

# Sync Project to put you to sleep

 By [Pasqua Heard](#)

1 Mar 2017

Don't let the title mislead you: as always, the Design Indaba has been anything but dull. Rather, this refers to an informative talk presented by Marko Ahtisaari who shared about the undeniable connection between music and relaxation, sleep, anxiety and even pain. The co-founder of Sync Project also announced a worldwide music experiment, Unwind, which uses personalised music to improve sleep, set to take place for the first time in Cape Town tonight.



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Ahtisaari commenced his presentation with a moving piece of music titled *Vivaldi The Four Seasons Recomposed* by Max Richter. He then went on to say, “Music is a remarkable thing. Intuitively, we understand the power of music for our brains and our bodies. We all self-medicate with music and use it to get pumped up for athletics, to unwind or to get into the zone to concentrate. We also use it to prime ourselves when we have presentations.”

## The evidence

There are two kinds of studies that point to the value of music. They are neuroscience studies, which look at what is physically happening to your brain when listening to music, and clinical studies, which look at the health effects and outcomes.

Referring to neurological results, Ahtisaari said, “When we listen to music, similar pathways fire as to when we take certain pharmaceuticals. So, at least hypothetically, it is possible that we could replace some pharmaceuticals with music.”

Ahtisaari then explained that clinical evidence showed the surprising fact that music can be used to manage pain. “One study on post-operative pain saw half of a group get to listen to music for an hour after their operation. The other half didn’t. The group that got the music self-administered a third of the morphine than the other group. Therefore, there should be an opportunity for everyone to listen to the right music when they’re in pain.”

Sync Project’s aim is to provide music as precision medicine using machine learning to measure biometrics such as heartrate and sleep patterns, in order to offer people personalised forms of music based on one’s physiology.

## The experiment

In his conclusion, Ahtisaari announced that Sync Project in partnership with Marconi Union will run a first of its kind experiment, titled Unwind, to help people sleep. He found it fitting that this launches from Cape Town as it’s commonly labelled ‘Slaapstad’ [Sleep city]. Read more about this experiment on [Design Indaba’s website](#) and participate [here](#).

“ Unwind by Sync Project with Music by Marconi Union [#designindaba https://t.co/uJ8neqm3qt](#)— Graeme Carr (@graemecarr) [March 1, 2017](#) ”

[The Sync Project](#)

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