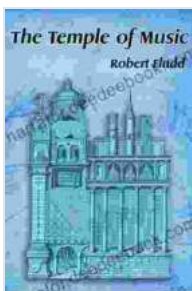


# The Temple of Music: Robert Fludd and Music Theory in Britain, 1500-1700

Robert Fludd (1574-1637) was an English physician, astrologer, and natural philosopher who is best known for his work on the relationship between music, mathematics, and the natural world. Fludd's most influential work, the 'Utriusque Cosmi' (1617-1621), is a vast compendium of knowledge that ranges across a wide range of subjects, including mathematics, music, medicine, and astrology. In the 'Utriusque Cosmi', Fludd argues that music is a universal language that can be used to understand the workings of the cosmos. He also develops a number of mathematical theories about music, which he uses to explain the relationships between different musical intervals and scales. These theories were highly influential in the development of music theory in Britain during the 16th and 17th centuries.



## 'The Temple of Music' by Robert Fludd (Music Theory in Britain, 1500–1700: Critical Editions) by Carmine Appice

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

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Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Print length : 323 pages

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Fludd's ideas about music were based on the Pythagorean tradition, which held that music is a reflection of the mathematical order of the universe.

The Pythagoreans believed that the universe is governed by mathematical laws, and that music can be used to reveal these laws. Fludd took this idea one step further, arguing that music is not only a reflection of the mathematical order of the universe, but also a means of participating in that order. He believed that music can be used to heal the sick, purify the soul, and even attract the favor of the gods.

Fludd's ideas about music were widely disseminated in Britain through his writings and lectures. His work was particularly influential on the work of later theorists such as Thomas Morley and William Holder. Morley's 'Plaine and Easie to Practicall Music' (1597) was one of the most popular music theory textbooks in England during the 16th century. In his book, Morley draws heavily on Fludd's ideas about the mathematical foundations of music. Holder's 'A Treatise on the Natural Grounds and Principles of Harmony' (1694) was another important music theory text that was influenced by Fludd's work. In his book, Holder develops a number of new mathematical theories about music, which he uses to explain the relationships between different musical intervals and scales. These theories were highly influential in the development of music theory in Britain during the 17th century.

Fludd's ideas about music also had a significant impact on the development of musical instruments and performance practices in Britain during the 16th and 17th centuries. Fludd was a strong advocate for the use of mathematical principles in the design and construction of musical instruments. He believed that musical instruments should be designed to produce sounds that are mathematically pleasing. He also believed that musicians should use mathematical principles to guide their performance practices. For example, he advocated for the use of equal temperament,

which is a system of tuning musical instruments that produces mathematically pleasing intervals.

The Temple of Music' is a masterpiece of Renaissance scholarship and a testament to the power of music to inspire and enlighten. Fludd's work was highly influential in the development of music theory, musical instruments, and performance practices in Britain during the 16th and 17th centuries. His ideas continue to inspire musicians and scholars today, and his work remains a valuable resource for anyone interested in the relationship between music, mathematics, and the natural world.

### **The Influence of Fludd's 'Utriusque Cosmi' on Music Theory in Britain**

Fludd's 'Utriusque Cosmi' was a major source of inspiration for music theorists in Britain during the 16th and 17th centuries. In his book, Fludd develops a number of mathematical theories about music, which he uses to explain the relationships between different musical intervals and scales. These theories were highly influential in the development of music theory in Britain, and they continue to be studied by scholars today.

One of the most important of Fludd's theories is his theory of the 'musical canon'. According to Fludd, the musical canon is a mathematical law that governs the relationships between different musical intervals. The canon states that the interval between any two notes is equal to the sum of the intervals between those notes and the notes that lie between them. For example, the interval between the notes C and E is equal to the sum of the intervals between C and D and D and E. This law can be used to explain the relationships between all of the intervals in the diatonic scale.

Another important theory of Fludd's is his theory of the 'musical proportion'. According to Fludd, the musical proportion is a mathematical law that governs the relationships between different musical scales. The proportion states that the ratio of the intervals between any two notes in a scale is equal to the ratio of the intervals between those notes in any other scale. For example, the ratio of the interval between the notes C and E in the diatonic scale is equal to the ratio of the interval between the notes C and E in the chromatic scale. This law can be used to explain the relationships between all of the scales that are used in music.

Fludd's theories of the musical canon and the musical proportion were highly influential in the development of music theory in Britain. These theories provided a new way of understanding the relationships between different musical intervals and scales, and they helped to establish the mathematical foundations of music theory. Fludd's ideas continue to be studied by scholars today, and they remain a valuable resource for anyone interested in the relationship between music, mathematics, and the natural world.

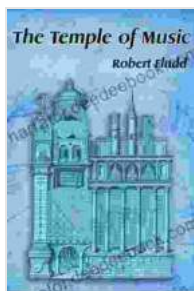
### **The Influence of Fludd's Ideas on Musical Instruments and Performance Practices**

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Fludd's ideas about musical instruments had a major impact on the design of the English harpsichord. The harpsichord is a keyboard instrument that was developed in England in the 16th century. The early harpsichords were tuned in meantone temperament, which is a system of tuning that produces mathematically pleasing intervals. However, in the 17th century, English harpsichord makers began to adopt equal temperament, which produces even more mathematically pleasing intervals. This change in tuning was due in part to the influence of Fludd's ideas.

Fludd's ideas about performance practices also had a significant impact on the way that music was performed in Britain during the 16th and 17th centuries. Fludd advocated for the use of a number of mathematical



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