

*Scintillating* baroque..



.. Serious **fun**



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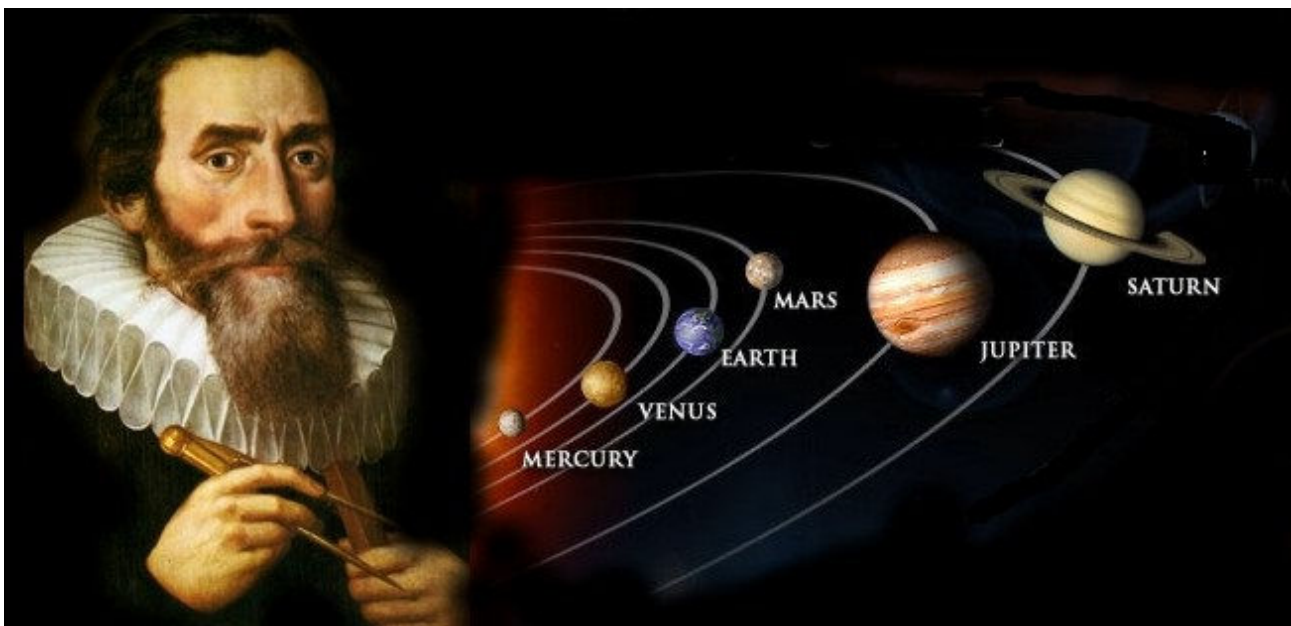
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Action! Action! Action!

## Bach & Friends VI

### “The Harmony of the World” – The Six Brandenburg Concertos



What is the underlying meaning of Bach’s ‘Six Concertos for Many Instruments’, presented to the Margrave of Brandenburg in 1721? Like an orator’s speech or a poet’s verse, a baroque composition is a piece of rhetoric, carefully designed to delight, persuade and move the listener’s emotions with a combination of logic and passion.

It is certain that Johann Sebastian was fascinated by number symbolism, and 6 often symbolised the six days of creation, the seventh day being the day of rest. Musicians in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century enjoyed the contrasts between national styles: French, Italian, German and (in these concertos) even Polish. Scholars might relish references to classical mythology and Lutheran doctrine.

But Baroque philosophy links music composed and performed on earth to the ‘Music of the Spheres’, the perfect harmony created by the movement of heavens. The German mathematician and astronomer Johannes Kepler linked the orbits of the six known planets to musical tones and modes, and challenged composers to create the music that would best express the mathematics of his book, the ‘Harmony of the World’. Is Bach’s work a musical map of the cosmos?

