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Music History

12-2-2015

There is a deep connection between music and philosophy. The musical scale was discovered by the philosopher Pythagoras. And music was considered a principal science by the Greeks. It was believed that it affected both the mind and the soul.

Pythagoras developed the musical scale based off a mathematical relationship between notes. He noticed that consonances were created by simple ratios in the length of a string. A scale is a numeric representation of favorable sounds. The best sounds had the simplest ratios with the octave and unison having a ratio of 1.000 and a less favorable sound a much more complicated ratio.

Plato a philosopher influenced by Pythagoras thought of music as the first science to teach a great future ruler and philosopher. Because of musicians' ability to see beauty in things the great and just philosophers should be musicians. Plato also believed that philosophers were kinder and gentler when trained as musicians and that musical training can bring about a soberness or self-control in the soul.

Music was also considered dangerous by philosophers like Plato. He believed that a change in musical style would cause rebellion and unrest in the youth and set them on a path to immoral acts. A new way of singing brings a new type of politics and social convention causing a disruption in the lawful spirit of the youth.

The ancient Greek philosophers had a deep regard for music. It was a measure of education and was believed to nurture and develop a kind and generous soul. It unified the spirit and brought peace to it. Music was important as an art and a science for its connection to math and the connection to the spirit.

Plato: The Collected Dialogues The Republic Plato.