Abstracts for *Esoteric Music, Music Performance, and Music Research: A Symposium*, Feb 21-23, 2020, Nazareth College, Rochester, NY

Keynote Address: What Makes Music Esoteric?
By Joscelyn Godwin

Since the 1980s there has been a lively debate about the esoteric traditions of the West and how the study of them can be made acceptable in the Academy. Among those traditions is the Pythagorean and Platonic current of *musica speculativa*, with its threefold concept of music as cosmic, human, and practical. But defining "esoteric" is not a straightforward matter. Several competing definitions have been put forward since Antoine Faivre made his classic analysis of four primary and two secondary characteristics. All of them can be applied to music, which nevertheless remains a phenomenon apart from the currents of alchemy, astrology, ceremonial magic, divination, Gnosticism, Hermeticism, Kabbalah, etc., and which differs from them in never having suffered eclipse during the "age of reason." A more radical approach sets music, both speculative and practical, as an equal partner with the whole esoteric enterprise.

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Magic Squares, Cosmic Unity, and Eternal Laws of Nature: A New View of Webern's Op. 24 as a Synthesis of Contemporary Esoteric Thought
by Elizabeth Abbate

Webern's long-time interest in the SATOR square – a 5-word Latin palindromic "magic square" with origins in antiquity – was so well known that it was chosen as the inscription on his gravestone. Its prominent role in the construction of his entirely symmetrically structured *Concerto for Nine Instruments* (Op. 24) (from 1934) has prompted speculation by musicologists and esotericists alike about the specific relevance of the square for Webern. These discussions have tended to focus solely on one or more clearly defined topics, including the resemblance of the square's intervallically identical trichords to the symmetric words of the square, Webern's temporary adoption of a potentially esoteric text to set a portion of the music, and his potential interest in the anagrammatic interpretation of the letters of the square as spelling "Our Father." However, a broader assessment of Webern's statements on Op. 24, and of the precepts that he believed should govern musical composition, begins to reveal the complexity not only of Webern's thinking but also of esoteric thought in the German-speaking world of the 1930s. Early 20th-century interest in magic squares and, in particular, in the SATOR AREPO TENET OPERA ROTAS (often translated as "the sower/farmer Arepo works the wheel/plow") reached new heights in the early 1930s with the publication of von Hardenberg's *Rosenkreuz und Bafomet*, which, expanding on Grosser's 1926 anagrammatic "Our
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Father" interpretation, attempted to conclusively establish the Christian origins of the SATOR square. Responses to von Hardenberg's book included other Christian interpretations as well as a response by Ernst Darmstaedter in the history of science journal *Isis*, which interpreted the square as reflecting the hermetic dictum "As above, so below." Given Webern's interest in Swedenborg's correspondences and in the anthroposophic thinking of his friend and collaborator Hildegard Jone, one might expect him to express an interpretation of the square similar to Darmstaedter's. Yet Webern's own reading of the square – "The sower holds the work and the work holds the sower" – both reflects the way he fit words to trichords in the row sketches and, strikingly, joins the concept of above reflecting below to the idea that [C]reator and artist alike are governed by some sort of unchangeable laws. This conceptual synthesis is clearly informed by his association with Arnold Schoenberg and is shaped by an understanding of Goethe that is closely akin to Rudolf Steiner's. Most specifically, Webern embraces Goethe's mandate to create music according to secret "natural laws" that are best perceived through intuition, with the resulting compositions reflecting and conveying the mystical unity of the cosmos. Thus, in a reflection of contemporary esoteric thinking, Webern's framework for the composition of Op. 24 embraces a range of esoteric concepts. In addition to placing Webern's thinking about the SATOR square in its likely esoteric contexts, this paper will consider the intended effect of Op. 24's highly unified pitch organization on its listeners, and will suggest that the 12-tone matrix for the piece contains some of the patterns typical of a 4x4 magic square.

"Im Himmel und auf Erden": Geometry, Alchemy, and Rosicrucian Symbol in Buxtehude's *Herr, wenn ich nur Dich hab'* (BuxWV 38)
by Malachai Bandy

In 1617, German physician, alchemist, and eventual Rosicrucian apologist Michael Maier published *Atalanta fugiens*, an emblem book containing fifty engraved illustrations of alchemical principles. Maier frames the series as an allegorical retelling of the myth of Atalanta: to each plate's title, motto, epigram, and discourse, he assigns a unique three-voice fugal canon, meant to symbolize Art chasing Nature, with tools borrowed from Venus. Of all fifty emblems, just one pertains to the Philosopher's Stone—the end goal of all alchemical processes and a common metaphor for the union of Heaven and Earth. Maier casts this concept entirely in geometrical language and image: with a compass, a Master constructs a large circle around a man and woman (duality), whom he has already enclosed in a smaller circle, square, and triangle.

Fifty years later, Dieterich Buxtehude's close friend Johann Theile compiled his *Musikalisches Kunstbuch*, a collection of contrapuntal riddles and puzzle-canons. David Yearsley has shown that Theile's *Kunstbuch* closely resembles Maier's text in format, epigram, and canonic technique, all of which suggest an intentional allusion to alchemy. Buxtehude demonstrates similar interest in canon and learned counterpoint across his oeuvre, yet his compositions have gone largely unexamined relative to tenets of occult philosophy evidently present in his social circle. An

intersection of seventeenth-century music and number theory, alchemy, and Lutheran mystical theology, this study examines interactions between textual content and structural proportion in Buxtehude's *ostinato* setting of Psalm 73, *Herr, wenn ich nur Dich hab'* (BuxWV 38). An analysis alongside writings of Andreas Werckmeister, Robert Fludd, and Michael Maier illuminates the work's geometrical design: major division points consistently align with the Pythagorean ratio 4:3, while Maier's "figural" numbers form the foundation for Buxtehude's *ostinato*. Triangular, square, and "star" numbers especially pervade the work's paradoxical structural scaffolding, operating in simultaneous conflict and union with the ground's circularity. Juxtaposition of star numbers 37 and 73 with the ratio 4:3 ultimately points to Buxtehude's having solved, in music, the infamous mathematical impossibility of "Squaring the Circle"—the gateway to the Philosopher's Stone and *unio mystica*.

Since Martin Geck's dissertation in the 1960s, scholars of Buxtehude's vocal music have centered speculation about his mystical tendencies not on counterpoint, geometry, or alchemy, but on the German Pietist movement. Complicating Kerala Snyder's opposing case, in 2018 Olga Gero traced the unique, previously unidentified text of *Fallax mundus* (BuxWV 28) to a Flemish Jesuit emblem book, reopening questions about Buxtehude's and his patrons' religious proclivities. Ultimately, my discovery of Rosicrucian, not Pietist, textual and numerical tropes in *Herr, wenn ich nur Dich hab'*—including Squaring the Circle, and as substantiated by an anonymous seventeenth-century Rosicrucian manuscript in the Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Hamburg—provides a new bridge between elements of Christian theology, alchemy, and counterpoint already well established within Buxtehude's milieu. Recognizing esoteric aspects of Buxtehude's work as conceptually foundational refocuses his image within exoteric historiography and challenges prevalent Enlightenment-bound notions of intellectualism during the Age of Exploration.

Musica ficta, Conjunction Theory, and the Hermaphroditic Nature of the Mi-Fa Complex

by Adam Bregman

In his *Scientia artis musice* of 1274, theorist Elias Salomon remarks on the inherent gender-specific qualities of *mi* and *fa*, as a pairing of masculine and feminine, when he guides his readership with the following statement:

> The nature of E is that it has a very masculine and rigid value and takes *mi* and *la* and no other [syllable], and always is struck [forcefully] … F has a womanly compliance and the nature of the feminine sex, and on it only *ut* and *fa* may be sung, and whenever the singer needs F, whether ascending or descending, it is necessary to subdue it and soften it.[1]

Such vividly gendered descriptions would continue to arise throughout the Renaissance, specifically to inform performance practices.[2] In modern scholarship, the study of Medieval and Renaissance music theory has followed such colorful

descriptions and has, effectively, undergone a sexual awakening. Scholars such as Elizabeth Eva Leach, Sarah Fuller, and Bonnie Blackburn have treated the feminine nature and effeminate effects of soft B(-flat vs. the hard B-natural) and the semitones of the chromatic genus of tetrachord, as well as the union of the authentic modes with their plagal spouses as co-dependent yet separate, lest a monstrosity result.[3] But scholarship has yet to address the relationship of *mi* and *fa* and the implications of *musica ficta* or *coniunctae*, when taking into account the gendered characteristics of these two syllables. This paper aims to investigate the gender fluidity or, more in line with Medieval thought, hermaphroditism of any note that shares the syllables *mi* and *fa*, especially when it shifts from one propriety or function the other, following the rules of *musica ficta per causa necessitatis vel causa pulchritudinis*. Certainly not unique to music, however, we find such gendered language in Alan of Lille's *De planctu naturae* (ca. 1160-65), where the author, through Nature, uses grammar to describe the deviance of mankind from what is natural (where Venus "changes 'hes' into 'shes' and with her witchcraft unmans man"):

> The active sex shudders in disgrace as it sees itself degenerate into the passive sex. A man turned woman blackens the fair name of his sex. The witchcraft of Venus turns him into a hermaphrodite. He is subject and predicate: one and the same term is given a double application. Man here extends too far the laws of grammar.[4]

By enlisting Alan and Nature, we will draw a parallel to help us observe how the use of artifice in music, in order to maintain consonance, effectively revolts against nature, turning "*mis*" into "*fas*" and "*fas*" into "*mis*." We will explore the gendered and sexualized implications of such alterations and consider how gendered musical language could inform ties between Medieval music and alchemy.

1 Translated in Bonnie J. Blackburn, "The Lascivious Career of B-Flat," in *Eroticism in Early Modern Music*, ed. Bonnie J. Blackburn and Laurie Stras (Surrey and Burlington: Ashgate, 2015), 32.
2 See Anne Smith, *The Performance of Sixteenth-Century Music: Learning from the Theorists* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 22-28.
3 See Eva Elizabeth Leach, "Gendering the Semitone, Sexing the Leading Tone: Fourteenth-Century Music Theory and the Directed Progression," *Music Theory Spectrum* 28, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 1-21; "'The Little Pipe Sings Sweetly while the Fowler Deceives the Brid': Sirens in the Later Middle Ages," *Music & Letters* 87, no. 2 (May 2006): 187-211; "Music and Masculinity in the Middle Ages," in *Masculinity and Western Musical Practice*, ed. Ian Biddle and Kirsten Gibson (Surrey and Burlington: Ashgate, 2009), 21-39; Sarah Fuller, Colloquy: "Concerning Gendered Discourse in Medieval Music Theory: Was the Semitone 'Gendered Feminine'?", *Music Theory Spectrum* 33 (2011): 65-89; Bonnie J. Blackburn, "The Lascivious Career of B-Flat," in *Eroticism in Early Modern Music*, ed. Bonnie J. Blackburn and Laurie Stras (Surrey and Burlington: Ashgate, 2015), 19-42.
4 Alan of Lille, *Plaint of Nature*, ed. and trans. James J. Sheridan (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1980), 67-68.

Athanasius Kircher and the Nature of Ecstatic Listening
by Charles Brewer

There are any number of descriptions of the power of music to affect thoughts and actions. In antiquity, the topos of music's power was expressed both in stories such as Herodotus's account of the *kitarode* Arion, whose song attracted the dolphin who saved his life, or the more detailed descriptions of Plato and Aristotle of how music could affect behavior. In the sixteenth-century there are reports of listeners's to Janequin's *La bataille de Marignan* or Le Jeune's *La Guerre* who were moved to take up arms and later pacified through the music they heard. Common to both the descriptions of Plato and Aristotle and that written by Artus Thomas about Le Jeune are the specific theoretic details that are cited which caused the changes in those who heard the music.

In 1656, Athanasius Kircher described a private performance by Lelio Colista (theorbo) with Michelangelo Rossi and Salvatore Mazzella (violins) that "because the figures of the previously described symphony would have excited the soul, now pregnant with harmonious melodies, into various images of apparitions, it is consequently a fact, that on that certain day I should have contemplated more fervently than usual the wisdom of the very great God, thrice perfect, stretching forth solely by himself in the wonderful and incomprehensible arrangement of the cosmic structure." This passage is an important document that at least one listener in the seventeenth century experienced much more that a simple pleasant concert. While it is possible to see hints in the extant music by Colista and Rossi (unfortunately, no music is yet known written by Mazzella) of what might have caused Kircher's ecstatic vision of the universe, it is possible to examine his own descriptions in the *Musurgia Universalis* to provide a concrete example of how Giacomo Carissimi was able to lead his discerning listeners to a deeper theological understanding of a biblical story.

Kircher characterized Carissimi as a composer who "excels before others with a genius and facility in composition for transforming the souls of the listeners into all varieties of affects," and discusses in detail the musical techniques that Carissimi used in the "Dialogue of Jephthe". While Kircher acknowledged there was not enough space to print the complete work, he "determined to add only this six-voice lament, so that symphonists would have something ingenious that they could imitate, a single specimen manifestly of affective music and skill." This chorus of lamentation, which implores the daughters of Israel to wail over the death of Jephthe's daughter, has frequently been used as an example of affective music, but all the descriptions have focused on the superficial aspects of Carissimi's music. By applying Kircher's own descriptions, it is possible to interpret this chorus as signifying not only the deep sadness over the daughter's death but also her transformation into a type of Christ, as noted in the commentaries and plays by Kircher's Jesuit contemporaries. By seriously considering Kircher's own descriptions it is possible to approach a seventeenth-century understanding of the deep transformative listening he experienced.

Bach's Symbolic Language in the Passacaglia and Fugue in c minor BWV 582
by Michail Konstantinos Chalkiopoulos

Johann Gotthilf Ziegler stated in his letter to apply for the organist post in Halle , that J.S. Bach instructed him to play the chorales in accordance to the "sense of the words."[1] Such assertions from those among the Bach circle provided the basis for the idea of a musical-symbolic language in the composer's music. In a seminal work on the topic, Walter Emery observed, for example, that "when the words refer to a rise, fall, or the Old Serpent, the music often rises, falls, or moves snake-wise."[2] Along the same lines of symbolism, famously, Albert Schweitzer associated the use of the sharp sign with the image or idea of the Cross of Christ, an idea that is still familiar and operative in many analyses and interpretations of Bach's music. In search for more revealing information on the topic, one encounters the work of Friederich Smend and Ruth Tatlow on numerology—hidden and overt—in Bach's music which remains controversial. Notwithstanding the potentially elusive nature of such ideas. Yet, their work triggers the mind for a deeper understanding of the philosophy of proportions in the music of Bach. Understanding the latter requires the combination of many disciplines. The roots of such, oftentimes, lead to the occult. More recently, David Yearsley took this thought a few steps further, connecting J. S. Bach's compositions with the esoteric philosophy of alchemy found in the Hamburg theorist Johann Theile's Kunstbuch . More specifically, Yearsley, on his article Alchemy in the Age of Reason, makes a profound observation regarding the character and nature of Alchemy as an occult philosophical movement that exercised powerful influence on great minds such as Newton's scientific thought : "Over the past twenty years, scholars have begun to investigate, the significance, even centrality, of alchemy in the mature thought of Newton and Leibniz, both of whom were committed alchemists, and has done much to correct the general tendency toward dismissing the role of the occult in the work of men who have become for us symbols of scientific progress."[3] As a result of Yearsley's work, it becomes more apparent that another leading figure of musical thought- Bach- was at least aware of, and indeed probably very familiar with, the symbolic language of alchemy and its relation to music: that is, the interplay among music notation with or without words, with the emotions that arise from the music, and the symbolic imagery of musical figures that synthesizes both. The Passacaglia and Fugue in c minor presents similar implications—but instead of words, the notation itself veils religious and esoteric symbols. This concept will be explored under the filters of theoretical analysis (analogy and numerical proportions, function of the segments of variations, use of thematic modulation etc.) and how this analysis blends with philosophical-religious ideas embodied in symbols.

1 Wolff, Cristoph, ed. David, Hans T., Mendel, Arthur. *The New Bach Reader*. New York, London. W.W. Norton & Company, 1998. 551 p
2 Walter, Emmery. "Bach's Symbolic Language." *Music and Letters* vol.30 no.4 (1949), 345-354. Jstor
3 David Yearley. "Alchemy in the Age of Reason." *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, vol.51, no. 2 (1998), 201-243. Jstor

"De septenario illo et sacro numero": The Divine Septenarius in Baryphonus and Grimm's *Pleiades musicae*

by Benjamin Dobbs

Heinrich Baryphonus and Heinrich Grimm's music manual, *Pleiades musicae* (1615/1630), is at once conventional and bizarre. The subject matter is well-established—the mathematical origin of intervals, modes, counterpoint, and the fundamentals of composition— but the mode of presentation for those topics is astounding in its complex and gymnastic configuration around the number seven. This presentation explores evidence of Neoplatonist impulses in Baryphonus and Grimm's treatise, focusing on three areas: the astronomical/mythological title and accompanying overt references to Neoplatonic cosmology and mysticism, the structuring of the treatise into groups of seven, and the protracted exploration of manifestations of the sevenfold in the metaphysical and physical universe.

The invocation of the Pleiades in the title signifies both the seven sisters of Greek legend and the constellation of the same name. In the preface to the first edition, Baryphonus draws mythological connections between the Pleiades and Mercury, writing, "in accordance with their number...Mercury was reported to have affixed seven strings to his lyre." In *Metaphysics*, Aristotle states that the Pythagoreans called the Pleiades the "Lyre of the Muses," and writes of their belief that the seven notes of the scale, seven-stringed lyre, seven planets, and seven Pleiades are all physical expressions of the same universal numeric principle.

The appeal to the Pleiades is more explicit in the second edition, wherein each chapter receives the name of one of the stars of the constellation and sisters from mythology. The number of the Pleiades further serves as formal structuring device for the treatise. There are seven chapters, which have seven sections, which have seven theorems, axioms, or examples. Baryphonus and Grimm write, "Before each and every section...I have set as a Goddess the title of one of the seven Pleiades, and as far as it is possible, I was most observant of the septenarius."

The most thorough expression of the septenarius emerges in the preface to the second edition, which examines the sevenfold nature of the macrocosm and microcosm, and affairs sacred and civil. In the macrocosm, the sevenness is manifest in the Pleiades, the seven planets in their seven orbits, and the twenty-eight-day cycles of the moon and Zodiac. Found in the microcosm are seven parts of the body, seven nerves in the brain, seven wonders of the ancient world—many of which are constructed in sevenfold measures and proportions—and seven hills of Rome. Regarding matters sacred are the seven forms of God's name, creation of the world in seven days, Sabbath as the seventh day, and seven years of feast and famine. With respect to civil matters, the rise and fall of rulers, dynasties, and empires occur in cycles of seven years.

Baryphonus and Grimm go through exhaustive lengths to honor the septenarius in their treatise. From the title of their work, to the structure of their arguments, to their incredible accounts of the number seven in metaphysical and physical realms, they demonstrate the profound numerological relationship between astronomy,

biology, architecture, and history, and between the Pleiades and their sacred charge, music.

Theosophy and Sun Ra's Esoteric Musical Modernism
by Anna Gawboy

In 1951, the jazz musician Herman Blount co-founded the Thmei Research group in Chicago with his partner Alton Abraham. This secret society met regularly to study a wide range of esoteric literature that included classic Theosophical writings such Helena Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* (1888), contemporary works such as Corrine Helene's *Healing and Regeneration through Music* (1943), as well as literature on paranormal phenomena such as UFOs, astral projection, and ESP. Blount and his colleagues were particularly interested in studying Egyptian Hermeticism and the ancient mystery cults of Isis. The group publically disseminated its findings through broadsides and street-corner preaching in Washington Park. In 1952, Blount legally changed his name to Le Sony'r Ra and began performing as Sun Ra, an Egyptian space god returning to earth to offer musical salvation to black Americans suffering from racial injustice.

The role of esotericism in Ra's professional transformation has been well documented (e.g., Szwed 1998; Youngquist 2016). This paper takes a closer look at how Theosophy shaped Ra's performing persona and his construction of a secret spiritual trajectory for black Americans. Theosophy identified Egypt and India as the sources of a universal ancient wisdom-religion, displacing Christian Euro-American claims to superior spiritual enlightenment. This inspired Ra to locate an Indian origin for black Americans (Ra/Corbett 2006, 81). The Theosophical Society's promotion of world religions was intimately related to its mission to establish a "Universal Brotherhood of Humanity without distinction of race, color, sex, caste or creed." Despite their bizarre anthropogenesis that blended ancient myth and nineteenth-century scientific racism, Theosophists rejected social inequality based on racial difference because they believed that all humanity shared the same divine sacred spark (Santucci 2008). Theosophical anti-colonial activity in India, Sri Lanka, and Ghana had already established a link between esotericism and political action in the early twentieth century.

Ra embraced the Theosophical idea that matter was comprised of complex vibrations and that music was a type of energy capable of producing spiritual and material transformation. Like Alexander Scriabin, Ra identified himself as an Orphic creator-god who was destined to perform a special messianic role. Ra's concerts became increasingly ritualized, with music, costumes, and movement coordinated for symbolic import. The 1973 film *Space is the Place* concludes with a performance by Sun Ra and his Intergalactic Arkestra that dematerializes human bodies and transports them to another planet, where they form a Edenic colony free from earth's racial and sexual oppression.

Ra's career-long movement away from bebop towards a more experimental style, featuring evocations of classical Indian music, extended instrumental techniques, clusters, noise, and electronic distortion reflects his search for a particular kind of

musical sound-energy that would elicit maximum spiritual effects. Just as Ra refashioned Theosophy's spiritual narrative in terms of black American liberation, he also adopted elements of an international esoteric musical modernist style and combined them with avant-garde jazz. The case of Sun Ra demonstrates both the power of Theosophical ideas as well as their flexibility in supporting an individual performing identity and social mission.

Air and Eros: The Musician as Demiurge in Renaissance Magic
by Leonard George

Marsilio Ficino (1433 – 1499) was a polymath who lived in Florence under the patronage of the Medicis. Ficino taught and practiced a system of therapy called Natural Magic (*magia naturalis*). Foremost among his recommended methods was the performance and hearing of music. His system was grounded in a metaphysics and psychology derived from many sources, including Neoplatonic, Hermetic and Theurgical texts that he was the first in Western Europe to read in a millennium, as well as medieval Arabic authors such as al-Kindi. In this view, the world consists of forces and entities in a web of mutual causality (both vertical and lateral). These influences are mapped within a fluid dynamic model using the terminology of vibration, circulation, radiation and impression. Suffused with cosmic Love, these motions can be called "erotic" in the broadest sense. Ficino also took relevant notions from tomes on music's power and its cosmological significance by Plato, Macrobius, Boethius and others. Three features of Ficino's music have been noted by scholars (eg. Godwin, Walker, Couliano, Kristeller, Tomlinson, Voss, Copenhaver, Allen, Kaske):

1. <u>The use of music to promote physical and mental well-being</u>**.** In Ficino's view, each person is a hybrid of body and soul mediated by spirit, embedded in a cosmos also made of those three factors. A juncture of each individual's body, soul and spirit, called the *idolum*, serves as a bridge between sensory input and conscious perception, as well as between intention and action. The *idolum* is a medium in which sensory impressions form, which then are copied and evaluated within the soul, producing changes in soul and body. Healthful effects can be transmitted by images left on the *idolum* by ingestion of substances (what we call today the placebo effect), viewing of pictures and symbols, or listening to sounds, words and music. Of these inputs, music makes the strongest images because of its affinity with the spiritual substance of the *idolum*, and can draw healthy inflows via resonance with forces and entities, analogous to the vibration of a lyre-string when a consonantly tuned string is plucked on another lyre.
2. <u>The use of music to rouse the soul from a state of "sleep" or "forgetfulness" to one of divine wakefulness and remembrance</u>. Ficino compared ordinary waking consciousness to the dream state in which one mistakes dream images for real events. He also endorsed the Platonic notion that the embodied soul has forgotten its divine origin, but preserves memory traces

of this heavenly source. Ficino claimed that music, both made and heard, is an especially potent stimulus of spiritual lucidity and recollection.

3. The idea that music composed and performed in a certain way can make living beings out of patterns of vibrating air. Ficino embraced the ancient view that the cosmos is alive, including the parts that modern biology regards as inert. But he held more specifically that the performance of a song in such a way as to create an aerial body of resonant proportions, vibrating with the thoughts and emotions of the performer, comprises an actual organism which then can bear those meanings and feelings to the *idolum* of the listener. Ficino did not discuss whether the creation of living songs in itself had therapeutic or spiritual import for the musician. His terseness might reflect that in his cultural milieu, such "airy spirits" would generally have been taken to be demons. (Bear in mind that the witch-hunter's manual *Malleus Maleficarum* was published three years before Ficino finished his major discussion of musical magic in *De Vita Coelitus Comparanda*. He was also aware that the work of his student Giovanni Pico della Mirandola had been the first printed text banned by the Church as heretical, a decade before the *DVCC* was published.)

But we can speculate on the value of making living songs by comparing Ficino's practice with other examples of animation and demiurgy in pagan and Judeo-Christian traditions, such as the enlivening of mummies in pharaonic Egypt, Neoplatonic exercises of cosmogonic visualization, Hermetic and Theurgical statue animation, and the ensoulment of the *golem* by Jewish magicians. The Renaissance magical musician, by crafting a living song, is re-enacting Genesis, and through this act of imitation is brought into resonance with God.

The Osiris-Light in Nino Rota's Music
by Pascuale Giaquinto

Nino Rota (1911-1979) was an Italian composer remembered in all the world especially for his many soundtracks composed for several directors. Scores written for Federico Fellini such as *8 e ½* (1963) and *Amarcord* (1973), for Luchino Visconti such as *Il gattopardo* (1963), for Franco Zeffirelli such as *Romeo e Giulietta* (1968), for Francis Ford Coppola such as *Il padrino – parte I* (1972) and *parte – II* (1974), known everywhere, have been awarded with BAFTA, Golden Globe and Oscar. They are a milestone in world cinema of the 1900s.

Nino Rota was a perfect composer, not just for cinema. His music not for cinema is very formidable even if it is little known. Later celebrations of his 100th of birth in 2011, many academic and musical ventures emphasized his versatility: music for piano, chamber music, sacred and profane music, music for orchestra, concerts, and operas.

For some of these vocal compositions Nino Rota collaborated with Vinci Verginelli (1903-1987), teacher of Italian and Latin language at "Liceo Virgilio", a

Roman High school, his best friend, that wrote the libretto. The studying about relationship Rota-Verginelli brought out human and professional agreement, and the same passion for a particular kind of esotericism: hermetism of Giuliano Kremmerz (1869-1930), one of the most important esotericist of 1900s. Rota and Verginelli joined to Circolo Virgiliano, one of academies founded by Kremmerz. However Rota and Verginelli kept an unconditioned discretion on their hermetic studies. The only one exception that enlightened an unclear argument was a gift of 500 ancient and modern books and manuscripts that Verginelli in 1986, few years later Rota's death, offered to National Academy of Lincei in Rome. This book collection was named *Raccolta Verginelli-Rota di antichi testi ermetici – sec. XV-XX* (Verginelli-Rota collection of ancient hermetic books – century XV-XX). To Roma Tre University in Rome, given *Raccolta Verginelli-Rota di testi ermetici moderni – sec. XIX-XX* (Verginelli-Rota collection of modern hermetic books – century XIX-XX), many years later Verginelli's death, exactly in 2003, composed of 2.500 books. Both gifts show other side of their hermetic studies: bibliophilia.

This paper concerns two aspects apparently not related but surely complementary to offer a general view on relationship between hermetism-music-books in Nino Rota's works. The first will show about opera *Aladino e la lampada magica* (Aladdin and the magic lamp), composed by Rota in 1968 on text of Vinci Verginelli. I will present a selection of opera and I will analyse music and text to pull out some elements of light-initiation's way, typical of disciples of Hermetism.

The second will propose some unpublished autograph of composer found between pages of books of Verginelli-Rota collection of modern hermetic books; these manuscripts will show interesting of composer for light such as physical-spiritual point and its precedence for Osiris-way of disciple of Kremmerz.

The final aim will be to offer an original and unexplored way to understand the poetics of this composer.

Concealment Revealed: Sound and Symbol in Ockeghem's *Missa Quinti toni* and *Missa Prolationum*

by Adam Knight Gilbert

Modern scholars Anne Walters Robertson, Craig Wright, Patrick Macey and others have identified copious examples of symbolism in Renaissance sacred music, yet treatises on *musica practica* and *speculativ*a remain conspicuosly silent about rhetorical and symbolic devices in Masses and motets. The effect of such theoretical silence is nowhere more resounding than in the Masses of Johannes Ockeghem. Studies by Fitch, Duffin, Rodin, and Luko focus largely on the technical aspects of counterpoint in Ockeghem's "aesthetic of concealment."

This paper argues that *Missa Quinti toni* and *Missa Prolationum* contain symbolism whose inspiration will be found not in music treatises, but in the public writings of Nicholas of Cusa and his contemporaries. In particular, these Masses reveal devices that correspond with remarkable consistency to the symbolic theologies in Cusa's treatises and public sermons.

Missa Quinti toni proceeds from an apparent chaos of concealed motivic logic

(Fitch and Luko), through a plethora of invertible motifs identified by this author, culminating in the first known use of the six *voces musicales* in incremental form, an explicit *scala caelestis*, mirroring one of the main theses of Cusa's *De quaerendo Deum,* that searching for the Lord is like climbing a ladder through the senses Heavenward. The expanding canon of *Missa Prolationum* corresponds closely to theological-geometrical concepts in Cusa's treatise *De docta ignorantia*, that proves the existence of God through endless expanding geometrical arcs. Most significantly, Cusa argues in *De quaerendo Deum* that one must search for the Lord by contemplating the Greek name THEOS (θεός). Cusa's foundational concept appears hidden in plain sight in Ockeghem's *Missa Prolationim*: the four fundamental musical mensuration signs at the heart of its canon correspond precisely to the four Greek letters letters of the name of the Lord, imagery echoed in Johann Theodor de Bry's engraving of Hermes Trismegistus, pointing Heavenward towards an image that simultaneously represents the four mensuration signs and THEOS. Contemporary theology and imagery reveals that this is no coincidence. Ockeghem's Masses thus play a central role in documentable traditions of symbolizing Divinity as a musical ladder and depicting the name of the Lord in music and visual imagery.

Contemplative Practice in Improvised Modal Auditory Space
by Justin Ray Glosson

Contemplative practices with music are provided frequently at typical New Age meditation gatherings. Long, pitch centric passages of slow moving notes, aetheric in their nature, offer no relational system of correspondence with any symbol system of sound in antiquity. Rather than promote those "a-symbolic" soundscapes, this presentation will make use of one of the many modal symbolic systems passed from the 12th Century. By creating a modal complex based upon Anonymous IV's translation of Boethius, this presentation will provide a modal meditation through harmonic sequences and intervallic juxtaposition native to a specific symbol desired. This Arts Practice Research presentation has been performed at the Academy of Reflection in Guthrie, Oklahoma, several Masonic Lodges throughout Texas and Oklahoma, and at Texas Tech University for the Contemplative Music course led by Dr. Angela Mariani.

The process begins by "talking down" the participants into a state of rest, or Alpha, and then providing a 7 minute guided, auditory-image based meditation. Participants will be given the opportunity to report feedback at the end of the meditation as part of the continued Arts Practice Research for the performer.

Gubaidulina's Numerology and its Sonic Characteristics
by Noah Kahrs

Although Sofia Gubaidulina's music is often described in terms of its timbral sonorities, below the surface is extensive numerological mysticism. In particular, Gubaidulina often structures her music around large-scale conflicts between

"consonant" and "dissonant" ratios—the Fibonacci-derived Golden Section is for her an ultimate consonance in a religious sense, and ratios resulting from other numerical series are dissonant (Lukomsky 1999). In her music, the dissonances and consonances associated with these numbers are expressed in the sonic characteristics of the passages they govern. Gubaidulina ascribes meaning to these ratios and expresses this not only in the pieces' Pythagorean geometry, but also in the music living within that space.

In this paper, I present my research on Gubaidulina's sketches for *Meditation on the Bach Chorale "Vor Deinen Thron Tret Ich Hiermit"*, held at the Paul Sacher Stiftung, and show how her numerological work plays out in the sounds she works with. *Meditation* is explicitly structured around several conflicting large-scale divisions, which correspond both to ratios such as the golden section and also to integers determined by religious numerology. Comparing these ratios and their places in the score to Gubaidulina's published interviews on her compositional process, specific sections of *Meditation* can be identified as consonant or dissonant. These sections of *Meditation* are distinguished not only by their pitch content, but also by instrumentation, timbre, and tempo, suggesting that consonance and dissonance are not, in Gubaidulina's music, exclusive to the domain of pitch. Gubaidulina's numerological planning, then, influences all musical parameters available. As her compositional process is somewhat improvisatory within these constraints, this forethought plays a crucial role in setting out a system for her to work within.

Because the structural divisions of Gubaidulina's geometry can be heard so clearly, her music can mediate between discussion of numerically-oriented structural preplanning and hearing-focused analyses of specific musical passages. By understanding how Gubaidulina values ratios and integers, a listener can come to hear how she treats her sounds similarly. Even in works with no sketches available, we can generalize from consonance and dissonance in *Meditation* to hear how her work works more generally. We can also extend this discussion to dissonance in other twentieth-century music; for example, Gubaidulina links dissonance to noise, much like in the compositional theories of Saariaho and Lerdahl. Correspondingly, a broader understanding of timbre in 20th century music can help us better hear how Gubaidulina assigns musical meaning to numerological geometry.

Hearing the Demon's Song: The Condemned Magic of Tommaso Campanella in the operas of the Barberini Court, 1632-1638

by Virginia Christy Lamothe

In July of 1628, under the shadow of a lunar eclipse, Tommaso Campanella, a Dominican friar who had been imprisoned for more than 27 years for heretical beliefs, was brought into the private chambers of an ailing Pope Urban VIII. Rumors that astrological events would soon spell his demise had disturbed the Pope for years. In order to thwart the "evil" effects of the eclipse, as well as those of Mars and Saturn, Campanella performed a rite that included music and poetry. Campanella

had long written about how music and poetry could not only guard against evil spirits, but also had the power to aid spiritual discernment within the speaker or listener. Campanella wrote an account of the rites performed that night, meant as a private guide for the Pope: *De fato siderali vitando* (How to avoid the astral fate). Fearing Campanella's rise to power and favor in the eyes of the Pope, his Roman enemies along with the papal *nipote*, Cardinal Francesco Barberini, covertly sent *De fato siderali vitando* to Campanella's publisher in Lyons where the final copies of his *Astrologicorum Libri VI* were being prepared. In a terrible turn of events, *De fato siderali vitando* was published as a supplement to the volume and presented to the Pope in October of 1629. The Pope was outraged and issued a severe bull, *Inscrutabilis*, in 1631 that denounced all forms of divination. Campanella's brilliant light at the Barberini court was slowly snuffed out.

Ironically, operas produced at the court of Francesco Barberini, *Sant' Alessio* in 1632 and 1634, and *San Bonifatio* in 1638, both present scenes where a Christian saint is tempted by a demon in disguise. Much like Campanella's discussions in his *Universalis philosophiae seu metaphysicarum* (A Universal Philosophy, or Metaphysics), these scenes featured demons who could take the form of a human body. But, also like Campanella's discussions in his *Poesia*, the music and poetry allowed not only the saintly character, but more importantly, the audiences members to discern the evil power of demons and call upon the angels in heaven to dispel them. Campanella knew, perhaps more than any philosopher of his time, that song came from the soul: it was a breath across the ether to another soul to be "inspired" when it breathed the song in and reverberated with it. Through careful analysis of these scenes in *Sant' Alessio* and *San Bonifatio*, the demon's voice is heard, and with careful attention to Campanella's writings, this paper demonstrates the means by which spiritual discernment takes place through music and poetry.

Sonic Symbolism: Matthew Cooke's Process for Assigning Music to the Scottish Rite Craft Degrees

by Andrew Owen

Throughout the nineteenth century, American Freemasons liberally employed music to strengthen the force of their initiatic degrees, all of which exemplify Antoine Faivre's six practices of an esoteric or mystical organization. Albert Pike defines Freemasonry in his introduction to the first degree as "A continuous advance, by means of the instruction contained in a series of Degrees, toward the Light, by the elevation of the Celestial, the Spiritual, and the Divine, over the Earthly, Sensual, Material and Human, in the Nature of Man."[1] These degrees, having broad appeal while still being mysterious and heavily stocked with symbols, were designed to bring a man from a state of ignorance of the divine to the highest state of awareness possible.

One of the two major degree systems in the United States is the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, whose thirty-three degrees constitute a coherent and expansive mystical education. Pike, who revised the degrees between 1853 and

1883 into about fifty-five hours of ritual, encouraged the addition of musical works at strategic moments. After Pike printed his first three degrees in a private work called *The Porch and the Middle Chamber* (1872), the music he called for received its own private publication, which the English organist and antiquarian Matthew Cooke assembled in 1881. The music he provided intensifies certain otherwise silent moments, aurally or symbolically depicts the ritual actions taking place, or draws from musical sources relevant to the particular moment. By explaining not only what happens during each piece, but also how the music itself contributes to those moments, this paper demonstrates how these twenty-two musical selections demonstrate a clear intention for the candidate to have a mystical experience in his first exposure to the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite.

1 *Liturgy of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry, for the Southern Jurisdiction of the United States, Part I, I–III* (Charleston, SC: Supreme Council of the 33rd Degree, 1878), 20.

New American Eden: Katherine Tingley and Music at Lomaland
by Christopher Scheer

In 1898 Katherine Tingley, a New York social worker, became the leader of the Theosophical Society in America. To the surprise of many, she immediately began to dismantle its vast network of lodges in favor of focusing the wealth and power of the society on the establishment of a utopian colony, called Lomaland, at Point Loma, a peninsula jutting into the Pacific above San Diego. As Tim Rudbøg and Michael Ashcraft argue, Tingley's Lomaland was aligned closely with the prophecies of Theosophy's founder, Helena Blavatsky while also reflecting late Victorian American culture, in both its communitarian and millenarian trappings. A unique aspect of this, and a defining characteristic compared to rival Theosophical organizations, was the importance that Tingley placed on the arts, music especially. Specifically, she used music for propagandistic, didactic, and therapeutic purposes, all of which can be understood to contribute to a practical program of education which sought to bring into being Blavatsky's prophecy of the rise of a "sixth root race" in California.

These musical functions will be explored by considering a single case study and then contextualizing it within Tingley's larger movement. In 1913, she travelled to Europe with student musicians from Lomaland on a speaking tour. At each engagement the Lomaland music ensembles would perform, illustrating the success, not only of Tingley's educational endeavors, but also her movement as a whole. While on tour the groups were invited to perform at the Twentieth Universal Peace Conference at The Hague. In response, the Lomaland-trained student Rex Dunn composed an "Ode to Peace" which was premiered at the event to great acclaim and later published. By considering Tingley's teachings, the musical training received by Point Loma students, the repertoire performed, and the reception of the touring Lomaland ensembles in the musical

and Theosophical press, an understanding emerges of the nature and function of music at Lomaland.

Tingley's success in deploying the arts for her cause provides a compelling example, at the institutional level, of the ambiguous place of music within Theosophical thought, especially when one moves from the speculative discussions of Blavatsky (Rudbøg, 2010) into the more practical concerns of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century American and European musical culture. In Tingley's movement music becomes the vehicle for not only moral improvement, but for the advancement of humankind towards material and spiritual perfection, a powerfully attractive combination for Theosophy's middle class adherents, and one for which her main rival, the Theosophical Society-Adyar, had no ready answer.

(In)Audible Sound in Spiritualist Acoustemologies
by Codee Ann Spinner

For Spiritualists in the nineteenth century United States sound and listening were crucial because of their role in the production of spiritual knowledge. Spiritualists believed they could communicate with spirits of the dead and, as a result, attributed particular meanings and significance to otherwise mundane sounds. For Spiritualist practitioners disembodied sounds or acousmatic noises might be produced by spirit. Spiritual sound could also occur in an inaudible form, such as a person who heard the voice of a spirit internally in their "inner ear". Thus, the study of Spiritualist listening requires a departure from thinking of sound and music as that which is purely audible in a traditional sense.

This paper analyzes Spiritualist ways of listening and engaging with sound as acoustemologies, or ways of knowing through listening as it is tied to space and place. Drawing from the work of Steven Feld and Nina Sun Eidsheim, I argue that an understanding of *Spiritualist acoustemologies* requires consideration of both audible *and* inaudible, un-shareable sound events. For example, a medium could hear sounds, music, or the voice of a spirit that no one else could hear and transmitted them to the ears of practitioners. My study references contemporary guides to spiritual listening, such as J.C.F. Grumbine's *Clairaudience* (1911). I argue that these understandings of clairaudience facilitated relationality between the living and dead. The living could hear the dead in the medium's embodiment of the spirit voice or by developing their own clairaudient abilities. The spirits in turn could hear and respond to living participants because of their metaphysical makeup and the particular plane they were thought to inhabit. In the case of audible sounds and voices, Spiritualists developed theories of explaining voices and sounds that seemed to emanate from thin air.

My study is based on correspondence, newspaper articles, and written aural descriptions of séance sittings that took place in the UK and US from 1880-1920. These archival materials have been obtained primarily from the Marion Skidmore Library of Old and Rare Books at Lily Dale, NY and the Arthur Conan Doyle Spiritualist archive at the British Library. In addition to these material resources, I

consult works of Spiritualist-inflected fiction to inform this sonic image of what the séance sounded like and its effect on participants and community.

The Nibelungen Hoard and the Holy Grail: Richard Wagner's Historiography and Its Implications for His Music Dramas
by Woody Steinken

Paul Schofield argued, in a 2013 article in *Religion and the Arts*, that *Parsifal* should be considered the fifth opera of Richard Wagner's *Ring* cycle. This presentation builds on Schofield's argument, which appears as the initial piece in an intricate mythological puzzle—one that connects Wagner's *Ring* cycle, *Parsifal*, *Lohengrin*, *Tannhäuser*, and some of his unfinished dramas, such as the extant material of *Die Sieger* and *Jesus von Nazareth*. Like Schofield, I focus on Wagner's historiographical essay "Die Wibelungen: Weltgeschichte aus der Sage" [The Wibelungen: World History as Told in Saga] from 1848. This essay provides a cryptic view of (mostly German) history, one that is contingent on myths and sagas. I will show that this theory of history draws many of Wagner's works into the same mythological canon beyond Schofield's argument—to an almost conspiratorial degree.

Wagner's historiography connects this diverse list of musical works via his theory of the "Ascent of the Ideal content of the [Nibelungen] Hoard into the Holy Grail." The mythical struggle for the Hoard, which Wagner set to music in the *Ring*, symbolizes the historical struggle for power in Europe in the Dark Ages, primarily won by the Franks and their monarchs, the Merovingians. As history progresses the Holy Grail replaces the Hoard at the very moment that the Crusades become the new historical impulse in Europe. Wagner set this to music in *Parsifal* and, to an extent, in *Lohengrin*. But there are deeper connections to be had, which conceptually link Wagner's other works. Through these connections, Wagner also appears acutely aware of a real-life, centuries-long conspiracy concerning the bloodline of Jesus and the development of world history at the hands of European monarchies and secret societies.

Music Analysis as Esoteric Activity: Victor Zuckerkandl at Eranos
by Daphne Tan

Established in 1933 under the influence of Carl Gustav Jung, the Eranos conference has long been a site of esoteric thinking. On the bank of Lake Maggiore in Ascona, Switzerland, scholars of religion and mythology, natural scientists, psychologists, philosophers, and interested lay participants gather yearly to discuss themes related to learned scholarship, mysticism, the occult, and the "irrational." As Wouter Hanegraaff has noted, the central research focus of Eranos might be difficult to pinpoint, but it is "easily recognized by its *alterity* with respect to Enlightenment rationality and modern science" (2012, 279). In existing histories of Eranos, music is notably absent (Hakl 2013, Hanegraaff 2012, Wasserstrom 1999). Yet in its heyday in the mid-20th century, one music scholar, the theorist and philosopher Viktor

Zuckerkandl (1896–1965), was an active contributor (1960–1964). My talk will examine two lectures Zuckerkandl delivered at Eranos, interrogating his adaptation of specialist music-theoretical approaches, which he viewed as conduits to universal truths, to a multidisciplinary audience.

In the lecture "Die Tongestalt," for the 1960 conference on "Mensch und Gestaltung" (Zuckerkandl 1961), Zuckerkandl seeks an understanding of music-as-*Gestaltung* (creation, design) that goes beyond the narrow empirical focus of *Gestaltpsychologie*. Zuckerkandl discusses the role of repetition in music, illustrating how time unfolds at multiple hierarchical levels in fugue subjects from Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier* (*WTC*). Central to this discussion are the ideas of music theorist Heinrich Schenker, with whom Zuckerkandl studied in his youth. Drawing on unpublished correspondence between Zuckerkandl and Eranos founder Olga Fröbe-Kapetyn, I show that Zuckerkandl viewed the *Tongestalt* as no less than the source of human self-awareness (*Selbsterkenntnis*) and Schenker's theory as the key to unlocking it. The presence of Schenker is surprising given Zuckerkandl's audience—religious scholars Gerschom Scholem, Mircea Eliade, and Henry Corbin, alongside Erich Neumann (analytical psychology), Adolf Portmann (zoology), and Herbert Read (art history)—and considering Schenker's association today with a particularly positivistic strand of North American music theory (Rothstein 1990, Brown 2005). This points to an alternative reception of Schenker's ideas that has received scant attention (see, however, Snarrenberg 1997 and Cook 2007), one in which the problematic aspects are sanitized through a wash of metaphysics.

The second lecture I consider is Zuckerkandl's "Die Wahrheit des Traumes und der Traum der Wahrheit" (The Truth of the Dream, and the Dream of Truth), from the 1963 conference "Vom Sinn der Utopie" (Zuckerkandl 1964a). Conference-goers wrestled with shifting historical meanings of "utopia" and utopias shaped by lived experiences, dreams, and technological advances. Zuckerkandl, for his part, suggests that musicians have ready access to a "placeless, utopian space"—a "third space" (*dritte Schauplatz*) that resides between physical and mental worlds. Demonstrating with analyses of Schubert's "Wasserflut" and the *WTC* once again, and with reference to Jung, Zuckerkandl attempts to bring his audience into this third space. I show how this is motivated by Zuckerkandl's overarching belief in a "musical thinking" that exists in a separate realm from "mere logical thinking," one that with the right guidance, can be accessed by listeners without musical training (Zuckerkandl 1964b).

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