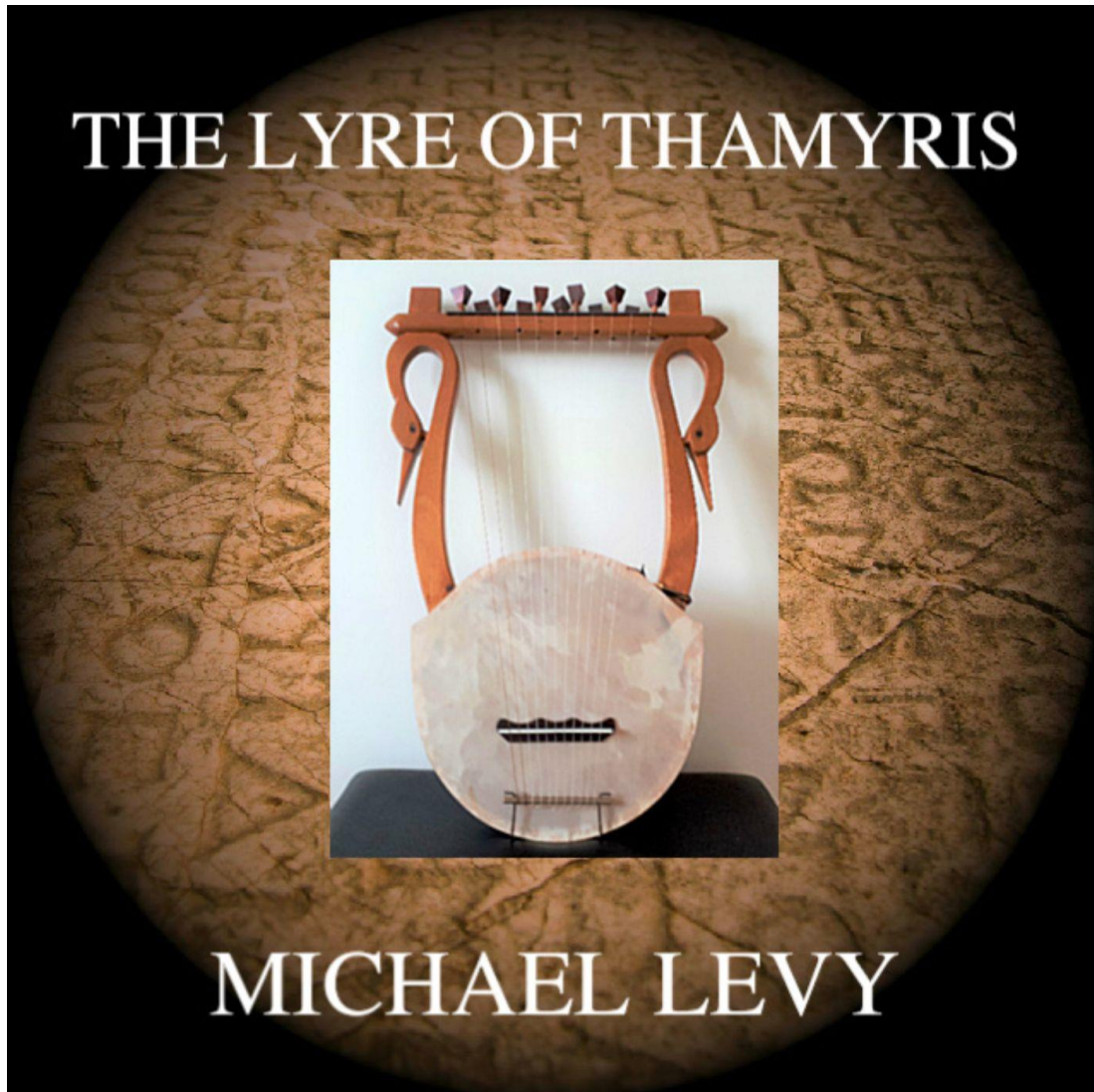


# THE LYRE OF THAMYRIS



In Greek mythology, Thamyris (Greek: Θάμυρις, Thámuris), son of Philammon and the nymph Argiope, was a Thracian singer who was so proud of his skill that he boasted he could out sing the Muses. He competed against them and lost - as punishment for his presumption they blinded him, and took away his ability to make poetry and to play the lyre. The outline of the story is told in the Iliad.

This piece attempts to evoke the particularly poignant feel of this gem of haunting ancient Greek mythology, in the intense and [sorrowful ancient Greek Hypodorian Mode](#), in the clear focus of musical intervals authentically tuned in [geometrically pure just intonation](#).

The Hypodorian mode was misnamed in the Middle Ages, the “Aeolian Mode”. The names of musical modes in use today, (e.g. Dorian, Mixolydian etc.) although having the same names as the original Greek musical modes, were actually misnamed during the Middle Ages!

Apparently, the Greeks counted intervals from top to bottom. When medieval ecclesiastical scholars tried to interpret the ancient texts, *they counted from bottom to top, jumbling the information*. The misnamed medieval modes are only distinguished by the ancient Greek modes of the same name, by being labelled “Church Modes”. It was due to a misinterpretation of the Latin texts of [Boethius](#), that medieval modes were given these wrong Greek names.

The original ancient Greek Hypodorian Mode has the equivalent intervals as A-A on the white notes of the piano. This intense and distinctively mournful mode, sometimes referred to as the ‘natural minor’, is actually the basis of all the modern minor scales we now use.

The piece features the rather appropriately mythical-looking ["Lyre of Thamyris", imaginatively recreated in modern Greece, by Luthieros](#)

