

From: MARK TRAMO <[REDACTED]>

To: Robert Kuhn <[REDACTED]>

Bcc: jeevacation@gmail.com

Subject: Re: Closer To Truth Topics

Date: Sun, 24 Mar 2019 19:01:12 +0000

Attachments: Tramo2011MusicMedicine.pdf

Thank you for your email, Robert -

The subject matter is topical for me at the moment: I'm working on a book for a general (erudite) audience that addresses how music probes mentality and how the brain makes music. Several ideas sparked by my numerous discussions about music, mind, and brain with Jeffrey, and the time his support has provided for their cultivation, are ripe for discussion on the show.

The *Science* reprint I sent last week includes a model for how the brain makes music at a gross anatomical level vis a vis regional specialization and connectivity patterns. There are deeper questions at the levels of neural coding and computation that address aesthetics (e.g., why it is that some combinations of tones sound pleasant and others not) and hedonics (e.g., why some music is so pleasurable it gives us goosebumps). The wording in the opening paragraph of the *Science* paper was, of course, meant to invoke Chomskian linguistics and to remind the logocentrists dominating academia that some claims relevant to the biology of language and its evolution apply to the biology of music and its evolution. After all, speech communicates emotion and meaning via intonation as well as words: often, it's not what you say but how you say it.

For the question of how music probes mentality, I'd like to address concepts surrounding limerence, chaos, collective behavior/group size, pleasure, "self-talk," and humans' compulsion/gift to bring the future into the present. (David Brooks has a nice section on limerence in his best-seller from a few years back, *The Social Animal*.)

Re: discussing specific content or additional topics, a real-time dialogue might be helpful - I'm available via my cellphone (310-913-7879) in L.A. all day/night today Sunday and in the evenings on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. The power of music to ameliorate suffering in a wide variety of disease states might be another topic of interest. I'm attaching a relevant reprint here that pertains to both therapeutics and innateness - even premature infants with pain and stress can benefit from controlled music stimulation.

Lastly, I'm pleased and honored that you and Peter have invited me to participate in Closer To Truth. Looking forward to seeing you again soon!

Cheers,
Mark

On Sat, Mar 23, 2019 at 4:53 PM Robert Kuhn <[REDACTED]> wrote:

Dear Mark:

I am looking forward to our on-camera discussions for Closer To Truth's "Breakthroughs" miniseries. Radically different from our original roundtable format in 2003, we conduct the session in one-on-one segments, each about 7 to 9 minutes in length, each a general topic/question/category within which we discuss specific areas of your expertise/interest. Below are the topics: each constitutes a separate segment.

The primary topic is “How Music Probes Mentality” - we’ll do two or three segments; this approach is using music as a probe to discern how brain/mind works. We will also do the reverse (which is more the normal question): asking how the brain makes music. Many of the ideas will be similar, but the purpose and flow of argument will differ. In essence, we will explore brain-music in each explanatory direction.

From your papers, I picked some possible organizing principles, but much more look to your guidance and direction how best to structure 2-3 segments on “How Music Probes Mentality” and two on “How the Brain Makes Music”. For example, we can do separate segments functionally: neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, cognitive science, etc. Or separate segments at levels of the brain: cochlear/auditory nerve; thalamus to primary auditory cortex, whole brain including orbito-frontal, etc. Or focusing on end results: harmony, melody, rhythm. Or mentality: perception, cognition, emotion.

In addition, there are several other topics/segments related to other episodes in CTT's Breakthrough miniseries as well as in CTT's core brain areas. (We may not have time for all, so we will prioritize.)

Moreover, if you have specific content or additional topics you would like to discuss, by all means tell me and I will make adjustments to include.

Each segment/topic needs to serve the dual objectives (modestly conflicting) of being, at the same time, (i) wholly self-sufficient (for TV shows and one-off web viewing) and (ii) sufficiently different so not repetitive (for those who watch many or all your web videos). This is achieved by stratifying your major ideas into segments that stress different aspects, each in some depth.

We look for a high intellectual level with a high degree of specificity, almost as if you are in discussion with a knowledgeable colleague (though a colleague whose specialty differs from your own).

Producer/director Peter Getzels and I are pleased to feature you on Closer To Truth.

Please confirm receipt.

Best regards,

Robert

CTT's Breakthroughs Miniseries Episodes - PRIMARY

How Music Probes Mentality - (2-3 Segments)

How the Brain Makes Music (2 Segments)

subtopics to cover

Brain and Music: Neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, neurochemistry

Music of the Hemispheres: Brain mapping – cochlear, auditory nerve, cortex

Music Studied Interdisciplinary - ethnomusicology, developmental psychology, animal behavior – as well as neurophysiology. interdisciplinary approach to understanding brain mechanisms mediating music perception, performance, and cognition

CTT's Breakthroughs Miniseries Episodes

What are Breakthroughs in Science? (brain/music)

What are Breakthroughs in Biology? (brain/music)

Transhuman Brains? (insights from brain/music)

CTT Topics/Episodes (time allowing)

When Brains Go Bad II

Can the Mind Heal the Body?

How are Human Brains Structured?

How Human Brains Function?

--
Mark Jude Tramo, MD PhD
Dept of Integrative Biology & Physiology, UCLA College of Letters & Science
Dept of Neurology, David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA
Dept of Musicology, UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music

Director, The Institute for Music & Brain Science
Co-Director, University of California Multi-Campus Music Research Initiative (UC MERCI)
<http://www.BrainMusic.org>
<http://merci.ucsd.edu>

