



# LEO PEREZ

I believe spirituality is a very complicated word. Nevertheless, it describes, or at least, evokes the most defining face of humanity: Self-Awareness. Science, religion, and of course, music are all traits of our collective quest of finding more about themselves, as a direct result of us become self-aware in the universe.

Whatever the reasons we humans have for creating art, music, and even science, there is no helping it. We have been doing it for thousands of years in the forms of myths, legends, and religions. It is all encoded in our intelligence. Again, there's no helping it. Therefore, is no coincidence that we often hear how composers can't stop making music. We humans can't help wonder what's out there, and why do we exist. Music is part of that "*encoding*" that characterizes our never-ending quest of finding the ultimate answer of the universe. Sometimes we want clear and concrete answers, and sometimes we just want to experience what our nature is. This second experience is what the spiritual significance of music is: the unavoidable searching and exploration of our consciousness and reality.

So music is a search? Sure it is. I often get the question as to how I come up with ideas for my compositions. I, being a Catholic-raised turned agnostic, have to say that there is no easy answer to that. However, in trying to answer it, there is a strong relevance to our original question: "*What do you believe is the spiritual significance of music?*" When I write music, or come up with ideas, there is nothing special happening, other than me letting the already-existing infinite combination of notes and pitches flow through my fingers. I don't feel any "*creative process*" per se; only a natural and ever-existing spirit that materializes through my chords, arrangements, and melodies.

Now, this prior paragraph sounds pretty esoteric doesn't it? In all honesty, it really couldn't be simpler and ordinary. I don't feel any genius flowing through my brain, or any kind of elevating meditation occurs. It's just like eating, or walking. It's a natural process that is certainly bigger than me, just like our human instincts are. It's always there, and I simply tap into it when I "*write*" music. In other words, we could say music is nothing else than the product of our exploration of the universe through sounds and structure. Just like a scientist observes with a telescope or microscope to explore nature, I just happen to use the piano instead. We both come up with answers and products, some are explanations from science, others are sensations and presences from art or music.

As simple as this may be, I believe this is precisely what the spiritual



significance of music is. When composers write, and when listeners experience music, we are all listening to a portion of our souls, as most belief systems understand it: something bigger than us that defines us in the universe. Music then, is one part of us that connects us with the universe, and shows us the multiple faces of it. I am not sure how far music will let us understand our universe, maybe it does help a great deal, but at least it's an experience of connectivity and something bigger than us in the broadest sense of the word. And if that isn't a spiritual experience, then I really don't know what else could be.



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