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## INTRODUCTION

The term “Music of the Spheres” is often attributed to Pythagoras, one of the founding figures of Western civilization. It is claimed that he believed the planets emitted celestial harmonies that influenced all sentient beings and affected every object within our solar system.

This idea was widely accepted until the Scientific Revolution of the 17th century, after which the notion of celestial harmonies faded into obscurity due to the lack of “proper” scientific evidence.

Johannes Kepler (1571–1630), was perhaps the last to synthesise the mystical vision of Pythagoras with contemporary Cartesian methods. This synthesis was achieved through both proper scientific investigation and a musician’s sensitivity to vibration, resonance and harmony. One could say Kepler discovered not just a natural law, but a divine law, the law of the Music of the Spheres itself. But such discoveries did not go down well with the scientific establishment. History decided to remember Kepler for his discovery of the elliptical orbit of planets, more than the wondrous musical proportions they revealed.

Many have since attempted to follow in Pythagoras’ and Kepler’s footsteps, but further scientific proof of indisputable musical relationship in the spheres (planets) remains elusive. Still, the quest for this divine musical–scientific marriage, this “holy grail”, remains fervent. This book does not reveal any new scientific evidence. Rather, it invites the reader to develop new ways of listening and perceiving.

We are familiar with listening through our physical ears, such as when we hear traffic noise or the hum of a busy street. We also know what it is to have a deeper, emotional experience of sound – such as when we listen to our favourite music (this is known in Anthroposophy as the experience of “soul”). This book invites you to go beyond just physical or emotional (“soul”) sound. It encourages you to approach the threshold of listening, transitioning from a “soul” experience to a profound experience of listening that engages the “spirit” – the aspect of our being that transcends the mind and emotions, connecting us to deeper, spiritual truths.

My own journey of listening has lead me from conventional musical

education to learning *gamelan* and dance in the villages of Bali to devotional chanting and playing for all night Indian *saptahs*<sup>1</sup>. But more importantly, the journey of listening has led me to listen within. Alexander Technique<sup>2</sup> and yoga have helped me to listen to my body. Meditation has taught me to listen to and understand my mind. Eurythmy has taught me to listen to the creative power of tone and speech. I have learned that through a deep and personal path of listening, one gradually uncovers the relationship between one's resonant self and the cosmos. This kind of listening is far more fulfilling than listening to the greatest symphony or the finest melody.

There is work to do to reach this way of listening. Those hoping that the Music of the Spheres is a quick intergalactic fantasy story will be disappointed. There are many indeed who wish to escape the pains of living on the Earth, and for them music from Mars is surely more interesting than music from Earth, and a new-age medium channelling intergalactic beings is more interesting than one who stays with their feet firmly on the earth. Gazing at the stars, of course, lifts us out of the pain of living on the Earth. We love to do it. What you will hopefully discover in this book, however, is that the ecstatic harmony of the spheres is in fact right here on Earth. We do not need to go anywhere, for celestial harmony is everywhere to be found: in every plant, crystal, snowflake and in every human being. The greatest miracle of all is that human beings can learn to approach, understand and recognise this harmony and ultimately reflect God's harmony back to its source.

I am greatly indebted to the work of Rudolf Steiner, and those who have followed in his footsteps. In my view, he has given us one of the most thorough explorations of this theme, particularly through pioneering the new art form known as Eurythmy.

This book will begin by looking at the Music of the Spheres throughout history, and how paradigm shifts in consciousness, from mysticism to materialism, have reduced the Music of the Spheres to a fanciful myth. But we will not allow this sound to become a myth so easily. We will instead fine-tune our listening, exploring physical sound, soul sound and the highly subtle spirit-sound. A deeper understanding of the quality of number will then prepare us to internalise and spiritualise the musical intervals found in Pythagoras' and Kepler's Music of the Spheres. Finally, a future initiation path of Listening is suggested and described.

My hope is that this book will open your mind and transform the way you listen. May you hear what you are looking for.

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1 A week-long chant, in which the name of God is continuously chanted.

2 A body-awareness technique developed by F.M. Alexander.