

Can a instrument have an archetypal male or female energy?

Do instruments have a archetypal male or female energy or can a instrument be androgynous? Come with me as we go up over the Drums through the Flute and down the Didgeridoo hole to find if we can determined an archetypal gender and if so how that possibly can be used to benefit a person's well-being in a healing modality or in therapeutic music.

Have you ever pulled out your guitar or sat behind your drumset or maybe went to DJ on your favorite pair of turntables and thought is this a male or female instrument? To some this sounds kind of funny and almost ridiculous, to others it could make sense of why certain instruments have certain types of influences on the Body, Mind and Spirit. Or better yet can certain Instrument's be androgynous carrying both the male and female energies and in turn carry a type of alchemical or transcended type of energy?

First let's look at a couple different ways to defer whether an instrument would be considered a male or a female energy. When doing much research i have found that the most common reference to a instrument being male or female would be related to it's Timbre or whether it puts off a primarily Hi-Tone or low tone. When researching deeper on this particular view I found it was quite difficult to narrow it down being that most instruments can play both high and low notes and that the make model and who and how the instrument is being played has a great deal of how the Timbre is heard from the instrument. But none the less I have found research and what people have said regarding whether an instrument is male or female on the Timbre of the instrument and here's some of the research I have found.(people online) not my opinion. (please read online info on page below)

(Online info on male and female instruments)

The flute: I know this is a cliché, but it sounds feminine to me.

The oboe and the oboe d'amore and cor anglais. I see the oboe as a soprano voice, oboe d'amore as mezzo, and the cor anglais as contralto.

I think the viola is most definetly female; a contralto voice.

Oddly the'cello seems very female to me. It's more male than the viola, but it's tone seems so feminine, especially on the two upper strings.

Bells and metal percussion (celesta, glockenspiel, steel drums, triangle ect.) always seem female. The organ seems female. The harp is female in its lower and middle registers, genderless higher up.

Male instruments:

The alto flute; it seems like a male version of the flute.

The heckelphone sounds so much like a baritone voice, it's amazing. A very male instrument.

The bassoon to me is the most male woodwind. It can sound like a bass, a baritone and a tenor voice. Even the extreme high notes, like the ones opening the rite of spring, don't sound female. They sound more like an eery countertenor than a woman's voice.

The horns, trombones and tubas are all male to me, both in timbre and depth. Most of the rest of the percussion seem male.

Hard to tell instruments:

The piccolo seems genderless to me. Too cold to be human.

The violin's tone is an enigma to me. It's tone reminds me of the pure voice of a child, quite genderless but very human. It doesn't seem female or male.

The trumpet is too high to be male, too masculine to be female. It combines male and female aspects. The saxophone is genderless to me, though the higher ones are more feminine and the lower one's more masculine. The piano seems neither male nor female too.

In the nineteenth century many people thought that music was gendered. Richard Strauss's orchestra for Don Juan makes use of the fact that certain instruments had specific associations in order to tell the story. The violin, flute, and oboe were considered feminine sounding whilst brass instruments, with their traditional hunting associations, were considered masculine.

(Back to my Opinion)

While I don't dispute the timbre and the way an instrument is played can show an expression of whether the instrument is speaking more in a female or male tone. I would find it quite difficult to distinguish the instrument gender on that alone.

Next we have another way to look at the inherent gender of an instrument by using the geometry of the instrument. A lot of this theory is founded on Pythagoras theory of geometry, but I'm sure it goes back way further than Pythagoras. A male energy line is a straight line and a female energy line is a curved line. Using this method we can decode the inherent energy of an instrument by the shape of the geometry in which it is constructed. You will notice that while some instruments are predominantly round and curved and some instruments are straight with very little or no curves, there are quite a few that have both straight and curved lines within them. This leads me to believe that some instruments are male some instruments are female and some are androgynous containing both the male and female energies within them.

Let me show some examples and explain, When looking at the archetypal female energy we look at instruments that are curved that have little or no straight lines in them. For the sake of not writing too lengthy of a report I will just name a few. A hand drum, a hung drum or handpan, Ting shags, Chinese hand symbols or the jugs would be good examples of female instruments based upon geometry. While all these instruments carry very different timbre they all have one unique thing in common which is they send the sound of the instrument around and out in a round and equal proportion. Which I think is important to note on the female archetypal energy.

Next we would have the male energy or straight instruments. Some that come to mind are crystal singing pyramids, triangle, tuning Forks, Claves and harmonium. These instruments tend to have a sound like it's coming from 'something not around something' which tends to be it's straightforward energy from having more of a male archetypal geometry. Even the harmonium sounds like it's coming up and out of the instrument and not from around the instrument.

Last but definitely not the least would be the androgynous or instruments that seem to have both male and female characteristics, such as a guitar with its curved body and straight neck. This definitely would bring both the male and female energies together, or how about the singing bowl with a round receptive body that needs to be activated by a straight stick. Does this remind you of how a male and female energy combine in nature to create a third and new energy? Or as in the turntable, you have a record by its own which is a nice round disc compiled with information ready to be activated, and the sharp fine straight needle that goes and reads and activates the doorman information placed upon the Round Disc. This is a symbolism of how the male energy penetrates the energy of the female egg and activates it's dormant DNA to create a new life. I find this very interesting since several of these instruments seem to be some of the most powerful instruments for moving people emotionally, physically, and spiritually.

In closing I would like to share a a few ways I think using male or female energy instruments might be beneficial in a sound healing or therapeutic music. When using archetypal male energies it could be used for straightening things out, to encourage the strength to move forward, to pinpoint something with intense action, or to break up energy in a precise spot. Archetypal female energy could be used to round things out, nurture the growth of something, to break up energy in a general area or place, or to smooth out and soften something. With the androgynous or alchemical marriage energy it could be used for bringing things together, rebirthing new energy, the bringing of higher or divine creativity, and for balancing out Energies. Remember, these are just theories I'm sharing with you based upon how sound affects the mind, body, and soul and the geometry that creates and defines instruments. I hope you find this useful the next time you go to pick an instrument for your treatments and possibly when writing your next healing score.

Blessings and balanced vibrations.
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