

# Meditations

by Daniel R. Mitchell

This is not music to meditate by. Rather, these are musical meditations about things I experienced in daily life.

This is not the standard “pop” electronic music style, but instead an eclectic style using classical form and melody combined with minimalist backgrounds, all performed on a software-based synthesizer designed and written by the composer (*BasicSynth*).

## Watching a Mile Long Train (2020)

Traveling across the long stretches of open land from east to west, north to south, the freight trains haul their cargo of food, grains, ore, petroleum, manufactured things, and anything else that is needed to ship long distances, to their destinations. In the United States, there is no legal limit for train length, and trains of more than a mile in length are common.

According to CSX: “A typical CSX double-stack container train carries 280 containers. Each railcar is 80 feet chafing plate to chafing plate...As a result, 140 cars at 80 feet is 2.12 miles...Most railroads will limit train lengths to less than passing sidings on their main lines. These vary from 1 mile to about 2 and one half mile on much of the Union Pacific lines.”

## Watching Fireflies (2019)

Fireflies (also called Lighting Bugs) are bioluminescent flying insects that gather at sunset and signal their potential mates by flickering on and off. According to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*,

“some frogs eat such large numbers of fireflies that they themselves glow.”

## Evolving Streams Of Consciousness (2018)

I was sitting on the porch, enjoying the day, and heard the birds chirping. I imitated some of the bird songs using the synthesizer and this was the result. The title is in reference to the constant development of a few simple motifs that the composition is constructed from.

## A Slow Flowering (2018)

The image that inspires this composition is one of a slowly opening flower. The theme emerges, then develops into a sound that increases in texture/complexity and accelerates until everything “flowers” into a C Major chord. A final theme in counterpoint is heard twice.

## What is the Point? (2018)

What is the point? Is it the end you point with or it is the end you poke with? (In the end, the poke is the point.) Or, do we mean a point of view? That’s an opinion focused on a particular premise that guides thought. Perhaps it is a query of the purpose of something. We should always “stay on point” when speaking or writing.

A 9<sup>th</sup> cord arpeggio accompanies two melodies. Then, running patterns with sustained sounds accompanied by a rhythmic pattern follow. Finally a merger of the previously heard sections.

## Hummingbirds Feeding (2019)

At the house there are five (or more) birds and four feeders with four feeding openings at each feeder. That means there are sixteen potential feeding spots for five birds. Nevertheless, the birds constantly swoop and dive at each other in an attempt to drive the others away from what they obviously consider a limited food source. I think the birds probably waste most of the energy they get from feeding just trying to chase the others away. The biggest irony is that we refill the feeders when they get close to being empty, so there will always be plenty of nectar in the feeders.

Hummingbirds are just like some people. Some people are upset that others might be getting more of limited resources and attack the other to protect what is perceived as “mine” never realizing that if they just quit fussing and attacking others, let everyone have a space, everyone would have plenty. Nature will constantly replenish what we need. There is no need to be obsessed over what others have.

## Walking a Labyrinth (2019)

The labyrinth is a symbol of the journey through life. It is distinct from a maze, a puzzle to be solved, with dead ends and turns that lead nowhere. To walk a labyrinth, all you need is to stay on the path, even when it suddenly changes direction, and you will be guided to the center.

The music is structured as seven “circuits” building in layers, varying in texture and melodic patterns, each set off with chime sounds.