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AN INTERVIEW WITH HEALING DRUMMER, TOBY CHRISTENSEN

The well-known leader of the growing field of healing music talks about his practice of Healing Drumming, his passions and his mission in life.

Have you always been a drummer?

Yes, as early as I remember I have been playing the drums. I got my first drum at age 7 and have never looked back.

How do you get involved in this?

Growing up I was playing professionally at a very early age, rock, pop, Christian, you name it, and I drummed it. I discovered native drumming through a meeting with a famous African drummer. It blew my mind; we spent all night drumming together. That was inspired by my trip to Africa, and then it took form in my shamanic training, in a series of journeys and dreams. It was deeply sacred and magical experience for me. I knew that my mission was to use my drumming for help and healing.

What are you trying to achieve with your work.

To relieve peoples suffering and bring peace and healing to all who hear and experience the Healing Drum.

You mentioned Shamanism how does that relate to your drumming?

The drum is one of the fundamental tools of the Shaman. Native Healers have used drums and drumming ritual since ancient time. Once I began to learn about ancient drumming, learning about Shamanic practices quickly followed.

What is Sound Attunement therapy?

Sound attunement Therapy is the use of vibrational energy in a process, which brings the mind, body, emotions, and psyche of an individual or group into harmony. The sound energy of the drum creates a force that disrupts unhelpful energy patterns. I use specific rhythms of the drum to restore and realign.

What is unique about your practice, compared to other Healing Musicians?

The method in which I use the Djembe and shaman's drum on a person is the most unique aspect of my process. By having the drum be played right over a person's body there is a direct energetic connection and a very powerful physical experience for the participant. In addition, I would say my innovations, like Sound Attunement and the Crystal Healing Bed.

What can a person expect from a session?

To feel better and to have their life align to the intentions they set in a session. It is typical for a person to feel an immediate, positive response to the drumming and then long term, there is a strong sense of support or resolve that is instilled in a person to achieve the intention set in a session.

What is the Crystal Healing Bed and how does it work?

The crystal bed enhances the healing energy that is experienced in the collaboration between the healing energy that resides in a person that which is stimulated by the drum. It uses the combination of crystal energy from crystals that are placed in the frame of the bed and sacred geometry, which is built into the shape and physical construction of the bed to create an enhanced energy field to bring a more profound experience of energetic transformation.

What can people from one of your concerts.

My concerts are an experience in rhythm, sound and healing. People drum along, dance and receive a blast of healing energy. The other beautiful concert experience is the strong sense of community that is created by people being in the energy of the Healing Drum.

Describe your music.

My music is high-energy world music. Drums and percussion are the primary focus accompanied by didgeridoo, flute, and other melodic instruments.

You've just created a training DVD, tell us about it.

I am very excited about this project. Five-element drumming is a method of instruction I developed a few years ago to bridge the gap between those who are just beginning their journey with the drum and those who have great experience and dexterity. This DVD and companion CD will have a profound effect on the drumming community at all levels. If you are a beginner, it teaches

you the fundamentals of drumming and teaches five very simple rhythms. If

you are a more advanced drummer, it will teach you how to enhance the efficacy and impact of your drumming by creating a rhythmic matrix on which to build and structure your playing. It is a good tool for people to improve their personal drumming skills and can be used as a fantastic structure for leading drum circles.