



# ART BEARS

CHRIS CUTLER

What is spiritual? A realm of experience to which we assign those perceptions of significance and autonomous power that seem to operate independently of all known physical laws - and that appear to originate as external facts, not products of our own sensoria. The spiritual is one of several repositories for the unaccountable and, as such, its sphere of influence has shrunk and fragmented in inverse proportion as the reach of scientific knowledge has grown: where an animistic world is one of pure spirit, a monotheistic society is one that attempts to reduce the realm of the spiritual to a monomaniacal and ideological abstraction even if, arguably, it is still instinctively animated by the same old primitive intimations of mystery. Thus, in recent centuries, the more that science has reduced uncertainty, the more spirit has been driven into exile, into realms increasingly dominated by ignorance, dogma, and superstition. And Art. To a post-enlightenment mind faced with the eternal problem of the categorization and expression of the inexpressible, only art remains inviolable, since art - and music in particular - continues to defy analysis or fragmentation. Art can still acceptably be inexplicable and ineffable, transcendent and metaphysical, since it demands nothing external to that which runs between maker and receiver. As an experience, music is in its essence irreducible - its parts can never account for its whole - and it lives, with no possibility of paraphrase, explanation, précis or translation, as its own best explanation of itself. To the extent that instances of music can invoke a total lack of comprehension, accompanied by profound feelings of meaning or affect, so they too may be inducted into the enclave of the spiritual.



**CHRIS CUTLER**  
**DRUMMER IN ART BEARS**