

REVIEWS

Star Cycles: The Timeless Wisdom of Pythagoras

Educational DVD

Produced by Pritchard School of Digital Arts and VyZ - music for movies

The Act of Learning

Star Cycles is the quintessential DVD for high school students that really does bring fun back to learning. It is an engaging feast for the eyes, ears and brain. There is clear relevance in studying the Ageless Wisdom from those seekers of Truth and Knowledge who have gone before us and even more so for those who have sought and found. Pythagoras is just such a man who understood and taught all about the diversity and unity of life on Earth and the Cosmos. His vivifying ideas are worthy of the attention the Pritchard School of Digital Arts brings forth in this dynamic and creative DVD for students.

As an educator, the ease of use and logistics of interfacing between the website and the video are a standout feature. The film is broken down into 10 segments or subsections which could each be used as a stand-alone lesson or supplemental to a larger unit. The combination of Movie and interfaced website makes for a powerful learning tool. There are also "Teacher Guides" that provide a solid overview of each part of the DVD with national curriculum guidelines and worksheets to print out for a class.

If you are like me and are always looking for a way to make Math, History, or any of the Sciences come alive in a new and exciting way for your students, you will love Star Cycles. Technology and curricula which assists the classroom teacher to ignite the spark of enthusiasm for learning has never been more in demand. Making the connection from isolated academic subjects such as Biology, History, Astronomy, and Math, to what is relevant to the lives of students and the world around them, is where real education begins. The interfaced website supports the classroom teacher after this connection and ignition has been made with a wealth of information that expands on the topic covered in each section of the film. The student Study Guide section also includes essay questions that can be answered online and emailed to their teacher. I was very impressed by the professional organization and presentation of this innovative, and educational DVD about "timeless wisdom." I have found a kindred soul in Pythagorus as he states "the most important act is the act of learning".

- John McComish, Berkshire County Educator

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Pritchard School of Digital Arts & VyZ - music for movies
DVD Soundtrack
2006

This ambitious and impressive DVD blends academic concepts, imaginative computer animation and diverse soundscapes into an engaging, cohesive whole. The brainchild of noted filmmaker and jazz-rock.com founder John Pritchard, the disc also features original music by his multimedia band, "VyZ," who are joined by fusion luminary and ex-Miles Davis keyboardist Adam Holzman. *Star Cycles* offers swirling, psychedelic images that ebb and flow in full synchronicity with the music. Eno-esque ambient voyages, acoustic jazz-driven explorations and buoyant fusion escapades form the core of the DVD's soundtrack.

Star Cycles is designed as an artistic introduction to heavyweight Pythagorean concepts including the fact that the electromagnetic cycles of the sun, moon and stars directly affect all life on earth, but don't let that scare you. It's also a highly unique release that works well as foreground and background entertainment. Whether you're simply interested in the intriguing audio-visual confluence or driven by the endless pool of knowledge bestowed on the world by Pythagoras, you'll find something of value here.

For hardcore academics out there, there is another version of the DVD that includes educational modules that detail the concepts this release hints at. For more information, visit www.starcyclesmovie.com.

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Star Cycles – A Multi-Dimensional Audio/Visual Experience

Star Cycles is a spectacular DVD of visual and sonic improvisations by VyZ that touches the viewer/listener in ways not usually associated with music we typically hear played by the usual suspects. Spontaneous improvisations from these exceptional musicians on the Star Cycles DVD are as artistically creative as any work of genius. The visual entertainment value alone is worth the price of admission, but this experience goes much farther in scope and diversity than first meets the senses. The concept behind the DVD comes from deep in the **Musical** universe, its **Mathematical** applications, and the **Mystical** aspects that

stem from the timeless wisdom of Pythagoras (the founding father of **Modern** music). (And those are just the “**M**’s”).

The Musicians are **Charlie Tokarz** – flute/saxophonist playing two Saxes at once with multi-layered electric effects has played with musicians such as [Ed Mann](#) of the Frank Zappa band, [Charles Neville](#) of the Neville Brothers, and guitar master, [Larry Coryell](#); **Rich Damone** – bassist using electronic technology and analog tube effects who has played with Sam Rivers, Archie Shepp, Dave Liebman, and Kenny Kirkland; **John Pritchard** – electro-acoustic drummer who plays midi drums and keyboards simultaneously has played with "Blood, Sweat & Tears" saxophonist, Fred Lipsius; Native American flute player and Grammy award nominee, Ken Littlehawk; and the drummers' drummer, Jack DeJohnette; **Adam Holzman** – legendary keyboardist who has played with Miles Davis, Wayne Shorter, Grover Washington, Wallace Roney, and his own band Brave New World whose latest Cd “Jazz Rocket Science” is a Jazz Rock masterpiece!

It’s difficult to talk about the music of VyZ on Star Cycles without some knowledge of Pythagoras and his contributions to the science of music. While the complete understanding of Pythagoras is subject to some debate, his musical influence is generally not questioned. Based on mathematics, he discovered and invented many of the musical standards still in use today. VyZ is keenly aware of the importance of the Pythagorean musical Tetraktys and the multi-dimensional meaning of the four levels it represents.

Star Cycles, while appealing to the ear and eye, is much more than a music video. It has an inescapable rhythmic vibe that sounds as good as it feels and a visual experience that’s well beyond ordinary. I highly recommend this DVD. It is an intense demonstration of the “...Geometry in the ringing of strings [and the] ...harmony in the spacing of spheres” (Pythagoras 575 – 480 BC)

By Rick Calic

HYPERLINK "http://www.jazzrockworld.com" www.jazzrockworld.com