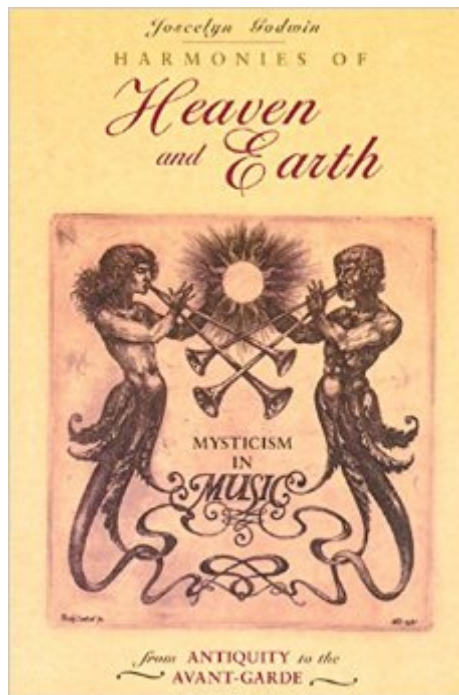


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Harmonies Of Heaven And Earth: Mysticism In Music From Antiquity To The Avant-Garde



Synopsis

Joscelyn Godwin explores music's effects on matter, living things, and human behavior. Turning to metaphysical accounts of the higher worlds and theories of celestial harmony, the author follows the path of musical inspiration on its descent to Earth, illuminating the archetypal currents that lie beneath Western musical history.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Though this may seem an unnecessary addition to my review, Professor Joscelyn Godwin is a professor I have had/will have again at Colgate University, and a man of utmost scholarship. That said, this book suffers from one minor flaw, not worth removing a star: his archaic writing style. Godwin's ideas are intelligent, thought-provoking, and well-presented...but his writing style is the kind that can make the average reader's eyes glaze over. Of course, the "average reader" will not be reading this book, but a bit of accessibility stylistically never hurt anybody...then again, who am I to judge Professor Godwin? He was just grading my papers, hehe. Anyway, this book is brilliant. Vast amounts of information are thrown at the reader in a manageable and coherent fashion, and all the chapters follow a logical course of thought which supports the ultimate thesis that the universe we live in is a musical one, dominated by harmonies and melodies of untold beauty, not equations of mind-boggling complexity. His own 4 chapters are excellent forays into speculative music, presenting scientific evidence of the effects of music in the universe, as well as anecdotal/mythological excerpts to support the idea. At times, it seems as though fact and fiction are indistinct, and this would be an accurate view. But even Godwin himself notes this in Chapter 2.

The ultimate relevance is that, whether fact or fiction, Godwin has touched upon some kind of truth (in my opinion), which his scientific evidence backs up, and his anecdotal/mythological evidence presents to us. The final section is the clearest description of complex musical philosophies I have yet found.

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