



# MY SILENT WAKE

KATE HAMILTON

For as long as humankind has walked upon the Earth we have considered music to be, above any other art form, essential to our survival. Although superfluous to our physical needs there is something in the nature of music that makes it indispensable to our wellbeing and esteem. Ancient people used music to connect them to the surrounding land, to their ancestors and to their own souls. Music was inextricably linked with their gods and creation myths, and evoked an understanding of their origins that went beyond what could be expressed in words. That still applies today.

I believe the creation of music is analogous to the generation of order from chaos that is intrinsic in most stories of the birth of humankind. A musician can bring beauty and order into being seemingly from nothing, and the best musicians have been accordingly revered throughout history. Even the many of us who will never earn that acclaim will have experienced the exhilaration that comes from producing a melody or rhythm that captures what we have a need to express, and conversely the frustration when we cannot!

Music can open a door to a long forgotten past experience, or even a visceral perception of something beyond that. One of the most lasting memories I have is of sitting in a group around a fire at a party, each of us holding a drum. We all began to play odd beats and rhythms but gradually these began to intertwine, grow in complexity and to self-perpetuate until I felt I no longer had control of what I was playing. I think it was only adrenaline and the momentum of the beat that kept me going. I can't even really play the drums! It probably sounded awful to anyone listening in, but afterwards we felt as if we had communicated on a level that negated verbal dialogue.

Music, even without words has the power to rally people to war, work, or worship. It transcends language and belief, and resonates way back before we erected social, cultural, and religious boundaries around ourselves. The spiritual significance of music is both transient and enduring. It can be considered spiritual because it is dependant on human experience, both for it's performance and appreciation. We create music for the sole purpose of provoking a reaction within ourselves, so if no one listens it is wasted.



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**CELLIST, KEYBOARDS, AND VOCALIST IN MY SILENT WAKE**