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Robert Rich returns to Philadelphia and The Gatherings Concert Series for an eight hour sleep concert performance, from Midnight to 8AM, on Sunday 4 June 2016, within The Rotunda Sanctuary, 4014 Walnut Street in Philadelphia. Attendance is limited to 100 quietly prone attendees with proper sleeping apparatus.

Robert Rich finds expression in his works by fusing nature, technology, art and craft into a sonic replica of our earthly macrocosm. His music is concise, exhilarating and charged by a keen sense of drama. Moving through his many albums we find multi-layered realizations enlivened by misty flute solos, floating glissando guitar, and ethereal synth pads. Less active areas within the meshes of musical fabric are like an oasis nestled inside his ambitious design.

Conjuring soundscapes derived from the darkest regions of the earth, to the brightest grain of stardust, Rich's performances evoke the enigmatic nature of the universe while emphasizing its harmony with the human spirit. With his steel guitar, flutes, field recordings, synthesizers and samplers Robert Rich delves into the mysteries of the cosmos, and our place in it.

The term "Sleep Concert" can be a bit misleading, as it implies that this music is intended to help the listener sleep deeply. On the contrary, at this unique all-night event, the audience may find that they sleep less deeply, and wake up more often. The idea is to let the music incorporate itself into our perceptual framework during the night, to create a sonic surround, an environment for unique states of consciousness.

The music is aimed at the nebulous territory that exists in our minds when we are hovering between awake and asleep, and still aware of our environment - yet detached, as the half-sleeping mind wanders into the realm of hypnogogic images and dreamlike non-linearity. This music may be found to act as a trigger for these flowing thoughts, and the activation of the surrounding environment can help us skate around the edges of sleep, with part of us in the dream world, and part in the physical space where we are sleeping.

The experience of listening privately will differ from the experience of audience members during the Sleep Concert. In the concert situation, an additional state of heightened arousal can occur from social factors, whereas the environment of the home is more relaxed.

People become more physiologically activated merely by being in the proximity of other people. Perhaps this arousal is a purely chemical phenomenon - which is an interesting feature that distinguishes a live Sleep Concert from listening to a recorded version at home. In the act of bringing a group of people together in the same room, we create an energized environment, which can contribute to the intensity of personal experiences. But for these factors to contribute to an interesting aesthetic experience, listeners must combine this activation with an increase in attention to internal states of mind. The music hopes to intensify this internal focus.

Certain things happen when many people sleep in a room together. In general, due to the simple noises of others, people sleep less deeply. One of the more mundane reasons for this is snoring. An estimated 10% of the population snores, which means that in a room with 50-100 people, some will snore. Since the music is generally very quiet, snoring can become invasive. Besides snoring, other interruptions will doubtless invade the Sleep Concert ambience. Among these may be traffic sounds, car alarms, sirens, or people walking around in the space as they move to use the bathroom. Audience members may also notice the presence of Robert Rich in the room, the musician working behind the mixer.

The musical environment of a Sleep Concert may act like a lens to sharpen mental images, a stimulus to help attendees generate internal realities. Some of the sounds are abstract, blurry, hard to separate from the background. Other sounds evoke natural environments, open spaces, insects and animal calls, wind or rain. The music can replace the acoustics of a room with a shifting virtual soundscape.

To get the most out of our Sleep Concert, Robert Rich recommends that we focus on several aspects of the sleeping experience - the most interesting of which will occur in the transitions between sleeping and waking, and later when we are dreaming. During this transition, we may have dreamlike thoughts and visions called hypnogogic images - which are often less organized than true dreams, and frequently come blended with a semi-awareness of the surrounding environment. Passing from this stage into a deeper sleep, yields no memory of these images and thoughts. But if we can linger at the edge, slipping in and out of the first stage of sleep, we may ride along the edge of our own awareness.

The music may be used as a focal point to hold one's self right at the brink of sleep. During these experiences, we may find that the sonic environment has triggered dream activity, evoking fragile new mental landscapes.

Throughout the Sleep Concert, the music gets quite deep, it explores the shadows. The music is also quite gentle, and asks that we encounter our mental states with an open mind. Even the shadows contain useful information. The more we pay attention, the more we might find.

The Gatherings Concert Series presents the Robert Rich Sleep Concert on Sunday 4 June 2017 from Midnight to 8:00AM (doors open from 10:30PM-11:30PM on Saturday 3 June 2017) in the sanctuary of The Rotunda, 4014 Walnut Street (near the corner of 40th & Walnut) on the Penn campus in West Philadelphia. Admission: \$40 cash at the door, night of show. Space is limited to 100 quietly prone attendees with proper sleeping apparatus. Discounted Advance Tickets available at: www.isotank.com

Marking its 25th anniversary in 2017, The Gatherings Concert Series is presented by the all-volunteer staff of The Corporation for Innovative Music and Arts of PA, an IRS recognized 501(c)3 charity.

For more information, please access: www.thegatherings.org