

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910454664503321
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Titolo	Absolute music and the construction of meaning / / Daniel K.L. Chua [[electronic resource]]
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cambridge : , : Cambridge University Press, , 1999
ISBN	1-107-11569-8 0-511-01918-1 1-280-42029-4 0-511-17575-2 0-511-15634-0 0-511-32540-1 0-511-48169-1 0-511-05106-9
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (xii, 314 pages) : digital, PDF file(s)
Collana	New perspectives in music history and criticism ; ; 4
Disciplina	781.1/7
Soggetti	Absolute music Music - Philosophy and aesthetics
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Title from publisher's bibliographic system (viewed on 05 Oct 2015).
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references and index.
Nota di contenuto	Cover; Half-title; Series-title; Title; Copyright; CONTENTS; ILLUSTRATIONS; ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS; ON THE PREFACE; PART 1 The Garden of Eden; PART 2 The Fruit of Knowledge; PART 3 The Tower of Babel; BIBLIOGRAPHY; INDEX
Sommario/riassunto	This book is born out of two contradictions: first, it explores the making of meaning in a musical form that was made to lose its meaning at the turn of the nineteenth century; secondly, it is a history of a music that claims to have no history - absolute music. The book therefore writes against that notion of absolute music which tends to be the paradigm for most musicological and analytical studies. It is concerned not so much with what music is, but with why and how meaning is constructed in instrumental music and what structures of knowledge need to be in place for such meaning to exist. From the thought of Vincenzo Galilei to that of Theodore Adorno, Daniel Chua

suggests that instrumental music has always been a critical and negative force in modernity, even with its nineteenth-century apotheosis as 'absolute music'.
