

# THE MATHEMATICAL ASSOCIATION OF VICTORIA

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## The World of Mathematics 2005: *Mathematics, Music and Magic*

A Free Public Lecture Series at Melbourne Museum.  
Presented by The Mathematical Association of Victoria in  
association with [The Age](#).

THE  AGE

Each year the MAV presents a series of lectures delivered by Drs Burkard Polster and Marty Ross examining mathematical issues in an accessible and entertaining way. This year the series promises to be especially interesting with mathematical explorations of ideas as diverse as the Da Vinci Code" through to the tuning of harpsichords.

You will find the [lecture details and a booking form for 2006 here](#).

The details for the 2005 Lecture Series were:

**VENUE:** The Age Theatre, Melbourne Museum  
Carlton Gardens, Carlton, Melbourne  
Melway reference: 2B J10



**COST:** Free. *Note: teachers attending the public lectures can also visit the rest of the museum free-of-charge*  
Bookings recommended. [Register online](#).

### Sunday, 31 July 2005 Quasimodo's Cipher

Time: 10.15am to 11.15am

Lecturer: Dr Burkard Polster

*I thought to see the fairies in the fields, but I saw only the evil elephants with their black backs. Woe! How that sight awed me! The elves danced all around and about while I heard voices calling clearly....*

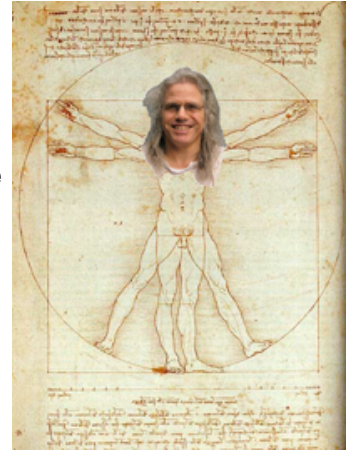
Puzzled? Curious? Come and join in the chase for the key to this cipher message in the mathematical music of bells, learn about the ancient art of ringing the changes, and find out what all this has to do with juggling.

### Sunday, 14 August 2005 *The Da Vinci Code* and other mathematical nonsense

Time: 10.15am to 11.15am

Lecturer: Dr Marty Ross

Mathematics occasionally makes its way into popular culture, usually in a manner which is clumsy, cliched, or just plain silly. Sadly, the blockbuster *The Da Vinci Code* offers no exception. We shall examine the mathematics in *The Da Vinci Code*, and in other popular novels and movies, and we shall consider why the writers are so careless and how they get away with it. In keeping with the Museum's Egyptian theme, we'll also make mention of the wonders of pyramidology.



## Sunday, 4 September 2005 The Mathematics of Magic and Miracles

Time: 10.15am to 11.15am

Lecturer: Dr Burkard Polster

In this mathematical magic show, Melbourne's favourite MatheMagician will entertain and amaze you with some real magic, let you in on the maths underlying some famous magic tricks, and give mathematical explanations for some of the most ancient and perplexing miracles.



## Sunday, 9 October 2005 Strange harmonies: the mathematics of music

Time: 10.15am to 11.15am

Lecturer: Dr Marty Ross

The association of music and mathematics is over 2500 years old, dating (at least) to Pythagoras's beautiful theory of harmony. This theory, though very simple, leads almost immediately to intriguing and difficult questions. We shall consider some of the strange and brilliant ideas to which it has given birth: why it is impossible to tune a harpsichord; what harmony can tell you about the orbits of the planets; how you can try to hear the shape of a drum; and why Australians design better pianos.

### About the Lecturers:

Drs Burkard Polster and Marty Ross entertain and educate budding and experienced mathematicians alike with their exciting brand of fun, information and, above all, ideas.

*"These really are world class public lectures. And to make them work for such a diverse audience is a splendid achievement."*

Dr Max Stephens, MAV Immediate Past President.

**Burkard Polster** is a Logan Research Fellow, and Monash University's resident mathematical juggler, origami expert, bubble-master, shoelace charmer, and Count Count impersonator. When he is not doing fun mathematics he has fun investigating perfect mathematical universes..

**Marty Ross** is a mathematical nomad. After studying at ANU and Stanford University, he returned to his home town of Melbourne, via Texas, Bendigo, and Tasmania. His research is in geometric analysis (the use of geometry to study naturally occurring phenomena), but he spends a lot of time thinking up jokes to slip into lectures.

Read what Burkard and Marty lectured about in [2004](#).

For details of MAV's professional development activities, please go to <http://www.mav.vic.edu.au/pd/>.

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