

Computational Music Science

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Cool Math for Hot Music

A First Introduction to Mathematics
for Music Theorists

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*All
enjoyment
is
musical,
consequently
mathematical.*

(Novalis)

Preface



Fig. -1.1. Maria Mannone, Guerino Mazzola, and Yan Pang. Photo and © 2015 by A.J. Wattamaniuk.

The idea for this book came from Yan Pang, a PhD student taking the course “Mathematics for Music Theorists” at the School of Music of the University of Minnesota. She was not in love with mathematics at all—bad experiences, bad teachers, the usual story. Fortunately, Maria Mannone, another PhD student taking that course who had studied theoretical physics, helped Yan get acquainted with mathematical rigor and beauty. Soon, Guerino Mazzola, the teacher, learned how to teach math using thorough musical motivation

and avoiding abstract nonsense in favor of concrete conceptual development of theory.

One day, Yan confessed that she had become enthusiastic about mathematics for music in theory and composition (using both composition software and classical score writing), and she suggested that Guerino should consider writing a textbook in this inspiring style. He thought about her idea and in fact recalled that there was no *first* introduction to mathematical music theory. Guerino's book *Geometrie der Töne* [73]—the most elementary among his music theory books—was written in German and not conceived in a style that would meet the criteria of a *first* introduction. Given the enthusiastic experiences with Maria and Yan, Guerino approached his publisher, Springer, with a proposal to write this book with the two co-authors for a maximal advantage from the students' perspective. Springer did not hesitate a single moment, and we could immediately delve into this important project.

Accordingly, this book is not intended to present a dry mathematical text about tools that may be used in music. Rather, we want to develop a discourse full of pleasure and fun that in every moment motivates concepts, methods, and results by their musical significance—a narrative that inspires you to create musical thoughts and actions. We want to offer a presentation abundant in images, scores, and compositional strategies and enriched by audio examples from music theory and composition so that you can not only view the concepts but also experience them. However, to be handed tools with no opportunity to use them can be frustrating. Therefore, we also describe our concepts, methods, and results to help you apply them to your own unfolding skills in musical creativity. The wonderful advantage of a mathematical concept framework is its universal applicability, and this also includes its social dimension. The outdated ideology of a lonely genius who finds new creations in the trance of drugs and existential borderline experience is replaced by a collaborative and relaxed environment of global communication. This can accommodate any direction of musical creativity in the world of digital media and augment its power to shape the future of the beautiful truth of music.

Of course, nobody is forced to accept our offer, and it is true: The payoff will not show up immediately. If you want to challenge yourself with this colorful book, you will be given a tool for creativity and discipline for your whole life. But if you prefer to enjoy an easy life without any challenge beyond flat consumption, we wish you all the best in your cage of nothingness. However, please consider this book in case you change your mind and come back to the challenge of true beauty.

Mathematical examples and exercises are headed by

✓ **Example**, ✓ **Exercise**,

whereas musical examples and exercises are headed by

🎵 **Example**, 🎵 **Exercise**.

The reference to mathematical examples or exercises is “Example, Exercise”, the reference to musical examples or exercises is “Musical Example, Exercise”. The exercises are intended to be challenges for the reader to solve a problem by applying the concepts and results that have been presented in the text. Solutions to the exercises have been provided, but the reader should not consult them without first having tried his or her own approach. For this reason, the solutions can be found at the end of the book, in Chapter 34. The numbers of the solutions match those of the corresponding mathematical or musical exercises.

Mathematical theorems and propositions always need to be proved. This is mandatory in science whenever we claim the truth of a statement. All mathematical results that are shown in this book in fact do have a proof, but it does not always serve our purposes in style and depth to include the proof in our text. Therefore, we include references to published text where proofs can be found. We also sometimes give a hint to a proof and leave it to the reader to fill in details as an exercise.

Original illustrations, both computer and hand-made drawings have been created by the authors.

The music examples in this book are available as MIDI, Sibelius, and MP3 files. They are all accessible via

www.encycloSPACE.org/special/MMBOOK.

So if you look of the file `XX.mid`, you define the address

www.encycloSPACE.org/special/MMBOOK/XX.mid.

As in the previous books of this Springer series on performance theory and musical creativity, Emily King has been an invaluable help in transforming our text to a valid English prose; thank you so much for your patience with non-native English. We are pleased to acknowledge the strong support for writing such a demanding treatise by Springer’s science editor Ronan Nugent.

Minneapolis, September 2015 Guerino Mazzola, Maria Mannone, Yan Pang

Contents

Part I Introduction and Short History

1	The ‘Counterpoint’ of Mathematics and Music	1
1.1	The Idea of a Contrapuntal Interaction	1
1.2	Formulas and Gestures	2
1.3	Mathematics and Technology for Music	2
1.4	Musical Creativity with Mathematics	3
2	Short History of the Relationship Between Mathematics and Music	5
2.1	Pythagoras	5
2.2	Artes Liberales	7
2.3	Zarlino	8
2.4	Zaiyu Zhu	8
2.5	Mathematics in Counterpoint	10
2.5.1	An Example for Music Theorists	11
2.6	Athanasius Kircher	14
2.7	Leonhard Euler	17
2.8	Joseph Fourier	19
2.9	Hermann von Helmholtz	20
2.10	Wolfgang Graeser	21
2.11	Iannis Xenakis	23
2.12	Pierre Boulez and the IRCAM	24
2.13	American Set Theory	25
2.13.1	Genealogy	25
2.13.2	Comments	28
2.14	David Lewin	29
2.15	Guerino Mazzola and the IFM	30
2.15.1	Preparatory Work:	
	First Steps in Darmstadt and Zürich (1985-1992)	30

2.15.2	The IFM Association: The Period Preceding the General Proliferation of the Internet (1992-1999)	31
2.15.3	The Virtual Institute: Pure Virtuality (1999-2003)	31
2.15.4	Dissolution of the IFM Association (2004)	32
2.16	The Society for Mathematics and Computation in Music	33

Part II Sets and Functions

3	The Architecture of Sets	37
3.1	Some Preliminaries in Logic	37
3.2	Pure Sets	38
3.2.1	Boolean Algebra	45
3.2.2	Xenakis' <i>Herma</i>	46
4	Functions and Relations	49
4.1	Ordered Pairs and Graphs	49
4.2	Functions	52
4.2.1	Equipollence	56
4.3	Relations	57
5	Universal Properties	61
5.1	Final and Initial Sets	61
5.2	The Cartesian Product	62
5.3	The Coproduct	63
5.4	Exponentials	64
5.5	Subobject Classifier	64
5.6	Cartesian Product of a Family of Sets	65

Part III Numbers

6	Natural Numbers	71
6.1	Ordinal Numbers	72
6.2	Natural Numbers	73
6.3	Finite Sets	75
7	Recursion	77
8	Natural Arithmetic	83
9	Euclid and Normal Forms	85
9.1	The Infinity of Prime Numbers	86

10	Integers	89
	10.1 Arithmetic of Integers	90
11	Rationals	93
	11.1 Arithmetic of Rationals	96
12	Real Numbers	99
13	Roots, Logarithms, and Normal Forms	107
	13.1 Roots, and Logarithms	107
	13.2 Adic Representations	111
14	Complex Numbers	113

Part IV Graphs and Nerves

15	Directed and Undirected Graphs	121
	15.1 Directed Graphs	122
	15.2 Undirected Graphs	124
	15.3 Cycles	126
16	Nerves	129
	16.1 A Nervous Sonata Construction	133
	16.1.1 Infinity of Nervous Interpretations	136
	16.1.2 Nerves and Musical Complexity	137

Part V Monoids and Groups

17	Monoids	143
18	Groups	147
19	Group Actions, Subgroups, Quotients, and Products	151
	19.1 Actions	152
	19.2 Subgroups and Quotients	154
	19.2.1 Classification of Chords of Pitch Classes	157
	19.3 Products	158
20	Permutation Groups	163
	20.1 Two Composition Methods Using Permutations	166
	20.1.1 Mozart's Musical Dice Game	166
	20.1.2 Mannone's Cubharmonic	167

21	The Third Torus and Counterpoint	171
21.1	The Third Torus	171
21.1.1	Geometry on $T_{3 \times 4}$	173
21.2	Music Theory	174
21.2.1	Chord Classification	174
21.2.2	Key Signatures	175
21.2.3	Counterpoint	175
22	Coltrane's <i>Giant Steps</i>	181
22.1	The Analysis	183
22.2	The Composition	186
23	Modulation Theory	191
23.1	The Concept of a Tonal Modulation	192
23.2	The Modulation Theorem	197
23.3	Nerves for Modulation	198
23.4	Modulations in Beethoven's op. 106	199
23.5	Quanta and Fundamental Degrees	201
<hr/>		
Part VI Rings and Modules		
<hr/>		
24	Rings and Fields	205
24.1	Monoid Algebras and Polynomials	206
24.2	Fields	211
25	Primes	213
26	Matrices	217
26.1	Generalities on Matrices	218
26.2	Determinants	222
26.3	Linear Equations	223
27	Modules	225
27.1	Affine Homomorphisms	230
27.2	Free Modules and Vector Spaces	232
27.3	Sonification and Visualization in Modules	234
27.3.1	Creative Ideas from Math: A Mapping Between Images and Sounds	235
28	Just Tuning	241
28.1	Major and Minor Scales: Zarlino's Versus Hindemith's Explanation	243
28.2	Comparisons between Pythagorean, Just, and 12-tempered Tuning	245
28.3	Chinese Tuning Theory	247

28.3.1 The Original System	247
28.3.2 A System that Is Completely Based on Fifths	247
29 Categories	249
29.1 The Yoneda Philosophy	253

Part VII Continuity and Calculus

30 Continuity	257
30.1 Generators for Topologies	260
30.2 Euler's Substitution Theory	262
31 Differentiability	263
32 Performance	267
32.1 Mathematical and Musical Precision	268
32.2 Musical Notation for Performance	268
32.3 Structure Theory of Performance	270
32.4 Expressive Performance	272
33 Gestures	273
33.1 Western Notation and Gestures	273
33.2 Chinese Gestural Music Notation	275
33.3 Some Remarks on Gestural Performance	276
33.4 Philosophy of Gestures	279
33.5 Mathematical Theory of Gestures in Music	281
33.6 Hypergestures	283
33.7 Hypergestures in Complex Time	285

Part VIII Solutions, References, Index

34 Solutions of Exercises	289
34.1 Solutions of Mathematical Exercises	289
34.2 Solutions of Musical Exercises	293
References	297
Index	303