

Sounding Bowls

Opening Hearts Across the World

by Tobias Kaye: Designer and Sole Maker, Worldwide.

"The Verdi Pitch" Why A=432?

The international standard orchestral pitch, A=432hz was set in 1959 in spite of over 20,000 musicians petitioning the International Standards Organisation. The fact that a few American sociological institutes had related the higher pitch to the use of hysteria in crowd control and that Goebbels recommended it's use to Chamberlin may or may not be relevant. What is interesting is that A=432 produces middle C at 256 and lower Cs at 128, 64, and 32. going down below conscious hearing we get 16, 8, 4, 2 and 1. Any other pitch means that lower C's soon vibrate at fractional numbers. 'C' is the only scale on the piano that has no sharps and flats, that this 'whole' scale should go down by whole numbers is significant.

Apparently the human cell vibrates at 2hz. How amazing is that? Is it a coincidence that we human beings have a bicameral mind, two lungs and a heart that beats with systole and diastole? That we have two circulations of the blood, one going to the outer worldly edge of body, muscle and skin, the other to our inner experience of the world, the air in our lungs?

If 2 is so important, if 2 cycles per second is the cell's pulse who designed the second? Who set time at 24 hours etc. to produce a twice per second vibration of cell life? Is it a coincidence that 24 hours produces 12 clock hours of night and of day, 2 cycles again?

How is it that we have two experiences of music as we perform, we hear the music as it flows through us towards our hands and or breath that express, through the instrument what we hear, then we hear it again through our ears.

How should A=432 not be a better tuning pitch if it is in tune with this fundamental aspect of our nature?

If our very cells are in tune with 'Two' imagine how much our body must respond to a whole frequency of music based around multiplications of and overtones on this number. It is not just every time we hit a C in this frequency, it is that the whole of music-maths is a generative number sequence related to all patterns in growth and biology. To tune our instruments to any other frequency seems now to be a sad loss of possible relationship between what we do and what we are.

The fact that computers also work on Two is remarkable. Their relationship with two is in the fact that they only know yes and no all digital equipment is based on this basic assumption, either the digit is set to yes or to no. double this again and again to get 4, 8, 16, 32 etc. two octaves up from middle C the frequency would be 1024, the number called mega in computer speak, thus megabytes etc.

Strangely this doesn't seem to make computers healthy to work with, like music is. Perhaps this is the difference between rhythm, consciously maintained order and vibration, machine perfected order. Machines are by their very nature antithetical to life, imperfection and development

Yet we can take this further. One cycle per second is also a 'C' note. A=432 is the only pitch that allows C to divide all the way down to one, the basic number of existence without becoming fractional. One is the indivisible nature of existence. Right up to the modern age it was believed that One is God, that an indivisible atom lay at the foundations of all existence, that my experience of Me was simply that. Only since subatomic physics and Freud have we seen the universe as physically and spiritually multi-versal, yet it remains direct experience that we are, at core, one being, and many particle physicist still believe they may come across a fundamental particle from which all else is built.

Numerous composers were clear that their music should be played in A=432, Verdi being perhaps the most strident and a few ensembles and even orchestras play only in this pitch. However the majority follow the ISO at 440.

I include this article in the backup to Sounding Bowls because the auto tuners I supply are adjustable from their factory setting of A=440. you may notice a number in the top left of the screen and you will find that the calibrate buttons just below the on button will change this number. Set it to 432 and your tuner will help you bring you instrument in tune with your inner physical nature. It will keep this setting when switched off but need re setting when the batteries are changed.