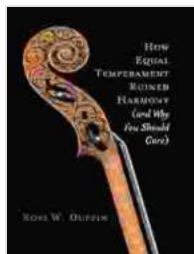


How Equal Temperament Ruined Harmony and Why You Should Care

Equal temperament is a tuning system that divides the octave into 12 equal semitones. It is the most common tuning system used in Western music today, but it is not without its critics. Some musicians argue that equal temperament ruins harmony, making it sound artificial and lifeless. In this article, we will explore the history of equal temperament, its advantages and disadvantages, and why you should care about it.

The History of Equal Temperament

The history of equal temperament can be traced back to the 16th century, when musicians began to experiment with dividing the octave into equal parts. In the early 17th century, the Italian composer and theorist Vincenzo Galilei proposed a system of 12 equal semitones, which he called "temperamentum aequale." However, it was not until the 18th century that equal temperament became widely accepted. In 1722, the German composer and theorist Johann Sebastian Bach wrote a treatise on music theory in which he advocated for the use of equal temperament. Bach argued that equal temperament was the only tuning system that could be used to play music in all keys.



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★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

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Print length : 208 pages



The Advantages of Equal Temperament

Equal temperament has several advantages over other tuning systems. First, it is relatively easy to tune. This is because the intervals between the notes are all equal, so there is no need to adjust the tuning for different keys. Second, equal temperament makes it possible to play music in any key. This is because the intervals between the notes are the same in all keys, so the same fingering can be used to play the same melody in any key. Third, equal temperament is well-suited for playing chords. This is because the intervals between the notes in a chord are always the same, regardless of the key.

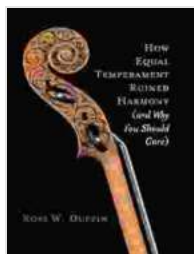
The Disadvantages of Equal Temperament

Despite its advantages, equal temperament also has some disadvantages. First, it can make music sound artificial and lifeless. This is because the intervals between the notes are not perfectly in tune. Second, equal temperament can make it difficult to sing in tune. This is because the intervals between the notes are not always the same as the intervals between the notes in the human voice. Third, equal temperament can make it difficult to play certain types of music, such as early music and folk music. This is because these types of music often use intervals that are not found in equal temperament.

Why You Should Care About Equal Temperament

Even if you are not a musician, you should still care about equal temperament. This is because equal temperament has a profound impact on the way we experience music. It affects the way music sounds, the way it is played, and the way it is sung. By understanding the advantages and disadvantages of equal temperament, you can make informed choices about the music you listen to and the instruments you play.

Equal temperament is a tuning system that has been used in Western music for centuries. It has several advantages, including its ease of tuning, its versatility, and its suitability for playing chords. However, it also has some disadvantages, including its artificial sound, its difficulty for singing in tune, and its limitations for playing certain types of music. Ultimately, the decision of whether or not to use equal temperament is a matter of personal preference. However, it is important to understand the advantages and disadvantages of equal temperament before making a decision.



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