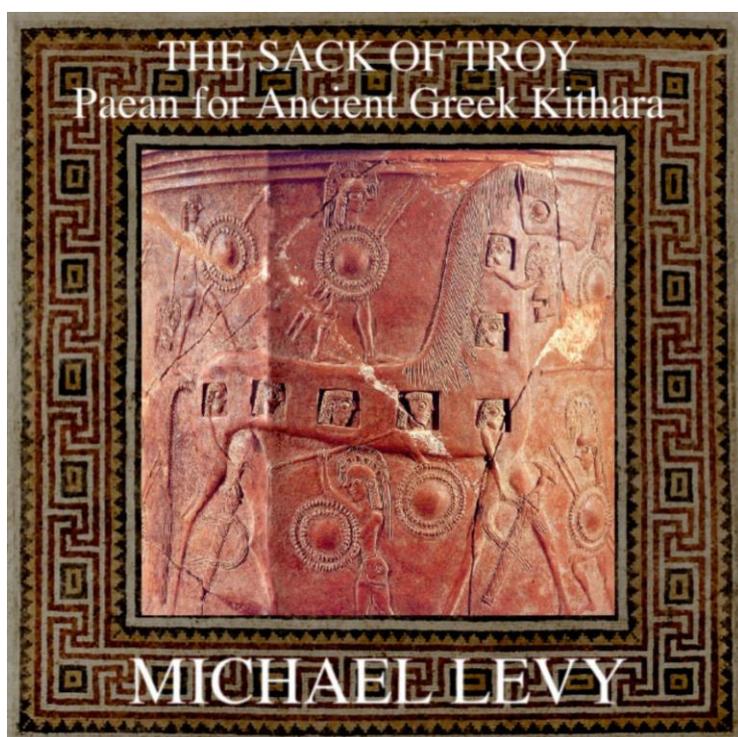


# THE SACK OF TROY: PAEAN FOR ANCIENT GREEK KITHARA

This piece is an improvisation for replica ancient Greek kithara, (the large wooden lyre once played by the professional musicians of ancient Greece) in the favourite ancient Greek mode of Plato himself; the ancient Greek Dorian Mode, which he considered the most 'manly' and noble of the musical modes, capable even of inspiring bravery in battle.



In ancient Greek Classical literature, there was a lost ancient Greek epic by the title of "[The Sack of Troy](#)" - which was one of the Epic Cycle, which told the entire history of the Trojan War in epic verse. In creating this this new composition for replica ancient Greek kithara, it was therefore my intention to evoke the sort of ancient Greek '[paeon](#)' style melody (an ancient Greek hymn of thanksgiving) to which that lost epic of ancient Greece could have been recited!

The [kithara](#) was the large wooden lyre favoured by the professional musicians of ancient Greece:



The replica kithara featured in this single, is the [‘Kithara of the Golden Age’](#), handmade in modern Greece by [Luthieros](#). This wonderfully recreated kithara even features [the highly advanced 2,500 year old vibrato mechanism](#), of which there is ample evidence from all the illustrations we have of the original ancient Greek kithara. As can be seen in the image above, all these illustrations clearly show what appear to be inverted ‘U’ shaped springs beneath the yoke and some sort of hinge mechanism at the top of the arms where the yoke sits, with large discs either side of the yoke and also vertical levers at either side rising from the yoke.

In the recreated model of the kithara, whenever light lateral movement is applied to either the vertical levers or discs, the wooden springs allow lateral movement of the yoke and strings, which creates a vibrato effect eerily similar to that of the ‘whammy bar’ of a modern Fender electric guitar!



Regarding the ancient Greek Dorian Mode, this was misnamed the 'Phrygian' mode in the Middle Ages. The intensely introspective ancient Greek Dorian mode is the equivalent intervals as E-E on the white notes of the piano. I also use authentically pure intervals tuned in [just intonation](#).

In Plato's ["The Republic", Book III \(398-403\)](#), in a classic philosophical dialogue of argument and counter-argument between the characters in this passage, the text is as follows:

*"The harmonies which you mean are the mixed or tenor Lydian, and the full-toned or bass Lydian, and such-like.*

*These then, I said, must be banished; even to women who have a character to maintain they are of no use, and much less to men.*

*Certainly.*

*In the next place, drunkenness and softness and indolence are utterly unbecoming the character of our guardians.*

*Utterly unbecoming?*

*And which are the soft and convivial harmonies?*

*The Ionian, he replied, and some of the Lydian which are termed "relaxed".*

*Well, and are these of any use for warlike men?*

*Quite the reverse, he replied; and if so the Dorian and the Phrygian are the only ones which you have left."*

This 'war-like' masculine quality of the ancient Greek Dorian Mode, was therefore perfect for putting together this composition, which attempts to evoke the battles and bravery of the legendary [Siege of Troy](#). In ancient Greek mythology, the **Trojan War** was waged against the city of [Troy](#) by the Achaeans (Greeks) after Paris of Troy took Helen from her husband Menelaus, king of Sparta. The war is one of the most important events in Greek mythology and has been narrated through many works of Greek literature, most notably through Homer's [Iliad](#).

