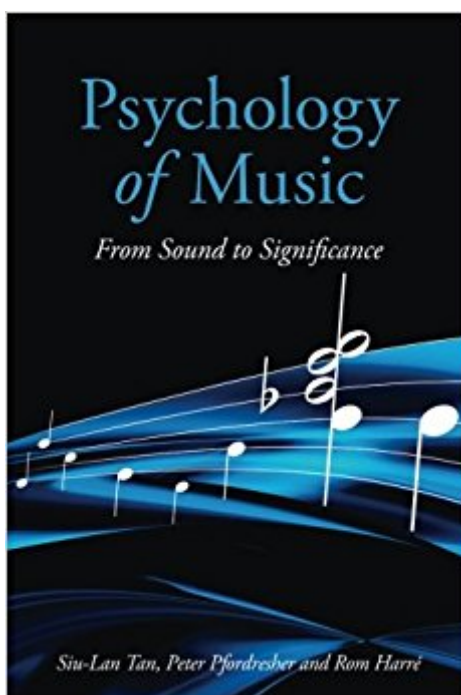


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# Psychology Of Music: From Sound To Significance



## Synopsis

Why are some disturbances of air molecules heard as 'noise' while others are perceived as music? What happens at the level of the sound wave, the ear, and the brain when we perform or listen to music? How do musical abilities emerge and develop, and become refined as one acquires musical expertise? And what gives music its deep emotional significance and its power to influence social behavior, across vastly different cultural contexts? These are some of the primary questions defining the field called 'the psychology of music' and driving the present volume. This book provides an introduction to classic and current studies in the psychology of music, combining a comprehensive summary with critical assessments of existing research. The volume captures the interdisciplinary breadth of the field, while covering central topics in depth. Part One explores sound and music at an acoustic level, explaining auditory events with respect to the workings of the ear and brain. Part Two focuses on perception and cognition of melody, rhythm, and formal structure. Part Three examines the emergence and development of musical skills, and turns to the most practical aspects of psychology of music: music practice and performance. Finally, Part Four broadens the discussion to the question of meaning in music, with respect to its social, emotional, philosophical, and cultural significance. Throughout, both behavioral and neuroscientific perspectives are developed. This book will be invaluable to undergraduate and postgraduate students in the fields of psychology and music, and will appeal to anyone else who is interested in the psychology of music.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Tan et al.'s volume is an impressive achievement and merits serious consideration by anyone teaching a survey course in music cognition or seeking to recommend to a friend or colleague. It's 300-odd pages are packed with the most detailed overview of our field we are likely to see in any text in the near term and it covers the major aspects of the field quite comprehensively. I've not had the opportunity to use the text myself yet, but will certainly do so in the academic year. ... Every instructor teaching a survey course should examine [Psychology of Music]." - Dr. Richard (Ric) Ashley, Associate Professor of Music Theory and Cognition at Northwestern University and past President of the Society for Music Perception and Cognition in Music Perception "Their evenhanded, reader-friendly treatment could easily be used as a basic text in a seminar on the psychology of music. ... The book integrates basic findings into a coherent narrative, avoiding the one-paragraph-per-study-strung-together quality that is a risk in any book of such scope. ... As it stands, Tan, Pfordresher, and Harré's volume is an engaging exposition of the current state of our knowledge of the psychology of music. The themes therein transcend their musical origin and make connections both with broader scientific psychology and real human experience. Reading it should significantly enhance one's enjoyment and appreciation of music, regardless of one's background or experience level. To paraphrase Nietzsche, experiencing music without knowledge may not entirely be a mistake, but experiencing it with the kind of up-to-date knowledge that may be gleaned from Psychology of Music is even more marvelous." - Aaron Kozbelt in PsycCRITIQUES "Tan, Pfordresher and Harre provide a nice, engaging and up-to-date overview of the psychology of music, from acoustics to ethnomusicology. The authors accompany the reader through the meanders of this complex field which spans several disciplines. The book, written in a plain and introductory style, is the ideal guide for students, and a refreshing overview for specialists and non-specialists interested in the psychology of music." - Simone Dalla Bella, Department of Psychology, WSFiZ, Warsaw, Poland and BRAMS, Montreal, Canada

Siu-Lan Tan is Professor of Psychology at Kalamazoo College in Michigan USA. She graduated in Music Education and Piano Pedagogy and taught music for many years in Hong Kong and California before completing a Ph.D. in Psychology at Georgetown University. She is also primary editor of the recent book, The Psychology of Music in Multimedia. Her research focuses on musical unity, music notation, and film music, and her primary instrument is piano. Peter Pfordresher is Professor of Psychology at SUNY Buffalo in New York USA, and an associate editor of the journal

Music Perception. He completed his Ph.D. in Psychology at the Ohio State University. His research interests include the role of auditory feedback in music performance and causes of inaccurate singing. He has experience in musical performance with piano, trumpet, and voice, as well as song writing. Rom Harré is Emeritus Fellow of Linacre College, Oxford University. Currently he is Distinguished Research Professor of Psychology at Georgetown University and, until recently, Director of the Centre for the Philosophy of the Natural and Social Sciences at the London School of Economics. He has performed in various amateur ensembles on clarinet and saron. He was awarded an APA Lifetime Achievement Award (Division 24) in 2010, and the APA's Theodore Sarbin Award in 2014

Sections of the book can be confusing for the average lay-person but I believe they do a good job of explaining things when necessary. It lays a fantastic foundation and provides for a thought-provoking read!

Great book, full of details in an accessible language. Well researched and written.

This book is a very good overview of music in psychology. Well written and researched. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in the field.

Psychology of Music: From Sound to Significance, by Siu-Lan Tan, Peter Pfordresher, and Rom Harré, is an excellent, and very clearly written, up-to-date review of the general standard field of music psychology. In other words, the book is a well-researched, well-documented, balanced, unbiased, and lucid introduction for the layperson on the physiological, neurological, and cultural nature and significance of music as an auditory form. In that way, I unreservedly give this book a full five stars: I'm in love with it as a methodically rational scholar. But, I'm deeply biased as a human being: I'm no Vulcan. While the book is journalistically admirable in its ultra-conservatively 'rational' refusal to jump to conclusions on the issues and on the empirical evidence, I, personally, believe that the musical sense, and, hence, the acoustic artifacts of that sense, is properly understood to be the proto-linguistic substance of what I call The Primal Logic. So, I personally 'demote' Psychology of Music: From Sound to Significance to four stars. For a hint of one of the few things that informs my bias, read the two of David Huron's 1999 UC Berkley Lectures that are at [...] and [...] (respectively, Lecture 3. Methodology: The New Empiricism: Systematic Musicology in a Postmodern Age; and Lecture 2. An Instinct for Music: Is Music an Evolutionary Adaptation?)

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