

## UPF International: What's Your Cup of Tea? Episode 5: Music and Peace

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UPF International - On January 28, 2022 at 8am EST, UPF International in collaboration with UPF EUME held our fifth episode of the IG livestream series, "What's Your Cup of Tea?" Piggybacking on last month's topic, this month we discussed the topic of "Music and Peace," focusing on using and producing music in various ways to bring about inner peace and bring peace to others around you. With more than 100 viewers tuning in from over 20 countries, the livestream was hosted by Eli Izumi, representing UPF International, and Mélanie Komagata, representing UPF EUME. The special guests were: Nathalie Komagata, from Switzerland, singer and lyricist, better known under the artist name of Naelise; Matogba Nelson, singer and musician from the United States; Harue Peham, originally from Austria but currently living in her fatherland, Japan, violinist and music therapist. Each speaker shared intriguing stories about how music positively impacted their lives and how they use it to inspire and help others.

Nathalie Komagata, a singer and lyricist from Switzerland, shared about how she started playing piano and writing lyrics to songs from a young age and grew up using it as a means to express herself and bring inner peace. Connecting music as a means for bringing about peace, she commented that, "...the experience of singing at a concert, at a worship service or singing with the family at

Christmas time,... when you sing together and feel this connection between each other, and this feeling of being united, I can't think of anything else that makes us be united so easily than singing together."

Matogba Nelson, a gifted American singer and musician, shared that her music journey started from the ripe age of 4 years old, after she watched an orchestra on television. This sparked her to start taking piano and guitar lessons, eventually leading her to continue her studies of music at a university level. She shared about how music festivals, in particular, are a way to bring many people from a variety of countries and all walks of life to one place to enjoy music together. She shared, "Music, performing arts, arts, and culture move society, not politics or economics. It really is up to us to decide what kind of culture we want to be a part of. We are like gatekeepers who shouldn't allow negativity or extremism to take hold of music, arts, and culture."

Co-host Eli Izumi reflected that "Artists or singers in general have a unique influence because there are a lot of people that follow them not only because of their music but the way they live, their style of clothes, the morals they have and the causes that they stand for. I don't think a lot of artists realize that they do

have this influence, but they really have such an important role. I wish a lot more singers, and people in influential positions were more careful and mindful of what they did. Like Matogba said, it is very important for us to know what we listen to and support what is right and lead by example."



Harue Peham, passionate violinist and music therapist, grew up in a musically talented family. She reflected on her past, saying if her mother wasn't playing piano then there was definitely a tape of some kind playing at the house, so she felt that all the moments of her life were accompanied by a sound track. Beginning her journey with violin from the young age of six, she continued on to become a professional violinist and a music teacher, eventually taking on music therapy as a way to use her passion and skills to help others. Inspired by a visit by a music therapist, she studied how she could use music as a therapeutical means, working currently with children with autism to teach social skills, to help people gain confidence, to relax, etc. During the livestream she gave a demonstration of a drum exercise she would use for a restless autistic child who because of the damage in his brain, cannot carry a proper conversation with someone. She uses the drum to interact with him and to stimulate his interest and encourage a positive response and communication in a way that will not stress him or push him out of his comfort zone. On a personal note, she said, "I play in an orchestra in Japan and most of the people I don't know. But I always feel that we are somehow united and that we like each other even though we cannot speak so much. This is the power of music. I can mention an orchestra in Venezuela called El Sistema where street children are gathered to learn

how to play orchestral instruments. Another famous project is the Israeli and Palestinian orchestra where enemy countries are playing together in the same place. Like marriage, I think it's the fastest way to bring people together."

Through this livestream we were able to explore the different ways that music can be used as a means of therapy, healing, unity, happiness and peace. We encourage you to watch the recording to listen to all of the inspiring guests and hear their words in full. Please also do not hesitate to send us a direct message on Instagram if you have any questions or recommendations for our next livestream.

Thank you so much for your continued support for UPF's Instagram initiative. We look forward to seeing you soon.