



Pet Music Can Soothe the Savage Human

A number of music producers caught a ride on the wave of new and innovative pet products that emerged in the late 1990s when they created musical arrangements especially for our furry friends.

Take Laurel Canyon Animal Company, for instance, a music company

that produces "Music to Make Dogs Happy." Humorous pet-related verses keep dog owners giggling, while squeaky toys and other sound effects stimulate their dogs.



Then, enter Pet Music, a company that recently reintroduced pet music specifically designed to calm pets and help with separation anxiety. No cutesy verses or stimulating sound effects

here. Just soft, lulling instrumentals that promote relaxation.

When the results of a study at Queens University in Belfast, Northern Ireland, were released in 2002, it confirmed what these music producers have been claiming all along: Animal behavior is

influenced by music. Heavy metal can get canines in a tizzy and classical compositions can quiet them. But what Dan Rappoport, president of Pet Music, probably didn't count on was the affinity humans would have for the same pacifying music.

A modern alternative to classical music, Pet Music's tranquil CDs seem to appeal just as much to the human senses, according to some of the consumer reviews on Amazon.com. One CD buyer boldly admits, "Forget the pets, I love the soothing music."

(continued on page 2)

Doggie Doodles

A simple treat that your pooch will love!

- 1/2 C. cornmeal
- 6 Tbs. oil
- 2/3 C. water or meat broth
- 2 C. whole wheat flour

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix well. Roll out to 1/4" thick. Cut into shapes. Baste with meat drippings and bake for 35-40 minutes.

Kitty Cuisine

Treat your companion to this feline feast!

- 2 flat cans of sardines in oil
- 2/3 C. cooked rice
- 1 Tbs. cooked chopped liver
- 1/4 C. parsley, chopped

Directions

Combine all ingredients. Stir with a wooden spoon to break up sardines into bite-sized pieces. Store unused portion in refrigerator, tightly covered.

Yield: 2 servings

Keeping Pets Safe and Healthy

Common Household Hazards:

- Chocolate
- Coffee
- Fabric softener sheets
- Many human medications
- Electrical cords
- Antifreeze
- Rodent or pest poisons
- Batteries
- Mistletoe

Top Ten Poisonous Plants:

- Marijuana
- Sago Palm

- Lilies
- Tulip Bulbs
- Azalea/Rhododendron
- Oleander
- Castor Bean
- Cyclamen
- Kalanchoe
- Yew

When to Call the Vet:

- Loss of appetite
- Increase or decrease in water consumption
- Bad breath (potential gum disease)
- When the animal is lethargic

- Any changes in behavior or habits
- Vomiting
- Persistent scratching/skin irritation
- When animal is exposed to a toxin



Resources

ASPCA POISON CONTROL HOTLINE:
888-426-4435

PLACER COUNTY SPCA:
www.placerspca.org

SACRAMENTO SPCA:
www.sspca.org



**Call us today for a
free consultation!**



This complimentary newsletter is provided by At Home Pet Services, your trusted neighborhood pet sitter. Let your pets enjoy the comforts of home and avoid the kennel while you're away. Now serving dogs, cats, birds, fish, reptiles and most domesticated animals.

*Bonded *Insured *Reliable *Affordable

At Home Pet Services
Jennifer Kirschten, Founder
2321 Sunset Blvd #170-224
Rocklin, CA 95765
916-508-8530

Musical Pets

Continued from page 1

Amy Brodsky, owner of a pet sitting business called The Waldog Astoria in Warwick, NY, confides, "I have listened to it for years. It's very relaxing, and we all need to relax."

It shouldn't be surprising that pet owners are usurping the use of their pets' stress-reducing music, since humans, perhaps, suffer even greater stress than their animal companions. An American Psychological Association survey in 2004 indicated that 54 percent of Americans were concerned about the level of stress in their every day lives.

The number of pets experiencing stress is likely to come in a close second, since animals are known to be extremely perceptive of human emotions. Body language and voice tone speak volumes to a pet, so if Master is stressed, Fido and Fluffy probably are, too.

"I think pets cheer up their owners and do know when they are stressed," says Brodsky. But in the process of turning to pets for stress relief, pet owners may not realize they are transferring tension to their animal companions.

Lorraine Zdeb, a professional pet sitter

in Manville, NJ, who specializes in stress reduction for both people and their pets, speaks of a love energy connection between humans and their animals. "People do not realize just how powerful that is," she says. "If the owner is not calm, the animal will not be."

The vicious cycle of stress is easy to envision: Master comes home from a stressful day at work and passes stress on to his dog. The dog is stressed from being left home alone all day, so he chews up the couch in frustration and passes stress on to his master. Stress could be considered the most highly contagious psychological zoonosis known to human (and animal) kind. So it makes sense that humans and animals should seek the same treatment.

Rappoport concurs. "Pet Music is good for human stress, too; just don't listen and drive at the same time," he jokes.

The inter-species benefits of stress-relieving music obviously apply to dogs, cats and birds, but the benefits to humans were not a consideration when Rappoport first embarked on a quest to help distressed pets. "When our original series was released in 1999, my partner and I did it almost as a lark, being as we were refugees from the record business."

If dogs could classify stress-reducing pet music, they might call it great music "to chew a bone by" or "to take a nap by." Humans might discover the same CD provides perfect music "to crochet by" or "to do yoga by." Would it be such a bad thing to abandon the TV in favor of listening to music "to read a good book by"?

Better yet, pet owners can share the experience with their pets by including peaceful pet music in their interactions. It is, after all, good music "to groom a pet by." There's nothing like a mellow melody during dog training sessions to encourage pets and their people to take things slow and be patient.

The calming effect of a Pet Music CD obviously has more applications than are immediately apparent. While Rappoport's original intention was to create "a natural way to address pet stress and separation anxiety," he has also succeeded in soothing the savage human.

Janice Biniok has written numerous articles and several books on companion animals. She has an English degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and is a member of the Dog Writers Association of America, Inc.