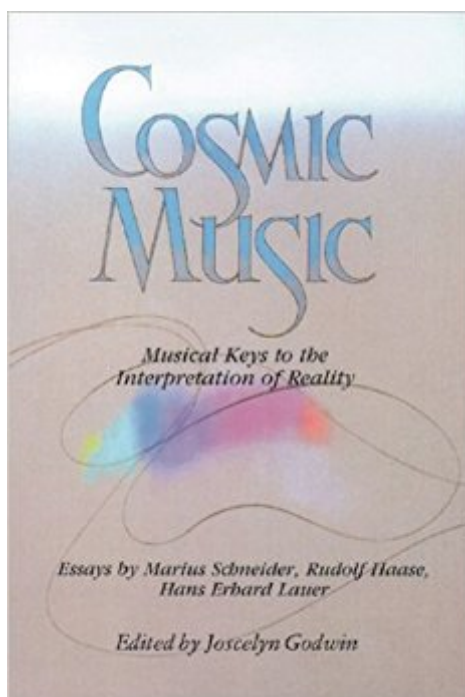


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Cosmic Music: Musical Keys To The Interpretation Of Reality



Synopsis

The idea that the universe is created out of sound or music (and therefore is music) is a very ancient one. In this book, Joscelyn Godwin brings together three contemporary German thinkers who exemplify this tradition in its modern variants: Marius Schneider, Rudolf Haase, and Hans Erhard Lauer. The selections draw on ancient Indian sources and mythology; Kepler's Platonic vision of a musical, geometric universe; and the evolution of the tone systems of music. While every music lover senses the power and truth that reside in music, very few actually approach music as a path to cosmic knowledge. Godwin takes literally Beethoven's assertion that "Music is a higher revelation than all wisdom or philosophy." Godwin writes, ". . .to penetrate the mysteries of music is to prepare for initiation into those fathomless mysteries of man and cosmos."

Book Information

Paperback: 256 pages

Publisher: Inner Traditions; Original ed. edition (December 1, 1989)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 089281070X

ISBN-13: 978-0892810703

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.8 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 12.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (1 customer review)

Best Sellers Rank: #925,319 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #75 in [Books > Arts &](#)

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Customer Reviews

Note that some of 's pages say that this book is by Alain Danielou, which is an error. It's by Jocelyn Godwin. Jocelyn Godwin is very prolific - this is the first book I've read of his. Although I will read more, my first impression is about 3 stars worth. His orientation seems to be Theosophical / Anthroposophical, heir to the traditions of Madame Blavatsky and Rudolf Steiner, which means that what we may wistfully call "hard facts" are freely interspersed with spiritual fantasy. Of the three essayists included in this volume (Godwin contributes the intro, some notes, and apparently some translations) - Marius Schneider, Rudolf Haase, and Hans Erhard Lauer - I can take or leave two. Lauer is an Anthroposophist through and through, which means Theosophy (itself an eclectic 19th

century blend of yoga and christianity) mixed with a dose of Darwinism and pushed through a sieve of Zoroastrianism. Schneider may have more to say elsewhere (his major work is in Spanish and is on my wish list but yet unread), but the essays included here are random musings on musical symbolism in the Vedas and elsewhere, and other authors have much more to say about the musical import of this symbolism (see "The Myth of Invariance" by Ernest McClain.) The saving grace of this volume is in the essays by Rudolf Haase, which deal with Kepler's work, with harmonic theory in general (musical and astronomical) and - in part - how it relates to the spiritual fantasies which are regularly imposed on harmonic theory (and of course have been for several thousand years). Haase has the grace to directly address this issue up front, saying that "...with the help of ... teleological thinking, harmonics is in a position to produce a morphological proof of God.

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