

ASCENSION

Michael Bettine/GONGTOPIA

Recorded live in concert at Ascension Lutheran Church,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin, October 13, 2013

Track list:

- 1 - Scattered Light #5
- 2 - Spiritual Resonance
- 3 - Schättenwelt/Primordial Realm
- 4 - Water Wheel
- 5 - SOUNDINGS:
 - Aurora Borealis
 - Soundings
 - Echo Location
 - Underwater Landscape
 - Creatures of the Deep
 - Refraction
 - The Flow of Tides
- 6 - Waking The Dead/Science Friction
- 7 - Stars Whisper In Her Ear
- 8 - Ritual Ascension/Underworld/Labyrinth

All compositions/photos/design by Michael Bettine and
© 2013 Michael Bettine/Intuitive Arts Media (IAM)
Recording produced & edited by Michael Bettine at *The Gong Cave*.

Special thanks to:

Ascension Lutheran Church; my friends at Paiste, Mike Balter, and Orpheus; everyone who has supported my music these past 12 years, Apogee (for the amazing Duet), Cascade (for the great mics), and especially to all the people who attended my performance. ~ MB

Michael endorses:

Paiste cymbals/sounds/gongs

Mike Balter Mallets

Orpheus Percussion

He also plays/uses:

Humes & Berg Cases

Gibraltar Hardware/Racks

Michael Paiste Gongs

Steve Hubback Gongs

Custom Tone Gongs



The Circle of Sound

Heavy Metal Dharma

On a fine autumn day, I brought my large set up of Gongs, Bells, Singing Bowls, Sound Plates, and other resonant metal percussion out to perform a full concert of original compositions and improvisations. What more could you want than to perform in a beautiful old church, with high marble ceilings, that was designed to magnify the choir voices? I had been looking forward to playing (and recording) in this wonderful reverberant space for many months. I was not disappointed in the sound. The Gongs just opened up and sang! It was quite amazing standing in the midst of all my instruments, feeling the vibrations. There's nothing else like it.

It was exciting to be able to play my compositions, some of which I hadn't performed live in years, in a sacred space like this. The center piece of the concert was my suite, SOUNDINGS. I hadn't performed the complete composition since its' premier at the *Ingenuity Fest* in Cleveland, Ohio, back in September 2010. So it was nice to dust it off, change a few things, and play it again. I also played some of my favorite compositions, including the first piece I wrote for Gongs, *Spiritual Resonance*. In essence, this was a history of the music I've been making for the past 12 years since I formed GONGTOPIA.

The performance itself went well and I am pleased with the result. Because it is a live recording, in front of an audience, there are extraneous sounds: pews creaking, coughs, talking, trucks driving by, etc. But that just adds to the atmosphere. And what an atmosphere it is. The sound just floats in the air and fills the soundfield. Headphones are recommended. Be aware that the dynamic range here is quite wide. Many parts of this concert are very quiet, while the loud parts are, well, very loud. Please adjust your listening volume accordingly!

~ Michael



Sonic Alchemy in Action

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**“No great art has ever been made without the artist having known danger.”
— Rainer Maria Rilke**