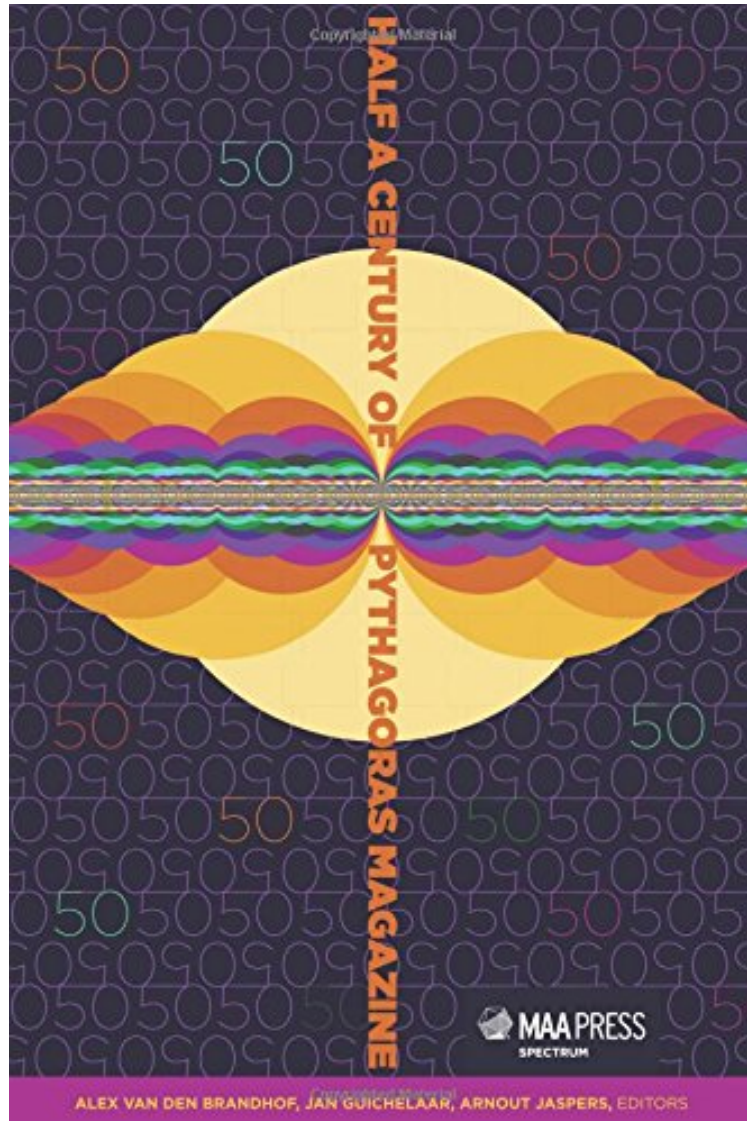


[Ebook pdf] Half a Century of Pythagoras Magazine (Spectrum)

Half a Century of Pythagoras Magazine (Spectrum)

Alex van den Brandhof, Jan Guichelaar, Arnout Jaspers
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Alex van den Brandhof, Jan Guichelaar, Arnout Jaspers : Half a Century of Pythagoras Magazine (Spectrum) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Half a Century of Pythagoras Magazine (Spectrum):

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy Kwok Ka KeungGood!

Half a Century of Pythagoras Magazine is a selection of the best and most inspiring articles from this Dutch magazine

for recreational mathematics. Founded in 1961 and still thriving today, Pythagoras has given generations of high school students in the Netherlands a perspective on the many branches of mathematics that are not taught in schools. The book contains a mix of easy, yet original puzzles, more challenging and at least as original problems, as well as playful introductions to a plethora of subjects in algebra, geometry, topology, number theory and more. Concepts like the sudoku and the magic square are given a whole new dimension. One of the first editors was a personal friend of world famous Dutch graphic artist Maurits Escher, whose 'impossible objects' have been a recurring subject over the years. Articles about his work are part of a special section on 'Mathematics and Art'. While many books on recreational mathematics rely heavily on 'folklore', a reservoir of ancient riddles and games that are being recycled over and over again, most of the puzzles and problems in Half a Century of Pythagoras Magazine are original, invented for this magazine by Pythagoras' many editors and authors over the years. Some are no more than cute little brainteasers which can be solved in a minute, others touch on profound mathematics and can keep the reader entranced indefinitely. Smart high school students and anyone else with a sharp and inquisitive mind will find in this book a treasure trove which is rich enough to keep his or her mind engaged for many weeks and months.

Half a Century of Pythagoras Magazine is a compilation of problems and articles found in the Dutch magazine established in 1960. The first version of this book was published in 2011 and the current is the English translation. Pythagoras is intended for a high school audience, but the cleverness of the puzzles and the historical details give a somewhat broader appeal for this book. The book is divided into seven chapters, including a solution set in Chapter 7. The first and sixth chapters contain brainteasers and so-called "Dionigmas," names after the Dutch mathematician who created these puzzles, Dion Gijswijt. The brainteasers found in Chapter 1 are short puzzles, explained quickly with two to three sentences and often with small illustrations. These puzzles are quite good for exercising creativity, as they are designed to have simple, elegant solutions that do not require advanced mathematics. The level of difficulty varies, but for most experienced mathematicians the puzzle would provide only a short diversion. Similar to the brainteasers, Dionigmas are mathematical puzzles meant to be solved using basic techniques and ingenuity. The puzzles and their solutions tend to be slightly longer than those in the first chapter and can often feel paradoxical at first. For example, in the tradition of classical dissection problems, the third Dionigma, called Cut and Paste, directs the reader to "Cut both figures into two pieces and rearrange the four pieces to form a square." One appeal of the book for a student or novice mathematician is that the reader can start directly into these articles with very little mathematical background. But the articles have other strengths. The historical details provide a wonderful frame of reference for the reader and give a depth of human interest to the mathematics. Numerous mathematicians, artists, and craftsmen are discussed in conjunction with their mathematical interests. Overall, Half a Century of Pythagoras Magazine is very readable and appropriate for students and recreational puzzlers as well as for teachers looking for interesting historical examples for the classroom. The English translation is well done and just enough background is provided to allow readers to understand the problems without referring to external sources. --Tricia Muldoon Brown, MAA sAbout the AuthorAlex van den Brandhof is a science writer and mathematics teacher. Jan Guichelaar is a retired theoretical physicist who remains active in the history of science. Arnout Jaspers is a freelance science writer.