



Silence

SMILES

THE HYMNS ENSEMBLE

colophon

concept & production: Harry van Dalen

recording: Frans de Rond, Michael van Polen

sound engineering: Frans de Rond, Michael van Polen, Harry van Dalen

editor & art direction: Kees Schreuders

translators: Lila Lundquist, Bob Snoijink

Silence SMILES

disc 1 **Hymn To The Silence** 52:54

disc 2 **Call & Response** 48:24

THE HYMNS ENSEMBLE:

Hans Karssen - didgeridoo

Gé Bartman - cello

Norma Brooks - bass

Eddy Koopman - percussion

Aleksandra Anisimowicz - soprano

Fred Smalbrugge - piano & choirmaster

Camerata Fectionata - chamber choir

Atzko Kohashi - piano

Michael Telapary - native American flutes

Frans de Rond - soundscapes

Spirit Connection - gongs & singing bowls

Listening

The sound meditations included on Silence SMILES are invitations to turn inward with sound. We recognise the external world only too well in the form of enticing and dominant ideas about ourselves, the other and the world around us. Our internal self is characterised by simple, impersonal stillness, something we often fail to recognise in the bustle of our daily lives.

These meditations are designed to redirect your attention from hearing to unconditional and objectless listening, and to observe the subtle experiencing itself, rather than the experiences. And to losing yourself in the sound of stillness.

Initially, while listening to these pieces, your mind will label instruments, sounds and feelings, in an attempt to form an image. It will be wanting to hear music. But once you transcend conceptual thinking and place your attention on undefined sound, you'll notice that thinking becomes less persistent, and gradually becomes still, until only an impersonal presence remains.

Don't dwell on this for too long, or your mind will be eager to claim this as understanding. It is in fact the miraculous, unnameable, that which supersedes and transcends all thinking. We recognise this as our primordial home.

Hymn To The Silence

Hymn to the Silence starts with undivided stillness. You hear a gong as the first cause and breath, the imaginary gateway between the formless and the creative. The gong continues to reverberate until it gradually takes form as sound, and then it unfolds slowly into a multidimensional, colorful creation. And just as everything in creation comes and goes, the manifested world after cathartic ecstasy, will return to the background of silent presence with a sigh of relief.

'Hymn To The Silence' is performed by cello, contrabass, didgeridoo, choir, percussion, soprano, native American flute, gongs, crystal bowls as well as meditation bowls from the Himalayas..

Call & Response

In this piece we hear the stillness, the oneness that conducts a dialogue with itself, which causes creation. In a game of call and response, question and answer, the undisbursed stillness is always present as a supportive background in the peace and space between words and sound.

The pianist Atzko Kohashi had never performed with gongs. The idea came about spontaneously. She answers the percussion sounds, gongs and scales with her playing. The mesmerising sound conversation operates on the thin dividing line between music and sound, and what's most remarkable is that this recording only has one take.

'Call & Response' was performed on piano, percussion, gongs, crystal bowls as well as meditation bowls from the Himalayas.

Reading

Just as you can listen and look without naming things, you can also read by bringing your attention back to the act of reading itself. Thoughts and feelings will respond naturally. Follow them without dwelling on their content too closely. Observe the game without judgement.

The fragments in this book were selected for their eloquence. Some will speak to you and unite your outer and inner, some will not. Follow whatever resonates within and realise that they are mere pointers to stimulate reawakening of the primordial self.

If you can allow yourself to reunite with that primordial self, your eyes and ears will open up to the peace and space of unconditional, all-encompassing love. Realise that there is not a 'somebody' doing that. No one here and no one there. Isn't it amazing?

The Hymns Ensemble

The Hymns Ensemble is a group of professional musicians and audio-adepts who are regularly invited by Harry van Dalen (Spirit Connection) for *the Manifest & the Unmanifest sound concerts* and the *Sound Experience music meditations* of Spirit Connection.

Silence SMILES

Members of the Hymns Ensemble were invited to the studio in varying combinations, and at different moments to take part in this Silence SMILES adventure. There wasn't much of a framework. The main idea was to focus on making room for stillness, sound and music. The intention was to surrender to the natural freedom of creation without too much interference from reason and technology, to be inspired in and by the moment, and to transcend the personal. In other words, to come home.

This explains the title, Silence SMILES, the stillness with which impersonal love invites you in with laughter.

PS: Only acoustic instruments were used. The CD's dynamic is quite broad, so be careful with the volume, quiet is quiet and loud is loud.

Your Self, Aware Presence, knows no resistance to any appearance and, as such, is happiness itself; like the empty space of a room it cannot be disturbed and is, therefore, peace itself; like this page, it is intimately one with whatever appears on it and is thus love itself; and like water that is not affected by the shape of a wave, it is pure freedom.

Causeless joy, imperturbable peace, love that knows no opposite and freedom at the heart of all experience this is your ever-present nature under all circumstances.

[Rupert Spira]

PRESENT

There is neither past nor future. There is only the present. Yesterday was the present to you when you experienced it, and tomorrow will be also the present when you experience it. Therefore, experience takes place only in the present, and beyond experience nothing exists.

[Ramana Maharshi]

NO OPPOSITE

NO PRIVACY

We seldom realize, for example that our most private thoughts and emotions are not actually our own. For we think in terms of languages and images which we did not invent, but which were given to us by our society.

[Alan Watts]

IT IS I

If there is any lover in the world, O Muslim; it is I.
If there is any believer, infidel, or Christian hermit; it is I.

The wine, the cup-bearer, the musician, the instrument and the music, the beloved, the candle, the liquor and the inebriation; it is I.

The seventy-two religious sects in the world, do not really exist. I swear by God every religious sect; it is I.

Earth, air, water and fire: do you know what they are? Earth, air, water and fire and the soul as well; it is I.

Truth and falsehood, good and evil, pleasure and suffering, beginning and end, Knowledge, learning, asceticism, devotion and faith; it is I.

Be assured that the fire of hell and its flames, paradise, Eden and the angels of heaven; it is I.

Heaven and earth and all they hold: angels, demons and men; it is I.

[Rumi]

POINTER

THE EYE

The eye cannot see it;
the mind cannot grasp it.

The deathless Self has neither caste nor race,
Neither eyes nor ears nor hands nor feet.
Sages say this Self is infinite in the great
and in the small, everlasting and changeless.
The source of life.

[Upanishads]

Ram Tzu knows this...
The Truth is unspeakable. It can only be pointed at.
The more elaborate and ornate the sign post
The more easily do you mistake it for the destination.
Except for you, oh so spiritual ascetics.
For you... the plainer and simpler the sign post.
The more easily do you mistake it for the destination.

[Ram Tzu]

NOTHINGNESS

My music was always written after I had been silent in the most literal sense of the word. When I speak of silence, I mean the nothingness out of which God created the world. That is why, ideally, musical silence is sacred. Silence is not simply given to us, but in order that we may draw sustenance from it. This sustenance is no less valuable to me than the air I breathe.

If you approach silence with love, music may result.

[Arvo Part]

VOID

The Void is not of the nature of a black abyss or a bottomless pit.

Rather is its nature 'vast and expansive like space itself'. It is apprehended as 'serene, marvellous, all-pure, brilliant and all-inclusive'.

Above all does it partake of the nature of light.

And it is not anything.

For Void is Mind Itself, and Mind Itself is Void.

[Wei Wu Wei]

Silence SMILES

disc 1 - Hymn To The Silence	52:54
disc 2 - Call & Response	48:24

THE HYMNS ENSEMBLE:

Hans Karssen - didgeridoo

Gé Bartman - cello

Norma Brooks - bass

Eddy Koopman - percussion

Aleksandra Anisimowicz - soprano

Fred Smalbrugge - piano & choirmaster

Camerata Fectionata - chamber choir

Atzko Kohashi - piano

Michael Telapary - native American flutes

Frans de Rond - soundscapes

Spirit Connection - gongs & singing bowls