



# YAYA DIALLO

I have two serious questions about the spiritual significance of music. "What is music?" and "What is spirituality?"

**Music:** I heard that music is a universal language. I don't accept that statement. To me music is a reflection of one culture, one tradition, and even one continent. One more point, the choice of music is subjective, it is not objective. There is no reason to love or hate one kind of music.

**Spirituality:** I have no clue about this word. Some people define it as the supernatural: the world of divinity. Many people think that spirituality is a higher level of positive state of mind. I don't believe that the supernatural is exclusively in the world of the supreme being. The higher levels of states of mind could be negative, even evil, and destructive. In general, people associate spirituality to religion, belief, or a way of life.

**My Opinion:** There is no hierarchy in music. Mozart is not better than Vivaldi, Coltrane, Jay-Z, Metallica, Garth Brooks, Bob Marley, or any African drummer. It depends on who is the listener. The Tibetan gong, Indian sitar and tambora, and the harp are not more spiritual instruments than the electric guitar. To a Heavy Metal lover, the electric guitar is the best instrument in the world. Who has the right to dictate to the whole world what is spiritual and what is not?

**Basic Principle:** In order for a medicine to heal, it is necessary for the patient to take it. Who is crazy enough to play New Age music at a Punk party, or Willie Nelson for a Rastafarian party. In my culture, we are encouraged to recognize, and to avoid those sounds and pitches that disturb us physically and psychologically. We should also avoid listening to music that recalls bad memories. The musician who performs music for peace of mind doesn't necessarily fall back on a repertory of established rhythm. Determining the right music in each case is a highly individual matter as there is no predetermined formula.

**Beneficial Effect of Music:** Music can be used to heal individuals. Also, music is a remedy for collective misery. Imagine one hour without Rap or Hip-Hop in the hood, and no Rock N' Roll in the U.S.A. Only one hour without those two kinds of music, can you imagine that?

**Negative Effect of Music:** Music can be used to promote hatred of other people. Also, music can create self-hatred, and self-esteem which could be harmful towards others.



**Questions:** How come they sing Gregorian chants in churches, and why do they play the organ in churches? The game of hockey is one of the most violent sports in the world. They play the organ to provoke fights in the arena. Is that a spiritual instrument? Is Gospel Christian music? I think that Gregorian chants, organ music, and Gospel music are not Christian music. So, what is the spiritual significance of those kinds of music? It depends on who you are, and what kind of music you are ready to listen to.

Spiritual music for me, is music that doesn't contain any complaints. It should be above human misery and human problems. When I listen to what is spiritual music for me I don't feel time, space, or myself. Life is not heavy for me and I don't mind where I am. It cleans my brain of all my problems and rejuvenates my energy. The harmony and sound affect me. I don't even pay attention to the meaning of the song. When you listen to some music, your feeling is unique to yourself. There are no standards that everyone gets the same state of mind.



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