



The Harp Therapy Journal

Vol. 27, No. 4

Winter 2022-23

The International Harp Therapy Program celebrates 30 years and changing of the guard

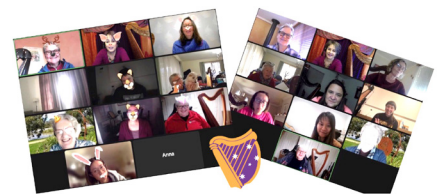
by Christina Tourin

An amazing celebration took place on the Isle of IONA October, 2022. I was so blessed to have my leaders, teachers, and students share in my retirement from the administration of the IHTP. After 30 years, I look forward to teaching, promoting and having time to compose more music and lessons with new technology. Six outstanding leaders with their assistant music theory coaches will continue the dynamic portion of the IHTP - that of Resonant Kinesiology: finding and implementing the perfect sound that resonates with the human body and emotions. Research at various hospitals has proven that tailoring music to the individual results in beneficial outcomes. When a certified therapeutic harp practitioner is able to create his or her music through beautifully crafted improvisation patterns, is when the magic of our art comes alive. By matching the five qualities for individualizing music for a person, one has the tools to create the most exquisite experience.



**5th Anniversary Cohort
IHTP-HK Module 2**

2020! Working with groups like Harps of Comfort, and continuing on with on-line teaching, we saw the importance of our work to those who were isolated. However, it was the nurses and doctors (bless them!), who realized it was so often the music that was the saving grace during their work. We learned how to make the best of technology to keep on going. I know our dear friends Kay Gardner and Don Campbell, not to mention so many who walked in the same footsteps bringing forth both the science and spirituality with sound frequencies, would be so pleased to see how the work has continued onwards. We witness the capabilities of how these frequencies have changed the medical world. Sound frequencies to relieve gallstones, and to aid those with Parkinson's by using sympathetic vibrations to relieve disorder, are just the tip of the iceberg. We go so much deeper with the whole human mammal and living experience with our work and knowledge. What a privilege it has been to live in the time and generation I have been granted! And I am sure that if we continue to pave our path, the younger generation will take the art further on in the future.



When I was very very young, I am told that my very first word was GO. "GO, Daddy GO!" My love for seeing other cultures never ceases. Fortunately, my formative years of practicing both keyboard and harp have allowed me to see the world on a shoestring! Even in my busking days, looking into the penniless — well — let's say dollarless hat, proved to be more than making money in the world. From living in a tent to building a room in a barn (many of my students can remember coming and having their lesson there!), it was always about the music. The music that would eventually flow down from the stars into my fingers. To study, to help others be able to flow with the sounds on their harps meant more than the loaf of bread that night! (I learned to bake bread!) My life has been so incredibly rich and I look forward to continuing with sharing what I can. So many of us who have led this path have had to grapple with how to 'let go' and we have all been able to pass on the work to others. Therefore, I introduce to you one of the most fantastic teams ever!

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*Wishing you a
happy, healthful and
harmonious New Year!*

I just got around to reading the latest *HTJ* [Su. 2022]. You are a shining star, and your work is brilliant. With the *HTJ*, you bring therapeutic musicians together with inspiring and expansive articles and lovely sheet music. Thank you.

Maryalice Little
Painted Post, NY

Thanks for all the great articles.

Sable Shaw,
Carson City, NV

There are numerous therapeutic music students and practitioners who receive encouragement and support from the *HTJ*. You offer a good balance of research, information, camaraderie, encouragement, and support.

Mary Stevens
Havre, MT

... Thank you for what you do ... I love the Turkish lullaby piece [W. 2017-18 *HTJ*, p.11] and have written some words that I sing with that melody. I recently noticed a lot of material in that issue that I really appreciate even more today and look forward to reading again. Love reading the *Journal* when it arrives.

Barbara Irvin
Ashland, OR

... Thank you for continuing to write and publish the *Journal*. I read each issue cover to cover.

I especially enjoy your compositions and arrangements, Sarajane. "What the World Needs Now" and "Maid of the Mourne Shore" come to mind first. Your choice of harmony gives them an added "ear tweak" that many harp arrangements lack.

Melissa Collins
Owego, NY

"Sound or vibration is the most powerful force in the universe. Music is a divine art, to be used not only for pleasure but as a path to Awakening."

~ Yogananda

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Expanding VAHT in Europe

by Marianne Gubri

During a journey to Hong Kong for the World Harp Congress in 2017, I had the chance to meet in person a wonderful harp therapist colleague, Carmen Lee (CHTP and VAHT trainer), who offered me a VAHT session in her Harpmony studio. As a harpist and therapeutic musician, I was trained to feel the vibration of the soundbox of my instruments along my body and my arms. During singing training and Nada Yoga training I had plenty of experience with the feeling of the sound inside my chest, my throat, and my head. This time, it was different: the vibration was inside my body, in places where I never felt vibration in the past. I will remember forever the sensation of feeling my organs, especially my heart vibrating through the water mat and resonating to the frequencies that the VAHT practitioner was offering me.

Since then, I decided I wanted to learn about vibroacoustics with the harp. While I was speaking with Silvia Maserati, Italian music therapist, CMCP and VAHT graduate, I understood that it was possible to start the program online, which better suited my activities in Europe. Studying the VAHT Training Course® home study portion has been a wonderful travel into archetypes, sound properties, vibrational medicine and VAHT devices. There is still a lot of knowledge that I would like to elaborate on in the future, especially the connection between sound and the energetic system. We then split the Practicum portion of the program into two days in two cities: on the 12th of July 2022, Silvia Maserati offered me the use of her devices, a bed with two transducers and her two harps, a Telenn Kadiou Camac 34-string and a Llanera Camac Harp in a studio in Milan, Italy.

The training was supervised online by Sarajane Williams, who first advised me on how to start a session: we needed to keep track of every patient with a treatment record, asking for his/her tension pain levels and mood levels and mapping the resonant frequencies of his/her body with a simple but practical and complete method. Then we were able to concentrate on improvising or playing with specific notes and rhythms or techniques to match the preferred frequencies shown by the client. I received a VAHT session while Silvia was playing and then offered a session to Silvia and to another volunteer.

I discovered that every tiny movement on the harp or on the wood (especially on the soundbox) is amplified by the mic and the amplifier itself and produces a sort of shock to the client's ears and body. This gave me the awareness to pay more attention to my movements and to the way I would play the harp: sweetness, love, delicacy became the words I kept in mind while playing. The touch on our strings is the touch the client feels on his ears and on his body, like a real sound massage. I had this awareness in my previous harp therapy studies and practices, but in this case, the effect was more intense.

As a VAHT receiver, I felt that a high volume from the device (amp and pre-amp) can be disturbing for our ears and our body; low volume can sometimes make the vibration disappear from the table and the body doesn't feel anymore the movement while we can feel the sound and the vibration outside of the body. I found this especially clear with higher frequencies (above A 440Hz) that were moving around my head. The sound was hitting my ears only from the acoustic sound of the harp. I will come back later to these specific sensations, as some of my volunteers felt them too.

In the meanwhile, it was time to create my own VAHT devices: thanks to the Training Course information and to Silvia's experienced advice, I was able to ask my sound engineer Roberto Passuti to build a central unit (with KK Sound pick up and a t.amp E-400 stereo amplifier). He helped me to build a portable wooden massage bed and a chair with two pillows adding 4 Dayton Audio TT25-16 PUCK tactile transducers.

On July 18, 2022, I started my second day of practicum in the Arpeggi school studio in Bologna, with a celtic Ana Salvi 38-string harp and an Aurora Salvi pedal harp. The training was supervised online by Sarajane Williams. With the four volunteers, two adult women and two adult men, I was able to observe a lot of different experiences that I will summarize now. Some of this information might become the axis of new research in future.

The first most interesting point is probably that for all four participants, their tension and pain levels decreased in nearly all parts of the body. On a scale from 1 (very relaxed) to 9 (very painful), they all reported a decrease of pain sensation: in some areas of the body pain level was from 3-4 before the session, and 1-2 after the session.

The frequencies are not perceived in the same ways by a different person: some feel more the lower frequencies (mainly from C 32.703 Hz to C 65.406 Hz) while other people feel also the higher frequencies (above A 440Hz). The preferred frequencies are mainly the middle low frequencies (from C 32.703



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Harp therapy: Reflections on collections

by Sarajane Williams

“Ms. L.” died last spring – a month before her 92nd birthday. She literally left behind a whole room filled with harp figurines and stained glass panels, angels with harps and lyres, harp music boxes, pill boxes, snow globes, pillows and coverlets adorned with harps, and a Christmas tree with nearly 500 harp ornaments that remained in place year-round. That was only one of her many collections – another room was filled with giraffe statues, pillows, clothes, mugs, toys, a Christmas tree with giraffe ornaments, and anything else imaginable that could be adorned with a giraffe.

By mid-July, both of the themed rooms had finally achieved a semblance of order after David, her “handyman and grounds-keeper” who also works in the medical arena, and I ferreted out and sorted such items from drawers, packed windowsills, closets, trunks, and boxes and bags that were strewn waist-deep throughout the entire mid-century ranch home, its attic, garage, and basement. Many more mountains of distinct collections emerged. For instance, one dealt with travel souvenirs, photos, and ephemera, while another with numerous boxes of greetings cards, wrapping paper, and a wide assortment of duplicate gifts that she kept on hand to distribute as needed. Her costume jewelry filled a huge dining room table plus several large jewelry boxes. A closet housed religious teaching materials, church memorabilia, and at least a dozen Bibles – some enclosed with handwritten daily scriptures. The basement became the repository of mounds of Christmas decor and dozens of nativity scenes.

“Ms. L.,” born in 1930, was the only child of a family doctor who operated his practice out of their stylish, then new, circa-1963, well-built, stone home. Her mother was a teacher. From an early age, “Ms. L.” showed great leadership promise and, like her mother, was groomed in Lutheran evangelical studies. She graduated from a nearby women’s college in 1952 – a time when less than 25 percent of bachelor’s degrees from U.S. colleges were awarded to women. After receiving a master’s degree in social work in 1960, she began as a children’s program director and concluded as an independent living program director at a facility associated with the Lutheran Home. Meanwhile, after the death of her father and during her mother’s later illness, “Ms. L.” moved to her parents’ home, which she kept in immaculate condition – with David’s help. Before retiring at age 75, she continued to work as an admissions social service coordinator at a Lutheran retirement community, where she loved to joke and provide entertainment for her beloved residents. On occasion, she might be seen there wearing a clown suit at a picnic or wearing an evening gown to play her pedal harp for an afternoon performance.

“Ms. L.” never married nor had children and remained dedicated to the church as a member and Sunday School teacher throughout her long life. Her life was one of service to others. In fact, at one time, she simultaneously served as a power-of-attorney (POA) for five people. One of them was “Ms. D.,” who taught both “Ms. L.” and me to play the harp. After the death of “Ms. D.’s” husband, “Ms. L.” became her travel buddy, and they enjoyed many cruises together. But “Ms. L.” had traveled a lot before then. Her neatly stacked boxes, each containing the airline tickets, travel brochures, museum ticket stubs, receipts, postcards, and diaries of an international journey, allowed me to travel back in time. I could imagine her checking in with several large suitcases, while wearing a feather hat, heels, nylon stockings, and a colorful designer suit and gloves to board a luxurious Pan AM flight, where she and her parents would be served a glass of wine and a delicious, full-course meal with silverware,

linen and fine china. “Ms. L.” traveled extensively and despite many medical ailments later in life, took a solo trip to India while in her mid-80s.

She studied and savored so many

**“The least of things with a meaning
is worth more in life than the
greatest of things without it.”**

– Carl Jung

aspects of life and had an excellent memory up until the last few years, when she was cared for by live-in caretakers. I was finally able to get a glimpse into what was important or of value to “Ms. L.” by going through her many detailed lists and her “stuff.” I wish she had shared more about her family’s history and ongoing support and fascination for Pennsylvania German cultural traditions, as evidenced by boxes of newspaper clippings, brochures, and programs that featured the local Deitch dialect. But like many strong, caretaking women, she hid behind a jovial persona that focused on others rather than revealing much about her own needs. She was there for everyone else, but who was there for her?

“Ms. L.” and I were not close friends, but had an unspoken appreciation and respect for each other, our work, and the arts – especially the harp. We both cared for our beloved harp teacher during her final days in our own ways. I was “the soup lady” and “Ms. L.” was the administrative POA. Perhaps my occasional soup deliveries to “Ms. L.” during her final years influenced her unanticipated decision to name David and me in her will as the persons who would receive the contents of her home. We were not executors, and despite a few distant cousins and friends who received specified gifts, the home would be sold, and the estate would be divided amongst several charitable organizations. Despite the tremendous amount of work required,

Continued next page

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David and I decided that everything in that house should go where it could best be used and not end up in a landfill. We were so grateful for the help of a few of our family members and friends, who sorted and packed truckloads of items that were donated to places like the Salvation Army or Goodwill. Other carloads of “stuff” went to some of my students, friends, local historical societies, churches, charities, and nursing homes. One of my students accepted “Ms. L.’s” spinet piano. “Ms. L.” had given her pedal harp to a family friend a few years earlier.

One vendor purchased some of her furniture at local auction prices. Another auction company gleaned whatever items would sell – for pennies on the dollar. This included several large closets of vintage clothing and fashion trends that transcended nearly a century. Her bedroom housed fur and feather hats, fur coats, evening gowns, long gloves, shoes, 90 purses, dresses, wool suits, sweaters... the list went on and on. The auctioneers also amassed piles of other items in the other rooms – for David and me to pack.

After “Ms. D.’s” death, all of her large boxes of music, photos, programs, and family photos had been stashed in a corner of “Ms. L.’s” basement until they were recently unearthed and now (temporarily) fill a large portion of a room in my home. A few years ago, “Ms. L.” had given me “Ms. D.’s” circa-1920, gold Lyon & Healy 23 harp, which is in dire need of repair and is on display in our local history museum. Now, what shall I do with all that stuff that has so much meaning and value – to me? I must ask myself if I’ve become a harp hoarder.

Well, there’s a fine line between collecting and hoarding. Some collections can be large, but they usually aren’t cluttered, and they don’t cause distress at the thought of getting rid of the items. At the other end of the spectrum, hoarding is considered a mental illness if it meets DSM-5 criteria and begins to cause significant distress or impairment in one or more areas of a person’s life.

Some theorists believe that hoarding could be due to genetics or stressful life events like a tragedy that might have resulted in the loss of items or a loved one. Others believe it to be a compensation for unmet belonging needs. As a result, hoarders often have trouble forming meaningful relationships with others. Their possessions often become more valuable to them than people. Regardless of the value, their treasured items might remind them of happier times with significant people or pets.

There are three major types of relationships that hoarders typically have with their possessions. The first is a *sentimental* relationship in which an item is used as a representation of an emotional experience that they wish to keep alive. Sometimes it represents the loss of the importance, role, or identity they once had. This begs the question, “Are historians hoarders?”

Second is an *esthetic* relationship which is caused by a strong dopamine rush when looking at an item you find esthetically valuable – like a harp – that you really want to keep! Despite any stressful decision-making, it calls you and you feel an overwhelming pressure to have it now and not part with it later. Similarly, when one appreciates the artistic value, the composer, creativity, and effort that went into publishing music that is now old and crumbling, it’s difficult to part with it.

Third is an *intrinsic* relationship in which the item itself is felt to have excessive current or potential importance. In addition, the person might have a strong commitment to avoid waste. “Ms. L.” was born to depression era parents who were also of Pennsylvania German origin. They saved everything and wasted nothing!

I admit that I’m guilty of all three relationships! Over the years, nearly everything in my life, including my persona, has become associated with the archetype of the harp in one way or another. So now, I’m beginning to feel at risk of becoming a hoarder, but it hasn’t yet interfered with my functioning or relationships. In fact, some of those possessions have enriched my relationships with others. Harp students, *HTJ* subscribers, music audiences, and historians seem to have benefitted from my relationship with the harp, and so I will continue to hone my “collections.”

Hoarding can be private and gradually develop over time. In “Ms. L.’s” case, her normally meticulously ordered household began to fill with items that she compulsively purchased. As she became less able to manage her affairs, shopping created distraction and comfort, but cluttered her home. In addition, bags of unopened mail, catalogues, giraffes, harp ornaments, photos, and unused medical supplies filled her floors. After retirement and as her health declined, she became more isolated and unable to identify her own needs. Then all of her ‘collections’ began to fill her inner and outer space of comfort and take over her world. As thistles grew in her once-well-manicured yard, and while she was swindled and virtually forgotten, there was no turning back. She tried to maintain control and refused help. In hindsight, “Ms. L.” had a life well-lived, although largely forgotten by those who benefitted the most.

One might ask, “Why and for whom am I collecting/saving this stuff?” “Do I collect to express love of (or relationship with) the self, others, or both – past, present, and future?” A reflection of, or resonance with, the part of self that loves such things might provide a sense of meaning and hone a recognition of one’s calling, one’s connection to a culture, larger collective, or spirituality.

Gautam Buddha taught that happiness can be achieved by fulfilling our responsibilities without being attached to our desires or possessions. The harp has long been viewed as a transitional object between Heaven and Earth – it is a sky-hook to the other realm. But a Buddhist analogy teaches, “I am a finger pointing to the moon. Don’t look at me; look at the moon,” and redirects attention from the object to the source.

Aside from being a road to enlightenment, ‘harp therapy’ can sometimes come in the form of purchasing a new harp, music, an ornament or harp earrings for oneself. Your harp and music collections are tools that can bring joy to you and your listeners. But ultimately, it’s important to discern how attached you are to your harp and collections, so that you don’t lose sight of your inner self amongst the hoard. ♥

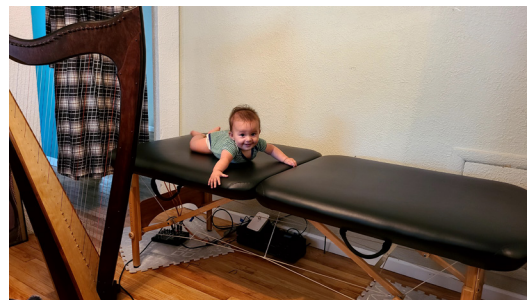
Beth VanWinkle certified as VAHT practitioner

by Mary Stevens

Beth VanWinkle has completed her training as a certified vibroacoustic harp therapy practitioner (VAHTP). It was my honor and privilege to oversee the practicum section of Beth's VAHT training. In spite of the exhaustion that comes with being a new mother, she was able to complete the VAHT sessions and was very effective and professional in all of those sessions.

Beth lives in Pueblo, Colorado and completed the home-study portion of the course during the early days of the COVID19 lockdown. As a speech language pathologist who worked at a hospital, learning about the body's response to frequencies and live harp music was a hope-filled escape from the heaviness of the realities of COVID19.

After completing the home-study portion of her training, Beth's journey to certification was interrupted by a pregnancy, the blessed birth of her son, and then supply issues which delayed the delivery of her soundtable. The practicum section of her VAHT training was finally completed in August of 2022 under the



Baby VanWinkle enjoys the VAHT soundtable

supervision of Mary Stevens, CCM, VAHTP, who lives in Montana. Most of the practicum sessions were completed using Mary's portable VAHT system when she incorporated a stop in Colorado with another personal trip in May, then two sessions were completed online through Zoom after Beth's soundtable arrived.

During the practicum sessions, Beth learned to be present with the patient and respond to the patient's reactions to the vibrations. Beth used a five-point scale to register the recipients' pain and stress levels before and after each session. Her recipients consistently reported significant decreases in pain and stress levels after the session. Being fairly new to the harp (she purchased her first harp in 2019), she was impressed with the effectiveness of playing music that was not complicated. The vibrations of the harp and the VAHT system did the work even without advanced harp skills.

Beth has noticed that sound therapy is being frequently talked about in the media and in professional healthcare circles, and it is entering the mainstream. She is hoping to be able to incorporate VAHT treatments into her speech therapy work with head and neck cancer patients during chemo/radiation treatments. While she is waiting for the future to unfold, she regularly utilizes her soundtable with recorded music to release tension and stress in her own body as part of her self-care regimen as a new mother. 🍷

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VAHT, from page 5

Hz to C 65.406 Hz). The pedal harp offers more profound and lower sounds that seemed to vibrate and please the volunteers more than the celtic harp.

I am not sure if these preferences are linked to personal conditions and personal resonances or to the specific volume of the devices we adjusted according to the volunteer's taste. I also wondered if men had lower resonance frequencies than women but the cases I observed showed me that it is not always true. Moreover, theoretically lower frequencies are felt in the lower part of the body (legs, lower back...) and higher frequencies are felt the highest part of the body (head, neck, shoulders...). Actually, there are some people who experienced very different resonant points in their body corresponding to a non-regular frequency progression. This experience inspired me to pay more attention to concrete results than looking to apply a theory on our bodies. It is especially important that our next experiences might be followed by the scientific, openminded and objective method that Sarajane and her colleagues shared with their work.

I observed that people with specific pain (one volunteer in one arm and the other in one knee) did not feel the vibration in the wounded area. They felt the frequency in the opposite part of the body; it is an interesting point to deepen specific disturbance not known from the patient himself and could be an interesting way to do diagnosis for VAHT trained doctors, nurses, or vibrational therapists. It may explain energetic blocks too.

Other volunteers may experience an increase of pain during the session. N. arrived with abdominal pain: after a moment in which the assessment of the frequencies seemed to amplify the pain, she expressed a deep release and lowered stress. This release at first amplified her stomach pain and then she cried and let go tears of joy and pleasure and sensed the aim and direction she wanted to take in her life. For J., the pain manifested first with a light headache and daze just after the session. She finally took a time to assess herself. The day after, she told me that it has been a long time since she slept for so long and so profoundly.

The first stage of assessment in VAHT technique (especially pain or stress release) may surprise or even scare a trainee without much experience, and I was glad to have Sarajane supervising me. I understand the importance of having a referred professional doctor or psychologist to call in case of emergency.

Another interesting case is the one of F., who at first felt that some frequencies were resonating "outside of his body" above his knees, below his hips and around his head. During the improvisation, he said that he felt his body floating without any gravity sensation. This description is very near to my own experience: with my actual knowledge, it could be the manifestation of one of our subtle bodies experiencing vibration. It is a very delicate and subtle sensation that gives warmth and vitality, and relaxes at the same time. In my modest opinion, VAHT technique may open many doors for new therapies and diagnoses as it gives a clear and precise sensation of the subtle body to the patient himself, a very rare occasion in the field of vibrational techniques.

Lastly, a volunteer, M., experienced the vision of water waves over the sand and psychedelic colour waves during his session. These are similar to the pictures of cyclic sounds, mandalas, yantra and rose windows of medieval cathedrals.

A few days later, on July, 28, 2022, Silvia Maserati came on a retreat near Piacenza to present VAHT to a Level 2 group of students of the International Harp Therapy Program.

After a very complete presentation of VAHT origins, methods, mechanisms of action and possible applications, she kindly offered to all of the 14 participants a chance to try VAHT both as a receiver and a performer. Seeing the faces and the physical movements and expressions of the students was clear evidence of their feeling of pleasure, tranquillity, relaxation and surprise.

As we were working on resonance during the module with Christina Tourin, they had a direct experience of the effects of sound on the physical body, and how the



Marianne Gubri provides VAHT

vibrations can then lead to emotions or thoughts. It was an important discovery and unique sensation for most of them. We will definitely repeat this kind of presentation and experience with the next IHTP training in France and Italy.

As for my future as a VAHT trainer, I would like to invite new clients in my studio in Bologna to experience this pure sound massage; I would also love to bring VAHT during a holistic retreat that I conduct in several centres in Italy. My aim is also to include VAHT presentations and experiences during IHTP or other therapeutic program sessions.

A special thank you to all the people I met during this training: Sarajane Williams, Silvia Maserati, Carmen Lee and Roberto Passuti who directed me to the place I wanted to be: a place made of care and service, love and beauty, sound and harp.♥

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Spring Flow

Deborah Mak

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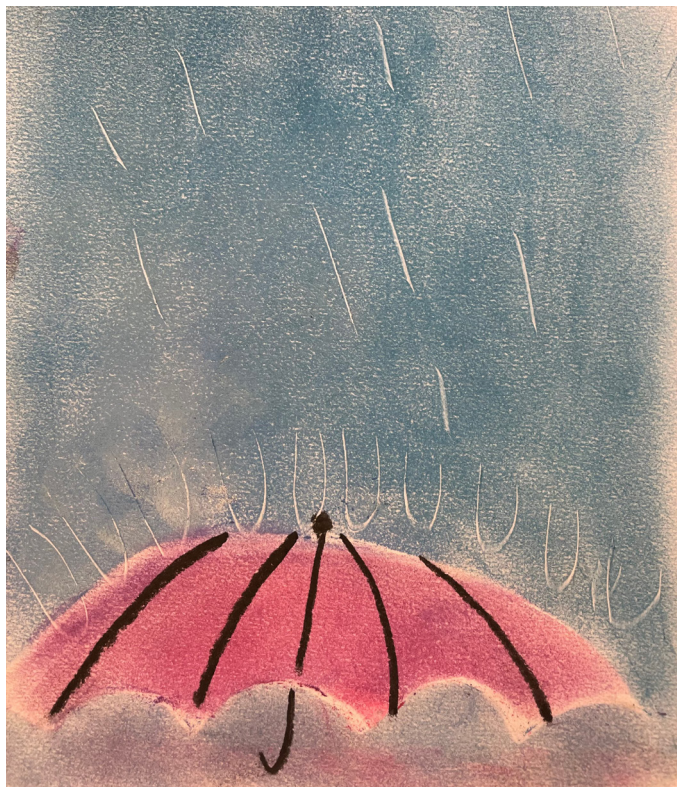
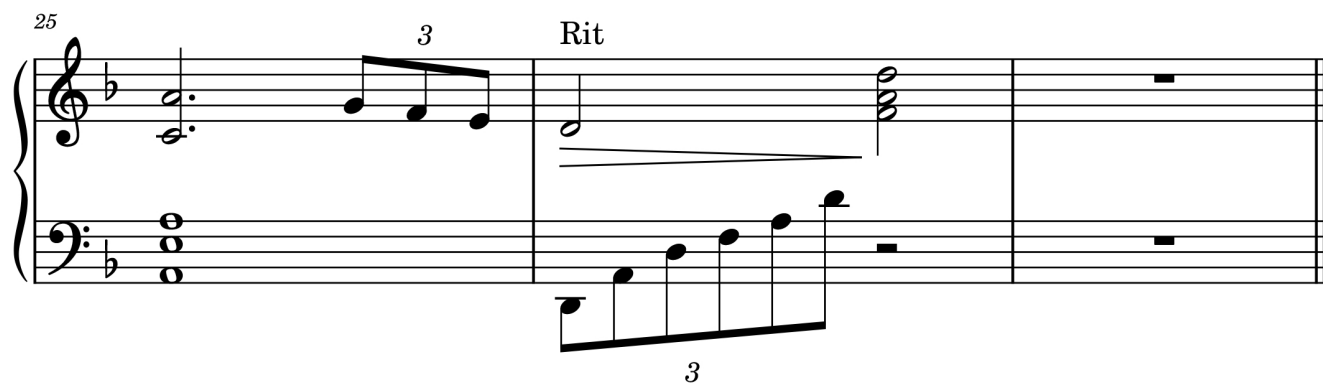
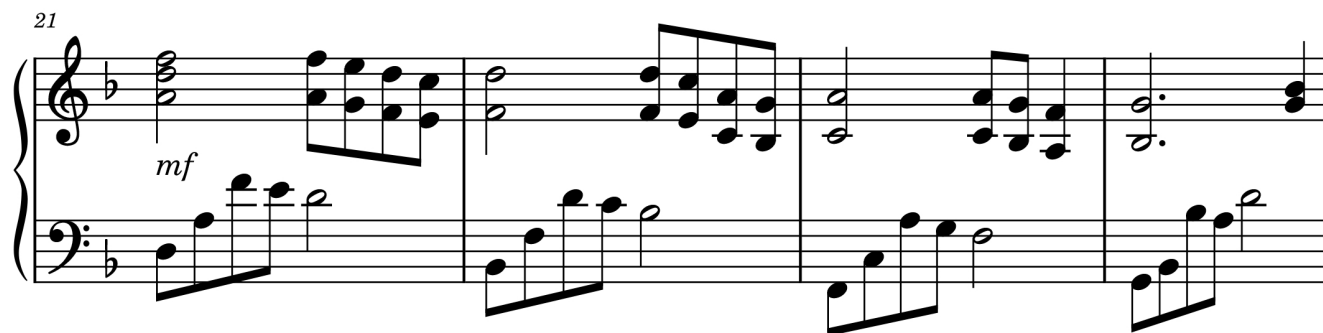
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Harpist Deborah Mak, VAHTP, is a speech pathologist at the Tree of Heart Speech and Swallowing Therapy Centre in Hong Kong. She said, "During the period of COVID quarantine, I looked out to the window and saw the green buds on the trees. I sat before my harp and this song came out. I try to draw one picture to accompany every song I compose, and here's the one for Spring Flow."

Contact: <http://www.speechheart.com>; Email: treeheartst@gmail.com

Harp history

Part one: A short history of the early Irish harp

by Linda Bloom

In the late 12th century, the English Prince John visited Ireland to see what could be made of the land after the Norman Conquest. He was accompanied on the rigorous journey by Giraldus Cambrensis, a Welsh cleric. Cambrensis wrote an account of the country, with the object of proving its barbarity, and its need of a civilizing and Christian influence. He said "This people . . . is truly barbarous, being not only barbarous in their dress, but suffering their hair and beards to grow enormously in an uncouth manner . . ."

"The only thing to which I find that this people apply a commendable industry is playing upon musical instruments . . . they are incomparably more skillful than any other nation I have ever seen. For their modulation, unlike that of the British . . . is not slow and harsh, but lively and rapid, while the harmony is both sweet and gay." (*Topographia Hiberniae*).

Music has formed the basis of religious ceremony from the earliest times, and it fulfilled these important functions for the Druids. The bardic order began with the people called the Tuatha-de-Danans, who preceded the Milesians, before 1000 BC. This name indicated three classes; Tuatha, a lord or priest, Dee, God, as being devoted to the service of the Gods, and Danans, poets or bards. Besides containing the traditional wisdom and history of the Celtic tribes, the bards were also said to possess supernatural powers of divination and prophesy. They were expected to have a complete knowledge of the geography of Ireland, as well as *fan dulraidh*, or lore of place. This dealt with the holy hills, such as Tara, as well as stories associated with wells, trees, rivers, standing stones, and other sacred spots.

Schools were established in remote parts of the kingdom for the education of the bards, where the students could contemplate nature, and devote their time to learning. The students learned the laws, history, physics, and early science of their kingdom, through the mediums of poetry and music. The knowledge was taught in the oral tradition, although they were also taught the system of Punic letters, the *Oghambeith*, in which the Celtic term *Ogam* means "the secrets of letters." The student was also taught the practice of arms to develop the physical body. This education took about 12 years, and generally began in childhood; the candidates were selected from certain hereditary families. After ending his course of study an honorary cap, called a Barred, was given to the bard and he began to execute the duties of his office.

The finished bard became an *Ollamb*, at this point and he became a *Filea*, an *Brietheamb*, or a *Seanacha*, depending upon the heredity right of his family. The *Filea* were poets. They inspired the military might of warlords and kings with war songs, and were attendants to the chieftains on the battlefield. They were seen "modulating their voice to the sweet sounds of the harp, an instrument which every member of the bardic order could touch with a master hand . . . arrayed with white flowing robes, harps glittering in their hands, and their persons surrounded by the instrumental musicians." (Conran, 1850).

The *Brietheamb* were the legislative bards. They were seated in the open air and recited the laws in a chant, accompanied by the sounds of the harp. The *Seanacha* were historians and genealogists, each province, prince and chief had a *Seanacha*, who knew all the history and connections of his chieftain. The bards had other duties, as well: to elevate the emotions of their patrons, to play healing music, and to lull the chief to sleep. They also conducted the burial ceremonies for departed princes and other great people. "Stories of his fame were raised amidst the voices of bards. The rites, prescribed by religion, having been performed by the Druids, the genealogy



The Brian Boru harp

or pedigree of the deceased was recited aloud by his *Seanacha*. The funeral song composed and set to music by the *Filea*, was sung over the grave by a *Rhapsodist*, who occasionally sustained his voice with arpeggios swept over the strings of his harp." (Conran, 1850).

Although there was no place for women in the bardic orders, women were instructed in the "elegiac measure" used for funerals, and usually sang in them. After the bards were abolished, women took their places in the funeral processions, and were also employed in welcoming the armies back from battle, dressed in white and singing songs to welcome the heroes back home.

But what of the harp? The earliest instrument associated with the harp in the Gaelic countries is the 'cruit.' However the first word for the triangular framed harp is the 'clarscach' or 'clarseach,' and may be of Scottish origin. Irish references to stringed instruments date from the 6th century, and the players of these instruments were highly regarded by the nobility. Irish law of 700 AD stipulated that the bards and cruit players were to sit with the nobility, and were allowed to wear six colors, which was the same number of colors as the nobility. The first true representations of the Irish triangular harp were found in Pictish stone carvings of the 11th and 12th centuries

History, from page 12

located on the west coast of Scotland, as well as illustrations in famous manuscripts such as the *Utrecht Psalter*. There are three pre-16th-century Gaelic harps which survive today; the Brian Boru harp in Trinity College, Dublin, and the Lamont and Queen Mary harps, both in the National Museum of Scotland.

The construction of the Irish and the Scottish harps is similar, and they have been dated to the 14th or 15th century. They have metal strings attached to a large sound-box, which was carved from a single log, of willow, alder or poplar. The strings were made of brass, steel, and perhaps even silver and gold. When played with the fingernails, they produced a brilliant, ringing sound. The harp had a reinforced, curved pillar.

The Brian Boru or Trinity College Harp has been rumored to belong to the High King himself, however, the truth cannot be proved. The story is told that Brian's sons Tadc and Donnchad became co-rulers after their father's death at Clontarf. Tadc was slain by Donnchad, who then became high-king of Ireland, and after his dethronement by his nephew Tairdelbach (who was the son of Tadc), Donnchad traveled to Rome to seek absolution from the pope for murdering his brother. He brought with him the harp and his father's crown and laid them at the feet of the pope. The harp remained at the Vatican until it was given to Henry VIII, along with the title "Defender of the Faith." Henry gave the harp to the first earl of Clanrickard, who kept it until it was given to MacMahon of Clenagh, Co. Clare, by a lady of the de Burgh family. After his death, it was bequeathed to Counsellor MacNamara of Limerick. In 1782, the harp was given to Colonel Burton Conyngham, who gave it to Trinity College. The harp was restored by the British Museum in 1961 to a more original medieval shape "This harp has one row of 30 strings; it is 32 inches high, and of 'exquisite workmanship,' the harmonic bar is ornamented with silver, chiseled, and well-wrought; the knobs and other parts of the instrument are ornamented with silver and gilt escutcheons; the four sound holes were also ornamented with metal, which has become the object of theft. All seems to be finished with care by an expert artist, and it attests to the high state of

the ornamental arts in Ireland at this period." (Conran, 1850)

Playing the wire-strung harp is known to be somewhat difficult. Because of the long-lasting resonance, the performer had to dampen strings which had just been played while new strings were being plucked. The left hand played the treble and the right hand played the bass, which was opposite to modern practice. The harp rested on the left shoulder. In 1581, an Italian historian of music, Vincent Galilei said, "This most excellent instrument was brought to us from Ireland, where they are excellently made, and in great numbers, the inhabitants of that island having practiced on it for many ages . . . the Harps which this people use are considerably larger than ours and have generally the strings of brass, and a few of steel for the highest notes, as in the Clavicord. The musicians who perform on it keep the nails of their fingers long, forming them with care in the shape of the quills which strike the strings." (Fox, 1911)

See **History**, page 16



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IHTP 2023 Schedule

IHTP-USA: Mod. 1 March 1-3 in Phoenix AZ inc. Ludwig's lecture & concert Mod. 2 with Martha and Christina - March 1-6 (optional 7th) in Phoenix AZ inc. Ludwig's lecture/concert PDG: CEUs offered March 4 & 5 in snow-free Phoenix! www.harptherapyusa.com

IHTP-AU: Mod. 1 [May 3-5], Mod. 2 [May 7-11] Guildford, Vic. Christina will be Tourin' Down Under! Louise, Vimukti & guests also be teaching Resonance. An exceptional in-person experience complementing our online program: soulful connection and deep study in beautiful countryside for current / new students & graduates seeking refreshers & CEUs. harptherapycampus.com.au

IHTP-HK: Mod. 1 December applications open for March 2023 Mod. 2 - Resonance Training by Carmen and Christina April 5-8, 2023 9-5 p.m. at a beautiful site with Refresher Seating the past Cohorts! harpmony.com

IHTP-FR/IT: Mod.2 July 5-9, 2023 in Brittany France with Marianne and Christina (in French). New Italy interested students contact: info@millepeggi.it

IHTP-EU/NL: Intro Day, Mar.11; Grad weekend Apr.22-23; Mod. 1 Apr. 24-29 Harp Teacher Intro: July 22-23; Mod. 2: July 24-28; Intro weekend: 30/9-1/10 www.harptherapycampus.eu

IHTP, from page 1

The International Harp Therapy Program continues on, with five centers run by these amazing leaders who have all the skills one needs to be successful.

From left to right back: Carmen Lee, Director of IHTP-Hong Kong; Lies Joosten, Team IHTP-NL; Rachel Christensen, Team IHTP-USA; Marianne Gubri, Director IHTP-FR and IT; Martha Waldvogel - Team IHTP-USA; Judith Hitt, Resonant



IHTP Leaders

Kinesiology (RK) Instructor; Vimukti Warr, Co-Director IHTP-AU (Missing is Co-Director Louise Bell - IHTP-AU); Liesbeth Schroen, Director IHTP-NL(EU) (although she considers her whole team all directors! Missing is Margaret Forrest and Alix Colin). Front row: Karen Soronow - Co Director with Jocelyn Obermeyer IHTP-USA; and lastly, for this coming year, I will be turning over the Main IHTP office to Dr. Karen Soronow. We will be titled as Co-Directors as we go forth with her expertise in grant writing.

Six of our leaders have studied and will continue this year to carry on the Resonant Kinesiology Program founded by Susan Borg and taught these past 30 years by Judith Hitt. They are Liesbeth Schroen,

Carmen Lee, Marianne Gubri, Dr. Karen Soronow, Martha Waldvogel and Vimukti Warr. Along with the RK Instructors, we have the very outstanding Music Theory teachers (necessary for RK comprehension), Louise Bell, Rachel Christensen and Lies Joosten.

With that all said, I am forever grateful to all these teachers and leaders and all our mentors and graduates and those who decide to dedicate their lives to make the world a better place. Every blessing to all of you throughout our Therapeutic Musician family!

The IHTP ad in this issue will give you the dates for the upcoming Mod-



IHTP-NL Module 2- Netherlands followed by Module 1

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ules in all five areas. You might need a magnifier! We are excited to be returning to the most beneficial way of learning which is a deep experience of creating beautiful and beneficial music by having, in most cases, our Module 1 on-line and our Module 2 returning to our Experiential Specialty Module (ESM) — that of learning how to find and implement Resonance to its fullest potential. Soon, we will announce our new forthcoming additions (which are optional), but extremely instrumental for end-of-life and palliative care. Stay tuned!

Throughout this update, I am sharing pictures from our gatherings this past year. You have seen pictures from the beautiful Belato, Italy retreat centre, from the tranquility of our retreat centre in the Netherlands, and students studying in various parts of the world. The beauty is that so many have taken one of their modules in another country (which is allowed) and made the most amazing friends.

The greatest teacher

by Susan Williams Haas

One night last summer my love, John, expressed that he was in more pain than usual. That evening what we experienced neither of us will forget. I was playing the harp. He was lying on the floor one night, to convince us both that sound waves do heal. The waves and vibrations enter our bodies and offer an internal massage. Sound carries us away to another place.

Pain relief is possible, even if momentarily, with slow, simple, soothing notes offered in the service of healing and wellness.

But we all know that, don't we? This is why we are here, reading this *Journal*. So here's my offering to you—to reinforce what we already know and believe.

John lives with constant pain from a tragic car wreck two years ago where he broke his neck, split his face open, breaking his right jaw in several places, and dislocating both shoulders among other minor injuries. He's had five surgeries within the first year. With this there is suspicion that he also suffers from a traumatic brain injury at the place of first impact: the right temple area of his head, with some mild cognitive issues such as short term memory loss and loss of facial recognition at times.

I have been his primary caregiver from the beginning—April 2020 during the start of the pandemic. Had it been medical business as usual, John would have spent more time in the hospital for recovery from his first two major surgeries and most likely a few months in a rehab center. Due to the pandemic closures, he was released one week after his accident, and just two days following facial reconstruction. Shocking! He received no rehab or PT. Instead, I was trained online, weekly, by nurses and doctors for his wound care and recovery bullet points.

To say it was overwhelming at first is an understatement. After the first year of three additional surgeries, he finally began to receive weekly physical therapy. There wasn't much change. The doctors and others stated his pain, particularly in his neck, was "normal" for his injuries. They gave little hope of improvement other than for him to gain further range of motion from PT. We accepted this as "normal," while trying some alternative natural treatments like CBD creams and experimental under the tongue drops for TBI. He lives with constant dull pain but has a fairly active life for someone who has had his neck and spine fused back together. To have zero paralysis is astounding!

But his pain had been increasing over the past several months. The day of this profound event that I am writing about, he told me "I don't want to live this way anymore." That's a hard one to hear.

I have tears in my eyes as I write this because our experience that night was so powerful, for him and for me. It was the first time I intentionally offered him sound healing as an option for pain relief. I'm embarrassed to write this given my course of study as a student in the Harp for Healing program, working on completing hours toward my certification in clinical musicianship.

I play the harp often here at home. He often moves his arms around like he's a ballerina fluttering by and treats it as musical silliness. Truly, the work of my entire adult life has been to provide entertainment, many weekends playing a pedal harp for wedding ceremonies and receptions. Perhaps, even as a student of clinical musicianship, I haven't "believed" yet that this is truly healing?

John is a jokester. He makes light of his pain and does not complain or draw attention to his suffering. Knowing this about him makes his serious exclamations



John and Susan Hass, eight months before his accident

all the more powerful for me. I knew he was NOT joking. I asked him if he was willing to have me play the harp therapeutically for him to see if it would lessen his pain. I fully expected him to laugh. Instead he said yes and laid down on the floor.

This is the backdrop for reading my "patient log" for John below, in italics. It was apparent in the first few minutes that he relaxed. I could see it facially first, then his shoulders fell more naturally to the floor. I watched as the rise and fall of his chest slowed and the creases in his brow gave way to relaxation. After about three minutes he began to share what was happening for him.

Patient Log:

John presented with neck and upper back pain as well as a severe focused headache at his right temple, along with tinnitus. This was our first official "session," with the intention of offering sound healing. His pain was at a 9 out of 10 so I offered this as possible pain relief. He did not and does not take any prescription pain medication. I played the deepest bass strings slowly on my harp as he reclined flat on the cool tile floor, where he felt the vibrations from my harp positioned about 6 inches from his left shoulder. I slowly and non-rhythmically moved from low A to low G. Within three minutes of playing, he exclaimed that his pain was gone! I continued and he stated the ringing in his ears was now "outside his body," holding out his hands as far as he could above his chest. I remained in a modal key between A and G while adding simple movement in my right hand in the mid-range of my 29-string Stoney End "Lorraine" harp. At one time, when I played a bit faster, he told me he could feel his pain returning and could I please "slow it back down." When I returned to my original simplicity he stated it's amazing that your music makes my pain leave, saying, "It's like your music makes it go somewhere else." We finished the 20-min. session and his pain was light enough for him to go to bed without tension in his shoulders or neck. I recommend further sessions for John.

I continue to play for John. It's become part of our days and nights. He says it is "pure pain relief medication" for him. Anytime I begin to add more complication, or move higher on the strings, he is immediately annoyed.

See Teacher, page 18

History, from page 13

When St. Patrick arrived in Ireland, everything changed. Some of the Druids accepted Christianity, and many of the nobility were baptized and raised their children in the Christian faith. The change took place without bloodshed, and gradually the bards became associated with the church, as some of them took holy orders. Instead of mystical rites, the harps were used for singing praises to the one God. The bardic schools still operated, however, and the nobility and chieftains still had their bards.

With the Norman Conquest, the great centers of patronage for the bards began to decline. The music of the earlier bardic tradition was too complex and boring for the Normans, and they introduced the Continental tradition of the troubadour and songwriter. The performance of poet and harper gave way to singers who accompanied their own compositions, with varying degrees of musical proficiency. They became little more than entertainers. A few of the bards retained a small part of their

former role as keeper of the tribal history and genealogy, however, and chieftains paid well to have their deeds celebrated.

With the defeat of chieftain Red Hugh O'Neill at the Battle of Kinsale in 1601, Ireland suffered several defeats that changed the native culture. With the loss of the aristocrats, the bardic order fell apart, and by mid century, the bardic colleges had disappeared. The bards were left homeless, with no support for their once honored profession. With their lives so altered, the making and playing of the harp also declined, "the practice of that instrument began to retrograde, and the rapid declension may be said to keep pace with the fall of the bards. The taste for that style of performance, seemed to be fast declining." (Conran, 1850).

*Loss of our learning brought darkness, weakness and woe
On me and mine. Amid these unrighteous boards
Oafs have entered the place of the poets
And taken the light of the school from everyone.*

— Eoghan Rua Suilleabhain (1745-1784) ♪

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Harping along with the zodiac

by Daniel Perret

My recent practice and research into healing with the harp made me discover how basing the mode or scale we use on the present astronomical zodiac sign raised the energy significantly. With radiesthesia means, it showed a good 50 percent increase. Here are some thoughts to encourage you to try it out. The understanding of the influence of the zodiac used to be more common knowledge in ancient times. They knew why. I believe unfolding of the magic of the harp needs to include this again.

When I bought my pedal harp some 40 years ago, I explored all the keys and modes I could find on it. I wanted to know why somebody had bothered to build such complex mechanics on a harp to make all 12 tonalities available. One thing I did was to explore the difference in feeling when using different tonalities and scales.

Shifting your key from one of the 12 notes of the octave to the next, C to C# can bring differences in feeling like switching from late spring to winter in your improvisation. The 12 periods suggested below follow the astronomical zodiac (as used in biodynamic farming for instance) and not the astrological (the one of your horoscopes). There is a difference of approximately 30 days between



Illustration from Flammarion's *L'atmosphère: météorologie populaire* (1888).

Key Note	Zodiac Sign	Date Ranges
C	Aries	Apr. 18 - May 13
G	Taurus	May 14 - June 20
D	Gemini	June 21 - July 19
A	Cancer	July 20 - Aug. 10
E	Leo	Aug. 11 - Sept. 15
B	Virgo	Sept. 16 - Oct. 31
F#	Libra	Nov. 1 - Nov. 19
Db	Scorpio	Nov. 20 - Dec. 19
Ab	Sagittarius	Dec. 20 - Jan. 18
Eb	Capricorn	Jan. 19 - Feb. 14
Bb	Aquarius	Feb. 15 - Mar. 11
F	Pisces	Mar. 12 - Apr. 17

good hundred years ago.

All those years back, when studying spiritual healing with the Irish healer Bob Moore, I decided to put my music work under the banner of 'Music & Energy.' In recent years, as I continued to research and teach energy work, my harp playing started to include distant healing. Lately I got the impulse to check out how setting any mode in tune with the actual zodiac sign we were in, would affect the energy of the sounds played. Trying various scales confirmed each time: the feeling was with more light and joy. I am writing this at the end of August 2022; the sign LEO and thus fundamental note being E at that time. The major scale benefits from it just as each of its modes when setting the first note to E (either just for the major scale alone or also each of its modes). I used also the hexatonic whole note scale 222222 (six whole

notes). The astronomical zodiac refers to the impact on nature of the movement of the planets through the signs of the zodiac. The feeling of a musical key can link you to colours, plants, flowers, perfumes, animals, and to the natural light at that particular time of the year. This can best be felt with non-melodic playing (clusters, sound clouds, including more than one octave between notes, etc.). Rudolf Steiner had suggested these connections a

notes). This scale does not lend itself for melodies but works well with clusters. It brings forth the feeling of gurgling brook waters, indicating its possible use for bringing more vitality and aliveness to the hara chakra (lower belly). Using the same setting for the scale I call 'Clear Blues' (2113212) works very well, too.

A long time ago, I tried to improvise with a friend on the Phrygian mode using C major scale. This proved to create a feeling of imprisonment, blocking our improvisation. Changing tonality opened a wide window of feeling. So, consideration of adapting your mode to the present zodiac tonality may enhance your feelings and pleasure of improvising on it, not just the energy level. You may benefit from it and likely the receiver may as well.

The key of compositions cannot always be easily shifted around. Yet, you can, say for a concert harp therapy session, choose melodies written in the day's zodiac key. ♥

This article includes extracts from my book, Music the Feeling Way, free download on my website www.vallonperret.com.

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Teacher, from page 15

He says he can feel the lower notes entering into his body, saying "Those notes go into me and through me, I can feel them." He says, "While lovely and distracting, the higher or faster notes just float over me, eluding entrance into my body."

While I realize I cannot expect the same dramatic impact or clear statements from other patients, I have a gift with John. He tells me, in real time, the specific effect my music is having on him.

He, through his pain, has become my greatest teacher. ♥

Susan Haas is a harpist, and harp and piano instructor in Austin TX privately and on the teaching faculty of Armstrong Community Music School. She enjoys playing the harp frequently in Austin and the Hill Country of Texas. She is completing her residency hours to become a Certified Clinical Musician and looks forward to offering healing music within the broader Austin healthcare community. In addition, she is certified as a Sound Healing Therapist with singing bowls and guided meditation. Her website is: www.soloharp.com.

IHTP, from page 14

We are pleased to announce that Ludwig Conistabile will be joining us on March 4 in Phoenix, AZ, from Milan, Italy where he is a professor of harp therapy. You will be in for a splendid day of learning his amazing techniques of creating the most relaxing music filled

with unique sounds. He will show you how to create the appropriate words to take your patients/clients on a journey without leaving a carbon trail. I would say that the two most influential courses that I have taken in my life are the Resonant Kinesiology program and Ludwig's Harp and Imagery training. You will learn to create sensory-driven themes where the harp brings out the atmosphere of the journey. You will receive your required CEUs attending our Professional Development Gathering. Open to all therapeutic music program graduates and students.



Ludwig Conistabile

I am filled with gratitude for all who attended our IONA Gathering in IONA. An amazing group of harp players who enjoyed the teachings of the Island - the EICSE - where the veil is very thin at the brink of the



**IONA Gathering of CTHP's
and leaders and teachers**



IHTP-IT - Module 2 - Italy in the mountains of Belato

See **IHTP**, page 20

MHTP Pre-Pandemic Tuition Sale!

Make your Music Matter



Sheila Gioia, CMP, plays for a patient in Parker Adventist Hospital, Denver, Colorado

Now through January 31, 2023, MHTP is bringing back 2020 tuition prices (over \$500 in savings!). You must apply, be accepted, and begin your tuition plan by January 31, 2023 to receive the sale price. Go to www.mhtp.org to learn more. All types of acoustic instruments and vocalists accepted.

We know these are challenging times and we want to make it more affordable for you to join MHTP's therapeutic music training and certification program. If you have been waiting for the right time to start your journey, this is it!

Become part of a community of musicians who make their music matter by bringing therapeutic music to ill and dying patients at the bedside. You can change their lives as well as your own.

Experience what it means to be a Certified Music Practitioner. Scan the QR code or go to our website to watch short videos.



The Music for Healing & Transition Program

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MHTP is accredited by the



IHTP, from page 18

waters. We enjoyed the teachings of Fionntulach and Julie Darling (CTHP), having classes with Ludwig Conistabile, learning songs of Hildegard with Erin Durrett, and studying in depth with Judith Hitt, it was a very full experience.

I have one more group that I will be hosting in IONA from June 24-July 1 again with Fionntulach (formerly known as Fiona Davidson storyteller/harper, with Julie Darling with her prose and poetry of the island, and with Alix Colin where we will be studying music for end-of-life and palliative care. It is an experience of a lifetime.



Greetings and blessings to all from Judith Hitt, Karen Soronow and Christina Tourin



IHTP-USA Module 2 Prep class

The journey is mapped out and people meet up. The food is scrumptious and the island is only three miles long and one mile wide with the most sacred powerful points of interest. I will need to know by January 15 if you intend to join us as at that time. All rooms not spoken for will be released. For information please go to this link: www.playharp.com/events

If you would like to see many pictures of what to expect on IONA, please visit my FB page at Christina Tourin. ♡

The Vibroacoustic Harp Therapy Home Study Training Course® announces new graduate

by Sarajane Williams

The Vibroacoustic Harp Therapy (VAHT) Home Study Training Course® is pleased to announce the VAHT certification of Rachel Saenger, LPC-S, LMFT-S, of Georgetown, Texas.

Her practicum was supervised by Sarajane Williams in September, in Macungie, Pennsylvania.

Rachel, a marriage and family therapist, is looking forward to exploring ways in which to integrate VAHT into her counseling practice. ♡



Rachel Saenger (left) receives her VAHT certification

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