstract, lot of people took a spiritual quest, exploring the ideas of religions and philosophies around the globe , specially those that offered the intensity of religious ecstasy combines with the tranquility of meditation. These things combined to help jazz free itself from its strictures as it became a vehicle for exploration and self-expression. Non European religion (as *Hinduism*, West African *Yoruba Religion*, including its Afro-Cuban and Brazilian variants, *Santeria* and *Candomble*, forms of *Islam*, and charismatic forms of African-American *Christianity*) long recognized in music a potencial for the ecstatic spiritual experience. Music could be a vehicle for a moment of transcendence allowing an epiphaniacal understanding, or an entrancing rhythm that could suspend the normal perceptions of time and space. It could be the opportunity for intense communion with God and the divine and it could even be the trigger for spirit possession.

Lot of jazz musicians began to reshape their music forms and ideas due to adopting themselves certain aspects of these philosophies during late 60's. One person very important in the jazz scene during the 60's, but also with a big influence in the religion and spirituality, was John Coltrane:

4.4.1. John Coltrane ¹

Coltrane was born in a Christian familiar surrounding; so his musical waking up happened at the same time through a strict religious road, so he didn't have another election, but also his grandfather (who was preacher) was an important figure inside of the family, he had a great culture, politically active...and his parents dedicated to service in the church. So Coltrane supposed that he just accepted it. He used to practice at the African-American Orthodox church.

In his teens, Coltrane lost his father, uncle and grandparents, so there was familiar and economical troubles; the reaction of Coltrane was he close himself inward and the only one thing was the music, was the saxophone. At the same time, the own nature of Coltrane had the characteristic of curiosity and he try to find answers where other people could be satisfied only with the faith: Coltrane started with the religión (the first religious questions that become the reason of everything). He started analyzing several aspects of his life as the family, friends, God, the church, the school and then the music, so he was conscious of all:

¹ <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=855350>

from this familiar crisis it was born a personal philosophy. (Coltrane went away successfully from that personal crisis, and all that he wanted to do was to play music for making happy to the people, which philosophy was “live well, do wellness and play good”).

In that period of racism against black people, Vietnam war,...Malcom X,...Coltrane found that he had also a musical voice to express what he thinks. So after Miles rejected out to him from the band because he used drugs, he drunk very often and he was not trustable but even still he was playing very good;

So probably he could get affected of that, and he stayed inside of a room at his aunt's house and he decided to stop the addiction to heroin; so as he said, thanks to God he realized a spiritual waking up that drove him to a richer and productiver life (1957); after arriving to that point in 1965, was clear that Coltrane was acquiring a certain sense of his own destiny, and even the sensation of his live wouldn't be long. All his works looked as he had urgency of achieving his purpose, and even they were getting far away from the conventionalism of that period. It is important to observe how Coltrane in that short period of life, he did and developed so much and fast (in the same way as other jazz musicians as Dolphy, Clifford Brown,...they did a lot of important things in music, intensively in a short life)

1957 was a important year when he stopped the addiction to narcotics, his intense musical studies (alone and with Thelonius Monk) and his discographic debut. Coltrane used to practice musical exercises and scales from different books (“*Thesaurus of Scales and Patterns*”) in a religious way. As Albert Ayler said, Coltrane all he did was meditate (practice and meditation).

Coltrane believed in all religions. He didn't trust in the idea of a only one religious way; when you see so many religions, more or less you see contradictory ideas, and Coltrane couldn't believe that somebody could have the true and another no.

In a 1966 interview, Coltrane discussed religion and spirituality:

"I've always felt that even though a man was not a Christian, he still has to know the truth some way or another. Or if he was a Christian, he could know the truth." he said. "The truth itself doesn't have any name on it to me. And each man has to find this for himself, I think."

4.4.1.1. 'A love Supreme' (1964) ^{1 2 3}

The jazz recording of Coltrane "A love supreme" was a privilege to make happy to the people and a humble gift to God. A attempt of saying "Thanks to you, God" . A love supreme had almost the function of a meditative mantra. When "A love supreme" came out, people thought that he was further than any human, but Coltrane was simply a normal human, but he wanted to practice more, and to do all the things that somebody have to do to self-develop.

There 2 texts that Coltrane included at the album: one letter dedicated to the "dear listener" and a poem dedicated to God:

4.4.1.2. Letter dedicated to the listener:

Coltrane transformation in his own words:

"A Love Supreme" the original Liner notes that Coltrane wrote:

"Dear Listener:

All Praise Be To God To Whom All Praise Is Due. Let us pursue Him in the righteous path. Yes it is true; "seek and ye shall find." Only through Him can we know the most wondrous bequeathal.

"During the year 1957, I experienced by the grace of God, a spiritual awakening which was to led me to a richer, fuller, more productive life. At that time, in gratitude, I humbly asked to given the means and privilege to make others happy through music"

As time and events moved on, a period of irresolution did prevail. I entered into a phase which was contradictory to the pledge and away from the esteemed path; but thankfully, now and again through the unerring and merciful hand of God, I do perceive and have been duly re-informed of His OMNIPOTENCE, and of our need for, and dependence on Him. At this time I would like to tell you that NO MATTER WHAT...IT IS WITH GOD. HE IS GRACIOUS AND MERCIFUL. HIS WAY IS IN LOVE, THROUGH WHICH WE ALL ARE . IT IS TRULY —A LOVE SUPREME—.

This album is a humble offering to Him. An attempt to say "THANK YOU GOD" through our work, even as we do in our hearts and with our tongues. May He help and strengthen all men in every good endeavor...

¹ http://jazztheologian.typepad.com/findingthegroove/john_coltrane/index.html

² http://www.tomajazz.com/perfiles/coltrane/parker_evan_on_trane.htm (Coltrane viewed from Evan Parker)

³ <http://www.coltranechurch.org/>

May we never forget that in the sunshine of our lives, through the storm and after the rain—it is all with God—in all ways forever.

“ALL PRAISE TO GOD”

Signed John Coltrane.

.....

Reggie Workman said “*You will understand the message if you are prepared, as the Hindu philosophy teach us. If you are not prepared, you have to leave it and get prepared and try again*”.

Rashied Ali had a very big ego, so Coltrane decided to give him a book called “***Light on the Path***” to put down his ego, so he realized that the sun doesn’t shine on Ali only.

In the last period of Coltrane, he expressed that he wanted to be a force of wellness. He wanted to discover a method for making raining when he wanted, to cure a sick friend with a song, to get money through playing a son when he would be without money,...but he didn’t know no one of those songs and the way to get to them. The true power of music still is unknown, so the aim of every musician, he thought, should be to be able to control this power. As Alice Coltrane said, John represented the sound of God, sound of energy, sound of life, ...

Coltrane read books about Hazrat Inayat Khan, Einstein, physics, Yoga, Vibrational Therapy, Entheogens, Geometry, Quzbbalistic studies, Buddhism doctrines and a lot of more, important mention of books as “***Bhagavad Gita***”, or “***Tora***”; also “***Autobiography of the guru Yogananda***”, “***Light on the Path***”,... There is a lot of material where Coltrane made a relation between astrologic concepts and music. The main material documents is the twelve tones card vinculated with the zodiac that Coltrane gave a copy to Yusef Lateef and it is reproduced at his book of patterns and scales.

4.4.1.3. Book 'The Mysticism of Sound and Music' by Hazrat Inayat

One book that John Coltrane read was "*THE MYSTICISM OF SOUND AND MUSIC*":

SAMPLES OF "THE MYSTICISM OF SOUND AND MUSIC" (The Sufi Teaching of Hazrat Inayat Khan)

p. 163 - *"The highest and most ideal form of composition is that which expresses life, character, emotions, and feelings, for this is the inner world which is only seen by the eye of the mind...Music loses its freedom by being subject to the laws of technique, but mystics in their sacred music, regardless of the world's praise, free both their composition and improvisations from the limitations of technicality."*

p. 3 - *"But among all the different arts, the art of music has been especially considered divine, because it is the exact miniature of the law working through the whole universe."*

p. 85 - *"But that magic charm of the voice is in the natural voice. Every person is gifted. God has given him a certain pitch, a natural note, and if that pitch develops and he develops that natural note, it is magic, he can perform a miracle...Apart from singing, even in speaking, among one hundred persons you will find one who speaks in his natural voice, ninety-nine who imitate. They imitate someone else; they do not know it."*

p. 5 - *"Besides the natural charm that music has, it has a magical power, a power that can be experienced even now. It seems that the human race has lost a great deal of the ancient science of magic, but if there remains any magic it is music."*

p. 9 - *"According to the esoteric standpoint, music is the beginning and the end of the universe. All actions and movements made in the visible and invisible world are musical. That is: they are made up of vibrations pertaining to a certain plane of existence."*

p. 17 - *"Those who have probed the depth of material science as far as modern science can reach, do not deny the fact that the origin of the whole creation is in movement, in other words; in vibration. It is this original state of existence of life which is called in the ancient tradition sound or the word. The first manifestation of this sound is therefore audible, the next manifestation visible. In the forms of expression of life, life has expressed itself first as sound, next as light."*

p. 20 - *"The man of science says that the voice comes from the spine, the diaphragm, the abdomen, and the lungs, The mystic says that sound comes from the soul, the heart, and the mind."*

p. 22 - *"Thousands who have never thought of anything but the self have gone, and we do not even know that they have existed. The dead souls, the ordinary people, go to hear that dead song. The living soul hears the music that is alive."*

p. 28 - *"The attraction that one finds in colour and in sound makes one wonder if there is a mystery hidden behind them, if there is a language of colour and sound which could be learned. The answer is that the language of colour and sound is the language of the soul, and that it is our outward language which makes us confused as to the meaning of that inner language."*

p. 40 - *"Philosophy or science, mysticism or esotericism will all agree on one point if they touch the summit of their knowledge, and that point is that behind the whole of creation, behind the whole of manifestation - if there is any subtle trace of life that can be found, it is motion, it is movement, it is vibration. This motion has its two aspects. There are two aspects because we have developed two principal faculties: sight and hearing. One aspect appeals to our hearing, the other to our sight."*

p. 43 - *"...by speaking near such a plate marks are made upon the plate with sound and vibrations. Those marks make either harmonious or inharmonious forms. If that is true, then every person, from morning till evening, is making invisible forms in space by what he says. He is creating invisible vibrations around him, and so he is producing an atmosphere."*

p. 47 - *"Music, according to the ancient people, was not a mechanical science or art: music was the first language."*

p. 49 - *"In order to keep their music [ancient music] akin to nature, it was necessary to give liberty to the singer and player to sing and play as he wished. Naturally, uniformity was lacking, and a standardized system could not be made. That is why this music always remained an individualistic art only - not an education. For this reason the music of the ancient people had its advantages and a great many disadvantages. The advantages were this: a musician - a singer or player - was never bound to sing in a particular way in order to execute properly the music he wanted to play before the public, but was always free to give the music according to his inspiration at the time. It gave him full liberty to express his emotions, his passions, without any outward restrictions which he should obey."*

p. 54 - *"There are two aspects of life: the first is that man is tuned by his surroundings, and the second is that man can tune himself in spite of his surroundings."*

p. 62 - *"Man is not only a physical body. Man has a mind, and behind the mind there is the soul. It is not only the body that hungers for food, the mind hungers for food, and the soul hungers for food. What generally happens is that man only ministers to his bodily needs and gives no attention to his inner existence and its demands. He experiences momentary satisfaction, then hungers again, not knowing that the soul is the fineness of man's being. And so that unconscious craving of the soul remains."*

p. 67 - *"We waste much energy in useless speech. Among the old races we see that a motion of the hands, an inclination of the head, takes the place of words for many things."*

p. 75 - *"As the form of every sound is different, so every syllable has a certain effect, and therefore every sound made, or word spoken before an object, has charged that object with a certain magnetism. This explains to us the method of the healers, teachers, and mystics who, by the power of sound, charged an object with their healing power, with their power of thought. And when that object was given as water or as food, that object brought about a desired result."*

p. 76 - *"The physical effect of sound has also a great influence upon the human body. The whole mechanism, the muscles, the blood circulation, the nerves, are all moved by the power of vibration. As there is a resonance for every sound, so the human body is a living resonator for sound. Although by one sound one can produce a resonance in all substances, such as*

brass and copper, the there is no greater and more living resonator of sound than the human body. The effect of sound is upon each atom of the body, for each atom resounds; on all glands, on the circulation of the blood and on the pulsation sound has its effect."

p. 88 - *"The voice is not only indicative of man's character, but it is the expression of his spirit. The voice is not only audible, but also visible to those who can see it. The voice makes impressions on the ethereal sphere, impressions which can be called audible; at the same time they are visible. Those scientists who have made experiments with sound and who have taken impressions of the sound on certain plates - which impressions appear like forms - will find one day that the impression of the voice is more living, more deep, and has a greater effect. Sound can be louder than the voice, but sound cannot be more living than the voice."*

p. 98 - *"If we study life today - in spite of the great progress of science, radio, telephone, phonograph, and all the wonders of this age - we find that the psychological aspect of music, poetry, and art does not seem to develop as it should. On the contrary, it is going backward. And if we ask what is the reason the answer will be that the whole progress of humanity today is in the first place a mechanical progress. This hinders in a way the progress of individualism...But in art especially, where the greatest freedom is necessary, one is restricted by uniformity, painters and musicians cannot get their work recognized. They must follow the crowd instead of following the great souls. All that is general is ordinary, because the great mass of people is not highly cultured. Things of beauty and good taste are understood, enjoyed, and appreciated by few, and there is no way for the artist to reach those few. In this way, what is called uniformity has become a hindrance to individual development."*

4.4.2 Alice Coltrane ¹

Was a devotee of the Indian guru Sathya Sai Baba. She was the wife of John Coltrane. In 1970 she moved to California where she established the Vedantic Center...In the late 70's she changed name to Turiyasangitananda. She was the director of the ashram, place where they practiced yoga, ate vegetarian, and read a lot of spiritual books.

"If we are worldly oriented or adversely affected by life's challenges, we cannot give the children the time, attention and guidance they need. But we can receive healing and direction from meditation itself. You do not have to adopt an Eastern religion. You just need to set aside 15 minutes a day to be still. Keep a little notebook near you to record your experiences. You are going to find there is something in those notes that you require in your life, your family, your work, on your spiritual path. Just as it is fire's nature to burn, it is meditation's nature to heal, to bring peace and uplift you beyond your worldly environment and transport you to a higher plane.

Interviewer: *What would you say is your most important teaching?*

Swamini Turiyasangitananda: *I think the central teaching is meditation. Not teaching on the subject of meditation, but more so, explaining that the path to God must involve meditation to bring you to the closest point. In other words, your study is going to be fine,*

¹ <http://www.alicecoltrane.org/news.html>

your acquisition of knowledge is going to be great — but you need direct communication. And the best time is after prayer, after recitation of the names — japa. Meditate. Sit in silence and try to hear the voice of the Lord. See the visions that God will send, ask the questions. This brings you into close proximity to God.

“I feel that if God gives you any type of blessing or good fortune or gift, you have to share it. You have to share it, because it's not really yours. It really is of the Supreme. Like [the title] Translinear Light refers to a single progression or concentration of light—focused upon an object or a goal, as it illumines the pathway to achievement. It is an emanation from the Divine. Sometimes I've heard music and feel like I've already engaged in the praise of God. I feel it already in my soul, in my spirit.

“Once John and I were coming from a concert that he had played out here in California and it was late in the morning—we got out at daybreak. We heard a couple leaving, and the lady said, ‘I have to hurry home because I'm going to church.’ Her companion said, ‘Church? You've already been to church!’ “

“The music is within your heart, your soul, your spirit. It's not really in some intellectual realm in your brain. And this is all I do when I sit at the piano, I just go within.”

“We on one side see suffering and pain, but on the other side we see giving, we see kindness, we see sympathy. We see a humanity opening its heart, its spirit, and reaching out to those who are in pain.”

4.4.3. James Moody and the Baha'í Faith ^{1 2}

Moody himself attributes much of his upbeat spirit to his wife Linday and his Bahai'faith.

“My goal in life is to play better tomorrow than I did today”

He is an active member of the ***Bahai' Faith***.

"Jazz is a spiritual music, and anything that's spiritual can't go along with what the devil does, OK? And for me, that hard metal rock and that stuff, that's the devil's music. And Baha'i believes that when you play music, you're praying..." ³

But you see, the devil has the world in his hands right now and the only way people are going to survive is to go spiritually, with God. My wife, Linda, and I, we're Baha'is and Baha'is believe that there's one country and mankind is one. That's what we believe. All this other stuff about different races and your kind and my kind, that's bullshit.

¹ <http://www.bahaindex.com/en/news/entertainment/4567-moodys-mood-for-jazz>

² http://www.melmartin.com/html_pages/Interviews/moody.html

³ <http://www.answers.com/topic/james-moody>

The first thing I tell anybody is if you're going to play something, go ahead and do it. Get a teacher and do it. But don't start by thinking about the problems, because if you think there's a problem, there'll be problems.

And most of all, learn to love yourself. Then when you love you and you tell me you love me, I'll believe you. If you hate you and then you tell me you love me, you're lying.

“Repetition brings familiarity”

4.4.3.1. Baha'í Faith

It is a monotheist religion who members follow the teachings of Bahá'u'llá, founder and prophet of the religion. Its central theme is that humanity is one single race and that the day has come for its unification in one global society. Bahá'u'lláh, a persian whose name is Arabic meaning *“the Glory of God”*, taught the there is one God who progressively reveals his will to humanity. In the Bahá'í view, each of the great religions were brought by Messengers of God-such as Moses, Krishna, the Buddha, Zoroaster, Jesus, Muhammad, and Báb- and represent a successive stage in the spiritual development of civilization, so they accept the validity of most of the world's religions, whose founders and central figures are seen as Manifestations of God. So Bahá'is believe that Bahá'u'lláh is the most recent Messenger in this line, so he brought teachings related to the moral and spiritual challenges of this modern life.

The Bahá'í writings state that human beings have a “rational soul”, and that this provides the species with a unique capacity to recognize God's humanity's relationship with its creator. Through recognition and obedience, service to humanity and regular prayer and spiritual practice, the Bahá'í writings state that the soul becomes closer to God, the spiritual ideal in Bahá'í belief.

These are 12 frequently principles listed as a quick summary of the Bahá'í teachings. It's not authoritative and some list have variations:

Unity of God

Unity of religion

Unity of mankind.

Gender equality

Elimination of all forms of prejudice

World peace

Harmony of religion and science

Independent investigation of truth

Universal compulsory education

Universal auxiliary language

Obedience to government and non-involvement in partisan politics

Elimination of extremes of wealth and poverty

4.4.4. Chick Corea (and Scientology)

The single greatest thing that studying Scientology has done for me is that it's helped me become freer. Freer to create life as I want to, without being thrown off from my objectives. One of the first simple successes was that I learned to handle and remove my own self-imposed barriers and restraints. Through further study, my ability to handle life around me also increased. This freedom has been hard won, but the rewards are great.

My study of Scientology has also enabled me to write more music. I have become quicker and am able to use all of the musical abilities that I already have. I gained a new understanding of what the proper importances are in the process of creating music.

Scientology has helped me to live better. Using the basic principles of Scientology has become a natural way of life for me. From Scientology I've gotten a freedom to learn whatever I want to learn in life and I'm gaining new abilities all the time.

4.4.5. Sri Chinmoy

Sri Chinmoy is a teacher of yoga meditation and the founder of Sri Chinmoy Meditation Centres. He was born in India in 1931 with the name Chinmoy Kumar Ghose (Sri is an honorific title rather than a name). Chinmoy reached the highest level in the yoga philosophy, nirvikalpa samadhi, while still a youth. He spent the next twenty years in an ashram. Acting upon what he believed was a diving message, Chinmoy moved to New York in 1964. Within a few years, he had opened meditation centers in New York, Puerto Rico and Florida. In 1970 he began conducting meditations for peace at the United Nations. Chinmoy is a musician and has performed flute at a number of free concerts sponsored by his centers.

4.4.5.1 John McLaughlin: ¹

Around the same time that Chick Corea discovered Scientology, John McLaughlin moved from England to the United States. McLaughlin had learned to do *yoga* exercises and he started doing these exercises in New York with greater concentration. After a year of a daily

¹ <http://www.johnmclaughlin.com>

hour and-a-half regimen of yoga, he felt great physically, but he began to feel the need to improve himself through meditation. One day Larry Coryell's manager introduced him to *Sri Chinmoy*.

At their first meeting, McLaughlin asked Chinmoy about the *relationship between music and spiritual consciousness*. The guru told him that the important thing was a person's state of consciousness, not what she or he did. Whether one was a street cleaner or a musician was less important. If one was a musician seeking enlightenment, one's music would "automatically be a part of it." Impressed with this answer, McLaughlin became Chinmoy's disciple.

Like Coltrane, McLaughlin wished to "transcend the human consciousness and become aware of the divine consciousness...and then ultimately to reveal this in music." (Schaeffer 1974:15) He shared with Coltrane the belief that by creating a music based on a spiritual search, a musician could help listeners become aware of the divine consciousness and improve people's lives. McLaughlin encouraged musicians to learn to meditate in order to become attuned to the spirit.

McLaughlin's participation in yoga made him interested in learning Indian music. Part of the reason he was drawn to the music was because it came from the same culture in which yoga developed. In this respect, he was no different from other western devotees of Indian religions whether they be yoga or Sikhism. Many of them develop a taste for Indian food, wear Indian clothing and adopt Indian names. More importantly, McLaughlin loved Indian music because he perceived it to be an art indivisibly connected to religion. The influence of Indian music proved to have a profound effect on McLaughlin. While still playing with his jazz/rock group, The *Mahavishnu Orchestra*, a name chosen by Sri Chinmoy, McLaughlin began to take vocal lessons in Indian music as well as lessons with Ravi Shankar. After the Mahavishnu Orchestra folded, McLaughlin formed the group, *Shakti*, with the South Indian violinist, L. Shankar, and other Indian musicians.

John McLaughlin makes a short resume about all his influences in spirituality that still remain a constant inspiration:

- Karen Armstrong and her affection for the mystic dimension of Islam and the Sufis. One can hear the beauty of this dimension in the Qawwali music of the Rizwan-Muazzam group, or the even better known, Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan recordings.
- The writings of Carlos Castaneda on the subject of Don Juan and Don Gennaro.
- The translations of the great Taoist, Chuang Tzu by Father Thomas Merton, himself a great inspiration to me.
- The works of D.T. Suzuki on the subject of Zen and the Japanese Mind.
- D.E. Harding with his writings on the true nature of the Universe and Consciousness.
- Aldous Huxley, especially his treaty on Religion and Politics in the book "Grey Eminence".
- The Chan poetry from China from the 6th to the 17th centuries.

- The sayings of Ramana Maharshi.
- The sayings of Sri Ramakrishna and his most celebrated disciples : Brahmanada and Vivekananda.
- Fritjof Capra and "The Tao of Physics".
- Last but by no means least, the great Alan Watts and his works on the elucidation of Zen for the Western mind, and his other works on Asian thought.

“His musical influences have tended to follow a similar path in the sense that he is constantly recapitulating his own musical past and the musical history of his principal influences”.

“I have the feeling that to go one step forward in music, I frequently have to take two steps backward”

“Over the last 10 years however, I have been sometimes disappointed by the general lack of imagination and innovation in Jazz Music. There has been a very powerful wave of retrospection on the part of the main record companies, with the result that groups emulating the “sound” and playing techniques of the 1960s have to some degree, dominated the CD Jazz shelves in stores, furthermore, this phenomenon has exerted an enormous influence on the younger players to remain based in the music of the 1960s , with the result that a stultifying effect has been created, inhibiting more daring and innovative music in Jazz.

Because of this, I have found myself drawn more and more to the "underground" music scene, where forms such as "Jungle", "Acid Jazz", "Drums & Bass", "Hip-Hop", and even "Rap" are being invented by musicians, frequently without much musical training, but by consequence, no limit on their imaginations. The results are not always good, but quite often one can find recordings that are astonishing in conception and imagination, and in the end, IMAGINATION is the Key Word”.

4.4.6. Buddhism in Jazz

4.4.6.1. Cultural and Social environment in the 1970's (by Wayne Shorter) ¹

During the earlier 70's, after the assassinations of Martin Luther King and the Kennedys, everyone started asking, “*Where is the world going*”; the social movements of the 60's got personal in the 70's, with revolutionaries reoriented toward identity politics and spiritual quests.

“*There was a period of openness to religious influences*”-Shorter said. “*People were investigating Sufism, stuff from India, the sitar, Beatles lyrics*”. Also is important to noun the celebration of the African heritage by the black community who had allied themselves with

¹ “*The life and work of Wayne Shorter*” FOOTPRINTS. Book

the civil rights movement in the 60's (but Shorter's perspective was never so black and white).

Many younger musicians were searching for something deeper, usually from the African culture, so for example, Hancock took the Swahili name "*Mwandishi*" for himself and for his electrified sextet which combined jazz, rock, African and Indian musical influences. "*We were always searching for ways to make true music all that it could be with an amount of freedom*" and "*We were searching for a religion that would help solidify our spiritual foundation*"-Hancock said; so then, Herbie discovered that religion one night through Mwandishi bassist **Buster "Mchezaji" Williams**. This religion would structure and support the rest of his life, and Wayne's, too. It was **BUDDHISM**, precisely *Nichiren Buddhism*:

4.4.6.1.1. Nichiren Buddhism

Nichiren Buddhism: (A thirteenth century Buddhist philosophy taught by a Japanese monk called Nichiren Daishonin, which philosophy centered around the final teaching of the Buddha (Siddhartha Gautama). This teaching, the Lotus Sutra, affirmed that all living beings have the potential for enlightenment or Buddhahood. Nichiren's Buddhism emphasizes the interconnectedness of all things –**cause and effect**- as well as personal responsibility for one's own life condition. The teachings were common to most Buddhist practice. The difference was, Nichiren taught that all the Lotus Sutra's beneficial wisdom could be realized by chanting its title "*Nam-myoho-renge-kyo*", what was the the main core of this doctrine.

"Nam myoho rene kyo" (the Law of cause and effect through sound). Nichiren claimed that "*Nam-myoho-renge-kyo*" was the ultimate law permeating all phenomena in the universe (the law of cause and effect through sound). So we see that Nichiren Buddhism has a heavy emphasis on chanting as a form of meditation, it is a very intense form of chanting while concentrating on a Japanese scroll called *Gohonzon*.

Soka Gakkai International (American-based group associated with Nichiren Buddhism)

Jazz musicians who follow this philosophy are Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter or Larry Coryell among others:

4.4.6.1.2. Herbie Hancock

In the spring of 1972, the Hancock's band "*Mwandishi*" used to play a music that required a very intuitive sense; it was an avant-garde approach of playing jazz, so it was very much in the moment and spontaneous, with structure, but a very loose structure. So it was a period when they were vegetarians because they would keep trying to find things that would help the flow of the music. Herbie was very open at that time. One night on a certain tour during that year, they had to play in a club in Seattle; it was a Friday night and the club was packed. They were all exhausted because they had only gotten a couple hours of sleep because they had hung out all night before. So on Friday night precisely, after several nights in the same club playing and hanging out, the band had to play, and as usually during this period, the band kicked off from the beginning with some pieces which Herbie featured his keyboard;

but Herbie was too tired to jump-start the show, so he decided to play another song “Toys”, a tune that began with a solo introduction by another musician, bassist **Buster Williams**. In that solo, Herbie heard a Buster Williams he’d never heard before. “*This expressive music was coming out of him from somewhere else*”, so the solo was beauty and full of ideas and inspiration, and the audience was freaking out over his solo, even crying, so by the time the band was waking up and getting inspiration before playing the melody of the song. “*The set played out like magic*”.

After the finish the gig, Herbie talked with Buster Williams and asked him: “*I heard you were into some new philosophy or something*”, “*If it can make you play bass like that, I want to know what it is*”, so Buster smiles magnanimously and said “*I’ve been chanting for a way to tell you about this*”. Instead, Herbie had asked him. “*The message reached me the only way it could have, through music*”. Herbie said. If Buster would tell Herbie just that he is chanting, Herbie wouldn’t give so much importance, but in the way as he played, was a very direct way of telling him that “message”. So it was the first time that Buster talked with Herbie about Buddhism and chanting “***Nam-myoho-renge-kyo***”.

Herbie had a background based on Christian tradition, but he had some kind of spin on Christianity, and what Williams was talking sounded like Herbie’s own personal take on religions and the way to look at things, and said “*this sounds like I always believed in anyway. I thought I was the only one*”, but Buster replied “*No, there are, you know, close to 20 million people that believe the same thing*”.

Herbie asked himself the question of “*I can’t just believe that chanting the sound is going to do something, so I don’t see how it could work for me*”, but Herbie as a person who is attracted to sciences, thought in the same way of the gravity law about the cause and effect law of chanting and he thought that you don’t have to believe in that, it is just like it is; so you will see the effect on life, it doesn’t depend on you having to believe it first”; so he compared it with the law gravity (“*Gravity works whether you believe on it or not, and then, should religion be weaker than natural science?*”), and he didn’t have nothing to lose and he decided to check it out.

The “message” was the Buddhism of Nichiren Daishonin and all that concerns about it.

Jazz-Buddhism relationship: ^{1 2 3 4 5} Hancock sees the parallels between the jazz discipline and the religion that he has been practicing together Wayne Shorter during the last 30 years, Buddhism. “*A lot of how we feel about music was inspired and supported by Buddhism*”.

For he, Jazz is one big example of the great characteristics of Buddhism and great characteristics of human spirit. It is very humanitarian and it’s about sharing rather than competing and requires a lot of trust and courage: “*Because in jazz we share, we listen each*

¹<http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Buddhism/2007/10/Herbie-Fully-Buddhist.aspx#>

² <http://www.hartmuthillmann.de/page20/page21/page21.html>

³ <http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=1080>

⁴ “*The live and work of Wayne Shorter, FOOTPRINTS*”

⁵ <http://ispringfromtheearth.blogspot.com/2008/02/soka-gakkai-musicians-herbie-hancock.html>

others, we respect each others, we are creating in the moment. At our best we're non-judgmental. If we let judgment get in the way of improvising, it always screws us up. So we take whatever happens and try to make it work. We try to make it fit. We try to enhance it". Jazz is about being in the moment. Miles used to say: "I pay you to practice on the bandstand". When you struggle to reach for something you don't know, that's where the most interesting stuff is, so in both fields there is a search for the unknown, and it welcomes and encourages the exploration and expression of being in a moment, also it encourages teamwork. There are lots of parallels between the two."

The value of music for Hancock is to play one note at the right time, in the right way instead being a virtuoso, what in the life could be something as simple as saying the right word to the right person at the right time- and that could change the course of the history"

For Hancock the Buddhist practice didn't necessarily change his nature, but simply reinforced what he already had. He also credited his Buddhist practice for giving him freedom "*not being afraid of things that may happen in your life. It's knowing that you can turn all the **poison into medicine**". As we saw, Hancock broke through many musical and social barriers without looking back; and he attributes his successes and power of positive thinking to his belief in Buddhism.*

He reckons that his own practice has been integral to his artistic development: "*Buddhism opened me up to being out of my comfort zone- to exploring things and being courageous enough to try new things*". One thing that attracted him to Buddhism was the support for this larger and open vision of life values.

Herbie chants everyday, primarily in the morning and the evening. Even going onstage he chants 3 times "***Nam-myoho-renge-kyo***", the idea is to get in sync with the moment. By chanting you get closer to who you are and discover who you are; Hancock discovered that he is a human being at the core, so every human being have to offer something for the evolution of the universe that only they can fulfill. We all have a mission in life, also contributing with the collective of humanity.

The older he gets, the broader his vision becomes. His whole vista is a lot broader than it used to be and he is having more appreciation and respect for life and the qualities of human life.

For Hancock the fact of being a musician was only what he does, but not who he is: he affirms that he is also a father, a neighbour, a son, a citizen, an Afro-american,...But at the center of all of that he is a human being rather than being a musician. So that's a much deeper overview

"Buddhism is very open, and doesn't reject another religions, so true is in everywhere."

Chanting is for Hancock the sound of life, the name of life.

Ikeda (the president of the Soka Gokkai International), said that Hancock's personal development lies in the fact the he is not afraid to travel on the path less traveled.

“Music is an expression of what it is to live. If we don’t enquire into how we should live, how can we create good music?”

“I used to think that music brought people happiness, that it had the power to change people’s hearts. But now I know that personal growth is the source for creating better and deeper music”

“I will continue doing my best to contribute to the development of music while polishing the spirit to earnestly seek what it is to be truly human”

As music is an expression of one’s life, the struggles and the victories over difficulties in Hancock’s personal life found their way into his music, causing him to create sounds that he had never produced before. Instead of repeating his past success, Hancock decided to move forward, fusing different styles of music, all the while understanding that his new musical direction may alienate his fan base.

Herbie learned from Miles a lot, and as a Buddhist, he sees those ideas as part of Buddhist way of life, so aspects as creating at the moment, being in the moment, trusting your instincts, not being afraid to go outside the comfort zone,...

- Hancock affirms that the last time he practiced was probably around 30 years ago, but he tries to practice with his life.

- *“Buddhism opens me up to not look at music from the standpoint of being a musician, but to look at it from the standpoint of being a human being; so looking at the purpose of action and the effects on life. You can’t connect this to a G minor 7th and C 7th. Those are tools you grab to make structure. So you have to learn that basics and get a firm foundation, that takes years. But in order to not be stuck inside the music box, there’s a larger vision that uses music as a tool to serve humanity. We are eternally linked not just to each other but our environment”*

“I’m not telling to students to not practice or advising people to limit themselves. This is advanced stuff. You can practice to attain knowledge, but you can’t practice to attain wisdom”

4.4.6.1.3. Wayne Shorter ¹

In the 1970’s, before the practice had matured in the United States, new practitioners were often encouraged to chant for material gains without any explanation of the deeper Buddhist principles involved. All Nichiren Buddhist are initially encouraged to chant for whatever they want, but this is directly connected to the belief that “earthly desires equal enlightenment”, which is a rare concept in Buddhism and can be misunderstood. But at the end, the overcoming of inner hurdles and development of inner wisdom are the more satisfying spiritual benefits of this practice. Most members chant for a personal goal, and then get familiar with more deeply transformative aspects of the practice; so with Buster’s

¹ (*“The life and work of Wayne Shorter” (FOOTPRINTS)*)

encouragement, Herbie originally chanted to find the best approach to his musical career, but quickly realized the larger effect Buddhism had on his entire life, so:

After the benefits that Herbie got from Buddhism, he was eager to share the practice with friends, and he fulfilled his duty by introducing Ana Maria (Wayne's wife) to the practice (This focus on propagation has sometimes earned the followers of Nichiren a cultlike reputation. Members have an imperative of *shakubuku*, to introduce others to Nichiren's practice). Herbie thought it would help her deal with the strain and burden of caring for Iska (Wayne and Ana's daughter with health problems), so Ana felt attracted to Buddhism and she decided to chant for the improvement of Iska. It became during the next few months a background sound in their home, even after she chanted, Wayne would notice the atmosphere in the house felt cleaner, like when Miles played a long tone and changed the temperature and color of the surrounding air.

One morning, Wayne felt curiosity of learning that chanting, he saw that Ana Maria was chanting in front of a shrine with a strange scroll, so she was performing the morning *gongyo* which meant "*making the highest cause for the highest effect to attain an enlightened life*"; the name of that shrine is *Gohonzon*, what it is a scroll with Chinese characters that depicted the ten realms, or states of life: hell, hunger, animality, belligerence, humanity, heaven, learning, realization, bodhisattva, and Buddhahood. So Wayne, still hesitating decided to practice it but he felt like he was messing it up, believing and pretending as if he was really doing it, so he noticed that he needed a full cultural immersion to understand it. So some time later, after a tour in Japan, he met a Buddhist family because Herbie and Ana decided it, so Wayne stayed in their home sleeping, eating vegetarian food and studying English language books of Nichiren Buddhism; he used it as a spiritual retreat after the tiring travelings with Weather Report. He saw that all the doors were open with Buddhism, and he was fascinated with the concept of "*cause and effect*" (similar effect of the meaning of his composition "Speak No Evil", so about caution, be careful what you say: "What comes out of your mouth can cause some horrendous effects or beautiful ones"). So Shorter accepted to convert to Buddhism very convinced of it (he also saw that the concept of Buddhism seemed like everything he already believed in anyway, or had once instinctively known as a child but had forgotten somewhere along the way).

Soka Gakkai Buddhists believe that their dedication to the practice instigates a process called "*human revolution*", so through this step by step process, Buddhists learn to conquer the negative aspects of their character and develop wisdom, compassion, and joy. When Wayne started practicing Buddhism, he began to see himself more clearly, and he didn't entirely like what he saw. At the age of forty, he wanted to recover the purity of intent he'd had as a teenager.

The inner transformation that Buddhism inspired and jazz's loss of meaning in culture caused Wayne to focus on aspects of life other than music. (the jazz role in this period was different of 50's and 60's when jazz was a respected cultural expression, especially when played by someone like Miles. By the 70's music no longer had the same social function).

After a while, Wayne wanted to integrate the Buddhist philosophy into his everyday life, but

sometimes it provoked that he didn't want to see too many people and not going to nowhere; sometimes he saw the actual world as contaminated to him "*I had to find out that the mundane world is where the principles of this Buddhism come from*", he said. "*You know the lotus flower that grows in the swamp? The swamp is the mundane world, the negative, and the negative tells you what the positive is*" The lotus flower, which blossoms in a muddy swamp, symbolizes the growth of Buddha nature from the desires and problems of everyday life.

One important concept in Buddhism is that first you have to investigate the roots of unhappiness to understand its causes. Only after Wayne understood suffering could he cultivate happiness in its place. He also admitted that he initially misused his Buddhist practice as a means of escape from routine realities –like when he would leave a dinner party to go gaze in a bathroom mirror

As Wayne practiced strengthened, it gave him philosophical protection against extremely sad circumstances such as for example the fact of having a child and never hearing the words "Daddy" to him or "Mom" to Ana Maria.

During the 80's, Wayne began to practice Buddhism in a more profound sense. "*It means you are living your life reaching for a higher and higher life force in everything, you do, everything*". Wayne said. He came to see the practice not as a means to avoid suffering, but rather as a way of cultivating happiness from sadness, finding ways to turn "***poison into medicine***" in all areas of his life.

Wayne Shorter is one of this very important musicians in the history of jazz music, even his compositions are sharing place at the Real Books and in any jam session in the world, at least one song from him usually is played; we want to say that he's important guy, but he sees all as "***Music is second, the human being is first***" answers always when somebody ask him about the purpose of music. He wants his music to do some good. Wayne promotes the philosophy of Buddhism and discusses creativity. He is a citizen of the world.

The essential thing is that he never stopped wondering about where the water met the sky, but at the end, Wayne Shorter thrills with the knowledge that the water and the sky finally meet up where everything else does. In eternity. Which is to say, in himself: "*The one thing that's immutable and has no beginning or end is us. When we're hip with this, we can afford to die*".

4.4.6.1.4. Larry Coryell ^{1 2}

He found peace on practicing ***Nichiren Buddhism***, but previously, in 1969, he became together John McLaughlin and Carlos Santana (Coryell introduced him) student of the Indian

¹ <http://www.angelfire.com/mi2/mica2/IskustvaLarryCoryell.html>

² <http://www.canadianchristianity.com/bc/bccn/0308/coryell.html#articletop>

guru Sri Chinmoy (spiritual popular teacher at that time), who changed their names on Mahavishnu and Devadip respectively for McLaughlin and Santana. But Larry Coryell stopped practicing it due he still addiction of drinking, partying, drugs...

After a period when he really felt very bad due to unhealthy way of life, drugs abuse, depression, bad diet,...after a concert where he played in Spain, three guys came to him to say that they already lost a lot of musicians because that and they didn't want to loose to Coryell neither; these three guys were Herbie Hancock, Wayne Shorter and John McLaughlin. Herbie taught him to chant a very acient old mantra based on the Nichiren Buddhism (so: "*Nam Myoho Renge Kyo, Nam Myoho Renge Kyo,...*"), -it doesn't matter what it means but it is something that saved to a lot of people, and it is supposed to bring you whatever you want, prosperity, money, happiness, you name it, all purpose link to the Universal Energy System Delivery Warehouse,- Hancock said.

Coryell practiced since then, and successfully he stopped his addictions, continued playing and recording, and feeling even better than always.

Nichiren Daisonin lived in the 13th century in Japan, and after he died he passed his legacy to some disciples; still until last century it was a viable Buddhist school, but during last century some Japanese educators got together and created a value creation society based on the principies embodied on the **Gohonzon** which were basically that Buddhism was life itself and people -especially students- should be treated like people. And they started a whole pedagogy of education based on that.

He didn't expected a instant cure when he just started: "*I knew that chanting wasn't magic like a lamp, sometimes it takes time to have your prayers answered*"-Coryell affirmed.

"When we chant to the Gohonzon, we are taught that all the other Buddhists in all the directions of the Universe line up behind us and support us and chant with us. And you magnetize your life."

"You're in a state of Buddha-hood when you chant to the Gohonzon. And you go back to the other states of life -the lower states- when you stop."

Coryell time prior of his morning ceremony is rarely focused, so he feels himself a bit negative and distracted, but when he chants, he thinks about what he wants to accomplish that day, he also open up his life throught the chanting; he stops thinking so much about himself, and he starts thinking about other people"

He also believes that chanting is effective for people of all faiths. "You can come from any religion. I come from the Protestant religion. And now that I chant full time, I don't need to go to the Protestant Church. But we don't reject it; we embrace it. The Buddhist practice covers everything".

"One's karma is always right in front of you. It's always there. And through this practice you

can change your karma. Through this practice you can change negativity into positivity". Coryell affirm that if he hadn't gone through some negative periods, he wouldn't be able to appreciate and be grateful to the positive life that he has now. "As human beings who we are, we can get down into the world of anger, self-pity and resentment –it's normal but there are ways to use all of that and become a better person".

For Coryell the Universe and God are the same thing, and he sees that we have sometimes to fight against the negativity like devils want to get inside his life and take over. But when his life condition is strong, he recognizes them for what they are.

4.4.6.1.5. Michael Brecker^{1 2 3}

As Hancock said, Brecker started practicing Nichiren Buddhism 9 months before he passed away, and joined *Soka Gakkai International*. On the day of Michael's funeral, Hancock also talked about the Buddhist perspective of the Four Sufferings: Birth – Illness – Old age – and Death.

Brecker helped to a lot of people to fight against drugs addiction (Brecker used to use drugs during 70's).

Buddhism helped to Michael Brecker to bring him to his Buddha-nature, so to appreciate himself more and more and be more gently with himself. He used to be very hypercritical on his own playing.

It also helped him to be happier than before he started chanting, because his life has been a bit chaotic and lately happened many mysterious things.

4.4.6.1.6. Nestor Torres⁴

Nestor Torres started singing Nam-myoho-renge-kyo for over 20 years, and these words function as a motivating factor in life and his Buddhist faith.

Before he started practicing it, his view of his own life and his role as a musician were different, so he was trying to understand questions as life-death, inequality, suffering,...and he couldn't never find it, so there was simply no joy in his life. As he developed his musical talent, he felt out of place in everywhere and kept to himself most of time. Later when he moved to New York city, he started playing professionally and the attitude of fellow

¹http://www.jazzorg.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=117&Itemid=89

²<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/02/22/arts/music/22brec.html?fta=y>

³<http://davidvaldez.blogspot.com/2007/02/namyo-ho-renge-kyo.html>

⁴<http://www.sgi.org/0407torres.html>

musicians, especially some whom he considered his musical idols gave him a bad sense of wonder and music making.

When he discovered *Nichiren Buddhism*, changed all dramatically, and he got a lot of answers and enjoyment to play music, especially he got a purpose and meaning for playing music. He uses the music as a “*weapon for peace*”.

“Music has not power, but music is power; music is life; without music there is no life, there’s no humanity.”

“More valuable than treasures in a storehouse are the treasures of the body, and the treasures of the heart there are the most valuable of all” (Statement of Nichiren's writings)

Nestor Torres makes his mission as a musician, as an artist and a human being, to touch, to revitalize, and rehumanize every person’s heart, one at a time. After receiving a Grammy, he accepted not as a recognition for work, but as a point of departure and reference for which his music and work could inspire hope and humanity to each listener’s heart.

4.4.6.2. Other Buddhists

4.4.6.2.1. Sonny Rollins ¹

Sonny Rollins sees himself as a musician who has considered himself a *work in progress*. He was interested in philosophy and esoteric groups as Rosicrucians. He got into **yoga** and eventually **Buddhism**, so he began seriously studying those disciplines in the middle 1950’s. So he went to practice to the famous bridge and that was something that pursued all his life. Now it is part of who he is.

In the late 1960’s, he took a couple of years off to pursue his interest about studying **Zen Buddhism** in Japan, and **Yoga** in a monastery in India. In Japan, he and Wayne Shorter, sometimes traveled on trains together, discussing how to stay physically healthy and spiritually strong as they aged.

Maybe his study of yoga, religion and eastern philosophy helped keep the tenor man vibrant enough to pursue his musical goals into his late 70s. But “*Maybe it’s also genetics*” he admits. “*In the mid-50’s, I began to get a consciousness about trying to keep my body healthy. I got into exercise. Eating right. Eating health foods. Stopping smoking and all of these other detrimental habits, which were part of what everybody did and I was one of the people that did them. I’ve gotten over all of those things and it probably had some positive effect on me. It could be just that I have good genes, that I’m able to still play. But I am definitely a person who was aware a long time ago of trying to eat correctly, exercise correctly*”.

¹ <http://www.allaboutjazz.com/php/article.php?id=31525>

“There are so many distractions and temptations on the road that you need a positive discipline like meditation or yoga. I still do yoga every day”

“There is so much to learn. I practice every day, and I’m still learning stuff every time I play”

“I’m one of these people that’s never satisfied with what I do, I’m always trying to get a better cut, a better sound”

“I’m not going to learn it all”

“However, I realize now that I probably don’t have enough time to get to a point where I can be completely satisfied. I’ll never be that. But even a modicum of satisfaction, I don’t think I’ll ever get there. So it’s a just a matter of trying to find something interesting enough to keep me relevant and keep me able to have something current to say when I’m playing”

“...the older you get, the more you realize how much you really don’t know”

“Jazz is life. It’s what happens every minute of everyday. It’s fresh and new. Creative, just like life itself”

“...I’m the kind of guy that like to practice everyday, and I love playing”

4.4.6.2.2. Charles Lloyd ¹

Charles Lloyd’s group became very famous and successful during the 60’s, so they placed in the same bills as Janis Joplin, Santana, Jefferson Airplane,...but due to some thought Charles had as ***“I thought my music could change the world”***, he noticed that he was wrong, and he embarked upon a long journey of trying to change his carácter and transform himself.

Lloyd went in search of the ***“inner life”*** he had lost during 10 years on the road. He meditated in Malibu, studied Eastern religious thought in Big Sur, and walked in the Woods. He still placed his tenor saxophone and his flutes, but rarely in public.

4.4.6.2.3. Sergiu Celibidache ^{2 3} (orchestral conductor)

Celibidache’s outlook was very affected from Buddhism. His philosophy about the way of making music has been described in terms of what he did not do instead of what he

¹ http://www.geocities.com/BourbonStreet/Quarter/7055/Lloyd/downbeat/rojac_lloyd_db_apr94.html

² http://www.romanianculture.org/personalities/Sergiu_Celibidache.htm

³ <http://surfaceofsilence.wordpress.com/>

did. It has been very clear on him the “refusal” to make recordings, especially the live concerts, because the interest of Celibidache was in creating in each concert the optimal conditions to make what he called as a “*transcendental experience*”. He thought that this experience was difficult to compare with an audition of some recorded music, reason why he avoid it.

Celibidache as he aims perfection from the music, he seeks perfection from his own state of being. In the music this need for perfection is most obviously manifested in his belief that to record music is to lose its purity and essence. Music performed and heard live as an organic entity. He describes with some frustration how it is impossible to capture the music in a recording.

Every performance from Sergiu Celibidache were affected evidently from the acoustical properties from the hall and from his own interior state. As a practitioner of *Zen Buddhism*, he believed in the ideal of *ichi-o ichi-e* (literally “*one time, one meeting*”, the uniqueness and transience of each experience).

4.4.7. Ernie Watts and positive consciousness on life and music ¹

Ernie talks about some ideas about music, life and the saxophone. But he first starts asking the question “*Why do we play music?*” (Do we play for our ego, to prove something, to do it better than other musicians....??). Philosophically talking, he believes that if you are given a musical gift, or you have this “talent”, it is a gift. You have chosen or you have been chosen to be a tool for this energy to work through you and create beauty on earth. You become a tool or channel for this energy to manifest itself on the physical plane. When you think of it this way, your relationship to the horn means being as fluid and clear on the instrument and having as few technical problems as possible, in order to allow this energy to flow through you into creation (so also, for practicing the music, he tries to not feel the physical instrument in the hands and to make the music in the same way as talking, so using a minimum of resistance for the energy to flow through).

About the life, he also talks about the concept that he calls it as “*compulsive*”: everybody we have a little voice inside that doesn’t stop bugging us, at the same time that every human being have a direction, a goal, a dream...; so most of times we were told to do things in moderation, because sometimes people is afraid to be compulsive. If you do all things in moderation, you get a puddle of mud. Anybody who is creative, anybody who is successful, and anybody who is considered great at what they do is compulsive. It’s a energy, we’re dealing with energy. The thing to realize when you’re compulsive is to consciously use that energy in a constructive way, because otherwise it can kill you. Bird was compulsive; he did drugs. He couldn’t stop and it killed him. A lot of people are like that. They have this compulsive energy but they don’t know how to direct it, they don’t know how to use it in a constructive way. At a certain point of his life he realized that he was compulsive and he started to learn how to consciously use that energy.

¹ “MASTER LESSON FOR THE CREATIVE MUSICIAN” (Sax/flute lessons with the GREATS) by Bruce Mishkit. Manhattan Music, Inc. (1994)

He got into studying the “*truth*” through books on positive consciousness. He got into wanting to know about how to control and direct this energy, so he needed to study about it and find out on his own. As human beings where are, we have the ability to choose. So for him was good to find his own direction and to keep going further through making little stops and to see the results.

One of the problems that comes from people is that there are a lot of people who stay in a comfort zone because they have the feeling that they are not able to do something, so they create a cop-out. They’ll say “Oh boy, he’s doing it, but he’s a genius”, or “He’s doing it, but his dad did it, so it was easy for him” or “His family has a whole lot of money, so it’s easy for him”. We come up with general Concepts which are built so that people can stay in their comfort zones. But if you have a dream to realice, at some point you just have to stand up and start walking, to figure out some way to get past that way of thinking.

When Ernie plays music, he has the feeling that he is observing, so like listening to somebody else play the saxophone. So letting the ego go.

“You have to practice positive consciousness just like you practice your horn”

5. CONCLUSION

All the information, exercises and philosophies in this research are the source of inspiration and practical insight that has helped me to continue the journey as a musician with more individual awareness of oneself, the profession, life, the meaning of music, etc. All from a physical, physical and spiritual side.

In some aspects I feel very identified with other musicians challenges or situations, although everyone has their own truth, experiences, situations, limitations and goals. Definitely the material researched in this book is not for every person, but it can be considered as a source of inspiration or helpful insight.

6. QUOTES

- *“Repetitions brings familiarity”*. **James Moody.**
- *“If you think there is a problema, there will be a problem”*. **James Moody.**
- *“We become what we repeatedly do”*. **Aristotle.**
- *“What we play is life”*. **Louis Armstrong.**
- *“Music is your own experience, your thoughts, your wisdom. If you don’t live it, it won’t come out of your horn”*. **Charlie Parker.**

- *“The music is what sustains the player from the beginning to end. That’s where you get your life from. That’s why you play jazz”*. **Art Farmer.**
- *“When sound vibrates at a certain level we can see a corridor. At the end of this corrido there’s a room where all the secrets are kept. This room is locked and can only be opened through sound. If we play the right combination of tones the door opens and we are allowed to enter the room. Once inside a secret of life is revealed to us. Every time we play music we can enter this room”* **William Parker.**
- *“With certain groups, like Albert Ayler, Cecil Taylor, Ornette Coleman, and now my own group, there is a level of playing which we try to reach which is the same thing that people do when they do transcendental meditation and yoga. They talk about “out of the body” experiences. That’s what this music is. It’s chanting; it’s meditation; it’s yoga. It’s all these things. In order to play, something transcends. Something happens with the physical, the spiritual and the mental state in which they combine, and their energy is turned free. It’s cleansing experience which in a religion they would say, “It’s another world”. The state I’m talking about even transcendent emotions. It’s a feeling of being able to communicate with all living things”* **Ronald Shannon Jackson.**
- *“During the year 1957, I experienced by the grace of God, a spiritual awakening which was to led me to a richer, fuller, more productive life”*. **John Coltrane.**
- *“At that time, in gratitude, I humbly asked to given the means and privilege to make others happy through music”*. **John Coltrane.**
- *“To find the own way in the life it is difficult even during the best times. The presence of inspiring humans beings is the safest way to receive aid and guides in these questions...”* **John McLaughlin** (at the death of Sri Chinmoy)
- *“There is no external peace without inner peace”*. **Yehudi Menuhin.**
- *“Music is the space between notes”*. **Claude Debussy.**
- *“The silence is the most important music, it is the condition to the music. Without a previous silence, there is no music”*. **Yehudi Menuhin.**
- *“Music is a powerful tool to harmonize man with himself and his global environment”* **Dr.K.S.Subramanian.**
- *“You have to practice positive consciousness just like you practice your horn”*
- *“It might be something as simple as saying the right word to the right person at the right time –and that could change the course of the history”*. **Herbie Hancock.**
- *“Playing one note at the right time , in the right way instead being a virtuoso”*. The value of music from **Herbie Hancock.**
- *“Music has no power, but music is power; music is life; without music there is no life, there’s no humanity”*. **Nestor Torres.**

- *“The music is within your heart, your soul, your spirit. It’s not really in some intellectual realm in your brain. And this is all what I do when I sit at the piano. I just go within.* **Turiyasangitananda (Alice Coltrane).**
- *“There are so many distractions and temptations on the road that you need a positive discipline like meditation or yoga. I still do yoga every day”.* **Sonny Rollins.**
- *“...the older you get, the more you realize how much you really don’t know; there is so much to learn. I practice every day, and I’m still learning stuff Everrett time I play”.* **Sonny Rollins.**
- *“Jazz is life, it’s what happens every minute of everyday. It’s fresh and new. Creative, just like life itself”.* **Sonny Rollins.**
- *“To be like a bamboo: firm and flexible”.* **Aikido** quote.
- *“More valuable than treasures in a storehouse are the treasures of the body, and the treasures of the heart there are the most valuable of all” (Statement on Nichiren’s writings).*
- *“By constant study the dullard becomes learned. The constant movement of a rope, cuts the stone”.* Rameshwar Dapp Gupta.
- *“Wood is more important than painting” (painting stays only for a certain time, but a good wood can stay longer)*
- *“The miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green Earth in the present moment, to appreciate the peace and beauty that are available now”.* **Thich Nhat Hanh.**
- *If in our daily life we can smile, if we can be peaceful and happy, not only we, but everyone will profit from it. If we really know how to live, what better way to start the day than with a smile? Our smile affirms our awareness and determination to live in peace and joy. The source of a true smile is an awakened mind.* **Thich Nhat Hanh.**
- *“Do not lose yourself in dispersion and in your surroundings. Learn to practice breathing in order to regain composure of body and mind, to practice mindfulness, and to develop concentration and understanding”.* **Thich Nhat Hanh.**
- *“Do not utter words that can create discord and cause the community to break. Make every effort to reconcile and resolve all conflicts, however small”.* **Thich Nhat Hanh.**
- *“Do not believe that I feel that I follow each and every of these precepts perfectly. I know I fail in many ways. None of us can fully fulfill any of these. However, I must work toward a goal. These are my goal. NO WORDS CAN REPLACE PRACTICE, ONLY PRACTICE CAN MAKE THE WORDS”.* **Thich Nhat Hanh.**
- *“the finger pointing at the moon is not the moon”.* **Thich Nhat Hanh.**

- “Yoga is a technique ideally suited to prevent mental and physical illness and to protect the body generally...”. **Yehudi Menuhin.**

7. RECOMMENDED SOURCES

7.1. Videos:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7QRGLzotjukn> (Sonny Rollins discuss about Buddhism)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MOsr_ZOi-Jo (Tina Turner explains Nichiren Buddhism, and chants a mantra)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xgqimZjJZ3U> (Alice Coltrane talks about spirituality, music and John Coltrane)

7.2. Audios:

<http://www.beliefnet.com/Faiths/Buddhism/2007/10/Herbie-Fully-Buddhist.aspx#>

(Herbie Hancock explain how he become Buddhist)

7.3. Websites:

<http://www.miqel.com>

<http://www.jazzsupreme.com>

<http://www.sufimessage.com>

<http://www.pedroflute.com/beliefs.htm>

<http://www.srisri.org/teachings.html>

<http://www.world-mysteries.com>

<http://www.anamimusic.com>

<http://www.abc-of-yoga.com>

8. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books:

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2. "Present moment, Wonderful moment". Mindfulness Verses for Daily Living. Thich Nhat Hanh. Parallax Press. 1990
3. "The Miracle of Mindfulness!" A manual on Meditation. Thich Nhat Hanh. Beacon Press Boston. 1976.
4. "The little book of Buddhism". His Holiness The Dalai Lama. Rider books. 1999
5. "The little book of Buddhism
6. "Everyday" OSHO, 365 daily meditations for the here and now. Fair Winds Press. 2002
7. "When East meets West" Truong Thi Dieu Dé.
8. "East meets West" Book V. Truong Thi Dieu De.
9. Yog Rashmi. Rameshwar Dass Gupta. Published by Yog Sadhna Kendra. Dharam Bhawan, South Extension, Part-I. New Delhi. 1982
10. Yoga and Health. Selvarajan Yesudian and Elisabeth Haich. Harper & Brothers Publishers. New York. 1953
11. "Natural Healing" through ayurveda. Dr. Subhash Ranade. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited. Delhi. 1994
12. "Bodylife" Arthur Balaskas. Book Club Associates by arrangement with Sidgwick & Jackson Limited. 1977
13. "Effortless Mastery" Kenny Werner.
14. "MASTER LESSON FOR THE CREATIVE MUSICIAN" (Sax/flute lessons with the GREATS) by Bruce Mishkit. Manhattan Music, Inc. (1994)
15. "Transcendental Meditation" Maharishi Mahesh Yogi
16. "Transcendental Meditation" Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and the Science of Creative Intelligent.
17. "A love Supreme". The story of John Coltrane's signature album. Alba Editorial, s.l.u.2002
18. "The life and music of Wayne Shorter" FOOTPRINTS.
19. "Amo hacer música". (Yogaterapia específica para los profesionales de la Música). Gloria Ruiz Ramos
20. "Music Therapy". Juliette Alvin. Hutchinson of London. 1975.
21. "Yoga". Pantajali.
22. "The Alexander Technique". Natural Poise for Health. Richard Brennan.