



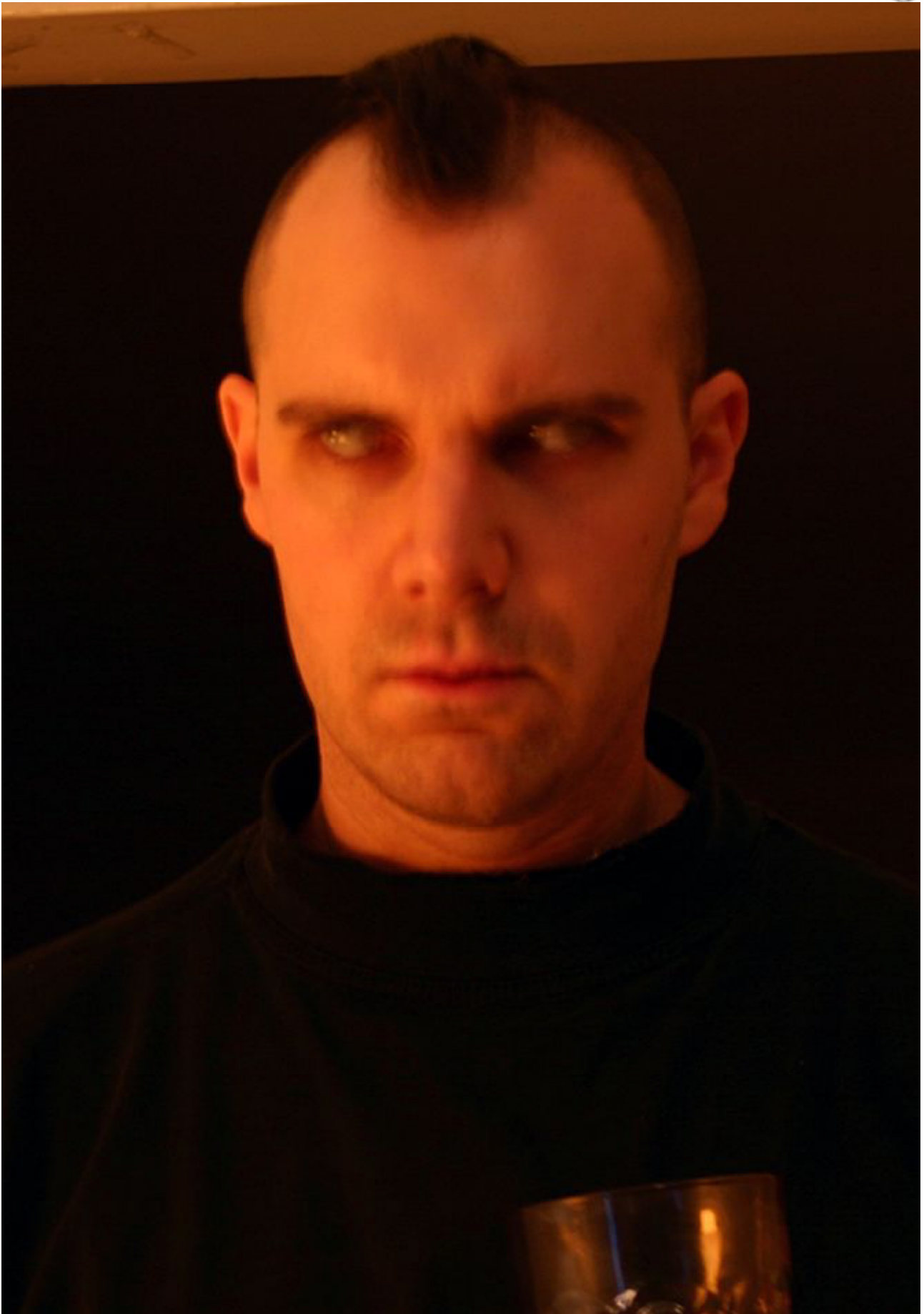
# APOCRYPHAL VOICE

JUHANI JOKISALO

The spiritual significance of music is mostly determined by the individual listener. It's not really in the musician's hands what the listener is picking up from the music in the privacy of their homes. A musician cannot and should not make any guesses how the music will effect a person he doesn't know. That's why a musician should try to be a listener himself to his own music both during creating it and during the reviewing of a finished piece. In the most rewarding case, music can open doors within the listener's psyche and lead them to a journey into mental and spiritual realms previously unknown or normally unreachable to the listener. After the last notes and sounds of an album have ceased, the listener can return to everyday physical world being richer with a strong experience, a new angle of thinking, an emotion, inspiration, rejuvenation, or strength. In such case the given piece of music is nothing short of a shamanistic spell, and thus a natural part of the religious continuum beginning from the dawn of Man that some individuals are yearning and seeking for otherworldly and/or holy experiences.

While the same piece which caused one listener to go through that, can mean nothing or arouse very different moods and meanings to another listener. As an example: A friend of mine described Monumentum's "*In Absentia Christi*" album as pure sonic desolation or death, while I have quite opposite reactions from it: exhilaration, euphoria, beautiful visions, a feeling of something very holy, possibly similar to what ancient pagan worshipper's of fertility gods might have experienced in their sexual rapture. However we both appreciate the said album deeply as a significant and strong work of art. In fact, a good question would be, what makes us see and feel certain genres or album in as similar way as we do. Perhaps something influenced by culture perhaps?

As a conclusion, I have to say I am personally as a listener yet to find a single stronger, more successful and more rewarding method to alter my mind to a higher or more spiritually responsive state than music. As a flipside because of this, music that I find void of creativity and challenge, music that seems to lie and lack integrity is utter poison to my ears. I much rather listen to silence than radio Pop. It seems incomprehensible how most people use music as an insipid way to fill background. I also often enjoy challenging myself to musically explore and study feelings and atmospheres that can be described as negative or scary. The way I see it, it's all to broaden my psyche and array of experiences alongside with more optimistic atmospheres. Music can be felt to express countless of things; from low to high, from strong to faint, from raw to sophisticated, from bitter to sweet, from understandable to esoteric, from mundane to spiritual. Music is food to imagination.



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