

Dear sir:

I have wanted to write you for what seems like quite awhile, although I was just recently introduced to your name by Mr. Johnny Reinhard a few months ago. Over the past three years I have, among several other endeavors, put myself through a flavor of tests occasionally. These involve, more than not, listening to randomly-generated melodies on an IBM-PC wherein a series of tones will be generated at whatever speed I feel like listening to them at the time, and for how long, as I write down my most distinct impressions of what I'm listening to during and after the fact. My usual setting involves 30 seconds of modest eighth notes and then increasing the number of notes in the octave by one; i. e., e. g., en ingles, 30 seconds of 1-tone, then of 2-tone, 3-tone, ad nauseum. For lack of the knowledge on this type of pun, I'd care to note the irony of the use of "ad nauseum," since I usually do this until I get sick of it. In doing this 3 or 4 times, I was taken a bit aback as I wasn't expecting those 3 or 4 impressions of 80 different temperaments to be so nearly identical. After a few dozen times, in as many different moods as I could pardon myself into doing the test from, I began more and more taking the idea for granted. Finally, after discussing this phenomenon (which to me now is second nature to having to eat) with Mr. Reinhard, he suggested I write to you, as you are "known" for an advocacy of the idea that every temperament has its own personality.

Specifically, the one minute facet which sparked the incentive to write you was something you said about the major 3rd in 17-tone, calling it (I believe) "harmonically brilliant and melodically elusive." I was touched, as I've heard nothing but pouty cynical I-don't-wanna-ism from anyone I've talked to about it or anywhere I've read about it. It's definitely one of the most delicate, controversial and underdog intervals I've encountered yet.

Your article on 34-tone was interesting, to say the least, as I'd read it only a week after I'd built my first 34-tone guitar. If I may list my assets in the guitar area, they are: a 12-string 19-tone acoustic, a 6-string acoustic currently fretted in (only) 15 successive fourths of the $12+19+31$ symmetrical temperament, and in the electric department, I have a 19 Aria Pro-2, a white 29 Stratocaster, a 31 Les Paul, a black and white pseudostrat in 34 (previously mentioned), a blue 41 Flying V and a plain Ibanez Blazer, torn fretless. Lying in the discard pile from whence the day came that I needed fretwire is a no-name which was fretted in 51 fourths of the $12+19+31$ Lincoln Memorial shape, to allow for the two 81-tone substitutions for 50's semioctave (or tritone as its too well known). The two frets around this space were sufficiently leveled so that the difference in pitch could be heard on any string played from any angle (I pat myself humbly on the back...) but they were so close together that the smallest conventionally sold jeweller's screwdriver could not fit in between them! I also have an autoharp which I derange occasionally... But I digress. These were all constructed by myself, as I purchase a fit 12-tone (or 18:17 repetitive decalibratus), ping out with a screwdriver, slap in putty, hack out the slots and bang in the fret wire. It's done ping, ping, ping...slap, slap, slap...hack, hack, hack...bang, bang, bang... NOT in a succession of ping-slap-hack-

bangs. I then paint psychedelc, but practical dot diagrams corresponding to the more frequently used nested scales (more frequently by me, that is). After the second coat of Mop-n-Glo, it's a new child. As soon as I can, I'll probably be doing 26, 43, 44, 46, 50 and 53 equal, a 7-17-41 geosymmetrical (explained later), and a just-octave-and-fifth system superimposed a semioctave away (mentioned later). I'll say now that one reason I wish you to respond is on the matter of guidance as to which one(s) I should do next. I'm trustable with the Tonal Arcanum.

I had a quite inspiring vision at one point that music, computer and electronics technology, mysticism and comedy could all be linked and the link put into homes via the media with any one of its faces forward. At my current age of 23, I've seen the use of this delicate linkage as being as vital quartic elements to the future as fire, water, air and earth have been to the West for centuries. The products I've seen include homemade perpetual-motion machines, artificial intelligence do-it-yourself make-a-new-friend kits, and more practically, as per the extent of the resources of my miniature bedroom laboratory, new musics. I would think it more than obvious to propose a system based on one of the earliest tonal volleys between the left and right brains. Since at one point the right brain wants to hear a perfect fifth as the perfect dissection of the octave and the left wants to hear the semioctave, the balance seems most obviously a cycle of just fifths within an octave, each one including its semi-octave compliment (mentioned earlier that it would be mentioned later). The "major 3rd" created by subtracting a semioctave from two "perfect" fourths seems to have a likeability as well as an intrigue.

And what of this "occasional" musing of the "golden ratio", " ϕ "? That it equals its reciprocal plus one!? $\{\phi:1+1\}$ What of that magic number that equals its reciprocal plus two? $\{\phi:2+1\}$ A.K.A. the square root of two plus one... $(1+2.4142... = .4142...)$ which if the octave is split into this ratio as two large parts and one small, as it is in the 7-17-41 system (unexplained earlier) the large part is less than one cent from a just, yes, 4-to-3 perfect fourth! And of the prime golden ratio $\{\phi:1+1\}$: Has no one noticed how close the proportion between 3:2 and 7:6 is to this number squared? Or how close the proportion between 7:6 and 11:10 is to this number itself? Is this divine symmetry not one more obvious spiritually dis-un-liberating factor in what the porkchops in the 16th century cut off from the eye of the common man when they banned the advocacy of prime harmonics greater than six for reasons which, despite the soon-after vanishing of said reasons, were superstitiously saleable at the time??? Or is anything like this just doomed to appear in the footnotes of someone else's dissertation? Or is it just...me? I won't even discuss the golden harmonic ratio...

Just to assure you that I'm not from the Seventh Harmonic Gestapo and I've come to collect your surrealist residue, I'll give myself the opportunity to tell you how I feel about the first "few" equal temperament systems, personally.

- 1 - droning, not much variation, jumping the obvious octave
- 2 - genarally alarming, hanging, disturbing, signaling
- 3 - moderately beckoning for variation and meaning
- 4 - too widely running around in a maze, could be disturbed could be acting, could be concealing a secret that only it knows and you never will.
- 5 - kaleidoscopic, happy, mobile, wise, sounds like it's one voice, two, three, and then one again.
- 6 - lop-sided and lost in limbo; doesn't do much but defines motion well.
- 7 - less blunt than 5; pleasant, very slowly drawing/distracting, magical; runs wild with your imagination
- 8 - "lost" of 6 plus a the definite "disturb" uncertain in 4 and a touch of shock. Flatness which takes more time to get used to. Revolving geometry way to do anything.
- 9 - there's no draw to hum along, as it speaks for itself; easy to follow, hard to discuss, non-visual, suprising unless you expect it, stops when it's over cut-and-dried, and it's interesting.
- 10 - Busy and bored, scattering and scurrying in all directions.
- 11 - insane, senile, canniving, calculated genius, intriguing, and would do as plane-crash music.
- 12 - a vampirish juggling of many things happening at once easily; general facts and not much more.
- 13 - rhythmically capturing, harmonically ignorable, easy to sp may be good for percussion tuning, seems like every note changes the root which clearly connects to the feeling th there is an underlying polyrhythmic structure constantly being redefined.
- 14 - introduces itself and then babbles; can't place the rhythm as it seems to be inside a smoke of magnetism constantly being emmitted from the source. it goes its own way.

I've taken the idea up into the early hundreds and the ideas, musically and visually, get much clearer as you progress. One pair of opposites that may well be the most fascinating factor in comparing temperament personalities is: as you ascend in the series, it becomes more difficult to distinguish units in any two adjacent temperaments - a 34th of an octave is (slightly) more difficultly distinguishable from a 35th than from a 33rd; yet the temperaments themselves become (greatly) more distinct - the audible difference between 34- and 35-tone is much greater than the difference between 33- and 34-tone. On the "golden" systems, I've found the only way to judge their personality is to limit the size range of possible interval jumps and then relate it to an experience with the corresponding equal temperament - $12+7\{\phi:1+1\}$ vs. 19 equal, say. I think this may be easier than counting to infinity and then working one's way back. Ha ha. «COUGH»

In wishing you to fare well, I'd like to ask you to contact me when you can. I'm not sure what to ask you to tell me or ask me, but just volley. I'll be home for a while before I start working again, at which point these will turn into my evening numbers (Eastern Time):

(718) 624-5646 or (718) 596-1010.

Or write:

Marc Jones
163 Joralemon Street, Suite 1088
Brooklyn NY 11201

I'm looking forward to hearing from you, as it's the only direction can look.

Marc
Jones.