

heart operations in several hospitals. These days you will find harpists in intensive care units playing music that helps normalise sick newborns' heart beats, reduces post-surgery anxiety among patients and even soothes mothers during childbirth.

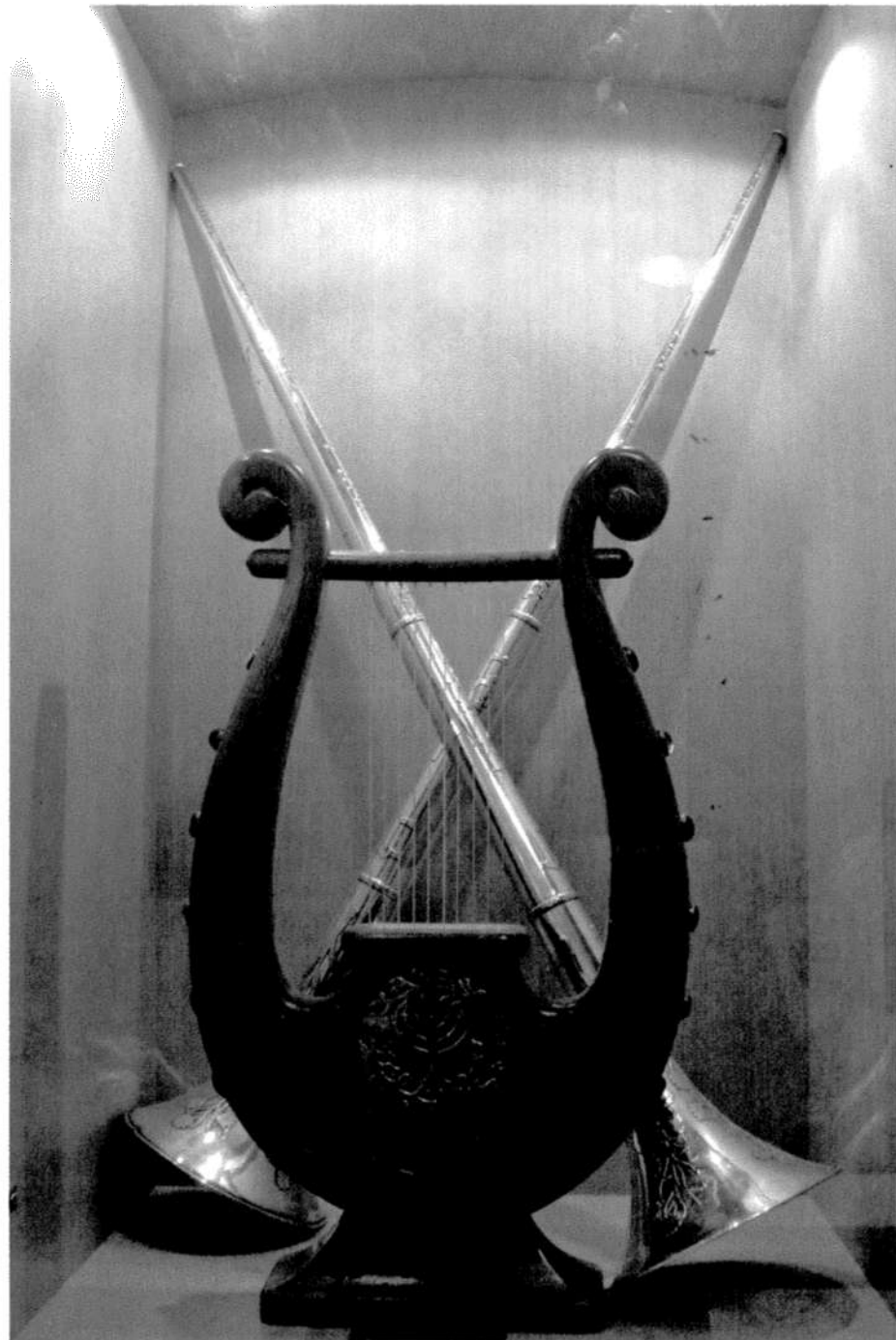
A story run by the news channel MSNBC on the Harp's incredible ability to 'soothe and heal' mentions the case study of a lady called Zook who suffered from atrial fibrillation. Her symptoms included unnerving palpitations and troubling fatigue that made her collapse without warning. Her doctor, Abraham Kocheril, chief of cardiac electrophysiology at the Carle Heart Centre in Urbana, made the amazing discovery that harp music could help Zook's heart beats return to normal. According to Dr Kocheril, resonant vibrations from live harp music may be particularly effective at regulating quivering heart rhythms. "Potentially, one could write out a prescription for patients to listen to harp music 5 days a week -- to keep the heart healthy in general and to keep rhythm disorders under control in particular!" he believes.

National Institutes of Health are financing larger studies on the healing effects of harp music. These musical sessions have also mysteriously helped accelerate the production of white blood cells two days faster than those in a

comparison group who didn't attend the music sessions. Dr Mark Jude Tramo, a neuroscientist, who is the director of the Institute for Music and Brain Science at Harvard, says, recent advances in basic neurobiological research have established a close link between the brain's hearing and its

emotional centres. The anatomical and functional connectivity of the brain's auditory and emotional systems may, in turn, influence both the body and its immune systems in positive ways." There have been several cases where the sounds of the harp not only helped soothe but also heal. A

study conducted by the International Harp Therapy Program indicated that after listening to the therapeutic harp music, 91 percent of patients, experienced relief from anxiety and 72 percent reported a reduction in pain. So what is so unique about the harp as a



"Life has its own music."

These calm, mellifluous musical notes are flying to all parts of the world from the House of Harrari, located in the mountains surrounding Jerusalem, in a small moshav

called Ramat Raziel, about 25 minutes by car from the centre of Jerusalem.

Micah and Shoshanna Harrari of Harrari Harps have been producing Bible harps in Israel since 1984. These are believed to be the first and only kind to have been made based on ancient origins of the Biblical harps, in over 2,000 years. They profess to make the best instruments using the finest musical woods. Shoshanna Harrari learned to play the harp by following her heart, first picking out simple songs, and then beginning to play her own music. She began to teach others by this method, encouraging budding harpists to find their own style and play music that comes from the deepest part of themselves. It is said that life has its own music. Therefore, the emphasis was not on perfect technique, rather on awakening of the sensitive strings of the heart and soul.

And that's at the soul of this joyful instrument. It sounds beautiful no matter how it is played, giving the player true freedom of expression and creativity rarely found in other instruments. Plus its easy portability you can carry it anywhere—out to the forest, beach, your back yard or a friend's home. It is just small enough to be considered hand luggage on airplanes, and light enough for anyone to carry with them," observes Shosanna. Would you comment on the healing



properties of the Harp?

Today we have the scientific instruments to measure just how the sound vibrations of the harp really do affect us. In many recent articles and film documentaries, it is being shown that the sound of the harp raises our sympathetic vibration to where it is supposed to be, allowing our overworked immune systems to regain their strength and vitality to be able to resist disease and debility.

Have Harrari harps been purchased by hospitals? Oh yes! Our customers tell us some of them are taking the harps into hospitals, hospices, even birthing rooms to play for the sick, the dying and the newborns. To ease one's pain and suffering, and smoothen the passage from one world to the next in the most gentle and loving ways. The people themselves in the hospitals are so grateful and they comment on how the sound of the harp helps them in their lives. I have even heard that a few were taken into operating rooms by nurses, where it was recorded that the people who were operated upon, recovered faster with more vitality..."

therapeutic instrument? It is believed that the rich tonal vibrations of the harp pulsate the entire body and can penetrate deep down to the cellular level, helping to restore physical, spiritual and emotional harmony. Another breakthrough in

the harp-music therapy is the Vibroacoustic Harp Theory (VHAT) that works by vibrating and resonating the tissues of the body, thereby affecting the physiological processes. Clients are asked to focus on areas of tension in the body, while

specific tones that resonate in these areas are identified. VHAT is a non-pharmacological approach to treating pain, stress and anxiety, and has virtually no side-effects. Research is being carried out internationally in the area of music healing .

And these beautiful instruments are taking centre stage, with the sounds of the harp floating not just through the streets of Jerusalem, which is the centre of harp production, but beyond its borders.

Irene Fernandez