

## LIRE: POSITIVE INFLUENCE OF HARMONY ON THE PSYCHOLOGY

“Music therapy represents the professional use of music and its elements as interventions in the medical, educational and everyday environment, in working with individuals, groups, families or communities that strive to achieve optimal quality of life and improve physical, social, emotional, cognitive and spiritual health. Research, education and clinical practice in music therapy are based on professional standards set with regard to the cultural, social and political environment. ”

This is what you can find about music therapy, for example, on the entrance website of HUM, ie the Croatian Association of Music Therapists.

People who are a little better informed about music therapy will know that it appears in the middle of the last century. A much smaller number are aware of the fact that the knowledge about the positive effect of music on the mental and physical state of people dates back to antiquity.

While researching and performing early music for over half a century, I came across a number of reports from contemporaries that, for example, *minstrels* (my medieval colleagues) played for badly wounded knights in order to ease their pains. Thanks to my 40 years of research and playing of *lire*, I learned how the great Florentine philosopher, physician, writer, translator and - player of *lira da braccio* - Marsilio Ficino treated both himself and a number of his contemporaries, fellow humanists by playing this instrument. And that's exactly the way contemporary music therapy works; by active playing, i.e. self-healing or passive indulgence in the calming effect of harmonies. Both *liras* (*lira da braccio*, as its name implies, is held on the shoulder, similar to the violin; *lirone* or *lira da gamba* is a type of viol, which is held similar to the cello) are played exclusively (*lirone*) with chords from three to six tones or in the combination with a melody (*lira*), and their main role was once the chordal accompaniment of a singer or reciter, most often in one person, as a kind of Renaissance "one man band".

In their relatively long career of over two centuries (from about 1450 to about 1680) the *liras* had several peaks; the *lira da braccio* as an instrument of poets - singers (*improvvisatori*) and humanists (who considered it ideal for reviving ancient *lyre* and musical practice), later (at least until the end of the 16th century) through *intermedi* and as an instrument of professional court musicians. *Lirone*, or *lira da gamba*, from the early 16th century, “side by side” with the *lira*, in *intermedi*, later as an instrument of *basso continuo* in monody and finally in operas and oratorios, until the late 17th century. In efforts to revive early music, from the mid-20th century to the present day, *lire* have very early awake the interest of musicologists - theorists but with some delay that of fellow musicians - practitioners, starting with colleague Erin Headley in the late 70s. Despite the fact that for both instruments (obviously due to their improvisational role) except for a few shorter fragments no written repertoire has been preserved, the number of colleagues who have dealt with or still do so (primarily playing the *lirone*, and to a lesser extent the *lira da braccio*) in the last two decades has simply “exploded” and is on a steady rise.

From the so-called industrial revolution onwards, we are born, live and die, from generation to generation, in a world where the amount and volume of noise is constantly increasing. This primarily refers to noise against which we can do nothing (traffic noise of any kind, factories, etc.), to music that we listen to consciously or in the background as well as to the irritating ubiquitous sounds of computers and mobile phones we work with, make phone calls or (constantly) send and receive messages.

There are various solutions and pathways that can lead us to mental calm and physical relaxation.

What I offer to you with the CD "LYRA STATE OF MIND" I tried before (and after) everything on myself through years of experimenting, learning myself, through rehearsals, concerts and recording sessions with other colleagues. For years during and after the concerts, I was able to feel the reactions of various audience and to hear many times "how soothing these sounds are".

All this led me, therefore, to prepare this (first) selection, which is based mainly on recordings from my rich archive (recorded at concerts, in the studio or during rehearsals), and to a lesser extent on recently created recordings. This time, I intentionally omitted all recordings with voice, voices, or other instruments to make the effect of the harmonies (including aliquot tones) as effective as possible.

I believe that these harmonies will have the best effect if you give them a chance by listening to them carefully for a few minutes a day. Once you open the "door" to them, they will also serve as music "in the background", to which you can read, think or meditate ...

I hope that this small gift of mine will give you at least some satisfaction and maybe help to find a peace and reduce the intensity of daily "stress" of any kind and cause. Especially important in the time of this unfortunate pandemic, which in itself is for all of us (regardless to which generation we belong) a source of great problems, unrest and fears.