

"Musick Hath Charms..."

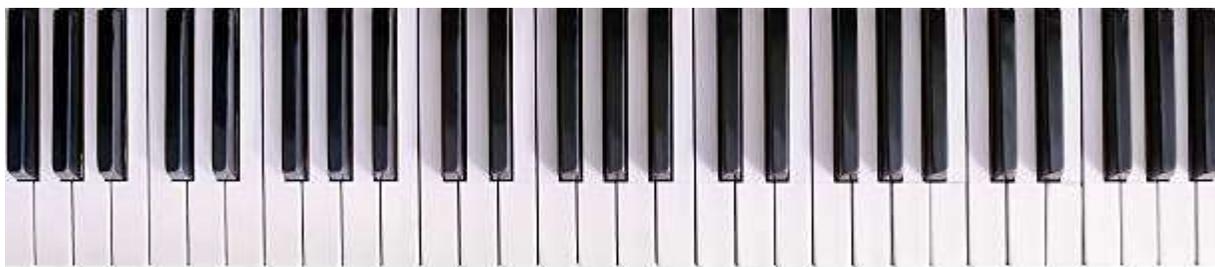
Jim Willis

In 1697, William Congreve, a British playwright, wrote that *Musick hath Charms to sooth a savage Breast, To soften Rocks, or bend a knotted Oak. I've read, that things inanimate have mov'd, and, as with living Souls, have been inform'd, by Magick Numbers and persuasive Sound.*



The study of the magical, mathematical properties in music goes all the way back to an ancient Greek mathematician named Pythagoras, the "father" of modern geometry. He was the first to recognize the unique qualities of the musical intervals, or the space between notes on a musical scale, that he called the "perfect" fourth and the "perfect" fifth. His name for these intervals, "perfect," stays with them to this day. Other intervals are designated either major or minor.

Even if you have never studied music theory, it's easy to understand what intervals are. To do this, it's best if you have a piano keyboard handy or can call up a picture of one on your computer. Keyboards are all the same. A steady progression of white keys starts at the left and, one by one in an even row, proceeds all the way to the right. But for a minute, ignore the white keys. Look at the black ones. They divide the white keys in a systematic pattern—first two, then three, then back to two, then three— and so on. These are the ones on which we're now going to concentrate.



Choose any five of these black keys, beginning with one of the groups of two, followed by a space, and then a group of three. This grouping of five notes, two black keys followed by three black keys, forms what is called a Pentatonic scale (*penta* meaning five).

This scale may be the earliest musical scale ancient humans recognized. Whereas modern instruments are constructed to produce chromatic scales, in order to play all the notes found on a piano keyboard, American Indian flutes, in keeping with most ancient flutes discovered by archeologists from around the world, produce pentatonic, five-note scales.



*Two Native American flutes crafted from branches by Robert Willasch.
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Why is this significant and why is it important to any study of ancient origins?

Let's analyze this scale just a bit to help us find out.

Go back to the picture of the black keys on a piano keyboard. Once again, notice the consistent pattern of two black keys, followed by three black keys. You don't need musical training to visualize this. It's all about mathematics.

Let's call the two black keys our "base" keys, or B1 and B2, for "Base 1" and "Base 2."

Now we'll label the three black keys above them T1, T2, and T3, for "Treble 1," "Treble 2," and "Treble 3."

The interval between B1 and T1 is a perfect fourth. The interval between B1 and T2 is a perfect fifth.

Now move to the other base note. The interval between B2 and T2 is a perfect fourth. The interval between B2 and T3 is a perfect fifth.

In other words, the pentatonic scale is made up solely of perfect fourths and fifths in two "keys." One is in the "key" of B1, the other in the "key" of B2.

If you want to hear these intervals in your mind, all you have to do is remember back to any of the old "Cowboys and Indians" movies produced back in the golden days of Hollywood westerns. They were riddled with racist stereotypes, not the least of which is the fact that every time the action on the screen revolved around Indians, the piano or orchestral score immediately reverted to an endless progression of perfect fifths sounding in monotonous,

drum-like fashion in the base section. Even then, the pentatonic scale of fourths and fifths was recognized as being part of American Indian musical culture.

But the pentatonic scale was used throughout Asia and Africa as well, eventually contributing its unique sound to American music. Every African American spiritual, from "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" to "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen," can be played solely on the black keys of the piano, because they are formed by the notes of the pentatonic scale. Without exception, this was the natural scale of choice of the early American slaves who invented this hauntingly beautiful, uniquely American, song form.



The Old Plantation (Slaves Dancing on a South Carolina Plantation), John Rose (circa 1785-1795). Beaufort County, South Carolina. (Public Domain)

Even the well know hymn, *Amazing Grace*, is written in pentatonic form. One has to wonder if its white composer, John Newton, was influenced by the fact that, before his Christian conversion, he made his living as a sea captain engaged in the slave trade. Did the melodies he heard wafting up from the people chained in hellish compartments below decks stay with him as he composed his famous hymn that immortalized the plight of his spiritual depravity? *Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me.*

The five-fold nature of the pentatonic scale is echoed in other expressions outside the realm of musical expression. The five pointed star called a Pentagram, for instance, has for thousands of years been associated with magic. It is featured as a central plot device in the book and movie "The Da Vinci Code." Sometimes used interchangeably with the Pentacle, it is often associated with both Paganism and Wicca as a symbol that represents light. When the top is pointed upwards towards the heavens, it symbolizes Spirit, Earth, Water, Air and Fire. It is particularly associated with the Goddess and Nature.



A pentagram talisman made from gold is said to bring mental clarity and raise energy levels. When made of wood, it connects its bearer to the natural world. A silver pentagram links to the moon and its feminine energies, enhancing intuition and perception.

We are almost forced to ask if the musical pentatonic scale is nothing less than an audio version of a pentagram talisman. One carries its message to the ear, the other to the eye.

Think of it this way. Ballet and other forms of dance, including sacred dance, are visual, physical movements that manifest the audio sound of music. Megalithic structures are no different, except that they don't move.



Do megalithic structures vibrate to the music of the spheres? Delicate arch night stars ([CC0](#))

If this is true, than there might be much more to the concept of "the music of the spheres" than simply an engaging metaphor. Does the universe vibrate with a music that can be heard by those who find ways to open themselves to it? And are the mysterious stone structures found around the world in every continent on earth proof that our ancestors were able to do just that?

Music is the result of vibration. A single string or vibrating column of air is the basis of every sound and note produced by a symphony orchestra. In Siberia, the land that gave us the word "Shaman," a drum is sometimes called a "pony" because it is the instrument that the Shaman "rides" to parallel worlds. The vibration of the skin head stretched tightly over a frame sets up an audio column of air that, when heard with the proper frame of mind, produces a spell which contributes to the one-point meditation needed to experience worlds outside our normal perception realm.

With this idea in mind, perhaps it's time to re-evaluate the megalithic structures found around the world. For a long time we have studied their visual sight lines and discovered connections that point to the stars, the sun and moon. Are there also hidden audio qualities we have yet to consider? Have we been looking instead of listening, using our eyes rather than our ears? Are there acoustical clues, perhaps to be found in frequencies that incorporate the perfect fourth and fifth represented by the ancient and universal pentatonic scale, that can elevate our minds, resonating in harmony with the music of the spheres? Can we then learn to "ride" these vibrations across the divide that separates our perception realm with parallel realms of existence wherein reside entities quite removed from us, but who may be listening for us? Is the sacred concept of an artistic, musical, "muse" just a metaphor? When the ancients spoke of seeing the heavens open and hearing angelic choirs, were they in reality undergoing a shamanic experience?

For that matter, is this the scientific basis of telekinesis, the act of affecting the very material structures that surround us? If sound itself can produce a technology capable of shaping and forming our material surroundings, it might go a long way toward explaining how the ancients managed to shape, transport, and construct the mysterious megaliths found around the world.

We know that music influences our moods. We know that as far back as Pythagoras there have been scientists who recognized certain harmonic frequencies, such as the perfect fourth and perfect fifth, that resonate with important consequences in our material realm. We know of the connections between math and music. We know that sound waves can be focused to great effect, and that some of these effects, such as laser beams, can actually produce physical changes to our environment.

If we, who are surrounded by conflicting and contradictory sounds such as the song of a bird being drowned out by the snarl of a gas powered lawn mower, can recognize the power inherent in music, surely our ancestors, living in a world of only natural sounds, must have understood this truth at a much deeper level. Maybe it's time to start examining the artifacts and structures they left behind with an ear toward their acoustical properties rather than just their superficial, visual forms. Stonehenge as a spiritual amphitheater. Lascaux as a sacred concert hall. The geometry of the Giza plateau manifesting the sacred symbols of vibratory constants.

When we do start to examine ancient structural artifacts in this light, it's a good bet that we will find proportional relationships involving perfect fourths and fifths. These are exactly the results that Andrew Collins found in his study of Göbekli Tepe and the Giza Plateau. He writes of these discoveries in his book, *The Cygnus Key*.



Deriv; Statue from Gobekli Tepe at Urfa Museum ([CC BY 2.0](#)), Orion Nebula ([CC BY 4.0](#)), and Gobekli Tepe (Flickr/ [CC BY-NC 2.0](#))

Could it be that, hidden in plain sight, so to speak, within the music that surrounds us in modern society, we can find clues to our ancient past and secrets that reveal how our ancestors managed to live, develop, and thrive in a complex world? Next time you hear music in the background or compile lists of your favorite songs, ask yourself why this particular music appeals to you. If you really concentrate, you might discover clues that can unlock your inner shaman, your inner spiritual traveler. Get on board and ride the vibration. Who knows where it might lead?

Sweet sounds / Oh, beautiful music...

With you alone is excellence and peace / Mankind made plausible...

(Edna St. Vincent Millay)

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