

“Vibe”

Ben Paille, with some wisdom! "Krishna Das says ‘It's not about the music; it's about the vibe. The music is too close to our ego; the vibe is about others’”.

I dig that. And yes, it's not about the music, it's about the vibe. And if you can't bring the vibe into your playing, into your practice time, then good luck trying to bring that vibe to other people.

Maybe for a lot of people, they can only get into the vibe when they're with other people, and that might just be one of the most important aspects of this whole thing, where if you don't have access to a community of at least one more person (like I've had Ben Paille for the last 25 years to vibe with) then you're missing out on something that's fundamental to this profession, to this art form. And if you can't get yourself into the vibe by listening to other people, like listening to recordings of people playing with a killing vibe, or videos of somebody else who is bringing the vibe - If you can't basically find a way to invite the vibe into the room when it's just you, then you gotta hook up with somebody else.

You gotta find a practice partner or some way - throw yourself into something - you know, go to New Orleans and visit Ashlin Parker - he'll get you plugged into the vibe. It's essential. Otherwise, you're always beholden to other people and their vibe. If you're not in control of your own vibe, then other people are gonna control your vibe, and the only time you'll be in a good vibe is when you are around other people who are capable of bringing a great vibe so strongly that it influences you. That's huge, you know?

That's really an important part of this. Part of my job is to bring the vibe with me wherever I go. And sometimes it's a big challenge because the vibe in the place that I go to is kinda icky; other times it's really easy because there's already a nice vibe that's harmonious with the one that I'm bringing. Man, vibe is it; it makes all the difference.

A lot of people who love music that I don't love; in fact people who say that they love music that I actually say I think is awful - in a lot of cases it comes down to not is the music being played well technically, it's what's the vibe. What's the vibe? Is the musician in that moment communicating a sense of community and love; or at least a love of life; a love of something? Or is it kind of a danker, lower sort of vibe you know, where it's about you know, pumping up one's own ego or you know, making sure that you're swinging the biggest dick in the room or whatever. That vibe also goes just as thickly into the music and defines the music just as much as a good vibe will, you know.

When there's no vibe, or a bad vibe, I feel that! Everybody feels that! Some people apparently, you know, it still might resonate with the lower aspects of *their* being so they still resonate with it; they still like it, but that turns me off big time.

So it's all about cultivating that vibe; and that's really the X factor in great recordings and in great musicians.