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Thomas Moore
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REFLECTIONS

Forty Years of Healing Music

And the Grammy that almost was

ON JANUARY 4, 1975, I recorded my first album, now known as *Chakra Suite*. On this 40th anniversary, I'd like to share a few thoughts on the "Quiet Revolution" in contemporary instrumental/healing music that this recording helped give birth to. It feels appropriate to expand upon the acceptance speech I would have given had I won the 2012 Grammy for Best New Age Album.

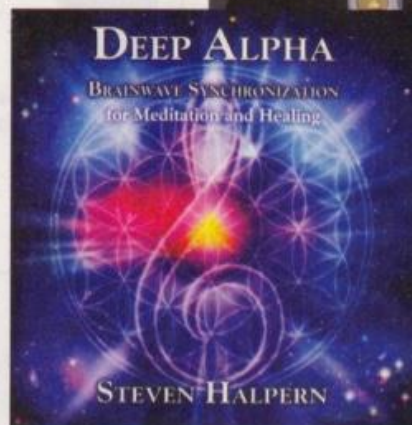
It is indeed an honor to stand here before you to receive this year's award for my meditative album, *Deep Alpha*. This award signifies a breakthrough in our industry, which traditionally hasn't valued the healing power of instrumental music. This is a tradition that goes back thousands of years, long before "recorded history."

Some would say that *Deep Alpha* is the first truly meditative and healing album to win a Grammy. Historically, most winners have not been openly concerned with the therapeutic effect of new combinations of tone, sound, and silence. Just last year, the award went to an album of cover versions of classic pop tunes like "What's It All About, Alfie?"

I would suggest to you that this year, what it's about is the *Alpha*, the alpha brainwave state associated with meditation and inner peace.

It's also not "All about the bass." Instead, it's about the *space*—between the notes, the gap between thoughts, where we can align and attune to fields of infinite potential, as well as to the subtler Music of the Spheres. It's about being up-front in harnessing the healing powers of music. That's why I refer to my recordings as "Sonic Spiritual Technology for the 21st Century."

Please don't misunderstand me. I like music with a good dance beat as much as the next guy. In my earlier career, playing trumpet, guitar, and bass with jazz and R&B bands, I learned how to move audiences with rhythmic grooves and power chords. The music of John Coltrane, Miles Davis, Jimi Hendrix, and the Beatles inspired me on my own quest to discover a New Age of healing music.



These genres are not mutually exclusive. In the stressful world we live in, however, it's more important than ever for each of us to have effective, enjoyable, safe, and legal resources to help us stay balanced in this out-of-tune world. Meditative music, delivered via CD or digital download, can be just what the doctor ordered.

In fact, when I released *Chakra Suite* forty years ago, my largest initial audience was among holistic doctors like Dr. C. Norman Shealy, who prescribed my music to patients to reduce their stress. Most media coverage and reviews of my albums appeared in health and lifestyle sections of newspapers and magazines.

While music reviewers had difficulty understanding my music, insightful writers like Bob Doerschuk, Jim Aikin, Lee Underwood, and Don Heckman understood that my goal was not merely to "entertain" my audience, but to "entrain their brains" to the higher octaves of consciousness by orchestrating tone and timbre to automatically slow down their brainwaves into the *alpha* and *theta* ranges in which our natural healing energies are amplified.

Relaxation only happens in the present moment. It doesn't happen in the future. Most classical music, for

instance, was not composed for relaxation and healing. The compositional structure hooks your mind into an unconscious analysis of where the music is going. That's fine for the emotional catharsis of a classical symphony or the blues, but that "anticipation response" is precisely what can make it difficult to effectively relax while listening. Part of the reason the music works as well as it does to harmonize body, mind, and spirit is its lack of a strong melody and rhythm. There's less focus on the music and musician "out there" and more interest in the introspective spaces where the music can take you when you listen with your heart.

Scientific research has proven that music is a "carrier wave of consciousness," a phrase I coined in 1976. The uplifting effects of music go way beyond what became known as the Mozart Effect, as well as considering melody as the most important element. The international acclaim my music has received demonstrates that when you listen with an open mind and an open heart, the more subtle, magical alchemy of ambient song forms highlight what is truly "new" in New Age music.

In closing, I want to thank two extraordinary musicians who join me on *Deep Alpha*, Paul McCandless (oboe) and Michael Manring (bass). And I also want to acknowledge my unseen band of co-composers, whose inspiration continues to inspire me, in the long tradition that includes Mozart, Liszt, and as he writes in his new autobiography, Carlos Santana.

Artists have always been, as Ezra Pound called them, "the antennae of the race." As more musicians become instruments of peace, we radiate those vibrations of peace and harmony out into the world, and in so doing, contribute to creating a better world for all of us.

—STEVEN HALPERN