

We publish on our Blog the following beautiful article written by Emilio Chelini about his experience in the Qi Gong Seminar given in Rome last February by Sensei Sydney Leijenhorst.



Yesterday I met Bill Evans

I'm a great music user and a bad performer with a hard, classical training. I'd have liked to approach to music in a different way, so I joined a seminar held by the superb pianist.

I (who can not even play two basic exercises without being ashamed) had the chance to meet an icon of jazz although he is dead!

A nightmare.

Bill turns to me and says: "There are several levels of depth in a musical performance".

Learning techniques and control breath, body and mind, represent the basic and primary level without which there can't be any other level.

Then, it's necessary to put together all the different techniques, pieces and genres.

On the next level you have to perform the same pieces being inspired by personal experiences, or by any other thing that can inspire you. But you still remain a simple performer. (It is something like the Moonlight Serenade performed with high inspiration by a languid and melancholic lover, I dare to say).

So you can even begin to play with this mastery, not more technical, not only inspired by patterns and rules, but finally free. The improvisation: following an harmonic progression, an idea; let the memory of our inspirations flow into our hands and let Love ramble between our fingers, moving them and finally the performer itself.

Bill also mentions two other levels: the level of spontaneous sound, the absence of any fixed form, pure creation constrained just by physical limits and by the instrument -I imagine Beethoven rapt by the creative fury, while deaf, composing the Hymn to Joy-

And finally, the complete absence of any practice. (for decency, I wouldn't talk about this).

For further sadism, he invites me to the piano, where I try to learn his skills by repeating his movements. And, at the end of the lesson he offers me a taste of his improvised, inspired and spontaneous art.

How can I go home? I am beset by a sense of frustration. It grows little by little as I get closer to the car. I'm not able to focus the meaning of what has happened. I think it was a big mistake. In my need for perfection, I try to remember the sequences that I have been taught, conscious of the uniqueness of the course: I'm afraid I would not be able to retain it.

The nightmare became reality: yesterday it's like I met Bill Evans, but in the real life I met Sensei Sidney and his White Crane Qi Gong. The frustration is still the same.

I'd like Sensei Sidney could immediately make up a class and stay in Rome for years. And, to be sure, even his Teacher. The absurdity of my desire is clear but it is genuine and arises spontaneously.

Before going to sleep, my nervousness is palpable. I let the body move, trying to kick away this feeling.

Through some slow and powerful movements I learned in the morning, the irritation disappears and the frustration ends. I regain my body while the mind becomes quiet. It seems like I don't care it is just the first level. I've known the meaning of a *gyaku zuki* only for two years and I'm not discouraged by the ability of my teacher or by the path I have in front of me. Indeed it gives me a sense of safety, it makes me feel on the right way.

I am glad of the warm sensation I still feel in my hands and in my stomach, sensation I already experienced during the exercises in the morning. Frustration had overshadowed those jewels that Sensei Sidney asked us not to mistreat: little seeds that, as a secret mantra, operate silently. I immediately take advantage of this stored energy in my hands walking into the kids room and touching them softly with the warmest caress of this winter almost gone, and then I run to bed.

Thank You Sensei Paolo and Sensei Sidney!
(How do you say Sensei at plural ??)