

THE KARL SISTERS ON THE EFFECTS OF SOUND ON THE BODY

By LISA ROVNER

Modern-day research into sound has showed that the effects of sound on the body are real. The Karl sisters, Joanne, Nancy and Patty, believe that sound can heal the body. They conduct "sound baths" at the Integratron, a white dome-like structure erected in the Joshua Tree desert above a powerful energy vortex. George Van Tassel, the Integratron's creator, called the striking architecture a rejuvenation machine. Both the Karl sisters and Van Tassel adhere to the idea that certain frequencies, in other words sound, both audible and non-audible, re-charge cellular structure and can be used to heal the physical body. As the Karl sisters explain, "Sound, when conducted through the body via the tympanic membranes of the ears and also the liquids in the body, washes through bone, muscle, tissue and the nervous system." Here in conversation with Lisa Rovner, the Karl sisters, who now own and run the Integratron and conduct sound therapy, share their thoughts and experiences.

Lisa Rovner: I'd like to start the conversation with something the theorist and philosopher Rudolf Steiner said: "There will come a time when a diseased condition will not be described as it is today by physicians and psychologists, but it will be spoken of in musical terms, as one would speak of a piano that was out of tune." *The Karl sisters:* It's interesting that the more recent quote from Steiner projects a time when music prescriptions will be applied by physicians. Pythagoras, credited with being the "Father of Mathematics", "Father of Geometry" as well as the "Father of Music", was the first person to prescribe music as medicine. And he lived between 569-475 BC. Sound and music healing practices became lost though they're so utterly simple, inexpensive, uplifting as well as physically healing, and can be practised by anyone. We have seen, enjoyed and applied sound frequencies to our bodies regularly, and believe so many people would benefit by even the simplest practice of sound therapy. *Lisa:* Yes, for thousands of years, Shamanic, Chinese, Indian, Islamic, Hebrew, Egyptian and Greek cultures have used sound vibration to heal the sick. Plato and Aristotle taught that sound and music were curative. These days, sound is widely accepted as affecting the physical body and modern research highlights a connection between sound and healing. Can you tell us about how you came to be interested in the effects of sound on the body? *TKS:* We tell people we're sound junkies. That it's our drug of choice. When we discovered the Integratron in 1987, we had already been exploring the power of sound for meditation and healing. We were fortunate to learn about the history of sound and music, as well as the application of it from amazing people like Tom Kenyon, founder of Acoustic Brain Research. Practising meditation using sound, then learning about different healing modalities using sound was completely amplified a thousand-fold just by being at the Integratron. We just wanted to learn and practise more and more all the time, diving into the related realms of geometry, mathematics, and more recent technologies that electronics offer, like binaural beat compositions. *Lisa:* What are binaural beat compositions? *TKS:* Binaural beats or tones are believed to have a positive effect on the brain. The effect on the brainwaves depends on the difference in frequencies of two tones, for example, if 200 Hz was played in one ear and 210 in the other, then the binaural beat would have a frequency of 10 Hz. Binaural beats are being incorporated into different musical compositions and can reportedly influence the brain to reduce anxiety and provide other health benefits such as pain relief. *Lisa:* On 2 January of this year I visited the Joshua Tree desert and participated in one of your legendary public sound baths at the Integratron. For weeks afterwards, I felt I was walking on air. Could you describe a sound bath and tell us, how does sound affect the body? *TKS:* The Sound Bath is a 30-minute sonic healing session conducted in the Integratron's highly resonant, multi-wave sound chamber. We play a series of



The Integratron structure designed by engineer George Van Tassel, near Joshua Tree, California.
PHOTOGRAPH Lisa Rovner

quartz crystal singing bowls live, each one keyed to the energy centres or chakras of the body, where sound is nutrition for the nervous system. Imagine lying on comfy mats in the centre of this relaxing and resonant high-energy field, while having your body bathed in exquisite sound for 30 minutes. Sound, when conducted through the body via the tympanic membranes of the ears and also the liquids in the body, washes through bone, muscle, tissue and the nervous system. Generally, it relaxes the

body, depending on the types of sounds you're exposed to. This relaxation tends to decrease the contractions that cause pain, soothe the nervous system which can lower blood pressure and steady the heartbeat. Some people use certain sounds to stimulate the brain, increasing awareness. *Lisa:* The Integratron is a 38-foot high, 50-foot diameter structure in the middle of the Joshua Tree desert, designed to reflect and focus a range of frequencies useful for the rejuvenation of human beings. Can you tell us about Van Tassel, the man who created the Integratron. Tassel was given the name "The Integratron" by aliens that visited him and was told it would revitalise and rejuvenate the physical bodies of humankind. Wow... *TKS:* George Van Tassel was an aeronautical engineer and a Tesla scientist who worked for Lockheed, Douglas Aircraft and Howard Hughes. He claimed to have a physical encounter with extraterrestrials who gave him a formula and other information in order to build a machine, the Integratron, that was to be used for recharging the cell structure of the human body. He was also intending to use the building as an anti-gravity field generator and a time-travel device. He died before completing his vision, but left behind a structure that, just sitting there, generates a significant field of energy that's been measured by scientists. There is a significant spike in the Earth's magnetic field in the centre of the Integratron. This was measured by a geophysicist a few years ago who took baseline measurements 15 miles in every direction and then placed magnetometers inside the building. It was so significant, she found it impossible to explain. Based on this and historical information from Van Tassel, we assume it's largely due to the combination of the building's sitting atop a geomagnetic intersection (Van Tassel's claim), and the amplifying effect of the parabolic structure. *Lisa:* Some of that historical information is on view now at the Integratron. *TKS:* Most of Van Tassel's work was taken immediately after his death. When we first discovered the building in 1987, the only archival documents were old newsletters that local residents or other visitors donated to the previous owner. Since that time, we've been actively seeking and collecting Van Tassel's body of work, though any engineering or other plans on the actual functioning of the machine have not surfaced. We have most of his published works, however. They paint a fascinating picture of one man's inspired "field of dreams". *Lisa:* So the Integratron is a machine? *TKS:* Yes, the Integratron structure is a machine – an electrostatic generator. Van Tassel intended to fire up a field of energy that, in theory, was as powerful as the Philadelphia Experiment. The field could potentially make objects, people, or even the building itself, dematerialise. Van Tassel called it "a rejuvenation machine, anti-gravity device, and time-travel machine". Some scientists who've studied the building and pondered its potential believe that it could create an energy field that could actually bend time. *Lisa:* Certain sounds are said to have a healing influence on the body because they influence the geometric patterns and organisation of cells and living systems. I recently discovered Masaru Emoto's work, the Japanese scientist who documented the effects of music on water. Classical music produced beautiful crystals, while heavy metal music produced a pattern that looked like a crystal that had exploded into a thousand pieces. His research provides factual evidence that sound affects the molecular structure of water and demonstrates that we are constantly being influenced by the sounds around us. This is especially (continues on page 249)