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THE PARTY

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The Problems

- A) With the exception of brilliantly programmed digital keyboards, it is impossible for a keyboard instrument, no matter how it is tuned, to play "in tune." Here, "in tune" = minimizing the beating (i.e. wave interference) for all possible vertical combinations of notes.
 This problem has haunted instrument makers, theorists, and performers for centuries.
- B) Mozart apparently composed a pair of pieces for an instrument that, it was claimed, solved problem A).
- *C)* I had to write something about this for Köchel 2023.



Problem A

A) With the exception of brilliantly programmed digital keyboards, it is impossible for a keyboard instrument, no matter how it is tuned, to play "in tune." Here, "in tune" = minimizing the beating (i.e. wave interference) for all possible vertical combinations of notes.

B) Mozart apparently composed a pair of pieces for an instrument that, it was claimed, solved problem A).

C) I had to write an entry about this for Köchel 2023.



Microtonal Organs, Clavichords, Harmoniums, Harpsichords, Pianofortes, etc.









Equal Temperament in the **Eighteenth Century** The Ear versus Numbers

Today, many have urged early music specialists to adopt a historical unequal temperament for keyboards and harps, and even for instruments whose frets produce equal temperament naturally. Equal temperament, however, played a significant role during this period, but

most writing today has stressed the numbers from early mathematicians who believed that the more just intervals a temperament has, the better it will be. Major writers, however, pressed for equal temperament because it enabled full use of the keyboard, transposition, and enharmonic notes. In contrast, the major and minor semitones of unequal temperaments limited the keyboard's usable compass and made enharmonic notes and transposition impossible. Performers with pitch flexibility did not follow the theorists' numbers. An accompaniment in equal temperament offered them free rein to find the best intonation because its ratios for fourths and fifths are closest to the natural ones. 186p (Brepols Publishers, May 2023, Music, Science and Technology 6) hardcover, 9782503606750, \$200.00. Special Offer \$160.00

Eighteenth-century tuning and temperament were hotly contested subjects in their day and they remain so today. As suggested in the previous slide, I believe that, since no later than the mid-19th century, "ownership" of Bach's "48" has played a role in the desire to date the acceptance of equal temperament early in the 18th century.

For an accounting of 18th-century evidence for equal temperament, argued from a point of view opposed to the one I am presenting today, see Beverly Jerold's recent monograph, Equal Temperament in the Eighteenth Century: The Ear versus Numbers.







from Bartolomé Ramos de Pareja *Musica practica* (1482)



Two Abstract Graphic Representations of a string, a column of air, or any other musical tone generator, showing the oscillations that produce overtones

> As shown in recent textbooks on musical acoustics



"Harmony of the Spheres"

(The hand of God tuning his celestial monochord) Engraving from the English hermeticist, scientist, doctor, alchemist, and Rosicrucian Robert Fludd's treatise, *Utriusque Cosmi, Maioris scilicet et Minoris, metaphysica, physica, atque technica Historia* (1617–1624).

It represents man's soul in harmony with the universe and links the Ptolemaic Universe to musical intervals.





Excerpts from Easley Blackwood, *The Structure of Recognizable Diatonic Tunings* (Princeton University Press, 1985), pp. 208, 278, 292-293

Distribution of various versions of recognizable and unrecognizable diatonic scales within the equal tunings

"... the only equal tunings of less than 36 notes that contain diatonic scales within the acceptable range [= the ratio of the size of the major second to the size of the minor second] are those of 12, 19, 24, and 31 notes...."

Equal tunings that contain approximations to just tuning

"... any tuning that approximates just tuning must contain a nearly pure major third as well as a nearly pure perfect fifth, and we call such tunings *nearly just equal tunings*. In order to discover whether a given tuning is nearly just, the most straightforward approach is simply to determine which intervals contained by the equal tuning are nearest to 701.955 cents and 386.314 cents; if these are not within a certain range of tolerance, there is little point in carrying the investigation further. Table 114 gives relevant data for all equal tunings of 12 through 75 notes."

All measurements are in "cents". One *¢* = one one-hundredth of the difference in pitch between any two adjacent notes of an equal-tempered chromatic scale measured logarithmically.

		TAB	le 114				
number of notes	each adjacent interval	closest perfect fifth	departure from pure	closest major third	departure from pure		
12	100.000	$\frac{7}{12}a = 700.000$	-1.955	$\frac{4}{12}a = 400.000$	13.686		
13	92.308	$\frac{8}{13}a = 738.462$	36.507	$\frac{4}{13}a = 369.231$	-17.083		
14	85.714	$\frac{8}{14}a = 685.714$	-16.241	$\frac{5}{14}a = 428.571$	42.258		
15	80.000	$\frac{9}{15}a = 720.000$	18.045	$\frac{5}{15}a = 400.000$	13.686		
16	75.000	$\frac{9}{16}a = 675.000$	-26.955	$\frac{5}{16}a = 375.000$	-11.314		
17	70.588	$\frac{10}{17}a = 705.882$	3.927	$\frac{5}{17}a = 352.941$	-33.373		
18	66.667	$\frac{11}{18}a = 733.333$	31.378	$\frac{6}{18}a = 400.000$	13.686		
19	63.158	$\frac{11}{19}a = 694.737$	-7.218	$\frac{6}{19}a = 378.947$	-7.366		
20	60.000	$\frac{12}{20}a = 720.000$	18.045	$\frac{6}{20}a = 360.000$	-26.314		
21	57.143	$\frac{12}{21}a = 685.714$	-16.241	$\frac{7}{21}a = 400.000$	13.686		
22	54.545	$\frac{13}{22}a = 709.091$	7.136	$\frac{7}{22}a = 381.818$	-4.496		
23	52.174	$\frac{13}{23}a = 678.261$	-23.694	$\frac{7}{23}a = 365.217$	-21.096		
24	50.000	$\frac{14}{24}a = 700.000$	-1.955	$\frac{8}{24}a = 400.000$	13.686		
25	48.000	$\frac{15}{25}a = 720.000$	18.045	$\frac{8}{25}a = 384.000$	-2.314		
26	46.154	$\frac{15}{26}a = 692.308$	-9.647	$\frac{8}{26}a = 369.231$	-17.083		
27	44.444	$\frac{16}{27}a = 711.111$	9.156	$\frac{9}{27}a = 400.000$	13.686		
28	42.857	$\frac{16}{28}a = 685.714$	-16.241	$\frac{9}{28}a = 385.714$	599		
29	41.379	$\frac{17}{29}a = 703.448$	1.493	$\frac{9}{29}a = 372.414$	-13.900		
30	40.000	$\frac{18}{30}a = 720.000$	18.045	$\frac{10}{30}a = 400.000$	13.686		
31	38.710	$\frac{18}{31}a = 696.774$	-5.181	$\frac{10}{31}a = 387.097$.783		
32	37.500	$\frac{19}{32}a = 712.500$	10.545	$\frac{10}{32}a = 375.000$	-11.314		
33	36.364	$\frac{19}{33}a = 690.909$	-11.046	$\frac{11}{33}a = 400.000$	13.686		
34	35.294	$\frac{20}{34}a = 705.882$	3.927	$\frac{11}{34}a = 388.235$	1.922		
35	34.286	$\frac{20}{35}a = 685.714$	-16.241	$\frac{11}{35}a = 377.143$	-9.171		
36	33.333	$\frac{21}{36}a = 700.000$	-1.955	$\frac{12}{36}a = 400.000$	13.686		
37	32.432	$\frac{22}{37}a = 713.514$	11.559	$\frac{12}{37}a = 389.189$	2.875		
38	31.579	$\frac{22}{38}a = 694.737$	-7.218	$\frac{12}{38}a = 378.947$	-7.366		
39	30.769	$\frac{23}{39}a = 707.692$	5.737	$\frac{13}{39}a = 400.000$	13.686		

(continued)

The Just Noticeable Difference (JND)

Pitch differences are sensed, measured, and understood somewhat differently by physicists, musicians and musically untrained laypersons.

In human perception the Just Noticeable Difference between two musical <u>pitches</u> (= frequency = Herz = number of vibrations per second) must be expressed as a ratio or a <u>musical interval</u>. The JND is reckoned not arithmetically but logarithmically in <u>cents</u> [c], a metric developed specifically to express musical pitch consistently and precisely. One c = one 100th of the difference in pitch between any two adjacent notes of an equal-tempered chromatic scale measured logarithmically. This can be restated as: 100 c = the pitch difference contained in an equal-tempered semitone (= half-step). One of the <u>advantages of the cents notation</u> from the point of view of a physicist is that it has a constant value for a given musical interval regardless of the frequency range in which that interval occurs.

Our ears' ability to perceive the difference (the JND) between two nearly identical pitches has been measured by some scientists to be about 0.5% of the frequencies between them, which corresponds to about 8¢, whereas others have found the JND to be as low as 5¢. Measurements of the JND will vary depending upon the size of the interval, the frequency range (low, middle or high pitches), the sound level (= volume/decibels), the duration of the tones, the suddenness of a frequency change, the musical training of the listener, and the method of measurement.

Galeazzo Sabbatini

Derelinquat impius viam suam

Soprano: Alice Borciani Violino: Eva Saladin Viola da Gamba: Brigitte Gasser Cimbalo Cromatico: Johannes Keller

Recorded at Kloster Beinwil, Switzerland

July 2014



Derelinquat impius viam suam, et vir iniquus cogitationes suas, et revertatur ad Dominum, et miserebitur eius, quia benignus, et misericors est, et praestabilis super malitia Dominus Deus nost — Isaiah 55,7

Let the wicked man give up his path, and the man who is unfair, his thoughts, and let him turn back to the Lord, and he will have pity on him, because the Lord our God is kind and merciful, and pre-eminent over evils. — trans. David Wyatt

Galeazzo Sabbatini

Derelinquat impius viam suam

Sabbatini notated his motet enharmonically, to be performed with more than 12 pitches per octave. Works in this so-called "metabolic style"* of the late 15th and early 16th centuries were composed or theorized by Zarlino, Gesualdo, Mazzocchi, Michelangelo Rossi, Doni, and others.** The result may shock ears accustomed to 12pitch diatonic tunings.

In a sung text words calling for emphasis receive it from chromatic or enharmonic moves. In instrumental works such moves can be employed as a free-wheeling resource. <u>Such dissonances or cross-relations can</u> <u>be perceived retrospectively as resolving into</u> their new scale with perfect voice-leading logic.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6VCKW4JkKFg&list=RD0akGtDPVRxk&index=2

^{*} Athanasius Kircher, Musurgia universalis, 1650

^{**} See Jeffrey Levenberg: "Worth the price of the 'Musurgia universalis': Athanasius Kircher on the secret of the 'metabolic style," *Recercare.* 28/1-2 (2016), pp. 43-88; and Martin Kirnbauer: "'Vieltönigkeit' instead of Microtonality. The Theory and Practice of Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century 'Microtonal' Music," Paulo de Assis (ed.), *Experimental Affinities in Music* (Leuven: Leuven University Press 2015), pp. 64-90.

Problem B

A) With the possible exception of a brilliantly programmed digital keyboard, it is impossible for a keyboard instrument, no matter how it is tuned, to play "in tune." Here, in tune = minimizing the beating (i.e. wave interference) for all possible vertical combinations of notes.

B) Mozart apparently composed a pair of pieces for an instrument that, it was claimed, had solved problem A).

C) I needed to write something about B) for Köchel 2023.



Five Remarkable Documents

- 1. The nobleman's article (1781)
- 2. A Viennese dissertation (2016)
- 3. The piano builder's announcement (1796)
- 4. The Linz Kapellmeister's son's memorandum (1842)*
- 5. The sole surviving instrument (1796 ~ 2023)

*Alois FUCHS: "Biographische Notizen über die beiden Capellmeister Joh. Georg Roser (Vater) und Fr. De Paula Roser (Sohn)...," in: *Allgemeine Wiener Musik-Zeitung*, 2/1842, Nr. 107/10.



Pag. 413 Signes de mutation de Sons .dieze bemol..... umisson 0 inc Oct

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OCTOBRE, 1781: 413

AUX amateurs & connoisseurs de la parfaite harmonie; par M. le C. D. T.

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<u>''esprit des journaux (Oct.</u>

» Le piano-forte de la parfaite harmonie dont on trouve le modele ci-joint, existe depuis un an en Autriche. Il est approuvé par des maitres & connoiffeurs de musique. Il ne laisse rien à desirer pour la perfection de l'harmonie. Cette invention a deux avantages : elle furprend les connoifseurs par la régularité des 31 intervalles ou tons différens depuis l'unisson jusqu'à l'octave ; & elle donne plus de facilité que l'ancienne méthode pour exécuter toutes les pieces de mufique. L'ancienne méthode des touches y est confervée. La seule différence qui y regne confiste en ce que chacun de ces 31 tons à son dieze au-deffus & fon bémol au-dessous de fa touche. Toute autre division de l'octave est défectueuse. La délicatesse des connoisseurs trouvera dans cette nouvelle invention de quoi fe contenter par des accords multipliés & par des vibrations parfaitement fonores.

[Remarkable Document 1]



5 3

O C T O B E R, 1781

To amateurs & connoisseurs of perfect harmony,

by M. [Joseph Gundacker] le C[omte] d[e] T[hürheim.]

"The piano-forte de la parfait harmonie, the design of which is herewith attached, has existed in Austria for a year. It was approved by maestros and connoisseurs. It leaves nothing to be desired as far as the perfection of harmony is concerned. This invention has two advantages: it surprises connoisseurs by the evenness of the 31 intervals, or different tones, found between the unison and its octave above; & its layout provides more ease in performing any sort of music than the old method does.[*] The old method of [laying out] the keys [touches] is maintained. The only difference that prevails is this: each of these 31 tones has its sharp above & its flat below its key [touche]. Any other division of the octave is defective. In this new invention the delicate taste of connoisseurs will discern something that, by chords multiplied & by perfectly tuned vibrations, pleases them.["] L'esprit des journaux (Oct. 1781, p. 413)

OCTOBRE, 1781: 413

Aux amateurs & connoisseurs de la parfaite harmonie; par M. le C. D. T.

» Le piano-forte de la parfaite harmonie dont on trouve le modele ci-joint, existe depuis un an en Autriche. Il est approuvé par des maitres & connoiffeurs de musique. Il ne laisse rien à defirer pour la perfection de l'harmonie. Cette invention a deux avantages : elle furprend les connoiffeurs par la régularité des 31 intervalles ou tons différens depuis l'unifion julqu'à l'octave ; & elle donne plus de facilité que l'ancienne méthode pour exécuter toutes les pieces de mufique. L'ancienne methode des touches y eft confervée. La seule différence qui y regne confifte en ce que chacun de ces 31 tons à fon dieze au-deffus & fon bémol au-deffous de fa touche. Toute autre division de l'octave est défectueuse. La délicatesse des connoisseurs trouvera dans cette nouvelle invention de quoi fe contenter par des accords multipliés & par des vibrations parfaitement fonores.

[Remarkable Document 1]

^{[*] [}The layout of the *Piano-forte de la parfait harmonie* is isomorphic: for any given piece the same fingering can be used no matter which set of keyboards one plays on. (Patrizio Barbieri)]

Anna Schirlbauer

[The House of Mozart's Student Barbara Ployer's Parents and the Pianoforte harmonie parfaite as Reflected in the Ployer-Thürheim Correspondence]

Das Elternhaus der Mozart-Schülerin

Barbara Ployer

und das Pianoforte "harmonie parfaite"

im Spiegel der Korrespondenz Ployer - Thürheim

Wien, 2.März 2016

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[Remarkable Document 2]

Anna Schirlbauer

[The House of Mozart's Student Barbara Ployer's Parents and the Pianoforte harmonie parfaite as Reflected in the Ployer-Thürheim Correspondence]

Das Elternhaus der Mozart-Schülerin

Barbara Ployer

und das Pianoforte "harmonie parfaite"

im Spiegel der Korrespondenz Ployer - Thürheim

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[Remarkable Document 2]

AR N10. 82 allerana haffer Wiener Zeifung. Bar Dece Mittewoche, den 12. October 1706.

Inlandische Begebenheiten.

wien.

18 eine Folge ber Berbefferungen, welche bie ni, offr. Regierung in bem all= gemeinen Krankenbaufe ju treffen, fich be= muht, ward auch bie Qufbebung bes Trai= teurs , und anftatt beffelben, bie Einfuh= rung ber Roft unter ber Mogie bes hau= fes, befchloffen. 21ber ba Diefe weitiauf= tige Unftalt eine ftate und rafflofe Auf= ficht erfordert, welche von ben Beamten bes Kraufenhaufes felbft nicht wohl gefeiftet werben tann; fo haben fich mehrere Bürger ber Ctabt Wien anheischig ge= macht, über die gute Beforgung ber Ruche, und bie augemeffene Bedienung ber Rranten wechfeliveife Dadificht unentgelt= lich zu pflegen.

Die ni. öfter. Regierung eilet baher bie Rahmen biefer verdienstvollen Menschenfreunde, welche noch mehrere zu diesem Liebesbienfte fich zugefellen wollen, bem Publitum biermit befannt zu machen:

Philipp Großmann, des aufferen Raths, in der Stadt. Erasinus Settele, des äufferen Naths, auf der Landstraffe. Philipp Puchebaum, auf der Wieden. Johann Michael Ulberstorfer, Franz Pichler, Mathias Wimaper, und Jynaz Gößer, fämmtlich auf der Wieden. Nitfolaus Menner, Joseph Reder, und Franz Lezderer, auf der Landtraffe. Inter Marfchall, Joseph Wirth, Karl Dormann und Chrizstoph Wirth, Rarl Dormann und Chrizstoph Wirth, in der Stadt.

herr Johann Georg Rofer, Domkapellmeister von Ling, hatte die Ehte, vom 5. bis 8. Ott. d. J. in fehrer Wohnung allhier, (in der Kärtnerstraffe 1025) auf dem ueu erfundemen, nach seiner Angabe von dem hiefigen bürgerl. Inftrument=Ma=

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2028 2028

cher Johann Jafeb Ronig, febr funfilich und niedlich verfertigten Diano forte ber pollfommenen harmonie, (wovon bie na= bere Befchreibung burch eine Diefer Zeitung pom 7. Oftob. D. J. befonders bengelegte Rachricht beraustam,) in Gegenwart Des boben 2bels, febr vieler groffen Kompofitoren und Sonfunftler, Die Bortheile ber neuen Erfindung, öffentlich und unentgeltlich barzuftellen. Ihre Konigl. Sobeiten bie fünf jungern Ergberzoge, unter Bealeitung mehrerer Ravaliere haben ibn mit Ihrer Gegenwart begnabigt. Gebach= ter herr Rofer fowohl, als fein 10 Jahr alter Cobn 21lois, welche auf Diefemnen erfundenen Diano forte mehrere von ibm felbit verfaßte funftliche Studte fpielten, wie auch fein alterer Cobn granz, welcher auch, eine von ihm fur biefes Plano forte eigends verfaßte Dalfche Urie fang, erhielten ben wohlverdienten Benfall von ben bochften Berrichaften, groffen Rompofitoren und Sonfünftiern.

Berr Friedrich Wilhelm Gerlach, Lebe rer ber Mbilofophie, Mechanit und Erpes rimentalphonft an ber R. R. Ingenieurs atabemie allbier, welcher burch feinen Un= terricht mit jur Ausbildung ber Jugend in ber R. R. Ingenieurafademie burch 40 Jahre hilft , viele Stabsoffigier und mehrere Generale, bie alle bem Staate burch Ibre Sabigfeit und Berwendung rubmilich bienen, unter feinen gewefenen Ochulern jablet, fchon im Jahre 1764 eine 2Bind= mage, Die ben allergeringften und ftarte ften Wind geiget, erfand, und feit bent von mehrern Afademien Preife erhielt, bat nunmehr auch ben 5. October 1796 ben von ber Raiferl. Alfabemie ber 2Biffen= fchaften ju Gt. Detersburg für febr wich= tige mechanische Erfindungen quertannten Preis von 25 Sollanderbufaten juge= fchicft bekommen.

Die hiefige Luchlanden-Verwandtschaft hat als ein patriotisches Geschent 1000 Ellen verschiedene Lücher und Eroifee an bie K. R. Militar-Monturs-Defonomie--hauptfommißion abgeliefert, welche lobenswürdige handlung allerdings befannt gemacht zu werden verdient, da selbe ei= nen neuerlichen Beweis von ben giten Ge= finnungen der Wiener= Burger an Lagllegt.

Die BB. 49. bes Predigoriens all= bier haben ju Folge ber in ber Mienerzei= tung Nr. 73 erichienenen Bekanntnachung, ju ben Kriegsbedurfniffen 100 Mejen Korn abzugeben fich ben bem Magiftrat ier R. R. haupt = und Neftdenzikabt Wien thriftlich erfläret , und über Unweisung deffeben auch wirtlich in ben R. R. Magazinftaiel unter ben Beißgarbern abgeliefert.

Die am 4. d. M. dem båchsten Nahmensfeste unfers allergnädigsten Monarhen, im R. R. groffen Nedontenslale zun dritten Male aufgeführte Rantate; der Letter in Gefabe, ward, so wie die bewen vorigen Male, mit undeschreiblichem Bohlgefallen aufgenommen. Die Zuhöer fanden sich sachtreich ein , daß ein groier Theil feinen Raum mehr fand. Beth zer Kasse sind abermahl 2262 Guld, 27 Kr. einges gangen.

Bur Feyer bes Nahmensfestes Gr. R. R. Maj. wurde ju Linz, Abends in Schauspielhaufe, von dem Unternehmerund Musik-Direktor, Franz Glöngl, eine groffe mussikalische Akademie gegeben, und daden eine patriotische Rantate abgesungen. Sowohl die Donkünstler durch ihrm Eifer, als auch das Publikum durch latten Beyfall äufferten lebhaft ihren Patrotissinus; die Einnahme von 248 Guld. 42 Krn. übergab der Unternehmer ohne illen Abjug, als einen freywilligen Kriegibentrag, an die Behörde.

Ein Schreiben aus Mitolebuch vom 3. October meldet : "Der gestrige Lag war für gute Menschen ein Lag ber brzlichsten Freude. Der Mann, der uns benfelben verschaffte, ift ein liebenswürdigt Greis, ber burch liein ehrenvolles Leben rafilos bem Staate, und jebem, der fener Hulfe bedurfte, ju dienen bemühr war. Nachbem er ben erhabenen Eutschließ gefaßt hatte, auch dann, wenn er nichtmehr som barbe, Wohlthäter guter Maschen ju Wiener Zeitung. Mittewoche, den 12. October 1796. Inländische Begebenheiten ...

Herr Johann Georg Roser, Domkapellmeister von Linz, hatte die Ehre, vom 5. Bis 8. Okt. d. J. in seiner Wohnung allhier, (in der Kärtnerstrasse 1025) auf dem neu erfundenen, nach seiner Angabe von dem heisigen bürgerl. Instrument=Macher Johann Jakob König, sehr künstlich und niedlich verfertigten Piano forte der vollkommenen Harmonie (wovon die nähere Beschreibung durch eine dieser Zeitung vom 7. Oktob. d. J. besonders beygelegte Nachricht herauskam), in Gegenwart des hohen Adels, sehr vieler grossen Kompositoren und Tonkünstler, die Vertheile der neuen Erfindung, öffentlich und unentgeltlich darzustellen.* Ihre königl. Hoheiten die fünf jüngern Erzherzoge, unter Begleitung mehrerer Kavaliere haben ihn mit Ihrer Gegenwart begnädigt. Gedachter Herr Roser sowohl, als sein 10 Jahr alter Sohn Alois, welche auf diesem neu erfundenen Piano forte mehrere von ihm selbst verfatzte künstliche Stücke spielten, wie auch sein älterer Sohn Franz, welcher auch, eine von ihm für dieses Piano forte eigends verfaßte Wälsche Aire sang, erhielten den wohlverdienten Beyfall von den höchsten Herrschaften, grossen Kompositoren und Tonkünstlern.

[Remarkable Document 3]

Wiener Zeitung Wednesday, 12 October 1796 Domestic Events ...

Herr Johann Georg Roser, Kapellmeister of the Linz Cathedral, had the honor — in his apartment here (Kärtnerstrasse 1025) in the presence of the high nobility [and] of the very greatest composers and performers — to share the new invention, built to his specifications by local resident instrument-maker Johann Jakob König [Könnicke], of the very artful and beautifully crafted *Piano forte der* vollkommenen Harmonie (the more detailed description of which was published by this newspaper in a special supplement to the 7th October issue of the current year.)* Their Royal Highnesses the five young archdukes, accompanied by many courtiers, have favored him with their presence. The said Mr. Roser — with his ten-year-old son, Alois, who played on this newly-invented Piano forte several artful pieces that he himself composed, and likewise his elder son Franz, who sang an Italian aria that he composed expressly for this Piano forte — received the well-deserved approval of the highest lords, [and] of the very greatest composers and performers.

^{*} In the two copies of the *Wiener Zeitung* that I consulted, the supplement of 7 October 1796 contains only reports from the front in the so-called "War of the First Coalition" between Austria & France.

Problem C

A) With the exception of a brilliantly programmed digital keyboard, it is impossible for a keyboard instrument, no matter how it is tuned, to play "in tune." Here, in tune = minimizing the beating (i.e. wave interference) for all possible vertical combinations of notes.

B) Mozart apparently composed a pair of pieces for an instrument that, it was claimed, solved problem A).

C) I must write something about B) for Köchel 2023.

Köchel 2023

KV X 15, Nr. 1–2 Zwei Stücke

für das "Pianoforte de l' harmonie parfaite" Werke zweifelhafter Echtheit

Einziger Hinweis auf die einstige Existenz der Kompositionen ist ein in vielen Details unzuverlässiger biographischer Bericht von Franz de Paula Roser von Reiter über seinen Vater Johann Georg Roser: "Roser hatte das Glück, Mozart mit seinem Vater durch 11 Tage in seiner Wohnung bewirthen zu können. Eben zu dieser Zeit vollendete Roser das von ihm erfundene Pianoforte, welches er Harmonie pour la parfait nannte. [...] Mozart hat während seines Aufenthaltes bei ihm 2 kleine Piecen für dieß Instrument geschrieben; leider aber ist dessen Manuskript bey dem Brande in Linz 1799 [recte: 1800] ein Opfer der Flamme geworden." (Dok; zitiert nach Biba). Bei dem das "Pianoforte de l' harmonie parfaite" benannten Instrument handelte es sich um ein enharmonisches Klavierinstrument mit 6 Klaviaturen und einem Umfang von 5 Oktaven, das von Johann Jacob Könnicke gebaut worden war.

The only indication of the compositions' former existence is a biographical report by Franz de Paula Roser von Reiter about his father Johann Georg Roser, which is unreliable in many details: "Roser was fortunate enough to host Mozart and his father in his home for 11 days. It was precisely at this time that Roser had completed the pianoforte he invented, which he called *pour la parfaite Harmonie*. [...] Mozart wrote two small pieces for this instrument during his stay with him; unfortunately, this manuscript was lost in the fire in Linz in 1799 [recte: 1800], a victim of the flames." The instrument called the "Pianoforte de l'harmonie parfaite" was an enharmonic piano with 6 keyboards and a range of 5 octaves....

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für das "Pianoforte de l' harmonie parfaite"

Datierung: Angeblich Linz, November 1783.

Besetzung: Clav (enharmonisches Fortepiano-mit 31 Tönen pro Oktave). –– Besetzung: Clav (enharmonisches Fortepiano mit 6 Klaviaturen, einem Umfang von 5 Oktaven, und 31 Tönen pro Oktave).



Autograph: Verschollen – zuletzt nachgewiesen Linz/Erben Johann Georg Roser. Abschriften: A-Wgm, 10907/134, Beilage.

Ausgaben: NMA X/31/4.

Nachweise: KV¹⁻⁶ deest.

Kommentar: Franz de Paula Roser von Reiter teilt in der Lebensbeschreibung seines Vaters Johann Georg Roser von Reiter (Dok) in Zusammenhang mit dem von diesem entwickelten enharmonischen Fortepiano mit: "Der diesem Aufsatze vorbehaltene Raum erlaubt mir nicht, die vor mir liegende detaillirte Beschreibung dieses Instruments, so wie einige für dasselbe componirte Musikstücke (worunter sich ein Rondo befindet, welches Mozart während seines Aufenthalts in seinem Hause componirte) hier einrücken zu lassen, obschon die Sache an und für sich merkwürdig genug wäre." Der biographischen Notiz liegt eine Beschreibung der 31-stufigen Scala und ein Notenblatt mit einem Exzerpt aus dem angeblich von Mozart stammenden Rondo KV x 15, Ir. 1, bei. Dabei handelt es sich offenbar um ein Couplet in Es aus einem Rondo-Satz, sodass keine sicheren Rückschlüsse auf die Grundtonart möglich sind, wohl aber Es dur.

Dokumente: Dok, S. 453.

Literatur: Fuchs, Biographische Notizen 1842; Huber, Der österreichische Kla a., Mozart in Linz 1991; Voigt, Biographien 1991; Biba, Nachrichten 1996; Sc "Harmonie parfaite" 2017.

KV ###, Nr. 2 St

Stück

für das "Pianoforte de l' harmonie parfaite" verschollen

Datierung: Angeblich Linz, November 1783.
Besetzung: Clav (enharmonisches Fortepiano mit 31 Tönen pro Oktave).
Autograph: Verschollen – zuletzt nachgewiesen Linz/Erben Johann Georg Roser.

Transcriptions from the Manuscript of the Younger Roser (A-Wgm)

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Courtesy of Dr. Ulrich Leisinger of the Mozarteum

Did Mozart Understand and Take an Interest in Microtonal Matters?

I begin with an anecdote conveyed by a long-time friend of the Mozart family, the Salzburg court trumpeter Johann Andreas Schachtner, to Wolfgang's sister Nannerl after his death:

... I had a very good violin, which the erstwhile Wolfgangerl called the "butter violin" because of its soft and full tone. One day soon after his return from Vienna [just seven years of age] he played on it and could not find words to praise it highly enough; one or two days later I came to see him again and found him amusing himself with his own violin.... Finally, he

thought for a moment and said to me "*Herr Schachtner, your violin is tuned* half a quarter-tone lower than mine, if you tuned it as it was last time I played it." I laughed at this, but Papa [Leopold] knowing the extraordinary sense of pitch and memory of the child, asked me to fetch my violin and see if he was right. I did so, and he was right.

Otto Erich Deutsch, Mozart: a Documentary Biography, 3rd ed. (London: Simon & Schuster, 1990)

"... ich eine sehr gut Geige habe, die weiland Wolfgangerl, wegen seinem sanften and vollen Ton immer Buttergeige nannte. Einsmals, bald nachdem sie von Wien zurückkammen geigte er darauf, und konnte meine Geige nicht genug loben, nach ein oder zween Tagen kam ich wieder ihn zu besuchen, und traf ihn, als er sich eben mit seiner eigenen Geige unterhielt an, sogleich sprach er: Was macht ihre Buttergeige? geigte dann wieder in seiner Phantasie fort, endlich dacht er ein bischen nach, und sagte zu mir, Hr. Schachtner, ihre Geige ist um einen halben *4tel* Ton tiefer gestimmit als meine da, wenn Sie sie doch so gestimmt liessen, wie sie war, als ich das letzte mal drauf spielte. Ich lachte darüber, aber Papa, der das ausserordentliche Tönegefühl und Gedächniß dieses Kinds kannte, bath mich meine Geige zu hohlen, und zu sehe, ob er recht hätte, ich thats, und richtig wars."

Otto Erich Deutsch, Mozart: Die Dokumente seines Lebens (Kassel, Bärenreiter, 1961)

il 1 so lel'octave all 7 m Diel 200 Dalle Rech stale maggine il i manie tuone à Aperten alle frette del 23 delle 7 ma all'octava. Nell. There queta ella darea . 5 tuon ded 12 Atu nella stala minere il i " arme tures à delle 2 " elle terre, dil alla yma (UI" Della seste ella quinte, Dil 25 della terre alla 2 nella stala della desi a la suda e qui magnice. aboo co zão o ho bo o ob inder o obobo e de de abobo a obo - obo o apapor obobo o obo taba o bo bo o o bo bo opobo bobo abobão o bobo ob

This is the first page of Mozart teaching Thomas Attwood the fine points of scales, intervals, and chromatic and enharmonic tuning. It occupies a number of pages and covers the tuning of all 48 diatonic scales and all musical intervals, accompanied by annotations. On most pages including this one, Mozart set an assignment and Attwood completed it.

Red = Mozart Black = Attwood

After Attwood's studies had ended, he wrote a document he called "Rules For Composition," a summary of his lessons in theory, thorough bass and composition with Mozart. On a page devoted to intervals, he put an **X** next to certain notes, explaining in the margin:

> X these tones the Harpsichord has not, but all other Instruments have —

See John Hind Chesnut: "Mozart's Teaching of Intonation," JAMS, 30/2 (Summer 1977), pp. 254-271



[The fifth and most remarkable "document"]

The only surviving Piano-forte pour la parfaite harmonie

(a.k.a. Piano-forte pour l'harmonie parfaite)





The fifth and most remarkable document



— The third manual from the top has a diatonic scale in C major in a re-entrant tuning (meantone temperament).

Left & right coupler knobs

The manual directly above the third manual is tuned higher than it by one semitore (half-step); the manual above that, an additional semitone higher.

An octave from F to F 1 F*x* Gx Ax Bx Cx $\mathsf{D}x$ Ex Double sharps G# A# B# C# E# 2 F# D# Sharps Α B С D Е F G C major ("white keys") Ab E*b*. G*b* Bb Cb $\mathsf{D}b$ Flats Gbb Abb Cbb B*bb* D*bb* E*bb* Double flats hh Unisons* 0 6 \mathbf{O} \cap \mathbf{O} \mathbf{O}

The manual below the third manual is tuned one semitone lower; the manual below that, an additional semitone lower.

* The lowest manual (6) can be *coupled* to either manuals 1 + 2 (flat side) or 4 + 5 (sharp side).



mbols for alterations of pitch
sharp #
double sharp x
flat b
double flat
unison o

Harpsichord **jacks** or **piano** hammers. Each octave is numbered: 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 1 3 5 7 9 11 13 15 17 19 21 23 25 27 29 31

Key levers. Each octave is numbered: 0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30 1 3 5 7 9 11 13 15 17 19 21 23 25 27 29 31

Manuals (keyboards):

- 1. Double sharps (x)
- 2. Sharps (*)
- 3. Diatonic C-major scale
- 4. Flats (*b*)
- 5. Double flats (b)

5+6 [with couplers, for the sharp side (1-2) and flat side (4-5) respectively]

"The keys² of the bottom two ranks, which display only numbers, are there solely for the convenience of the piano or harpsichord players."

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ADAGIO IN B MINOR, K. 540

VIENNA: MARCH 19, 1788

HIS ASTONISHING PIECE IS NOT WELL known, and one can imagine why. It is not the kind of autonomous work one expects in a modern piano recital: a multi-movement sonata or a set of variations. Without repeats it lasts perhaps five minutes, with repeats about ten, but its content is so extraordinary that one can only with difficulty imagine grouping it with some other isolated movements of Mozart's. With its strong modulations and pungent dissonances, the work seems to travel to heaven and hell and back again, which makes it also a poor candidate for an encore at the end of a triumphant evening. The fact is that this is private music, meant to be played alone or for only a tiny circle of connoisseurs.

Adagio was generally reserved in the 18th century for the most serious utterances. Mozart has cast his moody creation in a large binary design, with carefully constructed first and second endings to enable each half of the movement to be repeated. Many adagios leave room for added ornamentation during repeats, but it is difficult to see how a pianist could add much to this elaborate, variegated texture which in some passages is almost orchestral in its conception. After the second section has been repeated, Mozart provides a coda of six measures in which the tension of the piece's chromaticism and dissonance is resolved into B major, a key that on Mozart's piano, which was not tuned in equal temperament, was not at all at rest. So although all ends movingly, one is left with reverberations of unease ringing in the air and in the imagination.

Excerpt from

Neal Zaslaw

W. A. Mozart:

Portfolio of a Genius

(Thornwillow Press 1991, folio XIX)





The exposition 0:00.00—2:23.48 The end of the recapitulation & coda 5:00.48—6:46.00

1))

Adagio in B minor KV 540 (1788)

Performed by Bart van Oort (D.M.A. Cornell 1993)





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1 Parts

Thanks for your kind attention!