

*Scintillating* baroque..



.. Serious **fun**



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Early Harps & Research

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Action! Action! Action!

Accessing Super-Creativity:  
*May the Flow be with you!*

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In *The Origin of Dreams* (1993, 1997, 2004), Griffin assigns great significance to the human ability to access the REM-state whilst awake. I am investigating Csikszentmihalyi's *Flow* (1990) as an Altered State of Consciousness within the Griffin model.

Many aspects of Flow show strong correlation with Erickson's Permissive approach to *Hypnosis* (1967, 1980). I suggest that trance induction methods might offer gateways into Flow, allowing the teaching of Flow at any level of technical competence and interpretational experience.

I claim that learning to enter Flow is both a result of and a requirement for 'powerful' or *Deliberate Practice* (Syed 2010, Ericsson 1993). Maintaining Flow helps avoid performance anxiety and *Choking* (Beilock 2007), and aids development of specialised *Knowledge and Perception* (Gregory 1997).

Supporting evidence tends to be qualitative: it is difficult to get hard data. I report on measurement strategies to circumvent distortions from Observer Paradox effects.

Drawing on my personal experience of Flow as an elite performer (music), competent professional (sailing, a favourite example of Csikszentmihalyi's), and elementary student (fencing), I examine the particular connections of Flow to Improvisation and Historically Informed Performance. I illustrate gateways into Flow from (and for) these practices.

I observe differences in Flow between rehearsal-directing (essentially an intellectual exercise of time- and man-management skills) and solo practising (a physical exercise involving manual skills). Are these two distinct ASCs, or bands within a Flow-spectrum?

Flow can be a Force that unites people, but it also has a Dark Side. Induction of trance in music teaching or sports coaching raises questions of pedagogical Ethics. Clinical psychologists are aware of the danger of hypnotising oneself, whilst trying to induce trance in the client. Briefly introducing another research strand, I claim that 17<sup>th</sup>-century music-drama 'moved the passions' by performance practices that are remarkably parallel to Ericksonian hypnosis-induction.