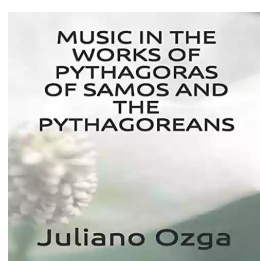


The Fascinating World of Music in the Works of Pythagoras of Samos and the Pythagoreans

Have you ever wondered about the origins of music? Did you know that the ancient Greek philosopher Pythagoras and his followers, known as the Pythagoreans, made significant contributions to the understanding of music and its mathematical underpinnings? Join us on a journey back in time to explore the captivating connection between music and the works of Pythagoras of Samos.

Music was a fundamental part of Pythagoras' teachings and philosophy. According to the Pythagoreans, music was considered a form of mathematical expression and the key to understanding the harmony of the universe. Pythagoras himself believed that music had the power to heal, uplift the soul, and even influence celestial bodies.

In Pythagoras' mind, music was closely linked to numbers. He discovered that musical pitch is determined by the length of a vibrating string, leading to the concept of the octave. This foundational work laid the groundwork for Pythagorean music theory, which explored the mathematical relationships behind musical intervals and scales.



Music in the works of Pythagoras of Samos and the Pythagoreans by Thomas Hylland Eriksen (Kindle Edition)

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

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One of Pythagoras' most remarkable discoveries was the relationship between musical intervals and simple ratios. He found that harmonious intervals, such as the perfect octave (2:1 ratio) or the perfect fifth (3:2 ratio), could be expressed as whole number ratios.

These findings revolutionized the understanding of music at the time. Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans believed that these ratios reflected the divine order of the cosmos. This understanding fostered a sense of unity and spiritual connection with the universe through music.

The Pythagoreans applied their insights into mathematical ratios to develop the Pythagorean tuning system. This system, which utilized a series of pure fifths to derive all other intervals, became the predominant tuning method in Western music for several centuries.

While the Pythagorean tuning system offered an incredibly pure and harmonious sound, it also had some limitations. Due to accumulating small errors in the ratios, when repeating the process of stacking pure fifths to create the remaining notes in the scale, the last note would be out of tune compared to the original starting note. This discrepancy, known as the "Pythagorean comma," eventually led to the development of alternative tuning systems.

For Pythagoras and his followers, the study and practice of music were not solely about aural pleasure but also had ethical and spiritual implications. The

Pythagoreans believed that specific musical modes and rhythms could influence human emotions and character.

They classified different musical modes into categories associated with specific moral qualities. For instance, the Dorian mode was believed to promote courage, the Phrygian mode elevated passion, and the Lydian mode encouraged moderation.

This understanding of music's moral and spiritual influence was deeply ingrained in Pythagorean philosophy and had a lasting impact on Western musical thought.

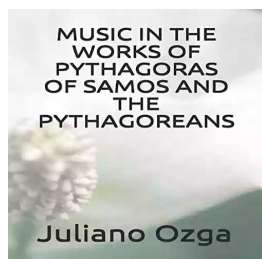
Pythagoras' work on music and its mathematical foundations left an enduring legacy. His ideas shaped the development of Western music theory for centuries to come.

Later scholars, such as the ancient Greek mathematician Euclid and the Roman philosopher Boethius, further expanded upon Pythagoras' theories. Euclid's work on mathematical proportions in music laid the groundwork for Renaissance composers to explore the intricate relationships between harmony and geometry.

Through their contributions, Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans established a deep connection between music, mathematics, and the harmony of the cosmos. Their discoveries and insights continue to resonate in the music we enjoy today.

The influence of Pythagoras of Samos and the Pythagoreans on the understanding of music cannot be overstated. Their belief in the mathematical foundations of music revolutionized ancient musical thought and contributed to the development of Western music theory.

By recognizing the mathematical relationships behind musical intervals and scales, Pythagoras paved the way for future generations to explore the intricate connections between music, numbers, and the harmony of the universe. Their ideas continue to inspire musicians and scholars to this day, reminding us of the profound impact that the ancient world had on shaping our appreciation and understanding of music.



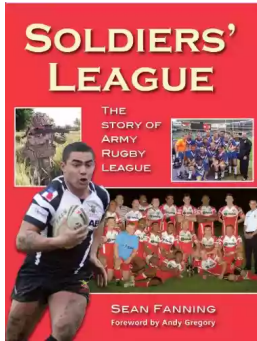
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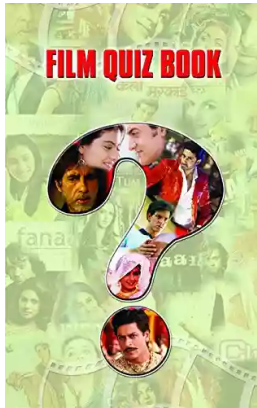


The subject of this book, as per the title, is music (from the Greek μουσική τέχνη - musiké téchne, i.e. "the art of the muses") in the works of Pythagoras, the first intellectual in the history of Philosophy to make that art the center of their worldview, even including it in the so called "Exact Sciences". In order to have more comprehension and clarity with regards to the intellectual production of Pythagoras, whose written works survived to the 21st century in a very fragmented form and in much smaller number, it is necessary to research the historical sources contemporary to the philosopher, as well as those which succeeded him.



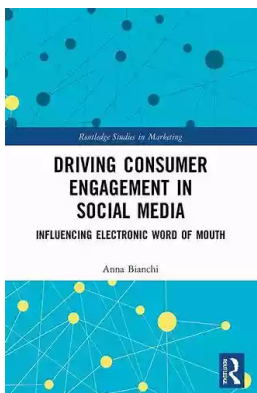
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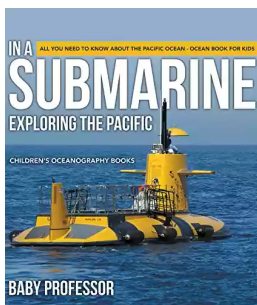
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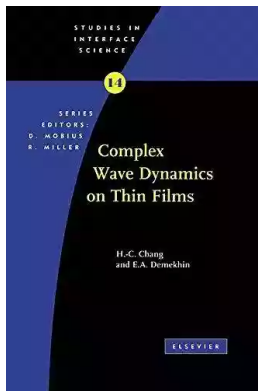
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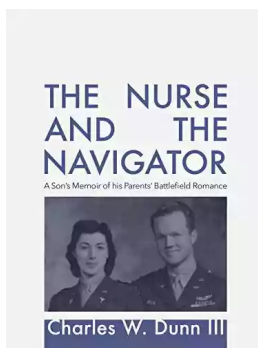
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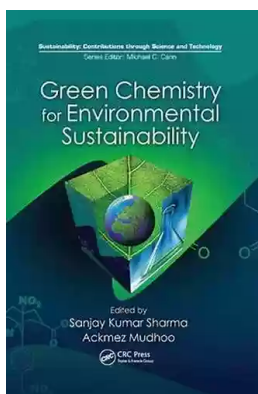
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