THE TALKING DRUM

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Network for promoting Intercultural Education through Music (NETIEM)
Pan-African Society of Musical Arts Education (PASMAE)
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Editorial

The *Talking Drum* has cause to celebrate. Some local readers will recall that only seventeen years ago (1985) the first national music educators' conference was held at the University of Natal in Durban. This conference aimed at taking a broad and critical look at the contemporary music education scene during those very difficult times. In my opening address one point made was that the musics of South Africa are diverse and substantial, but they remain largely untapped as sources of material for school and college use. During the 1980s and 1990s only a very few delegates from Africa were able to attend the biennial International Society Music for Educators (ISME) Conferences around the world. Repeatedly those few expressed concern that music-making from Africa was seldom found in schools throughout Africa. This year at ISME's conference (2002) in Norway participation from Africa increased. Because Norway realizes that African delegates are financially unable to attend overseas conferences, and that they make a profound difference when present, funds were made available for them to travel to Norway. Present were representatives of the newly formed Pan-African Society for Musical Arts Education (PASMAE), and they distributed materials for music education out of Africa. They also advertised their third conference to be held in Kenya in 2003. Further they revealed that plans are underway to publish a book which includes "African-sensitive research based resource material". This is cause for celebration.

The Talking Drum also has cause for concern. Know that demand for the publication is increasing, that copies taken to the ISME conference in Norway were sold out, and that positive comments continue. The latest from a teacher in Gauteng: "I have spent the last few weeks reading *The Talking Drum*....I can't tell you how interesting I find these". The concern – the problem – is that contributions are difficult to find. In September I attended the Ethnomusicology Conference at the International Library of African Music in Grahamstown to appeal to delegates to submit material. The only suggestion was that *The Talking Drum* becomes a journal so that academics will receive recognition and funds for their contributions. My reluctance to move in this direction is because many readers will not be able to afford or even want to read a more academic journal. The newsletter provides hands-on materials which teachers in rural areas and elsewhere use.

Apart from the two previous issues, much of the material over the past ten years has come from Jaco Kruger at Potchestroom University and from staff, students and associates of the School of Music at the University of Natal in Durban. This issue features the work of Yolisa Nompula, graduate of UND, and Jeff Robinson and Charlene May currently at UND. Where is the willingness to share materials on the part of academics involved in research and students studying at the many other universities and colleges in South Africa?

It is time to take stock. Funds are still available for the next issue. Utilising the internet is a possibility, and this will save on the high cost of postage for readers overseas. Will materials, however, be forthcoming? You are urged to submit materials and, if you are working with students, encourage and assist them to contribute. Finally, if you wish to remain on the mailing list, please complete and return the form "Taking Stock..." p. 20 by April 2003.

A good New Year to all!

Elizabeth Oehrle

Pan-African Society for Musical Arts Education (PASMAE)

Caroline van Niekerk, PASMAE Secretary-General, University of Pretoria

Glimpses of Music in Africa – PASMAE's double CD and accompanying video are available for sale, and provide wonderful teaching material, all in one. Some of the finest artists in Africa are featured, all of whom performed at the PASMAE Benefit concert held at UCT in April this year. *(See Resources p.18)*

A special international launch of *Glimpses* took place at the ISME conference in Bergen, with the proceedings enhanced by sparkling wine, specially donated to PASMAE by Distell Corporation. Order your copies now – for yourself and others as gifts. And if you can assist us by selling copies in your area, we would be most grateful.

A further bonus also lies ahead – Dr Anri Herbst, our Director of Resource Materials, Prof Meki Nzewi, our President and the eminent Ghanaian Prof Kofi Agawu from Princeton University are going to edit a book to supplement the CDs and video. Watch this space – many scholars have already been approached to collaborate, and a prestigious international publishing house has expressed interest in publishing the book.

PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE: www.chec.ac.za/pasmae. PASMAE is really surging ahead – we have use of *The Talking Drum*, we have a website and we now have another exciting development to announce: PASMAE now also has an annual Festival!

PASMAE has linked with the ICMF – International Classical Music Festival. The ICMF has already been held twice in South Africa (2001 and 2002). Henceforth it will be seen as strengthening PASMAE's performing arm, while PASMAE will in turn strengthen the educational arm and focus of the ICMF.

Never before have so many Africans been present at the "national meetings", for which ISME always allocates time slots in their conference programmes. In our case, we turned the two National meetings into Continental meetings, and this ISME conference in Bergen gave delegates from different African countries the opportunity to meet each other for the first time, in far away Norway.

PASMAE at ISME

Due to a large, last-minute donation received from NORAD by PASMAE, to ensure greater African participation at the 2002 ISME biennial conference in Bergen, Norway, it was possible for PASMAE to make an impact such as never before at an ISME conference. Deciding how to spend the money most accountably required much thought. The lucky beneficiaries were mostly our MAT cell coordinators – individuals who had already done a big job for PASMAE, and at virtually no financial reward. Then they got lucky!! MAT cells already exist in Botswana, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa (2), Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. But as we expand our reach in Africa, more MAT cells will be necessary. Why don't you offer your services? Contact the Secretary-General on caroline@mweb.co.za.

PASMAE 2003 CONFERENCE IN KENYA

Prepare yourselves for a really special working conference in July next year! Our host will be Dr Hellen Agak, Head of the Music Department at the University of Maseno, Kenya — dragak@swiftkisumu.com

This will also be an ISME Regional Conference – the first such conference to be held in Africa. It will be particularly special as the founding of ISME, in July 1953, will be celebrated in Africa on the equator!! How wonderfully symbolic: We will be able to stand with one foot in the Southern and one foot in the Northern Hemisphere, on the day when the International Society for Music Education started, fifty years ago.

The money at our disposal did not make it possible for most African delegates to go on any one of the expensive scheduled outings in the middle of the conference week. But the President organised a fun pizza party for us all, enhanced by some of the sparkling wine donated by Distell. We all enjoyed ourselves in the courtyard of the Grieg Academy, and were joined by several other passing ISME delegates, who even sang and danced well-known African favourites with us.

GET INVOLVED WITH PASMAE!

ISME uses the slogan "ISME is me", indicating that the Society is as strong as its members and their contributions. The same applies to PASMAE.
What can you do?

- Make sure that your details are on our database, and spread the word about PASMAE to as many others as possible.
- Collect indigenous material (songs, dances, instruments, biographies of local master musicians), on paper/ video/audiocassette, and make it available to PASMAE and *The Talking Drum*.
- Offer to start up a MAT cell.
- Offer to translate PASMAE materials into yet another language.
- Make sure to come to Kenya in July 2003.
- Don't wait to hear that you've been awarded sponsorship – do something from your side first, and the sponsorship might follow: ask those who were funded to go to Bergen at the last minute!

WHAT ARE MAT CELLS?

These are Musical Arts Education Action Teams. We already have very insightful reports from ten such cells. If you are interested, the PASMAE Executive will supply you with guidelines as to how to start up such a cell, and write up your experiences.

PASMAE AND LANGUAGES IN AFRICA

PASMAE is anxious to be fully representative of all regions of Africa. But we need your help to achieve this, and especially to reach out to Francophone Africa. We already have our PASMAE brochures available in English, French, German, Portuguese and Kiswahili. Who of you are good translators?

NEWSFLASHES!

- The PASMAE President, Prof Meki Nzewi, was elected in Bergen to the ISME International Board of Directors.
- The PASMAE Secretary-General, Prof Caroline van Niekerk, has been invited by ISME to chair a standing commission on conference organisation. This is largely because of the success of the ISME 1998 Conference held in Pretoria. Even in Bergen this year in August, four years later, delegates were still talking about their 'African experience' as the best conference in the Society's history.
- PASMAE Conference Proceedings from Lusaka in 2001 are available for sale at only R50 a copy. See how other African music educators have got their work published. Then write something yourself which you can hopefully see in print after the Kenya 2003 Conference.

Xhosa Children's Songs

© Yolisa Nompula, University of the Transkei

The songs are transcribed using Andrew Tracey's designed notation.

The rhythms have been transcribed according to pulses, which form cycles of twenty-four or less.

The two numbers at the beginning of each song (e.g. 4x6) show the number of beats per cycle (4) and the number of pulses in a beat (6).
For example, in the song *Unolongo* 4 beats per cycle is indicated by **x** appearing 8 times in this score; 6 pulses in a beat is indicated by the first 6 vertical lines (e.g. **IIIIII**)

UNOLONGO

Game Song (collected by Nompula 1988)

Duration of the lesson: 40 minutes

Objectives

- The children will demonstrate the correct rhythms by clapping and drumming.
- The children will experience singing in a group.
- The children will experience singing in correct pitch.

Introduction

1. The children should clap and drum each beat (8 beats).
2. The children clap rhythms of the following phrases after the teacher has demonstrated (see music).
   jiha, yimba
   jihaha, jihahaha

Procedures

1. The teacher recites the words of the song while the children listen and imitate.
2. The teacher sings the song alone while the children listen.
3. The teacher sings line by line while the children imitate until the children know the song.
4. The children are given an opportunity to practice in groups.
5. Within the groups the children interpret the song by imitating the workers digging or chopping wood.
6. The teacher supervises and makes sure that the children pronounce the words correctly.

Conclusion

1. The groups come together and perform, while the teacher evaluates them.
2. The children are also given an opportunity to evaluate themselves.

Origin

This is a working song.
Unolongo means a road worker.

There are a variety of domestic songs used to accompany domestic activities, for example, grinding corn or pounding corn or chopping wood or digging.

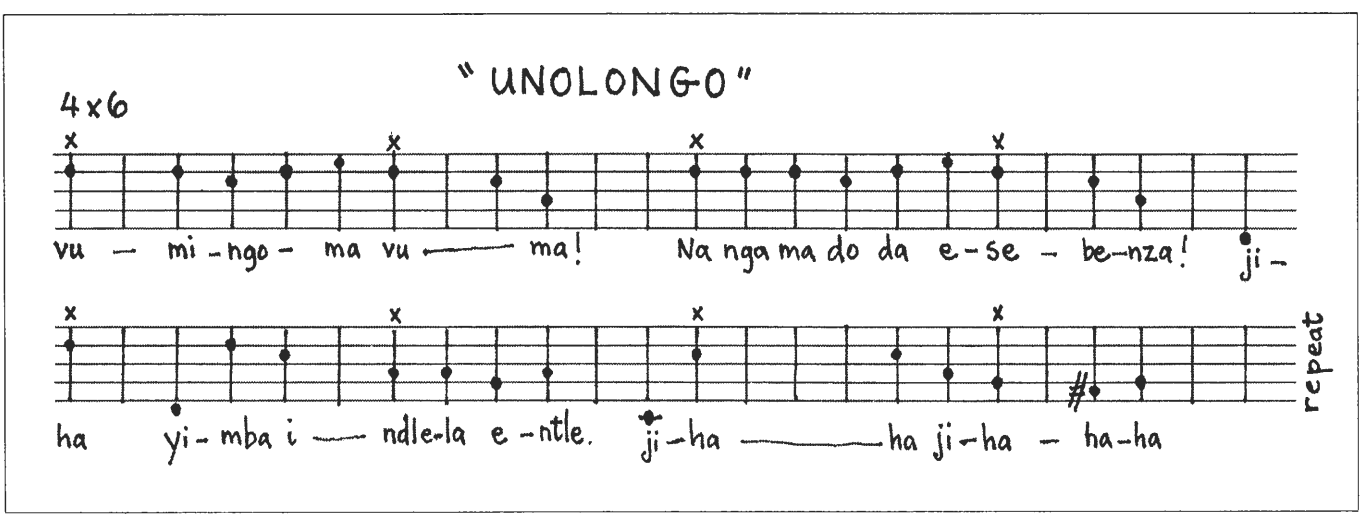
The music in these situations alleviates fatigue as it happens in working groups of people singing working songs.

Originally the song *Unolongo* was sung by a group of road workers to keep rhythm and alleviate fatigue.

The children sing the song pretending that they are digging/ chopping to maintain rhythm and speed.

Text and Translation

Vum'ingoma, vuma!
Sing a song, sing!
Nangamadoda esebenza!
Here are men working!
Jiha yimba indlela entle.
Working on a beautiful road.
Jiha-ha jiha-haha
(meaningless consonants to keep rhythm)



IMBONGOLO

Game Song (collected by Nompula 1988)

Duration of the lesson: 40 minutes

Objectives

- The children will demonstrate the correct rhythms by clapping and drumming.
- The children will learn to keep correct pitch.

Introduction

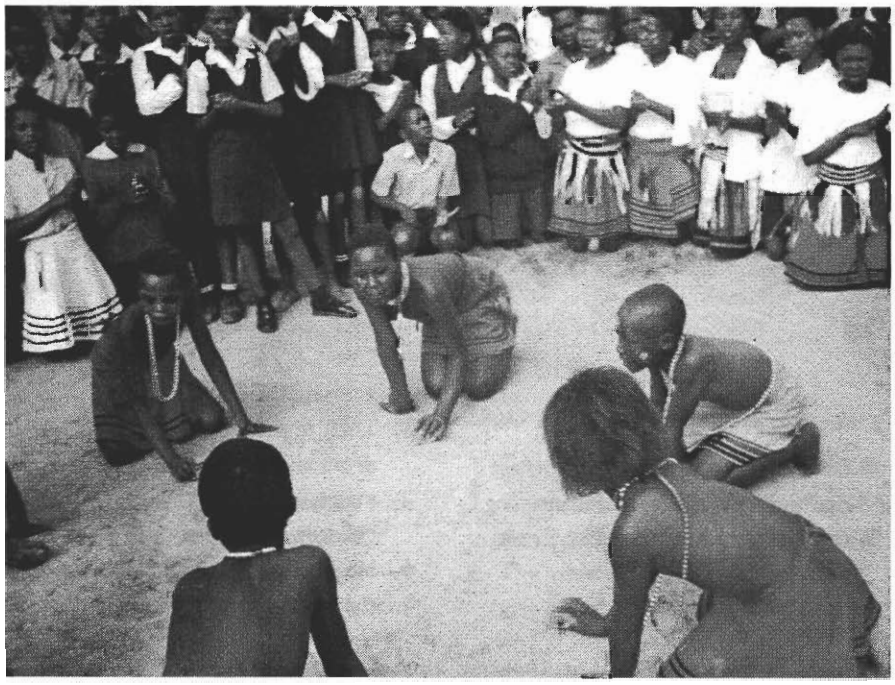
1. The teacher introduces the game to the class.
2. Clap simple rhythms of the song.

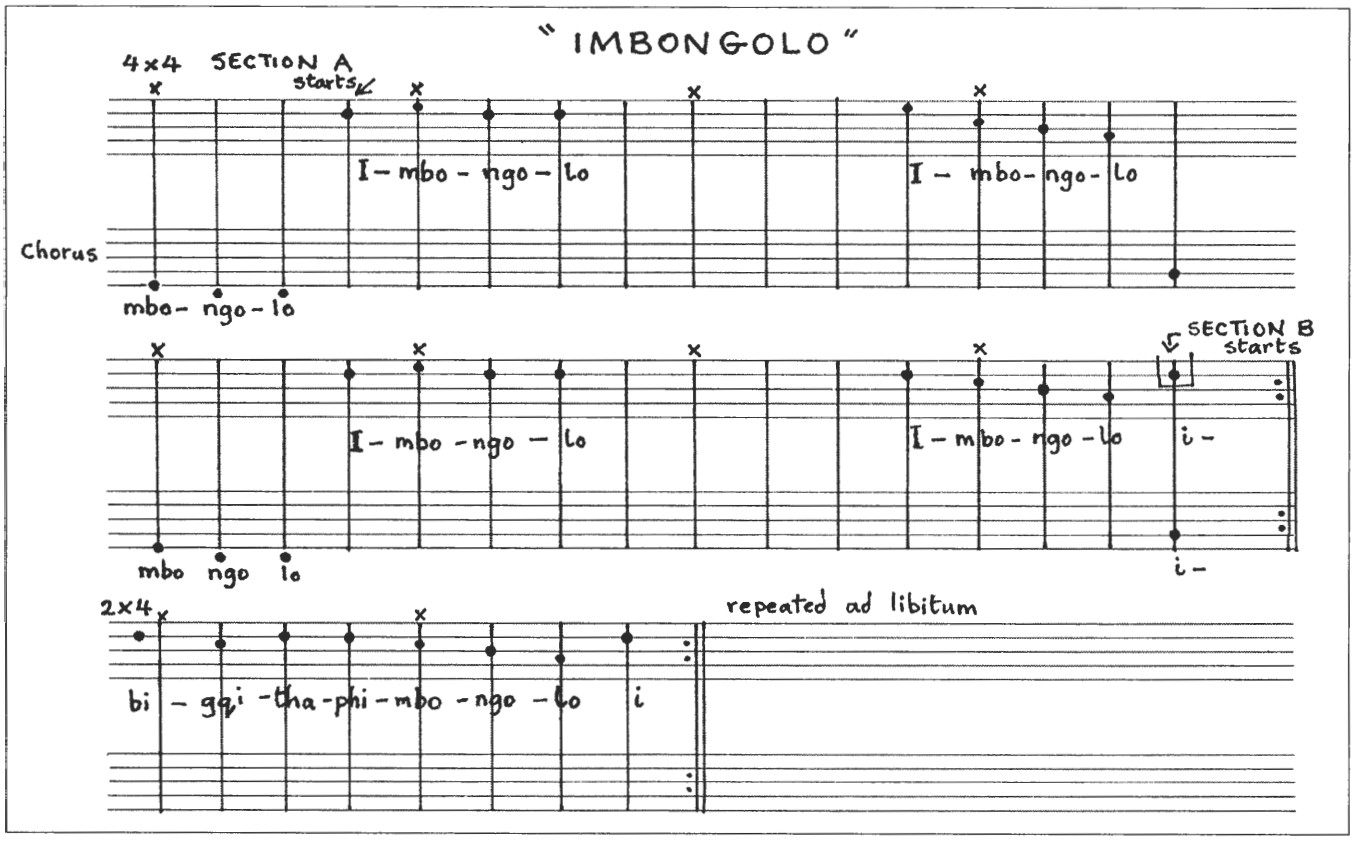
Procedures

1. The teacher recites the words of the song while the children listen and imitate.
2. The teacher sings the top line from beginning to the end while the children listen and imitate.
3. The teacher then sings the chorus and children imitate.
4. The teacher introduces the game and also supplies the children with small stones which are going to be used in the game.
5. The children kneel on the floor with their stones forming one circle.
6. The teacher introduces the rhythm of the A section of the song by tapping the stone on the floor on the **x**'s while the children imitate.
7. Then she/he introduces section B of the song passing the stone to the next participant and continue tapping on the **x**'s.
8. The actual game may start when the children know the song and understand the game.
9. The game is repeated until there is a winner.

Conclusion

1. The children are given an opportunity to perform in groups.





2. Each group appoints its own leader who supervises the smooth running of the game and directs it.
3. The winners from each group are announced and may be given gifts.

Origin

This song is a stone-passing game, divided into 2 sections (A&B)
A group of children sit on the floor in a circle.

Each child marks his/her stone to be able to identify it.

The children tap the stones on the floor on the **x**'s to maintain the rhythm of A section of the song.

Then the children pick up and pass their stones around maintaining the rhythm and speed of B section by tapping on the floor on the **x**'s.

The B section of the song is repeated as many times depending on the leader.

The exciting part of the game is in this B section of the song where each participant must maintain rhythm and smooth passing of the stone to the next so that not more than one stone piles in front of any participant.

The child with more than one stone will be excluded from the game.

Then the song starts from the beginning.

The game stops when there is one participant left as a winner of the game.

Text and Translation

Imbongolo, imbongolo.
The donkey, the donkey.
Ibigqithaph'imbongolo.
The donkey has gone past here.

SOMAGWAZA

Xhosa ceremonial song sung as *igwija* by a group of boys (collected by Nompula 1988)

Duration of the lesson: 40 minutes

Objectives

- The children will learn the correct rhythms by clapping and drumming.
- The children will maintain correct pitch.

Introduction

1. Introduce melodic phrases: *Somagwaza* and *yo-hoho*
2. Clap the rhythms of the above phrases.

Procedures

1. The teacher recites the words of the song while the children listen and imitate.
2. The teacher sings the song alone while the children listen.
3. The teacher then sings line by line while the children imitate.
4. Step 3 is repeated until the children know the song.
5. Then the teacher introduces the drum and hand clapping on the **x** to maintain the rhythm while the children sing the song.
6. He /she allows the children to play the rhythm on the drum.

Conclusion

1. The children are given an opportunity to practice the song in small groups, while the teacher supervises.
2. Each group may introduce improvised movement steps.
3. The groups perform for each other.
4. The teacher may involve the children in evaluating the groups.

Origin

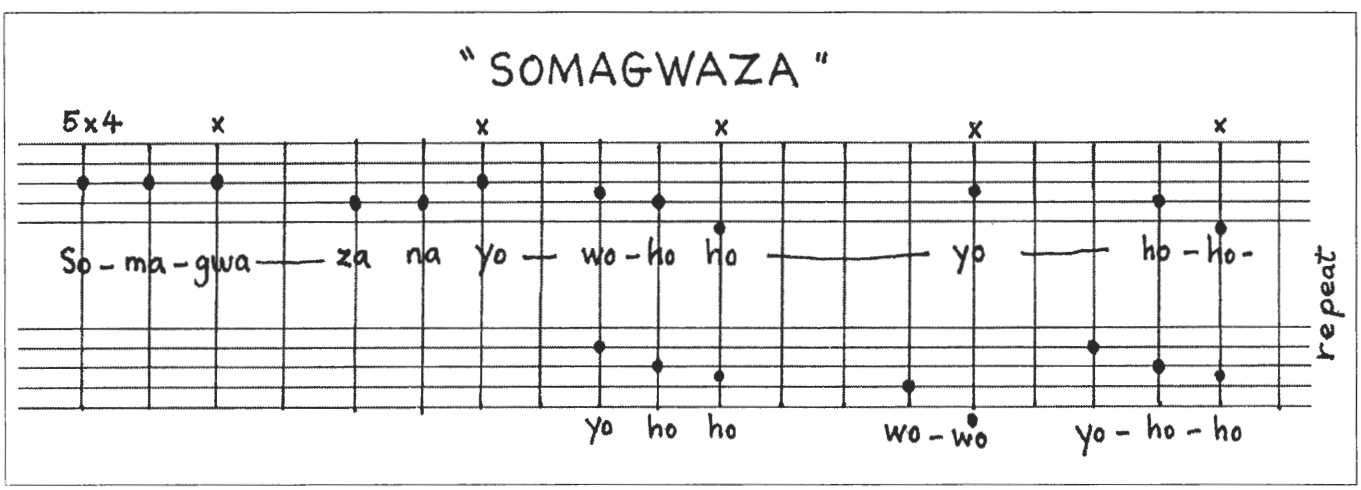
Children copy some songs from adults and modify them for their need such as walking/dancing/playing.

For example, *Somagwaza* is a Xhosa ceremonial song. It is customarily performed in special ceremonies, particularly during initiation and the children learn it in the process.

In some cases a group of children walk or run together to the veld/shop/school and back singing these songs (*amagwija*).

The group becomes involved in the music-making to the extent that distant walking or running becomes secondary.

Somagwaza for example in my research is one of the songs that boys sang as *igwija* when walking up hills looking for missing cattle.



BABEMZONDA

Dance Song (Mampondomiseni JS School, collected by Nompula 1995)

Duration of the lesson: 40 minutes

Objectives

- The children will demonstrate the correct rhythms by clapping and drumming.
- The children will learn how to sing in two-parts.
- The children will demonstrate singing in pitch.
- The children will maintain correct rhythm.

Introduction

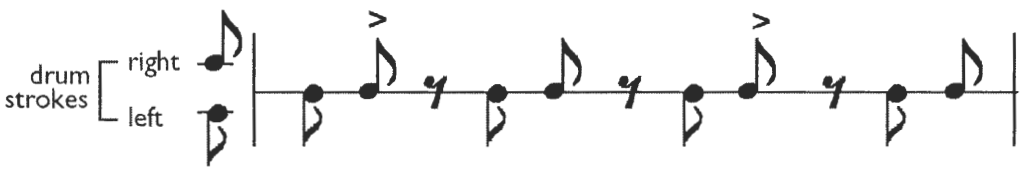
1. The teacher tells the historical background of the song.
2. Melodic phrases from the song such as: *babemzo-nda* are introduced.
3. Clap the rhythms of the phrases.

Procedures

1. The teacher recites the words of the song while the children listen and imitate.
2. The children are divided into two groups as chorus 1 and chorus 2.
3. The teacher sings the chorus 1 alone while the children listen and imitate.
4. The teacher then sings the chorus 2 while the children listen and imitate.
5. The teacher divides the class into chorus 1 and 2 and they sing.
6. The rhythmic pattern for the dance is introduced and played on the drum, accompanied by hand clapping (e.g. see below)
7. The teacher or the children devise dance steps and children imitate.
8. The whistle (*impempe*) is used to give signals for dance step changes.

Conclusion

1. The children are given an opportunity to practice the song in small groups, while the teacher supervises.
2. In each group the children may improvise their own dance steps.
3. The group leaders make use of *impempe* to give signals to the dancers.
4. The teacher evaluates all the group performances.
5. The groups perform for each other.



Origin

This is a dance song normally performed in festivals or ceremonies.

The song was composed after the assassination of the "Black" South African politician – Chris Hani.

Chris Hani was the strong leader of the South African Communist Party (SACP) one of the parties that strongly opposed the apartheid regime in South Africa. He was assassinated at his home in Johannesburg in 1994.

The song teaches children something from the history of South Africa.

Text and Translation

Bambulele kanjani

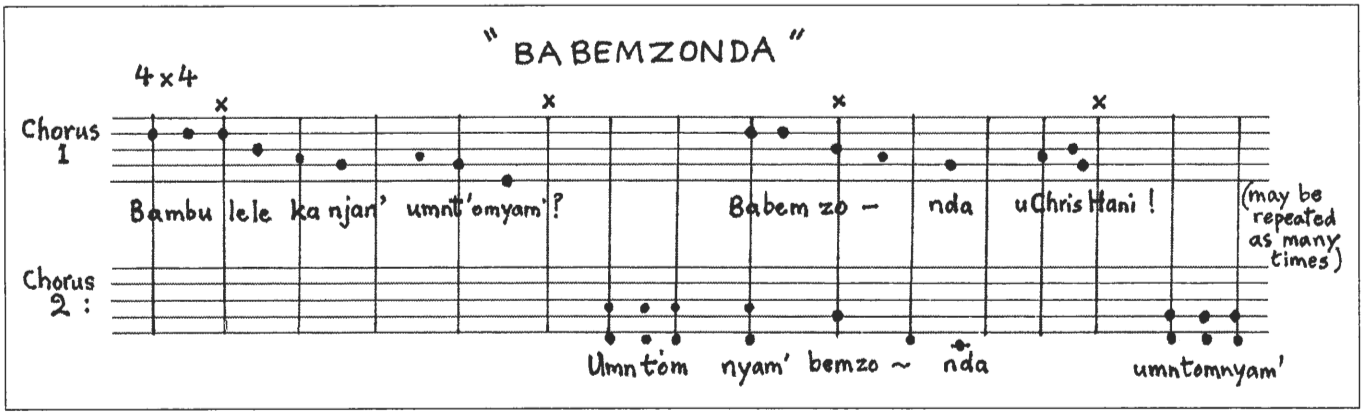
Why did they (the Europeans) kill

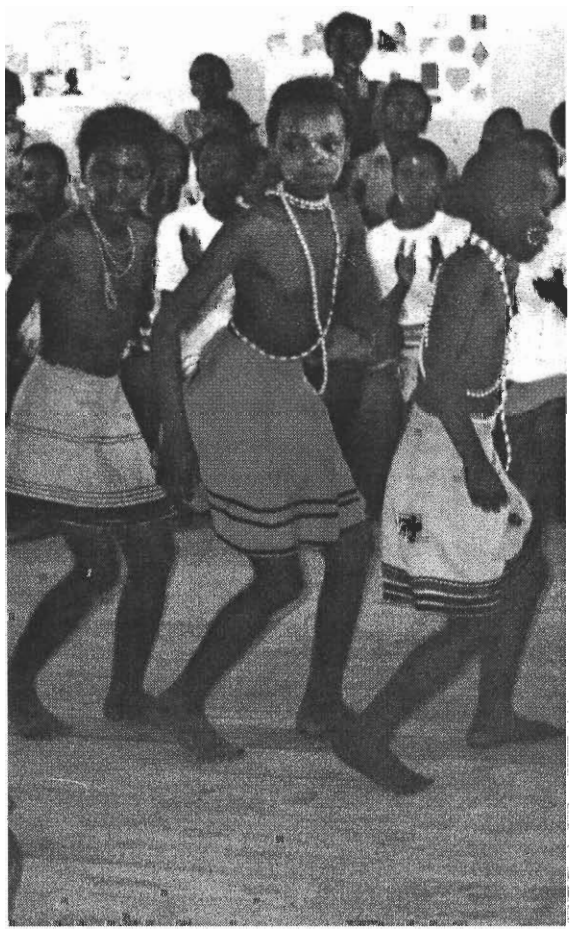
umnt'omyam'?

the "Black person"?

Babemzonda uChris Hani!

They hated





Transcribing Melodies

© Jeff Robinson, Lecturer in Music Education, University of Natal

This article is written for those who:

- find transcribing melodies difficult and rely mostly on published scores;
- are inefficient in their transcribing efforts and need a musical short-hand to speed things up; and/or
- want a proven approach to developing music literacy in students.

Regarding Music Literacy

My experience of tertiary level music students (both in Africa and abroad) is that, despite their achievement of high standards of performance skill and theoretical knowledge, they are generally weak when it comes to music literacy, chronically so in many cases. This can be said of many instrumentalists who are proficient sight-readers. How can this be? Let me answer by referring to my own music education, most of which has been linked to instrumental performance.

I began learning the saxophone at the age of nine and progressed through a series of school bands from Elementary through Junior High and Senior High. This developed to a high degree of proficiency my ability to accurately and artistically convert written symbols into musical sounds. Yet fundamentally, I was musically illiterate as became apparent when I auditioned for university admission and was asked to sight-sing a simple melody and didn't have a clue what to do. Neither was I able to write down anything but the simplest melodic phrase. It was as if I had learned to read French texts aloud convincingly, with proper pronunciation and inflection, BUT with no understanding of what I was saying, no ability to take down in writing even simple French phrases, and no ability to use it to communicate any message or idea of my own. Sadly, this deficiency was not thoroughly or systematically addressed in my undergrad studies, but somehow I got through and graduated with a BMus degree despite underdeveloped aural perception and transcription skill, seriously insufficient for my needs as a music educator, improviser, composer and arranger.

It was only after coming to Africa that I was exposed to Tonic Sol-fa, with its moveable 'do' (doh), and discovered a route which has allowed me to turn that deficiency into a strength. I should say 're-discovered' as I have to admit that I was introduced to sight-singing using sol-fa syllables with a moveable 'do' at university, but was never required or actively encouraged to develop proficiency in it. I also had Kodály Music Education as part of one of my courses, but I only superficially learned *about* it and never developed practical skill in its methods, thinking then that it really only had value to vocal education whereas my specialisation was instrumental music education.

Kodály Music Education

For those readers not familiar with Kodály Music Education, let me give an overview of various tools for developing music literacy identified with Zoltan Kodály, the 20th Century Hungarian pedagogue, composer, ethnomusicologist and contemporary of Bela Bartok.

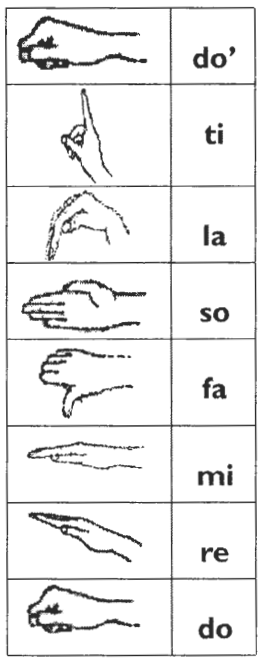
Kodály's principal educational objective was the achievement of mass music literacy, and he found tools for this in the Tonic Sol-fa system of sight-singing and notation devised in the 19th century by the English clergyman and educationist, John Curwen. In it, the pitch of 'do' is relative. It can be any pitch (e.g. C, C#, D, etc.), but once fixed, all other notes ('re' (ray), 'mi' (mee), 'fa', 'so', 'la', 'ti') become fixed in relationship to it.

When in a major key, 'do' is the key-note (tonal centre) and the vowel sounds of the notes are meaningful in terms of each note's 'character' (e.g. stable or wanting to move) relative to 'do'. 'Do' and 'so' with their distinctive vowel sound ('oh') correspond to the tonic; 'mi' and ti are both notes that ascend by semitones ('mi'-'fa' & 'ti'-'do').

Curwen devised hand signs to help bridge the gap between the concrete aural experience of pitches and their abstract representation in musical notation. The hand signs give a visual representation of each note's function within the major scale and are used extensively in Kodály pedagogy.

As one changes pitch, not only does the sign change, but its position moves up or down accordingly, e.g. starting with low 'do' at waist level and moving higher to high 'do' with the arm extended over the head. The position of low 'do' can be brought higher for melodies that move above and below 'do'.

NOTE: The sign for 'la' appears to be a fist in the making (just tuck the fingers in). 'La' becomes the tonic (key note) in minor keys. Using different notes as the tonic gives us the MODES of the Major Scale, i.e.
r – r' = dorian mode,
m-m' = phrygian,
f – f' = lydian,
s – s' = mixolydian,
l – l' = aeolian (natural minor), and t – t' = locrian.

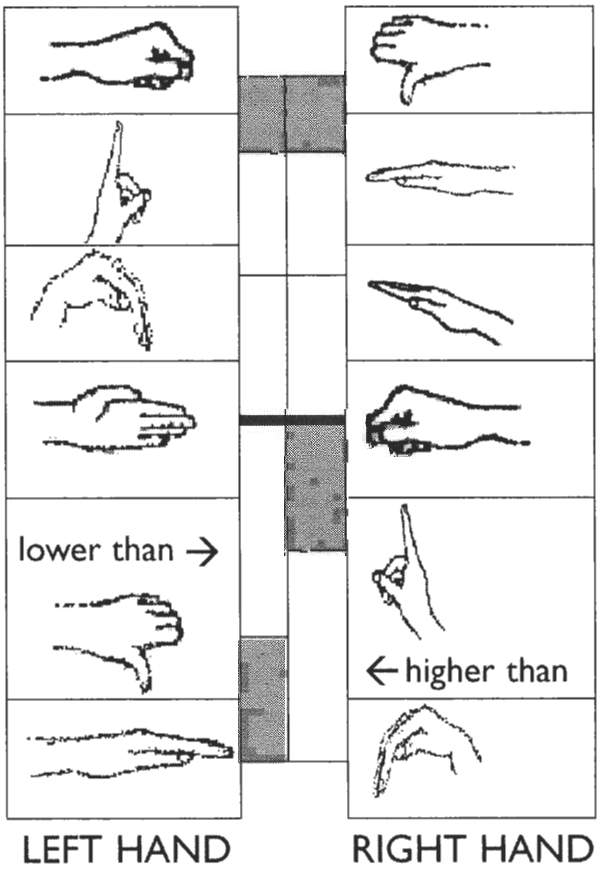


Chromatic Notes

There are signs for the chromatic notes used in the Melodic and Harmonic Minor scales, i.e. 'fi' (raised 'fa') with the thumb up, and 'si' (raised 'so') with fingers spread. I have invented others when needed (e.g. 'ri' with palm brought to vertical). But for most melodies the signs given here will suffice. It is important to note that syllables ending in 'i' (e.g. 'mi', 'ti', 'fi', 'si') must ascend by a semitone. Where 'fa' and 'so' are both raised, as in an ascending melodic minor scale, the name 'be' (bay) is substituted.

Modulation (Transition)

Modulation (sometimes called 'transition') is when the music changes its tonic, i.e. 'do' moves to a different pitch and the rest of the notes move accordingly. For example, the pitch of 'so' may become the pitch for a new 'do'. This is easily accomplished when signing by bringing the new 'do', signed by the free hand, level with 'so' and continuing with the new hand.



NOTE: Shaded cells refer to half-steps (semitones); non-shaded to whole steps (tones).

One can lead two-part singing by having one half of the singers follow the left hand while the other half follows the right hand. This takes practice.

Notating Rhythm

In the Tonic Sol-fa notation invented by Curwen, the length of notes (and rests) is indicated with vertical lines, colons, full stops and commas. For example:

4 | d . t_1 : d . r | m : s | f :-. m | r : - |

would have the same rhythm as

Stem Notation

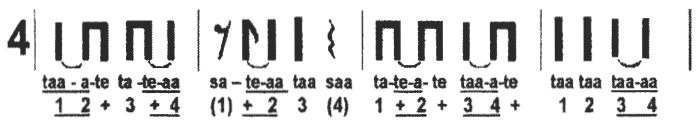
Although Curwen's system of notating rhythm has been successfully learned by choristers around the world, the system favoured by followers of Kodály is a simplification of staff notation that I call "stem notation". Because it leaves out the note heads, it allows one to get a rhythm down quickly. The pitch of the notes is then indicated by letters as in Curwen's system. For example:

Rhythm Names

Another method associated with Kodály Music Education is the use of rhythm names to indicate notes of different duration.

NOTES		taa	♩	1 beat
		ta - te	♪ ♪	2x ½ = 1
		ta	♪	½ beat
		taa - aa	♩	2 beats
RESTS	𝄾	sa	𝄾	½ beat
	𝄽	saa	𝄽	1 beat
	𝄽 𝄽	saa - aa	𝄻	2 beats

A tie between two notes combines them into one (equal in length to both combined). Using ties greatly increases the range and complexity of rhythms that can be notated with stem notation. With rhythm names, the effect of the tie is achieved by dropping the 't'. Here is an example.



SUGGESTION: Say the names for rests softly (i.e. those beginning with 's')

Notice that only one number (4) is given at the beginning of the above example. The lower number in a time signature identifies the note value that is to equal one beat (pulse). With stem notation and rhythm names, | or 'taa' equal one beat. If later transcribed to staff notation, the choice of crotchet, minim or quaver as the pulse note can then be made[1].

Multiple Pulses

When listening to music, most people can feel and physically express what they sense as the beat (primary pulse) by snapping their fingers or tapping their feet. BUT what one feels as the main beat is not necessarily equal to the note that would be indicated by the lower number in the time signature. The obvious example of this is 6/8 time. Except in slow tempos, one usually feels 6/8 as duple time[2] where the main beat is equal to the dotted crotchet (not the quaver as indicated by the Time Signature). But even so-called Common Time (4/4) can be felt as 2/2 or even 1/1. Where music is structured according to equal phrase lengths, e.g. 2 or 4 bars, even larger pulses can be felt, e.g. the first beat of every second or fourth bar.

In stem notation, as in staff notation, one can indicate notes equal to a 4th or 8th of a beat by adding 'beams' (when grouped) or 'flags' (when individual). However, in most cases this is not necessary if one merely doubles the beat. For example, Common Time (4/4) is written the same as Cut Time (2/2), i.e. the same note values are used. The difference lies with the note taken to equal one beat, the crotchet or the minim respectively.

With rhythm names, further division of the beat is done by adding the consonant 'f' between the names beginning with 't'. For example:

A seemingly difficult rhythm in 2/4 time doesn't look so formidable when written in 4/4 (which can also be counted as 2/2).

Compound Time

In many pieces of music the primary pulse is divided into three equal parts rather than two (Simple Time). Such music is said to be in Compound Time. 6/8 is called Compound Duple Time – 'compound' to indicate that the primary pulse (dotted crotchet) is to be divided by three; 'duple' to indicate that there are two primary pulses in each bar. Rhythm names accommodate this by adding 'ti' to 'ta-te'. For example:

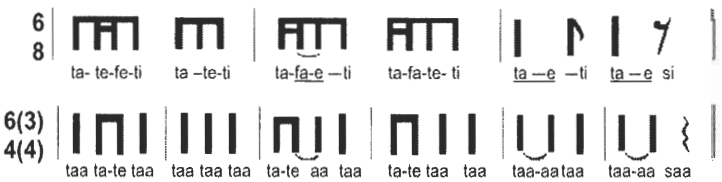
As in Duple Time, further subdivisions are possible. For example:

	ta-fa - te-fe - ti-fi		ta-fa —te - ti
	ta —te-fe - ti		ta —te —ti-fi

Using 'ties' several other patterns are possible. For example:

	ta-fa —e - ti		ta —te-fe - i

This starts to look complicated. In Duple Time we were able to avoid semi-quavers by doubling the primary pulse (2 beats to one). In Compound Time, we triple the beat (3 beats to one). Again, this makes difficult looking rhythms seem much easier. For example:



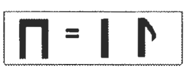
By now it should be clear that rhythms may be simplified by doubling the beat (in the case of Duple Time) or tripling it (in Compound Time). A fast waltz, while generally written in Simple Triple Time (e.g. 3/4), is like Compound Time in feel, i.e. you tend to feel it as one beat per bar.

Doubling or tripling the beat is what Kwabena Nketia would call increasing the "density referent."[3] When it comes to transcribing a fast moving melody, it is difficult to double

or triple the beat. In such cases, it is better, if possible, to slow the tempo down to a point where doubling or tripling the beat is possible. More will be said about this further along.

Regarding 'Swing'

The rhythmic style called 'Swing' is a complex concept with many nuances. However it's basic principles of rhythmic organisation are: (i) a loose Compound Time feel that can be thought of as rolling triplets, and (ii) the placing of accents away from the main beats, on 2 & 4 rather than 1 & 3, or within a beat (on the third 3rd of the beat). Accordingly, the most accurate notation of swing would be 12/8 (or 9/8 in the case of jazz waltzes). However, this makes for reader-unfriendly scores and so the convention is to write swing melodies in Simple Time with the instruction that...



Thus what would be written as...

sounds more like – but is more reader-unfriendly – as...

Transcribing a swing melody is fairly easy for me as I have had years of experience playing swing from scores with the rhythm written in simple time (as in the previous example). For those without much 'swing' experience, one approach is to sing back the melodic phrase that you are transcribing and 'stiffen' it's rhythm, e.g. singing "Fascinating Rhythm" as written in Simple Time. In other words, switch from a triplet to a duplet feel.

Applying Kodály Techniques to Transcribing Melodies

When transcribing a melody I usually try to get the rhythm down first. This is because I tend to forget rhythmic particulars more quickly than the sequence of pitches. But it may be different for others and there is certainly no rule in this regard.

Transcribing the Melodic Rhythm

This firstly requires being able to feel and maintain the 'primary pulses', i.e. the main beat and the metre (the grouping of beats into 'bars'). I have already emphasized that there is not just one beat that may be felt to be the primary pulse (see under MULTIPLE PULSES).

To determine the METRE of a melody, you must firstly sense regularly recurring strong beats. Then, counting each strong beat as '1', you work out how many beats there are before the next strong beat, e.g. 1 2 1 2 (duple) or 1 2 3 1 2 3 (triple). Remember that very often there are 'less strong but not weak' beats. These are conventionally called 'secondary accents', e.g. the third beat in a metre of 4 (i.e. 1 2 3 4).

To determine whether the rhythm is in Simple or Compound Time, try doubling the main beat, i.e. snap/clap/tap twice for every one of the main beats. If this works then the music is in Simple Time (2/2, 3/4, 4/4, 8/8). If it doesn't work, try thirding the main beat, i.e. 3 equal beats for every one.[4] If this works, then the music is in Compound Time (6/8, 9/8, 12/8) *OR* is in a fast 3/4 (where the dotted minim is being felt as the main beat (e.g. in a waltz).

If it is not clear whether the metre is duple or triple, simple or compound, this may be because it is a combination of both (e.g. 3 + 2 = 5 or 2 + 2 + 3 = 7 or 3 + 3 + 2 = 8). Either that or both are occurring together, i.e. 3 against 2 or vise versa. This kind of rhythmic Organisation (like combining 6/8 and 3/4) is common in much African traditional music and the traditions they gave rise to in the Western Hemisphere, especially in Afro-Cuban and Latin American styles. Obviously, if you are new to transcription, you should start with melodies that are easy, both rhythmically and as regards pitch (e.g. melodies that stick to a scale).

When transcribing a song, a logical approach is as follows.

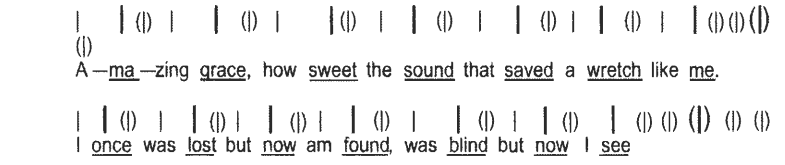
- Write out the words first, separating the syllables with hyphens in the case of multi-syllable words.
- While singing it (or listening to someone else sing it, or speaking it in time), indicate the syllables that are stressed by underlining them.
- Next snap/clap/tap what you feel as the beat and indicate each beat by writing vertical lines (|) over the words according to where they fall. Remember that one syllable or word might be held for two or more beats. Remember also that a beat may fall where the music is silent (i.e. on a 'rest')

Let's take the example of "Amazing Grace". Depending on how fast the song is sung / spoken and depending on how you feel the beat, there could be two results. (Note that beats falling 'under' silences or 'within' syllables are indicated in parentheses, i.e. (|))

| | | | | | | (|)
A—ma—zing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me.

| | | | | | | (|)
I once was lost but now am found, was blind but now I see

If what you feel corresponds to the above, you must then determine whether the metre is simple or triple by either doubling or tripling your bigger beat, as suggested above. You should get the following result.

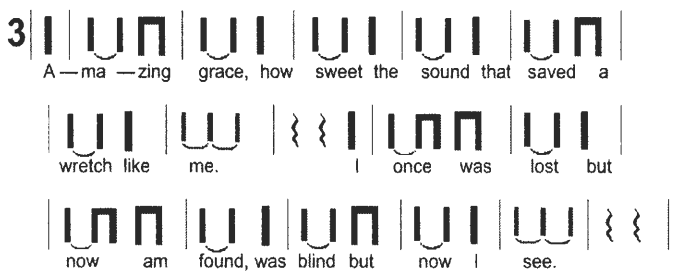


It is clear from the above that the metre is Triple *OR* Compound Duple if every second stressed syllable is treated as a secondary accent. In other words, the metre is either 3 or 6 depending on how you feel it. Also note that the song does not start on a strong pulse (i.e. the downbeat).

"Amazing Grace" has many versions as may be expected from a song that exists so much in an oral (and aural) tradition. But whatever the variant, it is the case that some syllables last for more than one beat and – *AS WELL* – some one-beat syllables are comprised of more than one note (each with a different pitch), they being '-zing', 'a', 'was', 'am' and 'but'. 'Once' and the first 'now' are each equal to two beats and comprised of two notes of different pitch, *BUT* the second note does not fall on the second beat in either case!

It is here that rhythm names come in handy. According to how you know the song, 'zing' will either be comprised of two (ta-te) or three (ta-te-ti) even notes of different pitch *OR* two uneven notes (ta-e-ti). With the simplest of these (ta-te) the rhythm of the melody would be given in rhythm names as follows.

The above is then easily transcribed into stem notation as follows.



In Compound Duple time (e.g. 6/8), it would look like this.

Getting the Pitches

Assigning pitch names to the notes of a melody takes some practice. The advantage of the moveable 'do' system is that it doesn't matter what key the song is sung or played in, i.e. what the specific pitch of 'do' should be. What follows are some suggestions that I have used successfully with my students.

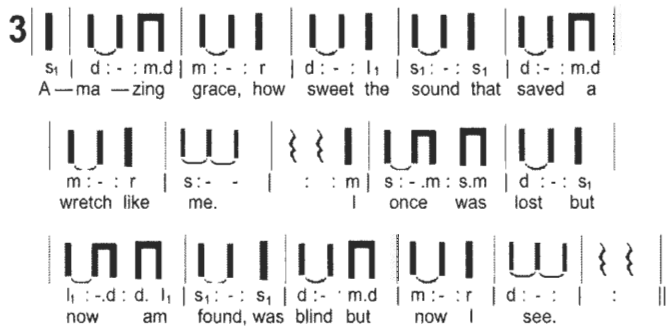
Firstly, you must determine which of the notes making up the melody is the key-note or 'tonic' ('do' in the case of major and 'la' in the case of minor). There are various tricks that can help you.

- The last note of a song's melody is the key-note in most but not all cases.
- Many melodies begin ahead of beat one, most often, as in the case of "Amazing Grace", on the last beat of the bar. This is called starting on the up-beat or annacrusis. In such cases, it is highly unlikely that the up-beat note (called the pick-up) is the key-note.[5] Most often it is the 5th note of the scale ('so' in major, 'mi' in minor) as is the case with "Amazing Grace". If not the fifth note, then it is likely to be the note a 3rd or 5th above it. These are the other notes needed to make a dominant chord ('ti' and 're' in a major key).
- In the majority of cases, the note that comes on the first beat one (the down-beat) is either the key-note or the 3rd or 5th above it, i.e. the notes of the tonic chord. It is the key-note in the case of "Amazing Grace".
- Often the key-note suggests itself if you sing just the first phrase of the melody.

Once you have determined what the key-note is, then you need to decide if the melody is in major, minor or some other mode. There are many modes, but for now let us work with major (where 'do' is the key-note) and minor (where 'la' is the key-note). Some people distinguish them easily, claiming that major melodies have a brighter, happier quality, whereas minor is darker or sadder. This, however, is not always true.

- Sing the key-note as 'do' and then sing 'do – re- mi'. If 'mi' sounds like it doesn't belong in the melody, then it is likely that the mode is minor. Try singing the key note as 'la' and then sing 'la – ti – do' making sure to ascend only a semi-tone (half step) from 'ti' to 'do'. If 'do' sounds like it fits the melody, this confirms that the melody is in minor,
- It is the location of semi-tones (half-steps) relative to tones (whole-steps) that determines a mode and you really need to be able to distinguish them readily.
- If you want to be adept at doing this, you will need to practice. Often while driving, riding on a bus, or in a free moment, I work out the pitch sequence of melodies I know.[6]

Try the above with "Amazing Grace" and see if you come up with the following. Although not needed, I will include punctuation marks for readers who know Tonic Sol-fa notation.



The Way Forward

If you were successful in following the steps used in transcribing "Amazing Grace", it is now only a matter of practice before you can transcribe more difficult melodies involving more complex rhythms (e.g. with odd metres, shifting metres, asymmetric phrase structures, combinations of duple and triple, simple and compound) and more challenging pitch sequences (e.g. with modulations, modal or chromatic melodies, and unconventional interval leaps).

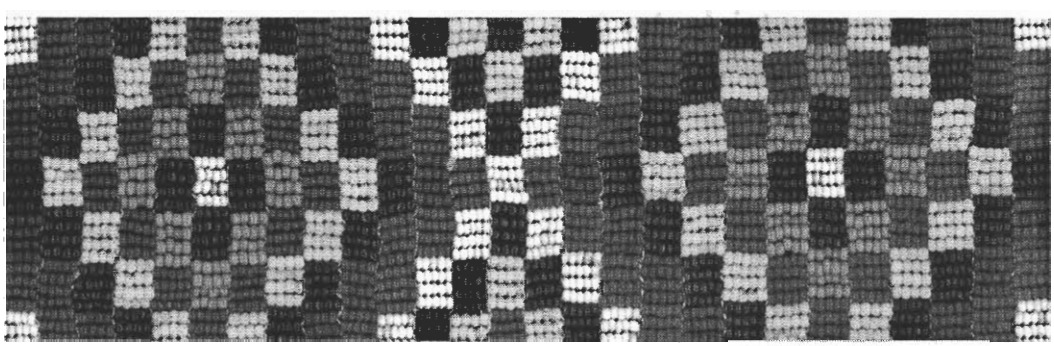
Competence in transcribing music by ear opens many doors of opportunity and possibility. For the music teacher, it frees him/her from a reliance on published songs and arrangements. So much of the music that should be featured in our classrooms is not, simply because it is not available in score form. Consequently transcribing such music could be especially beneficial if shared with other *Talking Drum* readers.

In many cases, especially with songs, there is never a need to translate the 'short-hand' transcription (as for 'Amazing Grace') into staff notation. It is generally helpful – and in some cases necessary – to give the key-note (tonic) a specific pitch (e.g. 'do' = Eb = Eb major or 'la' = C = C minor). Converting to staff notation doesn't require any musical skill, only an understanding of how staff notation works, e.g. how clefs work, how sharps and flats are used to accommodate key-notes (tonics) of different pitch. Applying Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences, this conversion task involves 'logical/mathematical intelligence' only, whereas transcribing melodies aurally involves both 'musical' and 'bodily-kinesthetic' intelligence. Based on my observation of music teaching in schools, I am actually dismayed at the extent to which the 'logical/mathematical' dimension (needed for passing music theory exams[7]) is given priority.

The user-friendly and efficient tools I've recommended, which are prominent in Kodály Music Education, have more than proved themselves, both in my own musical development and in my teaching. They lead to authentic music literacy, where one can think music representationally and make it communicable to others.

Footnotes

1. Minim = Half Note; Crotchet = Quarter Note; Quaver = Eighth Note; Semi-Quaver = Sixteenth Note.
2. 6/8 is called Compound Duple Time, 'compound' to indicate that the primary pulse (dotted crotchet) is to be divided by three.
3. J H Kwabena Nketia. *The Music of Africa* (London: Victor Gollancz LTD, 1986), p. 127.
4. Make sure the beats are even. It might help to say "EEE-VEN-LEE" (evenly) at the same time.
5. "Greensleeves" is one exception that comes to mind.
6. Many is the time I've had to do this quickly when playing a gig and having to play a tune for which I have no score but which I know aurally. If I can just work out what the first few notes are in sol-fa, I can usually carry on from there. And because I'm on top of my scales, it doesn't really matter what key has been chosen.
7. Someone who has been deaf from birth could pass many theory exams with 100%, as could someone with little kinesthetic grasp of music.



Molweni Nonke

© Charlene May, Masters Student, University of Natal

This is a Xhosa greeting song that can be taught in a number of ways to children of different ages and musical levels. The melodic line is relatively easy and can be taught to pre-primary children. To increase the challenge, additional parts can be introduced such as vocal harmony, instrumental accompaniments and movements.

Outcomes:

The children should be able to

- sing the song in Xhosa and English;
- create movement sequences to fit the music.

Older children should be able to

- perform an instrumental accompaniment to the song;
- sing in harmony to the melody.

The Text

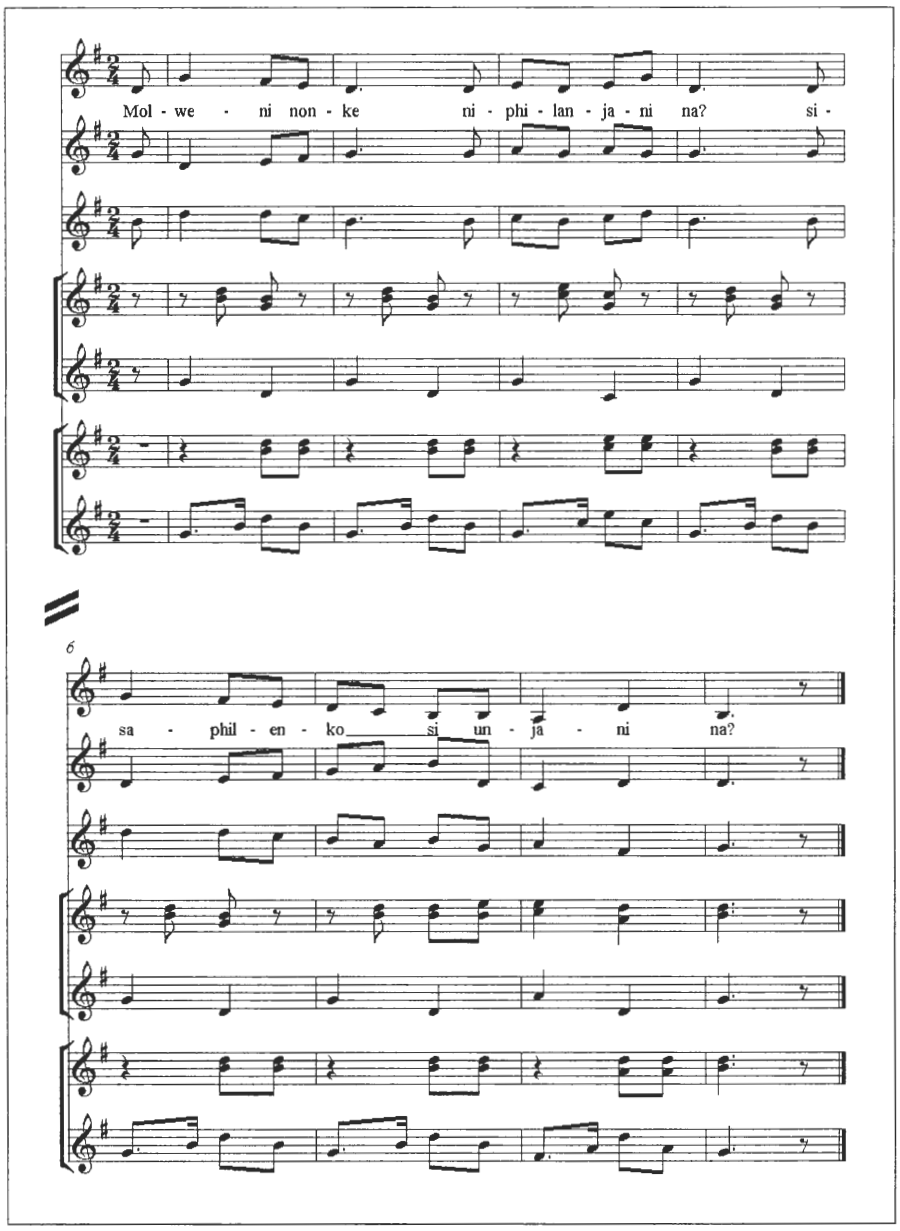
Molweni nonke,
Niphilanjani na?
Sisaphil' enkosi,
Unjani na?

Hello everyone,
How are you all?
We are fine thank you,
How are you?

Activity Using Movement

Students can decide on their own about movements to 'act out' the text, for example...

Molweni nonke
Wave to classmates
Niphilanjani na?
Point to each other
Sisaphil' enkosi
Point to yourself
Unjani na?
Point to someone in particular



Activity Using Instruments

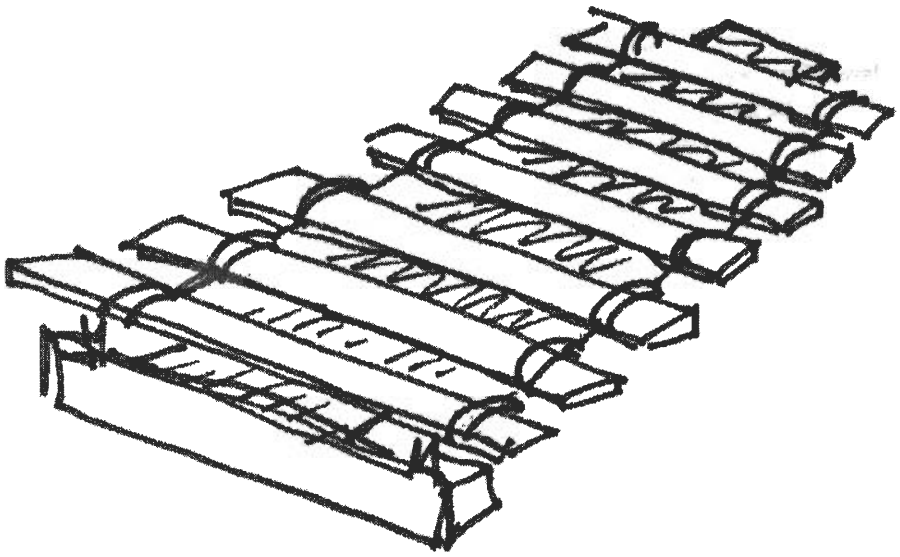
The parts could either be sung or played on Orff-type instruments or both. Shakers and drums could also be added. With reference to the score provided:

1. the main melodic line
2. a lower harmony
3. a higher harmony
4. an ostinato accompaniment using a 'straight' rhythm
5. an ostinato accompaniment using a 'dotted' rhythm.

Music incorporating the Hocket Approach

© Charlene May, Masters Student, University of Natal

The word *Hocket* is taken from the French, Italian and Latin languages. In music it has been applied as an approach to composition whereby melodic and/or rhythmic lines are broken up into short patterns or single notes and given to individual members of an ensemble. It is in the interlocking of the individual parts that the music emerges. An essential element of the *hocket* approach is integration. Each part on its own has no real meaning until put together. Each part is as important as the next. The *hocket* approach has been applied in music from different times and places.



It was very common in the 13th and 14th centuries and was most often used in two parts at a time so that one sings while the other has rests.

In European Medieval music, there were three types of polyphonic music: motets, organums, and *hoquetus*. The *hoquetus* was for the 'lower' level of society. It was known as a cut-up song as the melody passes between voices. It was very complicated to write, as it was not regular or predictable. It was considered pleasing to hot-tempered young men because of its speed.

Examples of the *hocket* approach, which may be familiar to readers from Africa, are ***Nyanga* Panpipe music** from Mozambique and ***Amadinda* Xylophone music** from Uganda. Readers may be familiar too with **Handbell ensembles** found around the world.

The intention of this article is to demonstrate the value of this approach as a basis for musical activity in the music education classroom. The activity is especially good for the following reasons:

- It requires a cohesive group of students.
- Everyone is on the same level with this approach as no one part is more important than the next.
- Each part is crucial to the whole.
- It requires a kind of social engagement unlike what is required in other forms of ensemble playing.
- This approach to composition is used in different cultures around the world.
- Because it can be applied in different means, it is very useful for promoting intercultural music education.

The true essence of *hocket* music can be summed up in the word: *Ubuntu* – I am who I am through others.

Nyanga Panpipes

The *Nyungwe* are famous for their performance of traditional *nyanga* over a large part of central Mozambique, Zimbabwe and southern Malawi. The panpipes are made of bamboo, and each set of panpipes has a different name. The only other instruments used for *nyanga* are leg rattles. The performance consists of four parts: the panpipe parts including their voiced notes, the women's choir, the dancing, and the lead singer. There is only one so-called 'tune' played on the panpipes. This *nyanga* tune is 24 pulses long. It is repeated once followed by the lead singer's passage, therefore making a cycle 72 pulses long in total. The panpipes and the voiced notes combine to fill up all 24 pulses. The parts interlock and so are dependent on each other. The women's choir sing parts that tend to reinforce some of the melodies heard in the panpipe parts. The women generally stand in a group just outside the circle of players. Although each player has his own part to play on the panpipes, the dance steps are fixed and done in unison. Because the panpipe parts are different, the steps fall into a different relationship with each part. The lead singer changes frequently throughout a performance. The words sung may be topical, praising, moralizing, humorous or dance step instructions. With these four parts of *nyanga* performance, it can be seen that they are highly dependent on one another for the music to make sense. This is a true example of *hocket* style due to the level of interaction and interlocking of different parts and rhythms. This can be used as an activity in the classroom for music education.

Amadinda Xylophone Music

The two fundamental parts of this music from Uganda are the *Okunga* and *Okwawula*. The third part is the *Okukoonera*. The first two parts interlock each other as they play on alternative pulses. The third part can only be played if the first two are accurately interlocked. The individual parts may sound meaningless or empty but once all three parts are played together, correctly and accurately, a number of melodic phrases result. In the April 2001 issue of *The Talking Drum*, Stephen Anderson presents an approach to this using eurhythmics and utilizes the interlocking aspect. This is challenging, especially for musicians with a Western music background. When there is successful interlocking, one realizes a special kind of achievement, and this produces a unique kind of satisfaction.

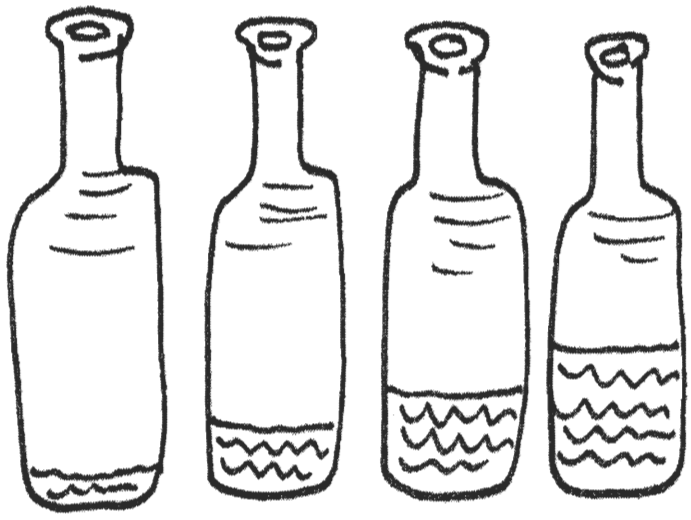
Handbell Ensembles

These ensembles are often found in churches. This music uses a range of different sized handbells tuned to different pitches up to and including the full chromatic scale. Individuals can play from one to four handbells each. Each handbell is sounded at a precise point in a rhythmic scheme for harmonic and melodic series to develop.

Demonstrating the *hocket* approach in the classroom

Using glass bottles

This is a good activity to develop a more acute sense of pitch. Students and teachers are able to tune bottles to given pitches by filling each with a different amount of water. Remember, the more water, the higher the pitch. To produce a sound, the student must blow across the top of the bottle. The



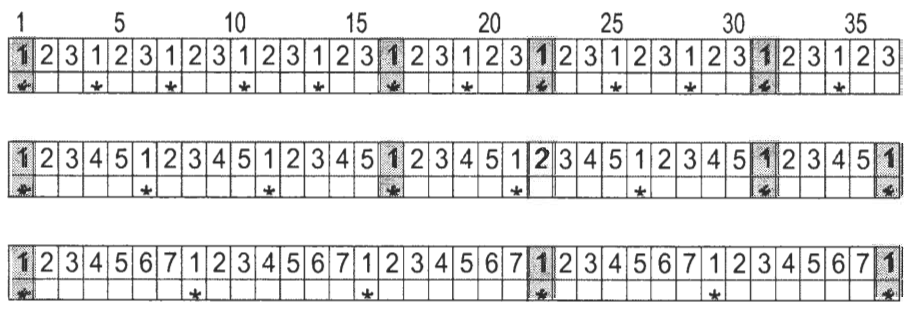
same method is used in playing the flute and panpipes. Melodies and harmonies can be produced with students playing different pitched bottles at various times. Included in this activity are possibilities for learning theoretical concepts such as the understanding of primary chords, modes, and the whole tone scale and also the relation between pitch and the size of the air column.

Using the voice

A good example of the *hocket* approach applied vocally is presented in the movie "*The Sound of Music*". Here, the notes of a major scale are divided among seven children. Once put in various orders, different melodies can be produced. The use of the Kodály hand signs can further the students understanding of Tonic Sol-fa. Students could come up with their own sequences and could construct ostinatos using individual voices.

Using body percussion

A fun and challenging activity is to divide a class into three or more groups. For example, if there are three groups, group 1 would clap every 3rd beat, group 2 would clap every 5th beat, and group 3 would clap every 7th beat. If done accurately, group 1 and 2 would coincide after 15 pulses, group 1 and 3 after 21 pulses, and group 2 and 3 after 35 pulses. To be able to differentiate the groups, each group should produce a different sound. For example, group 1 could use finger snapping, group 2 could clap their hands, and group 3 could stamp their feet.



Resources

CDs

PASMAE's new realse:
Double CD Album (R150) and Video (R120) or R250 for both. Featuring some of the finest artists in Africa: African classical drumming, Mouth bow play, *Mbira dza vadzimu,* Overtone singing, Music from the African Diaspora, Cape Malay "GoemaJazz", South and West African compositions, Opera, Various choir genres... and more. Contact: PASMAE Secretariat, 85 Fairview Avenue, Woodstock, Cape Town 7925, South Africa. E-mail: pasmae@zsd.co.za.

Magical Musical Bows – Dave Dargie. This CD has an accompanying article/handbook (see issue #16) to introduce the sounds of the wonderful musical bows of South Africa. CD and booklet = R100 plus courier postage (±R30). Student price R80 plus postage. Contact: Prof. Dave Dargie, PO Box 4, Fort Hare 5701, South Africa.

BOOKS

A New Direction for South African Music Education, Elizabeth Oehrle (ed)., Shuter & Shooter (Pty) Ltd, Pietermaritzburg.

PASMAE 2001: Selected Conference Proceedings from the Conference in Lusaka, Zambia, 2001, Caroline van Niekerk (ed), Department of Music, University of Pretoria, Pretoria 0002, South Africa.

Symposium on Ethnomusicology: papers presented – 1999: University of Namibia. Contact: International Library of African Music, Rhodes University, Grahamstown 6140 or C.Webbstock@ru.ac.za.

Teaching Materials for Marimbas by Geoffry Tracey & Mandy Carver. R400. Contact: African Musical Instruments, No.1 Froude Street, Grahamstown 6139

World Musics & Music Education: facing the issues by Bennett Reimer (editor), MENC, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston, Va. 20191-2002.

VIDEOS

Except for "Rhythms of the Tabla", all are relative to aspects of music-making in Africa. These NETIEM videos use the PAL system, and are solely for educational purposes.

1. *GUMBOOT DANCING: V. GODDARD (15-20 min.)*

This is a teaching video which includes demonstrations of some basic steps of Gumboot dancing accompanied by lesson plans.

2. *AFRICAN DRUM MUSIC – Lecture / Demonstration (38 mins.)*

PROF. SIMHA AROM, lecturer, is a Director of Research at the National Centre for Scientific Research in Paris. He is responsible to the Department of Ethnomusicology within the Laboratory of Languages and Civilisations of Oral Traditions.

GAMAKO is a group of African musicians resident in Nantes, France. Their first meeting with Prof. Arom took place in June 1984, and gave rise to a mutually beneficial working relationship which has taken them on tours together. The name GAMAKO is derived from their various countries of origin:

GA as in Gabon
MA as in Madagascar
KO as in Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)

The members of this present group are as follows:

Hior Rasonaivo is from Madagascar. His talents as a teacher and musician, especially in Afro and Afro-Cuban percussion, have made him one of the most sought after percussionists in the region.

BONIFACE DAGRY, born in the Ivory Coast, combines his academic studies with an active participation in dance and music. Apart from teaching African dance, he is acknowledged as a percussionist in various groups from Nantes.

MAMADOU COULIBALY, from the Ivory Coast, is a Doctor of Music and a regular participant with the Galerie Sonore d'Angers. He has founded three Music and Traditional African Dance groups.

PIERRE AKAFFOU, also born in the Ivory Coast, is presently lecturing at the Language Faculty in Nantes. He is the founder of the group Oum Sosso which covers both traditional and modern music, and has been teaching African dance for five years. (Ethnomusicology Symposium, Howard College, University of Natal, August 1993)

3. *MASKANDA COMPETITION (33 mins.)*

Maskanda is a neo-traditional type of music played by Zulu-speaking migrant workers. The word comes from the Afrikaans "musikant" and means music-maker. Our modern day maskanda can be seen walking along the street strumming a guitar. He plays to keep him company and to make the road a shorter one. Listening to a maskanda musician, one can hear the strong tradition or storytelling that is a part of this style, a tradition that reminds one of the minstrels and troubadours.

This video features men and women dancing and playing guitars, violins, concertinas, bows, mouth organs, drums, electric keyboards, and instruments created by the performers themselves. (Old Mutual Sports Hall – National Sorghum Breweries/Music Department, University of Natal, 29 August 1993).

4. *RHYTHMS OF THE TABLA–YOGESH SAMSI – Lecture/demonstration (30 mins.)*

YOGESH SAMSI was born in 1968 into a rich musical tradition. His father

Pandit Dinkar Kaikine and his mother Shashikala Kaikini are renowned vocalists in India. Yogesh has been trained by India's most famous table performers, Ustad Alla Rakha Khan and Ustad Zakir Hussain. Yogesh is himself a brilliant and much sought after accompanist, in spite of his youth. He has accompanied many of the leading senior musicians in India and has travelled widely taking part in performances in Japan, Poland, Austria, Germany and the United States. (Ethnomusicology Symposium, University of Natal, 25 August 1993).

5. *TRADITIONAL AFRICAN MUSIC AND BARBERSHOP SINGING (50 min.)*
The African Music Ensemble and the NU Nuz in a lunch-hour concert at Howard College Theatre, University of Natal, 11 August 1994).

6. *RITUAL DANCERS: SHANGAAN, MAKISHI AND NYAU (50 min.)*
A performance which includes the Makishi stilt and pole dancing, masks of great variety and narration. (Falls Craft Village, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, September 1994).

7. *SPOORNET GUM BOOT DANCERS with Blanket Mkhize & Johnny Hadebe & introduction by Carol Muller (50 min).*
A performance during a lunch-hour concert at the Outdoor Theatre, University of Natal, June 1994.

8. *WEST AFRICAN KORA MUSICIANS & MASTER DJEMBE DRUMMER: Dembo Konte and Kausu Kuyathe from the Gambia and Adama Drame from Cote d'Ivoire – Workshop presented by Lucy Duran (45 min).*
A KORA is a traditional African harp-like instrument made from a large calabash gourd, a piece of cowhide, a rosewood pole and 21 strings in parallel rows.

Dembo and Kausa are hereditary musicians who pass the repertoire of traditional and freshly-composed songs and dances from generation to generation. They are oral historians, praise singers, advisors to kings and entertainers in a tradition that stretches back over six centuries to the great Malian empire in West Africa. (programme notes of the concert at the Zimbabwe College of Music: Ethnomusicology Symposium, Harare, Zimbabwe: September 1994).

9. *PANPIPE WORKSHOP WITH ALAIN BARKER (35 min.)*
Barker instructs and makes music with Ukusa students at the University of Natal, April 1994. Useful for class music.

10. *INTRODUCTION TO UHADI, ISANKUNI, UMRHUBHE, and ISITHOLOTHOLO by Dr. Luvuyo Dontsa from the University of the Transkei*
and
CHIPENDANI MUSICIAN (30 min.)
Green R. Mususa at the Ethnomusicology Conference at Zimbabwe College of Music, Harare, Zimbabwe, September 1994.
The chipendani is a "braced mouth bow of the Shona (Karanga and Zezuru) peoples of Zimbabwe. It resembles the Zulu Isithontolo in appearance and in performance techniques, but is made from a single stick instead of from three sections".
(New Grove Dictionary, Stanley Sadie, Vol.1, p.356)

11. *MBIRA DZAVADZIMA PLAYERS: MUSEKIWA CHINGODZE and WILLIAM RUSERE from Zimbabwe (35 min.)*
An informal session in courtyard of Howard College at the University of Natal, 1994.

12. *MOTHER EARTH DANCERS with Beauler Dyoko (30 min.)*
A performance at the Ethnomusicology Conference at Zimbabwe College of Music, Harare, Zimbabwe, September 1994.
and
AN INTERVIEW IN SHONA WITH BEAULER DYOKO
Conducted at the Cultural Centre, Murehwa, Zimbabwe, September 17, 1994. Dyoko is one of the very few women mbira dza vadzimu players in Zimbabwe.

13. *NGOQOKO WOMEN'S ENSEMBLE SPLIT-TONE SINGING (40min.)*
Led by Mrs. NoFinish Dywili, this women's ensemble somes from Ngqoko village near Cacadu (Lady Frere) in the Eastern Cape. They are of the Thembu people who form a large sub-group of the Western Xhosa-speaking peoples.

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