



Interview with Sananda Maitreya – Music and Psychology



Sananda Maitreya

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Di [Gaspere Palmieri](#)

**Il Dr. Gaspere Palmieri intervista:
Sananda Maitreya**

Hello Sananda Maitreya! The music that you are playing recently, the Post Millennium Rock (PMR) has in my opinion the taste of freedom and joyful creativity. Can you tell us a little more about the process of composing your recent songs?

Thank you for your interest. Mind you, my initial reaction upon hearing of your request was, "Oh my God, they know I'm insane!" Then again, now that the cat is out of the bag, we may begin. Mind you as well, I do not feel lonely as an insane person these days. Thankfully, the waiting room is full of us, more than ever before! As it pertains to my 'process', since childhood I have heard music and words in my head. Most of the time, it simply comes out of nowhere EXACTLY as it happens to you, that you are sitting on the bog, and all of a sudden comes the idea you were looking for. They come as ideas, but as musical and lyrical ideas. Usually, it happens that I get what is called the 'Hook' and 'Chorus', the main lyrical thrust, and whatever the main riff that the guitar or bass will employ. I can also tell by listening to it unfold, whether it will be a guitar or keyboard driven piece of music. And the rhythm is a given, it comes with the idea. For me, it has always seemed as were I simply no more than one of music's messengers. I am a Mailman, I deliver her mail. For this reason, many writers are often seen as

Dr. Gaspere Palmieri Interviews for State of Mind Musician and singer Sananda Maitreya.

'mystical', because in fact they ARE aware of a process occurring between what we perceive as the veil between the worlds. And whether or not it be reduced to a mere biochemical process, it is still no less a wonder to behold from one's emotional perspective. To state, I have never really felt that I 'write' the songs, as much as I listen to what is presented to my moments, and capitalize by finishing it with what simple arranging skills the many years have allowed me to learn. At best, I Co- Write with my limited perception of spirit and the muses sent to look after wandering creative fools like me. The music is a container for all emotional content. PMR was coming out of a period of great brooding, and using music to express sorrow and pain is one of the reasons we need the music. Though now is a time for less brooding and more celebrating. WE MADE IT! YES TO MORE JOY, PLEASE! We will take more joy if we can get it. We are not prejudiced against joy.

Your musical style has changed in the years, but your incredible voice is a sort of bridge between your old identity and Sananda. An individual's emotional response to life experience can affect the qualities of their voice. Do you think that your voice has changed through the years?

You are threatening to actually seduce me with credible questions, dear Sir! Listen, it is simple. The human body is an electro-magnetic antenna, both sending and receiving information in the form of electrical data. The Voice is the amplifier AND the filter in such a way as to quite accurately measure the human's state of mind and physical alignment. And as a filter, it also stores information (experience) that then filters again through the amplification responsibilities of the voice. To wit, the voice is a barometer of the state of consciousness it is in contact with and through. It is capable of both clearing and retaining vast reserves of information. And the THROAT and LUNGS are vehicles of the Voice. I sing like an antenna with a will towards a mood and a



tone. Otherwise, I am ONLY there as a singer to LISTEN to what is being sung, NOT to sing it. At this point, I do not sing songs. I let the SONGS SING ME, because I am there anyway and what else do I have to do, but show up and be ready to be sung. It is par for the green, that as singers get older, they realize that they can get away with singing much less, and getting more out of it. Yet, this is something that I learned conclusively, studying two of my great masters: Miles Davis and Frank Sinatra. And if my musical style has changed, it is as much as anything, because we were given the space for it to GROW, for what is change but growth?

I have read that your music has been used as therapy in a brain Trauma Center in Tokyo. Can you tell us something more about that? How did the doctors use your music?

I found out through a friend in Japan that I met as a physical therapist. I once needed help with a hamstring and found this wonderful doctor who told me about the use of my music in trauma therapy at the time. I found it very interesting that particularly, he said that the 'NEITHER FISH NOR FLESH' project was seen as quite conducive in stabilizing severe trauma. Considering how much brain damage I myself had to go through because of Sony records response to the project, it was weirdly gratifying as well as ironic. I were also told that the song, 'SHE KISSED ME', woke people up out of mind coma type situations. Look, music was made to soothe the savage breast. It is what it is SUPPOSED to do. And we are always most grateful and humbled to be a part of ANYONE'S healing experience ANYWHERE. And neither are we prejudiced against getting your mind back together, which is what healing is. And I could go on writing for days on end, of the music, that over the long years have wrested, rested, and saved my soul!

The beneficial effects of music on the brain are well known and studied. Can you tell us an episode (ore more than one) in your life where music has helped you really much?

Indeed, my good man! Exhibit Number 1, upon hearing for the first time the Beatles' 'SHE LOVES YOU', my soul was confirmed. I can remember hearing 'A HARD DAY'S NIGHT' and seeing my future. The same happened when I first heard the COASTERS' 'POISON IVY', and then it faded to dark for a while, while I was going through the religious indoctrination of my early youth. Later, STEVIE WONDER, opened my mind to more miracles, The

JACKSON 5 were a major part. And the lessons of James Brown were relentless. Gospel and Country music gave me a lot, as did the blues but my heart, quite against all social conventions of conformity, has always been more about Rock, Pop and their wider possibilities. My mixed race aspect gives me a sense of entitlement that I have legitimate access to all that my bloodlines contain and not just that which, in its limits, makes others feel more comfortable about things remaining in their place. I have always adored and idolized the 'FUCK YOU' element of Rock. And I Love playing with the fires given to me. I love mixing the music's of the Africans and the Vikings and kicking some ass into gear. Who feels it does, and who doesn't can just bring the beer! And finally, I can remember once going through a severe depression and kept looking each day for reasons to continue my journey through this labyrinth of hell. I found myself going into my TV room and putting on a disc of (yes again!), the Beatles, in the film 'HELP', performing 'YOU'RE GOING TO LOSE THAT GIRL'. And over a period of perhaps a very long weekend, I might have rewound and listened to it for over a hundred times, as if I knew that it were the medicine my heart needed to take. And I knew that as Master Poet Robert Frost wrote, I had MILES TO GO BEFORE I SLEEP. Something about the Beatles music touches into the deepest crevices of my life, along with a few others, their music is meat to my bones.

If you were a music therapist with the possibility to work with people with emotional or psychological disorders (anxiety and depression), how would you use the music as a treatment? What kind of music? Would you just make them listen or also try to play instrument or compose songs together?

ALL MUSIC FITS. For exercise, which is the cheapest and most valuable long term form of therapy, ANYTHING THAT MOVES THAT ASS! Go for it and have it! For relaxation, naturally, sounds close to nature are the best. The electronic music is better for the cerebral cortex as it relates to neurological function and the easing of muscle tension. For matters of stress related to the stomach, the lower strings like cello and violas are wonderful. BASS heavy music is good for releasing the tensions held in the lower body, REGGAE in particular is good for this. The Violins help relax mental anxiety and is helpful in bringing the mental and the emotional bodies together. The Flutes encourage mild out of body experiences, such as 'Letting the mind go', while the Woodwinds in general are very good for the toning and maintenance



of the physical body as it relates to the emotional body. Saxophones encourage active introspection, and TRUMPETS, WAKE YOU UP, and get the body moving in alignment with the WILL. Though my favorite, is the KAZOO, which was made to keep your penis ready! (laugh) And yet, nothing beats the natural sounds of NATURE, her blowing winds, her rushing waters, her rustling leaves. And I swear, that the sound of a Chorus of CRICKETS, may be the most healing of them all.

Which do you think is the role of art and music in mental health and in keeping a psychological balance?

I think the role of art, IN ANY FORM, music or otherwise, is essential to the overall top maintenance of the human machine. Listen, let's be clear, what I suffered clearly in the past, and still have to deal with the ramifications of, is P.T.S.D. I had to come to terms with this fact and deal with it accordingly, though without the Psychotropics. NOT because I am a moralist, but because I haven't found any real cool ones yet! I am not against drugs. I am against drugs that don't work for me, which seems fair enough. I have been advised over the years by many, to begin painting. I never understood why, I cannot draw worth a penny. Yet, this meant that my mind was still limited to the concept of what art was, is and can be. I took up painting after all. I am not great, but I do have something, and the following of it down the rabbit hole, will only take me through the journey needed to rescue whatever it is that the painting lends itself to. The bottom line is, I really LIKE creating and am grateful to be in a position to indulge it. I have come to conclude that, if I speak the truth before God and mammon, MOST OF OUR EDUCATION IS SHIT. We can remember a bunch of facts at any time, but youth should largely consist of PLAY, CREATIVE EXERCISE, and the MUTUAL SOLVING OF PROBLEMS. If we really want the brighter future our hopes promise, we would do well to RELEASE our children from the BURDEN of our education, let them reinvent it, and get on with it. You can learn Arithmetic online. SCHOOL is about navigating and negotiating SOCIAL INTERACTION. And should be overall about FUN. They will, like us, be miserable older bastards soon enough.

Do you believe in musical education for children? How would it be in your opinion the ideal good musical education?

I believe in teaching music to children yes! But according to their interest. For one, that may mean learning the tuba

(poor thing), for another, it may mean listening to the tuba and being content. It gives to all, according to their need. Children naturally gravitate towards the making of music, WE CALL IT NOISE! To them, it is something divine happening.

I am interested in the change of your identity and your name. Why did you choose Sananda Maitreya as a new name? Has it some religious meaning?

I am certain that it DOES have religious meaning as much as it may imply other things. But I do not look for religious meaning, I look for what makes sense. SANANDA came first, After requesting help, through a series of about 3 dreams that I can still recall, as a walking in a forest clearing with friends I knew in the dream to be Angels. And from the woods, I would keep hearing a name called out, which was 'Sananda'. After the last dream, it dawned on me that THIS WAS MY NAME, WOW, THANK YOU, COOL! Turns out anyway, that Sananda is primarily a GIRL'S NAME IN INDIA, so maybe the dream was also a practical joke played on my desire to change. Like having a sex change without having to touch your nuts! For me, it kills two ducks, I love the ladies and I like the name Sananda. It is just close enough to BANANA, but you don't have to peel it or watch it turn brown and spotty. As for MAITREYA, after about 3 years of being Sananda, I realized that this was a real new life and spirit and not just a 'patched up' one, and that a last name might be useful. During that time, I was reading a friend of mine, J. KRISHNAMURTI, and heard him speak often of his guardian Angel, or spiritual teacher, Maitreya. Krishnamurti's life experience I could very much relate to, as he had denounced the path set out for him and went his own way so on his recommendation, so to speak, I felt comfortable taking it. In truth, it was all quite familiar to me anyway. Much prior to that, there had ensued a very uncomfortable tug of war over my previous identity. As if, once branded, twice shy. My last identity and its name, no longer belonged to me, and that was made rapaciously clear by the industry and the state. Tug of war lasting too long? LET GO OF THE ROPE. I did, and the rest is a bunch of footnotes. So what's in a name? Someone else's money.

I can imagine that changing identity has not been easy from a psychological point of view. Can you tell us if you had to face any difficulties? Did you feel confused at some point or instead relieved?



It may be assumed that we had a choice, but we didn't. Me and my band of merry mental men had to abandon ship before the whole thing burned. Has it been difficult? At times enormously so, but at least I am blessed to know what my meditation is. It is mainly when going through small manic episodes that it may effect me. It is no secret that most of us creative types are Manic-Depressive. Though apparently science has verified that the chemical process of Manic-Depression is vital in producing the brainwaves necessary for sparks of inspiration.

I would also imagine that I have worked through some mild Bi-Polar issues, though the greater surprise would be growing up in our culture WITHOUT sustaining Bi-Polar tendencies. And yet again, all of this is but another fancy way of describing what are basically just ANGER and old survival issues. There are of course, as you know, many diseases connected to our anger. My family,



my experience, music, art, writing, good food and drink and marijuana have helped me tremendously deal with the wounds I sustained

during my time in the culture wars. And at this point, as it concerns ALL OF US, there is no greater battle going on, than for the control of our minds, individually and collectively. I have also learned that ANGER, harnessed is a wonderful servant and motivator. Our processes have value, and our patience with them is vital. And the idea of schizophrenia is interesting because I think we are all attended by a few personalities, mainly what the ancients would regard as our ancestors. The classical Greeks were certain that who can manage his 'DAEMONS' could rule the world. Their belief was that our Daemons are there to motivate and inspire. I put mine to work, they are quite valuable and are willing to work for less than the minimum wage. This is why I had to leave America, because with my symptoms and past, they would have me on "OBAMACARE" and underneath an asylum, as the great BO DIDDLEY said, SO DEEP, THEY WOULD HAVE TO PUMP AIR INTO IT. Only the Holy Spirit and what remained of my small wits protected me. And so as not to contradict, bear in mind that my belief in the Holy Spirit is NOT religious, but PRACTICAL.

The choice of changing your name was to give a clear message to your fans and to the music system or it was something you felt inside more deeply?

I am not a martyr to sacrifice myself totally without at least seeing what gain there might be therein for me. I AM WILLING TO DIE IN THE FIRES OF THE PHOENIX, but only if I know that when I rise from the ashes, something is there that I can claim. And if it were about sending a message, then the message was meant for me. But what can be gleaned from my experience is this, THERE IS LIFE AFTER CORPORATE DEATH! Naturally I could not have pulled this off had I not felt it body and soul. I regard my living with a bit more respect than to gamble it on superficial means. And whether we change our names or not, METAMORPHOSIS is real. As the grand master Sam Cooke sang, A CHANGE IS GONNA COME. And notice that I was simply a part of the zeitgeist, because since, many others, as well as companies and nations have changed their names also. I was merely rolling with the flow of the parade!

I thank you for your regard for my work. My mind is a bit mashed up at times, due to the scars of the past, but the good Lord has taught me how to get around that, and use it to my advantage. "We could never manage to get Humpty-Dumpty back into an egg shape, but boy does he make for one hell of a lamp shade!" Bless you and ROCK ON!

Thank you for your time and for your insight!

Thank you again Dr. Palmieri for the opportunity to express these things.

My highest regards to your family and worthy colleagues.

