

Sound Source

Sonic reflections from Gary Diggins

Promoting Peace through Sound



Things started brewing when I brought *Shiva* home. I found Shiva, or rather a 100 pound bust of him, in a neighborhood store and knew this Hindu god was to find a place in my backyard. Shiva acts as a destroyer of ignorance and helps dissolve illusions. Consequently, I wanted to have this figure nearby as a reminder that delusion can be replaced by perception.

Shortly after Shiva settled in, I met with Theo, an old friend from San Francisco. She was passing through en route to Israel. The presence of Shiva prompted an in-depth conversation about conflicts in the middle east. Theo, who lived in Israel for several years, was traveling to Netanya where, two days earlier, a suicidal bomber had killed five Israelis at a shopping mall – a terrorist act that spawned serious clashes between Palestinian and Israeli forces.

The purpose of Theo's trip was to open a riding stable for the disabled. Over a number of years,

she has guided the development of an equestrian and therapeutic service that provides for individuals ranging from blind riders to children with cerebral palsy. As we talked about her visit, I was impressed by the distinction between two travelers to Netanya – one an agent of destruction, the other an emissary of peace.

Knowing the volatile situation Theo was heading into, I wanted to provide something smaller than my Shiva bust that could remind her of the power of peace. The answer jumped out at me from the cover of a Sonica Erotica CD. *Sound knows no borders and love knows no bounds.* In no time, I recorded a handful of CDs and tapes for Theo that contained music characterized by such qualities as serenity, strength, and well-being.

I believe certain types of music can, like Shiva, dispel conflict and promote co-operation. For instance, sound rituals or drum circles are used today in everything from dispute resolutions within prisons to healing ceremonies within high schools. Each time we collaborate in a drumming event, participate in a singing circle, or mediate understanding through

*The softest of substances
penetrates the hardest.*

Lao Tzu

thoughtful words, we are promoting empathy and synergy through sound. Every day across this planet there are Tibetan monks, Christian nuns, Jewish cantors, Harlem school children, Dublin string ensembles, Nigerian village elders, Central Park percussionists, and Toronto eccentrics, such as us, who contribute to one great Peace Project through intentional soundmaking.

Today, as I write this newsletter, there is certainty in my heart. I am confident that meaningful change is transpiring through planetary citizens such as Theo.

My own passion is to provide a gathering place where, from time to time, we can concentrate our individual energies and give voice to the spirit of co-operation. In this regard, I look forward to playing with you someday and to promote agreement through sound.

*May peace spread like sound travels,
without regard to barriers.*

Gary Diggins

(((For further information please contact Gary Diggins at:)))
(416) 482-2783; e-mail: gdiggins@aol.com