



LARRY SITSKY

To answer your question, there is at first the thorny issue of what “*spiritual*” might mean; there is a whole gamut of definitions, including rather kitschy applications of the word in a trendy New Age context. I actually prefer the word “*mystical*” to more correctly describe what I think you may be asking. At any rate, “*mystical*” is a word that is closer to what I try to achieve. Music certainly has the power to put into sound what is often impossible to describe in words, and the yearning towards a spiritual experience is one of those things. Some say that this is also the longing to approach closer to God; others, that music allows us to discover the divine spark buried deep within us. To me, music also allows us to embark on the mystical journey, which is the actual quest to find this indefinable realm, even if some of us never quite get there. If we would but allow it, music’s spiritual power could make us better human beings and tear us away from the planet-wide cycle of violence that seems to have gripped our world. Many composers are thoroughly spiritual beings; unfortunately, the discipline of musicology, ostensibly the study of music, shies away from writing about this topic, as it is deemed unscientific; and so, the very engine that drives and drove many composers through history remains largely unexplored. Writers on music preferring to skirt around the issue and concentrate on the nuts and bolts of music, a purely routine thing, rather than the bigger questions.



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