

Rogosanti

In most early civilizations percussion instruments were (and to a certain extent still are) considered sacred, and to possess the power of magic. In Sri Lanka the Kandyan Drum is used in religious rituals and is considered to possess healing powers. In Java and other parts of South East Asia and China the gong has been credited with healing sickness, expelling evil spirits and defending against ghosts. It is even said that bathing from a gong gives health, and to be touched by a gong strengthens the soul and creates strength and happiness.

Rogosanti is the Sanscrit word for 'healing' or 'quietening of disease'. Here the evil spirit is represented by a rhythmic cell from Northern India called Ata Trisra (3.3.2.2) and is associated with the drums and wooden instruments - the good spirit by a cell from Southern India called Dhamar-tala (5.2.3.4) and is associated with the metal instruments. If healing is to be achieved, the evil spirit must become possessed by the good spirit.

Rogosanti was written in November 1986 for my good friend, Steven Schick.

James Wood