



The Zen of Magic Squares, Circles and Stars: An Exhibition of Surprising Structures Across Dimensions (Paperback)

By Clifford A. Pickover

Princeton University Press, United States, 2004. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 230 x 154 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Humanity's love affair with mathematics and mysticism reached a critical juncture, legend has it, on the back of a turtle in ancient China. As Clifford Pickover briefly recounts in this enthralling book, the most comprehensive in decades on magic squares, Emperor Yu was supposedly strolling along the Yellow River one day around 2200 B.C. when he spotted the creature: its shell had a series of dots within squares. To Yu's amazement, each row of squares contained fifteen dots, as did the columns and diagonals. When he added any two cells opposite along a line through the center square, like 2 and 8, he always arrived at 10. The turtle, unwitting inspirer of the Yu square, went on to a life of courtly comfort and fame. Pickover explains why Chinese emperors, Babylonian astrologer-priests, prehistoric cave people in France, and ancient Mayans of the Yucatan were convinced that magic squares--arrays filled with numbers or letters in certain arrangements--held the secret of the universe. Since the dawn of civilization, he writes, humans have invoked such patterns to ward off evil and...



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