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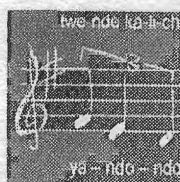
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## The Talking Drum • Newsletter Issue No. 25 • July 2006

Network for promoting Intercultural Education through Music (NETIEM)

Pan-African Society of Musical Arts Education (PASMAE)

Prof. E Oehrle, School of Music, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, 4041 South Africa  
Fax: +27 (31) 260-1048 • E-mail: oehrle@ukzn.ac.za

Editor: Prof. Elizabeth Oehrle

Illustration: Dina Cormick

### Editorial

The Bartel Arts Trust's unexpected and most welcome donation makes possible the posting out of this issue of *The Talking Drum* (TTD) to everyone. Realizing that our First National Bank account number was incorrect in the last issue, we sent the correct bank account number to all our readership. Possibly you did not receive it and so this issue of TTD comes to you now, although you may not have subscribed as yet. Our First National Bank account number has changed and is now correct on the enclosed subscription form. To those who still wish to subscribe, particularly the libraries, please complete the subscription form in this issue as soon as possible, but no later than October 1, 2006. Your subscription includes both issues for 2006. Note that subs for 2007 may also be paid.

TTD strives to enhance and promote the following:

"the pooling of musical resources from southern Africa may accelerate the kind of cohesion wanted, and widen our vistas to understand each other as compatriots, and to understand world music and people", (*Proceedings of the Second National Music Educators' Conference*, Univ. of Natal 1988, Lucia (ed) pp.10-11);  
"... the induction of students into different music cultures may be one of the most powerful ways to achieve a larger educational goal: preparing children to work effectively and

tolerantly with others to solve shared community problems. This is one way of achieving the goals of humanistic education". (*Music Matter: a new philosophy of music education*. (1995) David Elliot p.293);  
"... Culture shapes all our thinking, imagining and behaviour. It is the transmission of behaviour as well as a dynamic source for change, creativity, freedom and the awakening of innovative opportunities. For groups and societies, culture is energy, inspiration and empowerment, as well as the knowledge and acknowledgement of diversity..." (UNESCO's *Our Creative Diversity: report of the World Commission on Culture and Development*. Javier Perex de Cuellar. p.11).

Contributions from Jaco Kruger, Andrew Tracey, Dave Dargie, Minette Mans, Jeff Robinson and others are always of great value. The current issue once again features Jeff Robinson's work and an article from Andrew Tracey. Jeff contributes, as he is well aware of the value of TTD. Minette Mans writes: "keep up TTD – so valuable!" Students and teachers, especially those "on the ground" with little access to written material, make extensive use of TTD.

For TTD to continue as a newsletter of great value, contributions are essential. Having reread past editorials, I realize that a request for contributions appears each year. You are urged once again to take some responsibility for the continuation of

TTD by submitting your contributions for consideration in order to assure that this remains an ongoing publication?

A challenge was also issued for staff and students of tertiary institutions to contribute the bulk of articles and/or lesson plans for a future issue of TTD. More explicitly a school or department of music agrees to submit between twenty and twenty-five pages of relevant materials for publication in TTD. In addition the institution is invited to also submit an article that will inform readers about their particular focus or research or function. Meki Nzewi at the Univ. of Pretoria took up this challenge. The School of Music, with Jaco Kruger, at Northwest University will feature in our next issue in 2006, and the University of Cape Town is a possibility for 2007. Hopefully other institutions will follow. To academics in particular – encourage your students to provide their research material for consideration in TTD. Give them the unique opportunity to experience the preparation and publication of their work in progress.

For TTD to continue providing material for educators plus publicity for and information about PASMAE (Pan-African Society of Musical Arts Education), a struggling, new and vital organization, your assistance is vitally needed.

Elizabeth Oehrle



# Helena Wattström's Eurhythmic Workshop

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Regular readers of *The Talking Drum* should be fairly well acquainted with Eurhythmics and hopefully they use this approach with their students and draw from the wide range activities and lesson ideas that have been shared in *The Talking Drum* over the years. The previous issue featured my article "Eurhythmics Reconsidered" in which my intention was to convince readers of the crucial role that Eurhythmics should play in any musical arts programme. To this end, I tried to provide a deeper understanding of 'kinesthesia' or 'bodily-kinesthetic intelligence' and show that it is the most vital attribute of a musician (as it obviously is for a dancer).

Helena Wattström is a lecturer at the University of Göteborg in Sweden. Since 1999, she has made several visits to the University of KwaZulu-Natal as part of a long-standing exchange programme between these institutions' Schools of Music. On four of these visits she was joined by her colleague and fellow Eurhythmics expert, Anna-Maria Koziomtzis. Together they presented two 40-hour courses in Eurhythmics for teachers from the Durban area and UKZN Music Education students. I was a participant in the first of these and its profound impact on me has been realised in the extent to which Eurhythmics features in my Music Education modules at UKZN.

In March of this year, Helena came to Durban for two weeks most of which was spent visiting the schools of course participants to evaluate how they have applied what they learned and to provide guidance for using Eurhythmics more productively. Despite a busy schedule, Helena found time to give two workshops for my second and third level Music Education students.

What follows are the four activities Helena presented in the workshop. None of them are intended as once-only activities. They should be revisited in subsequent lessons and modified to increase the level of kinesthetic challenge. They are presented here more as generic strategies than as specific lesson plans.

You will need a room large enough for all the students to move about freely. Accompanying groove music is needed for most of the activities – recorded tracks, sequenced tracks (such as many modern keyboards can play at the press of a button), live music provided by students, or by the teacher (although it is best if s/he can move around and interact with individual students). Three of the activities need items ('stones', hand drums and 'sticks') the particulars of which will be given further along in relation to the activity concerned.

## ■ PREPARING TO PLAY THE DRUM KIT

### Introduction

A principle that Helena emphasised in her introductory remarks is that Eurhythmic activities should wherever possible be linked to specific musical goals (a key principle in the Orff approach). In this activity, the goal is to play a basic groove on a drum kit. This is a real challenge given that different limbs have to be rhythmically independent, but the kinesthetic demands can be met fairly quickly when approached eurhythmically through a logical sequence of movement exercises. Obviously one should start with a simple groove and Helena's choice was a basic 'rock' pattern.

Ideally, there should be a drum kit available that students can take turns playing as they become comfortable with the movement exercises set out below. For this activity all that is needed is a bass (kick) drum, snare and hi-hat.

### Activity

1. Against any appropriate 'rock' track (Helena used a Michael Jackson track) students move freely around the room stepping to the crotchet beat. They should start on the right foot (which plays the bass or kick drum in the kit).
2. According to the teacher's instructions, the students start clapping on specified beats either together with a step or in place of a step. For example:

Note that the last pattern is 'wrong' according to a 'rock' groove where the bass (kick) drum plays on the primary beats (1 & 3). As Helena sees it, by experiencing it the wrong way students more thoroughly internalise the right way.

	1	2	3	4
CLAP		X		X
STEP	R	L	R	L

	1	2	3	4
CLAP				X
STEP	R	L	R	
STEP	L	R	L	

	1	2	3	4
CLAP		X		X
STEP	R		L	

	1	2	3	4
CLAP	X		X	
STEP		R		L

3. Quavers are then introduced.

	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
CLAP	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
STEP	R		L		R		L	

	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
CLAP			X	X			X	X
STEP	R				L			

4. Next, students form a circle spaced so that each can place her/his palms against the palms of the students on either side.

5. Against the backing track (same as before), they do different combinations of movements as directed by the teacher, from simple to more complex, e.g.

	1	2	3	4
High clap (over head)				X
Pat neighbors' palms				
Low clap (chest high)		X		
Pat thighs				

	1	2	3	4
High clap (over head)				X
Pat neighbors' palms			X	
Low clap (chest high)		X		
Pat thighs	X			

	1	2	3	4
High clap (over head)				X
Pat neighbors' palms			X	
Low clap (chest high)				
Pat thighs	X			

	1	2	3	4
High clap (over head)				X
Pat neighbors' palms			X	
Low clap (chest high)		X		
Pat thighs				

	1	2	3	4
High clap (over head)				X
Pat neighbors' palms				
Low clap (chest high)				
Pat thighs	X			

	1	2	3	4
High clap (over head)				X
Pat neighbors' palms			X	
Low clap (chest high)				
Pat thighs				

6. Quavers can then be introduced as follows.

	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
High clap (over head)							X	X
Pat neighbors' palms								
Low clap (chest high)			X	X				
Pat thighs								

	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
High clap (over head)							X	X
Pat neighbors' palms					X			
Low clap (chest high)			X	X				
Pat thighs	X							

	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
High clap (over head)								X
Pat neighbors' palms		X				X		
Low clap (chest high)			X				X	
Pat thighs	X			X	X			

7. Next, the students start stepping sideways to the right (so that the circle rotates counterclockwise) according to the following pattern.

	1	2	3	4
Bring left foot next to right		L		L
Step sideways to the right	R		R	

Other movements are added, for example:

	1	2	3	4
High clap (over head)				X
Pat neighbors' palms		X		
Bring left foot next to right		L		L
Step sideways to the right	R		R	

8. The following movement addresses the kinesthetic challenge of playing the bass and hi-hat. The crossing-over of the right hand is important in this regard.

	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
Pat left shoulder with right hand	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bring left foot next to right			L				L	
Step sideways to the right	R			R				

9. This is more difficult than it looks and may take time. When all are comfortable with it the challenge is significantly increased by adding another step to the right as follows.

	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
Pat right hand on left shoulder	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Bring left foot next to right			X				X	
Step sideways to the right	X			X	X			

10. The highlighted 'pats' on 2 and 4 indicate accents which enhance the 'rock' feel and make the exercise yet more challenging. Lastly, the snare drum part is added.

	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
Pat left shoulder with right hand	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Pat stomach with left hand			X				X	
Bring left foot next to right			X				X	
Step sideways to the right	X			X	X			

When comfortable with this, the students have essentially mastered the kinesthetic demands of playing the basic drum kit. In the last *The Talking Drum*, as part of a teaching plan for a 'student generated, groove-based performance event', I included the following body percussion exercise that is also meant to replicate a groove played on the drum kit.

	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	a
Hands Left-right on thighs (toms)									L R
Finger snap (cymbal)		x				x			
Clap (snare drum)			x				x		
Foot tap (bass drum)	x			x	x				

## ■ STONE PASSING ACTIVITY

### Introduction

Stone passing games are found in many African cultures. They are generally thought of as children's games, but can be enjoyed by students of all ages. (The 2nd and 3rd year UKZN students in the workshop sure had fun with this and clearly found it challenging.) The kinesthetic demands vary according to the specifics of the game<sup>1</sup> and the musical accompaniment. While not as goal specific as the preceding activity, stone passing activity is effective in developing the metrical sense and concentration that are fundamental to nearly all forms of music making.

In the workshop, the activity was done to a recorded accompaniment, but it is more commonly and profitably done with the students singing or chanting. As with all of the activities, it can be revisited in subsequent lessons where the musical and movement elements can be modified and made more challenging.

Any items may be used as 'stones' as long as they can be picked up easily. They should be different from one another in some way. (Actual stones could have numbers or letters painted on them). The reason why will become clear in the following description of the activity.

### Activity

1. Everyone kneels in a fairly tight circle so that the 'stones' can be 'passed' easily (NOT handed to another but placed in front of the student to the left or right). There are three basic movements: (1) tapping the floor with the 'stone'; (2) placing the stone in front of your neighbor; and (3) picking up the 'stone' that has just been placed in front of you. All movements should be done with rhythmic precision and with the same arm (left or right) although this can switch at some point (thus developing ambidexterity).
2. Everyone gets with the beat by tapping it on the floor in front of them. Tapping harder on beat one will help to reinforce the meter.
3. On the teacher's cue, everyone passes to the right FOUR times, counting on each passing movement (i.e. each 'minim').

Beat (crotchets)	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Count (minims)	1		2		3		4	
Pass RIGHT	X		X		X		X	
Pick up new stone		X		X		X		X

Without losing a beat, they switch the passing to the left, again FOUR times.

Beat (crotchets)	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Count (minims)	1		2		3		4	
Pass LEFT	X		X		X		X	
Pick up new stone		X		X		X		X

Each student's original 'stone' should now have come back to him/her.

4. The passing stops and everyone taps until cued to start the passing again. This gives time for everyone to get their original 'stone' back if things have gone amiss. The sequence may have to be repeated a few times before everyone gets it.

5. Several variations of the above may then be attempted.

Two examples follow:

Beat (crotchets)	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Count (minims)	1		2		1		2	
Pass Right / Left	R		R		L		L	
Pick up new stone		X		X		X		X

Beat (crotchets)	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
Count (minims)	1		2						1		2	
Pass Right / Left	R		R						L		L	
Pick up new stone		X		X					X		X	
Tap					X	X	X	X				

6. At a later stage, 'odd' meters can be attempted. Two examples follow. Obviously, the musical accompaniment will have to be changed to one that is in the same meter. Perhaps, after introducing the new pattern, the teacher can leave the circle and play an appropriate groove on a *Djembe* or other drum (or on a piano even).

### Variations on a Congolese children's song

The following is a children's song from the DRC as it was introduced to me last year by UKZN student Ntasakira Rusangiza (from the DRC). He remembered it as being a passing game from his childhood but was not sure about the movements. But from what was done in the workshop, various possibilities present themselves.

#### Twende Kalichangwe<sup>2</sup>

Twe-nde Ka-li-cha-ngwe      twe-nde Ka-li-cha-ngwe

twe-nde ka-li-cha-ngwe tu-ka che-ze      ya-ndo-ndo ya-mo-te-ma

ya-ndo-ndo ya-mo-te-ma      ya-ndo-ndo ya-mo-te-ma

ya-ndo-ndo oh

The easiest would be to maintain the basic pass-pickup movement and keep the passing going in the same direction. The song can then be repeated with the passing going the other way around, in which case each student should end up with her/his original 'stone' at the end.

Even younger children get this quite easily and, without realising it, they are achieving a polymetric goal – performing 3 against 2. They sing three even notes ('YA-NDO-NDO') while making two even movements (PASS-PICKUP).

YA -	NDO -	NDO	YA-MO-TE-	MA
PASS	PICKUP	PASS	PICKUP	

Another variation would be to 'speed up' the pass – pickup movements to coincide with YA – NDO – NDO as follows.

1	2	3	4
YA -	NDO -	NDO	YA-MO-TE- MA
PASS	PICKUP	PASS	PICKUP PASS

1	2	3	4
YA -	NDO -	NDO	YA-MO-TE- MA
PICKUP	PASS	PICKUP	PASS PICKUP

Try adding an accompaniment of percussion instruments played by some of the students, with at least one playing the 'crotchet triplet' along with the words 'YA-NDO-NDO'. The 'YA-MO-TE-MA' pattern could also be taken up by one of the instruments.

## ■ PLAYING 'HITS'

### Introduction

This activity has many values, but is primarily aimed at developing skill in accurately playing 'hits' on set beats or parts thereof. Hits' are short accented notes that, when placed at different points in a rhythmic cycle, provide a punchy backing for a solo (e.g. a drum solo or improvised melody). Jazz players really need to be good at playing 'hits' (especially Big Band trumpeters and drummers), but several musical traditions make use of this device in various ways.

### Activity

1. Against a clear rhythmic groove (recorded or played live) the teacher and the students move freely around the room stepping to the crotchet beat. Helena used an Afro-jazz track she had picked up on one of her previous visits.
2. While still stepping to the beat, the teacher starts clapping according to the following pattern which is repeated over and over. Students are invited to join in as they perceive what is going on (i.e. that the claps are coming on successive beats).

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
CLAP	X				X				X				X			
STEP	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L

3. When all are doing this accurately, the teacher switches to 'off-beats' and has students follow accordingly.

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
CLAP	X				X				X				X			
STEP	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L

Even 2nd and 3rd university Music majors took a while to settle in with this. The tendency is to rush the hits slightly, clapping a shade ahead of the half beat. This is because they still have to think where to place the hits and need to feel it rather.

### Now with hand drums

You can use any drums that can be easily held by students in front of them so that others may hit them with their hands. If you have no drums, the students concerned can hold up one palm in front of them.

4. Half (or at least a third) of the students are given drums and directed to position themselves around the room no more than two metres away from the next drum.
5. The music starts and the students without drums move around and between the drums, stepping to the beat as before. But instead of clapping, they now must hit a drum on the set beats and/or off beats according the patterns given above. The challenge is greater here because they must adjust their stepping to arrive at a drum at the appropriate time to hit it. When the hits come close together (e.g. FOUR – ONE), they can be done on the same drum (or a different drum if positioned close enough).
6. When everyone is getting this fairly well, they can switch, i.e. those who were hitting the drums now hold them for the others. If this is going well, they can then try alternating between ON and OFF beats as follows.

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
HIT	X				X				X				X			
STEP	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
HIT	X				X				X				X			
STEP	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L	R	L

### Try it with instruments

Helena asked that those of our students who play portable instruments bring them along to the workshop. At this point they got them out and played the hits. Those playing pitched instruments were instructed to choose pitches according to a basic ii7 – V7 – IMaj7 cycle that she had a student pianist play. The cycle used was as follows (where the root of the IMaj7 becomes the root of the next ii7).

	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
1	F#m7				B7				EMaj7							
2	Em7				A7				DMaj7							
3	Dm7				G7				CMaj7							
4	Cm7				F7				BbMaj7							
5	Bbm7				Eb7				AbMaj7							
6	Abm7				Db7				GbMaj7							

Of course, any harmonic cycle could be used, for example, the quintessential South African cycles: I – IV – I(6/4) – V7 or I – IV – V7 – I(6/4). If necessary, specific pitches can be written out for the players (especially for those playing transposing instruments). A rhythm section can be formed to play an appropriate groove while the others play the ‘hits’. A great effect is produced when all (except perhaps the drummer) play the hits while one solos (improvises) over the chord sequence. This is what in Jazz is called a ‘stop chorus’, always a ‘crowd pleaser’ if the hits are really tight.

## ■ CREATING A ‘STOMP’-LIKE PIECE USING STICKS

### Introduction

In my article “Eurhythmics Reconsidered” in the last *The Talking Drum*, I lauded the well-known British ensemble *Stomp* as a superlative realisation of the principles of Dalcroze and Orff. If you are not familiar with their work, it would well be worth the effort to obtain the 1997 video “Stomp Out Loud” (available through Amazon.com). *Stomp* combines percussion, movement and visual comedy, and for their percussion, they use items not generally thought of as musical instruments, such as dustbin lids, brooms, buckets, Zippo lighters, scrap metal, and basket balls. Anything that makes an interesting sound can be used. Great ideas for using the *Stomp* concept with students are included, together with sound and video clips, on their website at [www.stomponline.com](http://www.stomponline.com)

The activity that Helena presented, using one-metre wooden sticks (dowels), had as its goal the creation of a *Stomp*-like performance piece. Students will master the following without too much practice and this could later be developed into more complex and extended performance pieces. Again, this should be thought of as a basic approach or generic activity that can be modified and made more challenging in countless ways using different sound producing items or just body percussion. It is by and large the approach used in creating gum-boot sequences. (See *TTD* No.8 and 9)

### Activity

Have enough one-metre wooden sticks (dowels) so that every student gets her/his own.

1. Everyone forms a circle with enough space between students to allow the different movements (at least an arm’s length). The teacher joins the circle with the

necessary number sticks in front of her/him on the floor (including one for her/himself).

2. Against an appropriate backing track (with a clear 4/4 groove at a bright, but not too fast tempo), the teacher picks up two sticks (one in each hand) and starts passing them around the circle in both directions. The passing movement should coincide with beat one of each bar.
3. Imitating what the teacher does, the students learn four 2-bar movement patterns (8 bars in total) which when done one after the other will comprise the ‘A’ section of the performance piece. Helena used the following four movements:

Floor Tap	Tap the floor with the stick held vertically in the right hand (like a walking stick)
Forward Thrust	Hold the stick horizontally or vertically in front of you with both hands (holding near the ends of the stick). You then push the stick away from you with a quick thrusting movement.
Rotate Stick	Hold the stick as for the Forward Thrust but at a 45 degree angle (left hand higher than the right). Then rotate it 90 degrees (lower the left hand while raising the right).
Tap -Turn	Tap the floor once then turn your body around 360 degrees ready to start the sequence again.

4. The four 2-bar movement patterns are then done in sequence as follows. This forms the ‘A’ section.

	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
Floor Tap	X				X				X				X			

	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
Forward Thrust	X	X							X	X						
Floor Tap					X		X						X		X	

	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
Rotate Stick	X		X						X		X					
Forward Thrust					X	X							X	X		

	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+	1	+	2	+	3	+	4	+
Floor Tap	X		X		X		X									
Tap -Turn									X	o	o	o	o	o	o	o

5. After everyone has got this down quite well, break up into pairs<sup>3</sup> with the partners facing each other and practice the ‘A’ section a few times. On the Forward Thrusts the sticks come together with a clear ‘click’ which means that one partner must be holding her/his stick vertically while the other is holding her/his stick horizontally. The Rotating Stick movement does not involve bringing the sticks together and thus does not produce a sound.

### Creating the ‘B’ Section

6. Time is given for each pair of students to explore different movement possibilities (both silent and sound-producing), decide what works and then sequence them into four 2-bar patterns as in the ‘A’ section (8 bars in all). They should aim for a result that is interesting both visually and aurally.
7. When everyone is ready, each pair is given a chance to perform their ‘B’ section one after another or with the

whole group inserting the 'A' section between successive 'B' sections. Because each pair has a different 'B' section,

'A'	'B'	'A'	'C'	'A'	'D'	'A'	'E'
Everyone		Everyone		Everyone		Everyone	
	Pair 1		Pair 2		Pair 3		Pair 4

the result will be a 'rondo', i.e.

8. All of the above steps are done to the musical backing (obviously one that has 8-bar phrases). This helps keep everything together. But then the backing should be turned off and all pairs can perform their 'B' sections at the same time. The aural effect of this can be amazing. Where you go from here is limited only by your and the students' imaginations. Here are just a few possibilities.
  - One pair's 'B' section is mastered by another pair, or by everyone, and done together to increase volume and dramatic effect. It could become a new 'A' section or added after the existing 'A' to produce a 16 bar section.
  - Two or more 'B' sections can be selected and combined sequentially to create longer sections or performed together to create a more rhythmically complex section. Determining which sections to perform together should be based on how well their aural rhythms integrate (i.e. how they sound together).
  - Individual two-bar patterns that are particularly 'hip' are extracted from the different 'B' sections, mastered by everyone and sequenced one after another to create new

sections that can then be ordered in different ways to create a longer, more substantial performance piece.

- Everyone does the same section, but pairs start one after the other at four or eight beat intervals (producing a canon that is both aural and visual).
- All pairs do their 'B' sections over and over again but enter and exit in a predetermined order. This results in a layering up and layering down of texture as follows.

Section	1 <sup>st</sup> 8	2 <sup>nd</sup> 8	3 <sup>rd</sup> 8	4 <sup>th</sup> 8	5 <sup>th</sup> 8	6 <sup>th</sup> 8	7 <sup>th</sup> 8
Pairs	1 only	1+2	1+2+3	1+2+3+4	1+2+3	1+2	1 only

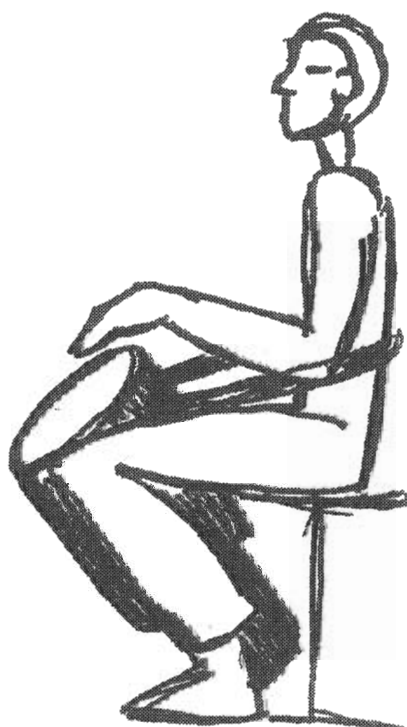
OR

Pairs	1 only	1+2	1+2+3	1+2+3+4	2+3+4	3+4	4 only
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#### Footnotes

1. Calling it a 'game' suggests that there should be a winner. If the teacher believes that adding a competitive element is a good thing, the activity can be so adapted by, for example, students being 'out' of the game if they end up with more than one stone in front of them at the end of the movement sequence.
2. Translation:
 

*Twende kalichangwe* – Let us come together  
*tuka cheze* – so we can play  
*ya-ndo-ndo* [sound of stones]  
*yamotema* – from the heart  
 Let us come together so we can play from the heart.
3. Helena emphasised that when working with younger students, the teacher should appoint partners rather than to let the kids choose for themselves. The psychosocial reason for this should be evident.





# How the southern African 'Marimbas' came into existence

© Andrew Tracey, ILAM, Rhodes University, Grahamstown

Few players of the popular marimba sets in South Africa know anything about the origin of their instruments. In the twenty years they have been in South Africa some surprising folk versions of their history have grown up. Some know that it came from Zimbabwe. Some say vaguely, "It's a traditional South African instrument". A CD write-up recently said: "Zimbabwe's marimba traditions died out at the end of the 19th century due to colonial interference". If you want to know what really happened, please read on!

Firstly it is NOT a traditional South African instrument (except for the Venda, see below), and secondly Zimbabwe had NO marimba tradition, certainly not in the last two centuries or so. There was one early Portuguese quote which says that the "Karanga" played marimba. I discount this, because the Portuguese were on the coast, and the people with whom they came into contact there apparently called themselves 'Karanga' only because they were under the influence of, or part of the empire of Great Zimbabwe, which was Karanga-ruled. These coastal people, now called Chopi, Tswa, and Ndaushanga, still play marimbas to this day. But this does not mean that the Shona themselves ever played marimba (nor of course the Ndebele, the second major group in Zimbabwe, who like their Zulu ancestors are not instrumentally inclined). If any of the Shona had ever played marimba, I would certainly have expected to come across remnants of memories of it, and in particular a vocabulary connected with it (as one finds for instance with the now-extinct Karanga *ngororombe* panpipes).

Some of the Valley Tonga live on the Zimbabwe side of the Zambezi. Before

being removed from their river-side homes to make way for Lake Kariba, they once had *ulumbundumbundu*, a 4-note 'leg xylophone', with loose keys placed on the outstretched legs, like those once played in Madagascar. They played it in the fields to make the seeds grow, they said, and probably also to keep birds and baboons away. I was there in 2005 and this instrument only exists now in the memories of old men. In any case it cannot be classed with the other large and complex African marimbas.

The WORD 'marimba' is used in Zimbabwe, only by the Njanja people around Buhera to refer not to a xylophone, but to their *mbira*, which is of the *njari* type. But there are no marimbas proper in Zimbabwe, except the occasional one brought in by someone from Zambia or Mozambique. It is also possible that the few Venda who live in the south of Zimbabwe may sometimes have played the *mbila mutondo* marimba, as is known in the Soutpansberg in the Limpopo Province of South Africa where the majority of Venda live. This instrument may have stemmed from the ancestral Shona side of the Venda but is more likely connected with the Chopi *mbila* (plur: *timbila*) in Mozambique via the Venda's neighbours, the Pedi. There are historical, family, chiefly, and linguistic connections between these three peoples, and some details of the way the *mbila mutondo* is made resemble the comparable parts of the Chopi *timbila*.

It is possible, of course, that the Venda, prior to moving from Zimbabwe to the Soutpansberg during the 16th to the 18th centuries, already had their marimba. If they had also formed part of the Great Zimbabwe kingdom, this could account for the Portuguese quote

mentioned. However, they had not met the Pedi at that time, and the relationship of their marimba with the Mozambique ones seems to relate to the Pedi connection. Against this, note however that the music played on the Venda *mbila mutondo* is clearly related to the early, probably very ancient, 24-pulse level of Shona music, as found for instance in music for the *karimba mbira*, in children's songs, work songs and story songs. (I believe that the 48-pulse music of the big Shona *mbiras*, the *mbira dza vadzimu*, *matepe*, *njari* etc, is a later development)

The very ABSENCE of marimbas in Zimbabwe is the chief reason why this instrument was chosen, in Bulawayo in about 1960, to be developed as a new national instrument. This was because it had no Zimbabwean ethnic affiliations which could lead to charges of favouritism; it could belong equally to everybody in the country. Yet, of course, it was totally African at the same time, although not actually played in Zimbabwe itself. The nearest marimba traditions around Zimbabwe are the *shilimba* of the Nkoya and Lozi in Barotseland, western Zambia, the Venda *mbila mutondo*, and three in Mozambique, the *valimba* of the Sena, Manganja and other peoples on the lower Zambezi, the *muhambi* of the Tswa and the *mbila* of the Chopi of the southern coastal plain.

It is usually said that the new Zimbabwe marimbas (or Zimarimbas) drew on the Lozi and Chopi traditions, but as I was there at the time and play the Chopi marimba I can tell you that there was no Chopi influence at all, neither in construction nor in playing technique. The most prominent extra-Zimbabwean influence came from some Lozi *shilimba* players who happened to

be living in Bulawayo at the time, which left its mark on some of the standard Kwanongoma marimba pieces like "Siyamboka". But over the years these pieces gradually lost their Lozi-ness and were 'Zimbabwefied' or 'Kwanongomated'.

My side of the story of the birth of the Zimarimbas is this. It all started with the late Robert Sibson, the Bulawayo City Electrical Engineer and flautist, who later became Director of the Rhodesian Academy of Music (as then called), and built the new concert hall at the Academy which is named after him. I went to work at the Academy in late 1959 under the then Director, Hugh Fenn, and was present at the birth, so to speak. Sibson was concerned that the rich indigenous music of Zimbabwe was not being encouraged or taught anywhere in the country. He asked me to come up from Johannesburg to scout the Bulawayo townships for traditional musicians and produce teachers and teaching materials for the newly proposed Kwanongoma School of African Music, of which he was the chief moving spirit. Jeye Tapera, *karimba*-master, was the best-known of all the musicians I found to teach at Kwanongoma.

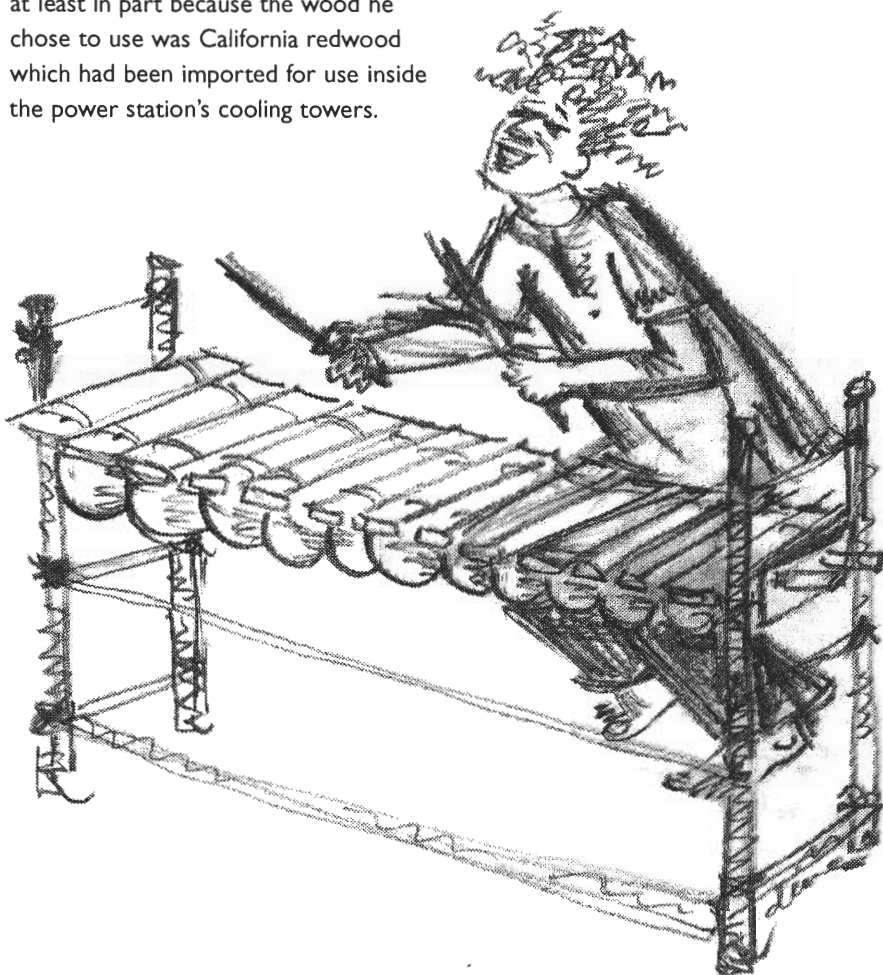
Sibson had found premises very near his power station in town. The next step was the long discussions we had over what should be taught and how and by whom etc. Out of these discussions arose the idea of the marimba, in that it was not 'partisan', as mentioned above; it could be designed to play both traditional and modern music; it would play in groups in African communal style; it would not be expensive, etc. The large southern Mexican and Guatemalan marimbas were one of our models. All models would have membrane buzzers in African style. They would be in four pitch ranges similar to an SATB choir, and so on. A major decision, which I actually disagreed with, as one who already played a heptatonic African marimba, was to include an extra Fsharp key in the keyboard in line with

the other notes, giving eight notes in each octave. The purpose of this was to allow the use of two major keys, C and G, as well as several other useful modes, and of course also to assuage the feelings of the Western musicians involved that a plain 7-note scale would somehow be 'limiting'!

Sibson's second in charge at the Bulawayo power station was the late Nelson Jones, a practical man and humorist with an interest in music, who later also became City Electrical Engineer when Sibson became Director of the Academy. Jones was charged with designing a marimba set from scratch. I remember his first instruments very well. He had gone into the intimate mathematical details of the vibration of free-free bars, and worked out exactly how the bottom surface of a key should be profiled in order to get all the overtones in tune. And I mean *all...* the profile he produced looked on paper like the Manhattan skyline upside down! I think he only made one of these 'ideal' keys. The net result was not impressive, at least in part because the wood he chose to use was California redwood which had been imported for use inside the power station's cooling towers.

Redwood doesn't sound too bad, but it is much too soft for a marimba, so his first models did not last long. He made about two alto-size marimbas and one bass, all on tubular metal frames with cardboard tubes for resonators, with the keys angled up towards the player. I remember he arrived once at the door of the first Kwanongoma saying "It's the man come to tune the marimbas!", as if he were a tradesman!

Taking some practical ideas from the Lozi *shilimba*, he went on to make more playable instruments, using *mukwa/mubvamaropa/kiat/dolf* (*pterocarpus angolensis*) which was a much better bet, as this is the resonant wood used on the Lozi *shilimba* and is readily available in Zimbabwe. I returned to the International Library of African Music in Roodepoort at about this time, so details of subsequent development are not as well known to me. Alport Mhlanga, who now teaches marimba at Maru a Pula School, Gaborone, Botswana, was one of the early graduates of the first Kwanongoma



College near the power station, and could fill in on this stage

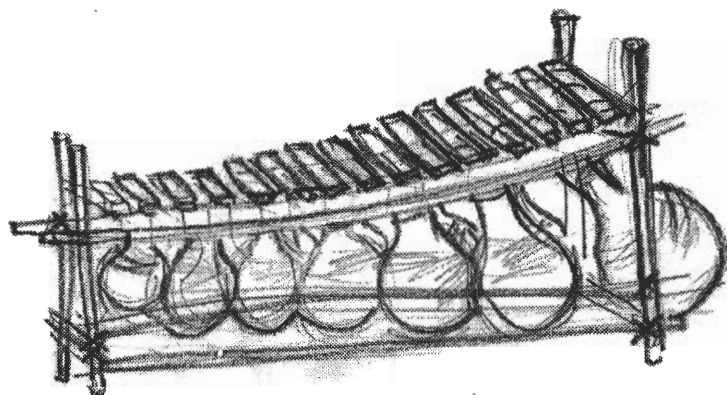
(alportak@hotmail.com).

(Kwanongoma later moved to new premises at the United College of Education on the Old Falls road, and regrettably faded out of existence in due course when the

Zimbabwe government failed to accept Kwanongoma-trained music teachers in schools.) Another well-known graduate of Kwanongoma was the late Dumi Maraire, whose marimba compositions are widely played both in Africa and on the U.S. west coast, where he spent many years developing Zimarimba bands.

Three other Kwanongoma people who had a big part in the later design were Olof Axelsson, one of the Directors, Br. Kurt Huwiler, who also worked there and developed the recording studio, and Elliot Ndlovu, who ran the workshop for many years, even continuing after Kwanongoma closed as a music instruction centre. Ndlovu has now retired and continues to make his marimbas and *karimbas* at home. Axelsson, concerned to make the instruments look more African, developed a model of the Kwanongoma marimba which was based on the Tswa *muhambi* marimba, sitting low on the floor as they do, with small, light, boat-shaped keys and spherical spin-moulded aluminium resonators. Several of these sets can be seen in Zimbabwe, e.g. at the Zimbabwe College of Music, Harare. Although they were well-made and looked good, somewhat like a piece of modern Afro-Swedish furniture, the sound was not up to their looks, mainly because the keys were *mukwa*, not the superior sneezewood (*umhlahlam-phethu / mwenje / umthathi / nzari* etc, *ptaeroxylon obliquum*) which is essential if you are going to have such small keys as the *muhambi* does.

Br. Huwiler moved to Umtata, South Africa in the early 1980s and set up a marimba factory at Ikhwezi Lokusa



Ghanian circa 1965

School for the Catholic Church. Fr. Dave Dargie (later Prof Dargie, Head of Music at Fort Hare University) set about introducing the instruments in Catholic churches and youth clubs and creating new liturgical music for marimba, at first among Xhosa speakers in the Cape Province, and later country-wide. At the beginning he and I worked out a suitable tuning for use by the Xhosa people, closely based on the two harmonic series, a whole tone apart, as used in traditional Xhosa music. (The Zimbabwean marimba, on the other hand, had been tuned at first to something resembling a *mbira* scale, with the semitones of a western scale enlarged and the whole tones decreased. Marimbas in Zimbabwe are now tuned to the tempered western scale of C major.) Among the changes Dave Dargie made was to tune the marimbas in Eflat, as against the C tuning used in Zimbabwe, because this is a much better general-purpose singing key. The new 'Xhosa-fied' marimba sets were first introduced into Catholic youth clubs in Cape Town, and from a small start have now spread, twenty years later, to schools, churches and clubs almost all over the country. Many professional bands use marimba sets. The first band to achieve renown was 'Amampondo', led by Dizu Plaatjies, in Langa, Cape Town. Many have followed since.

Br. Huwiler retired to Switzerland in 1993, and the factory was taken over by Power Marimbas in Grahamstown, which was taken over in turn by my firm African Musical Instruments Ltd in 1999, who continue to make full sets

(now much improved, extended and diversified) on the Kwanongoma / Huwiler model. Several individuals around the country also make their own models of marimba sets. (I have just heard that Br. Huwiler is now seriously ill with cancer. (k.huwiler@bluewin.ch) )

The story of the

Zimarimba is not yet finished, in fact it is still starting. A distinct South African marimba sound has already developed, even regional styles can be heard, and inventiveness and originality is the hallmark of many groups. The instrument is perfectly suited to the energy of African musicality. In the beginning, however, it caught on quite slowly which, it seems to me, relates to the general lack of instruments in our musical traditions and the corresponding emphasis on the voice. In Grahamstown, for instance, when Miki Tame first got hold of a set of marimbas in the early 1980s, he and his friends attacked them with tremendous enthusiasm, but little idea of how to place the notes they could hear in their heads onto the straight keyboard in front of them. It took Miki's group about a year of near cacophony in the tiny room in town where they rehearsed constantly and entirely on their own before they had mastered the new instrument, and began to take gigs. Miki went on to lead the music at Gold Reef City, Johannesburg, and made several world tours with their group. So the marimba is not just a musical instrument . . . it is also a means of self-empowerment and employment in the new South Africa. Tell that to anyone who still says that music is not important!

Andrew Tracey (Prof)  
African Musical Instruments (cc),  
P.O.Box 95, Grahamstown 6140  
Tel: +27-46-622.6252.  
Fax: +27-46.622.3501  
Email: andrew@kalimba.co.za



# PASMAE NEWSLETTER – MAY 2006

© Irene Soko, Secretary-General of PASMAE, Botswana

## WHAT ABOUT PASMAE?

PASMAE (Pan-African Society for Musical Arts Education) was founded at Harare in Zimbabwe in the year 2000. It was founded as PASME (Pan-African Society for Music Education). It was launched in Lusaka, Zambia in 2001 where its name was modified to PASMAE. In 2003 the conference was held in Kisumu, Kenya. During the elections at the Kisumu conference, Prof. Nzewi and Prof. van Niekerk were retained respectively.

In 2005 the conference was held at Maputo in Mozambique. At the Maputo conference, new office bearers were elected: Dr. Robert Chanunkha of Malawi as President, Tiago Langa of Mozambique, Adeoluwa Okunade of Nigeria and Dr. Siphon Mandlazi of South Africa as Vice Presidents, Irene Soko of Botswana as Secretary-General and Joyce Nyirenda of Zambia as Assistant Secretary-General. This election resulted in a new executive committee. I am sure you will agree with me that this means difficult times lay ahead of the new committee.

## ACTIVITIES

### 1. Document of Musical Arts Education on Cultural Issues

During the Mozambique conference a special committee comprising of the incoming president Dr. Robert Chanunkha, Secretary-General Irene Soko, Vice president Tiago Langa, outgoing President Prof. Meki Nzewi, and two additional members Dr. José Mucavele and Ricardo Candido both of Mozambique was formed. This Advocacy Committee for Musical Arts Education was tasked with drawing up a

working document that would state the aims of PASMAE on cultural issues. It has not been easy for this committee to meet due to financial constraints.

### 2. Documentation of the Mozambique Conference

Preparations to have the Mozambique Conference Proceedings published are on-going. The papers are undergoing editing and hopefully by the end of the year we will have a finished product. If you have any suggestions on where we could possibly apply for funding, please forward the information to the Secretary General on the address provided at the end of this newsletter.

### 3. The way forward

The next conference will be held in Malawi in July/August 2007. The dates are yet to be set. A circular on papers shall be released as soon as possible.

The Theme for the Malawi conference is:  
*Musical Arts Education & National Consciousness*

Sub-themes:

1. Relationship of Musical Arts Education with Entrepreneurship
2. Music and HIV/AIDS
3. Musical Rights
4. Social/Political Mobilization

### 4. PASMAE's Objectives

PASMAE's objective is to facilitate and promote Musical Arts Education in Africa through:

- (i) advancing the research, study and understanding of African Music
- (ii) informing the governments of African countries on the values of Musical Arts Education for:
  - a. the conservation as well as modern advancement of the cultural heritages of African

peoples and societies

- b. the enhancement of the cultural integrity and human pride of African peoples and societies
- c. the positive representation and presentation of African human genius and mental civilizations
- d. the excitation and overall stimulation of creativity
- e. the mental stability and physical health of the individual

- (iii) assisting music educators in Africa in the preservation and teaching and practice of knowledge of the music cultures of African societies which will enable inter-cultural respect, understanding and co-operation
- (iv) guiding and facilitating the teaching and understanding of the music of other cultures of the world in Africa for overall human understanding and cultural respect.
- (v) acting as a clearing house for Musical Arts Education in Africa
- (vi) encouraging and supporting the development and production of appropriate materials for lifelong Musical Arts Education
- (vii) developing creative artists who will be capable of promoting knowledge about the content, practice and meaning of African Musical Arts
- (viii) encouraging the sharing of knowledge and experiences relative to Musical Arts Education in Africa with the rest of the world.

### 5. Membership

There are benefits for being a paid up member:

- You will receive updated information concerning the Society.
- You stand a chance of being covered should there be any sponsorship from PASMAE to any conference.



Membership is open to anyone interested in African Musical Arts and Education. The membership fee is USD \$20 and USD \$10 for students.

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 (Secretary-General)  
**Fax:** +267 - 3936933 Attention: Irene  
 Soko (Secretary-General)  
**E-mail:** irene@botsnet.bw  
**Web site:** www.pasmae.org/ciimda

Membership fees can be deposited or transferred to the PASMAE Account:

Bank: **First National Bank**  
 Country: **Republic of South Africa**

Copies of any transactions made to PASMAE account should be forwarded to the Secretary-General at the following address:



## PASME (Pan-African Society of Musical Arts Education)

### New Member Application Form



*Membership of PASMAE is for all who care about musical arts education and the goals of the society. By becoming a member, you will have access to the PASMAE e-mail updates, PASMAE related activities and any discounts applicable at the appointed time.*

#### Your details

First name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last name: \_\_\_\_\_

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## PUBLICATIONS

**African Music Educator:** the journal publishes peer-reviewed articles on current problems relating to music education in Africa, as well as book reviews. E-mail: [uccmusic@saoas.org](mailto:uccmusic@saoas.org)

**Centering on Practice: African Musical Arts Education.** Minette Mans (ed). TBP – papers submitted for 2005 PASMAE Conference. Contact Dr. Minette Mans: [mans@iafrica.com.na](mailto:mans@iafrica.com.na)

**Cultural diversity in music education: Directions and challenges for the 21st century.** Edited by Patricia Shehan Campbell, John Drummond, Peter Dunbar-Hall, Keith Howard, Huib Schippers, & Trevor Wiggins. Brisbane: Australian Academic Press, 2005.

**Democracy and music education: liberalism, ethics, and the politics of practice.** Paul G. Woodford. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005.

**Encounters – meetings in Australian music: Essays, images, interviews.** Edited by Vincent Plush, Huib Schippers, & Jocelyn Wolfe. Brisbane: Queensland Conservatorium Research Centre, 2005.

**Teaching music globally: experiencing music, expressing culture.** Patricia Shehan Campbell. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

**The World of South African Music; A Reader.** Christine Lucia (ed) OUP, June 2006. A selection of texts on South African music.... To provide the reader with a deep understanding of the music...

### DHOW COUNTRIES MUSIC ACADEMY (DCMA)

News letter No.7 – Excerpts



#### Taarab goes to Norway

DCMA started the year 2006 with a highly publicized event – the TV Gala Opening of the Ibsen year in Norway. Artistic Director Ibrahim Khatib traveled with five Zanzibar musicians to Oslo to perform a Taarab version of a popular Grieg song, “Maragrathes Lullaby” along with artists from the Cairo Opera, the Hangzhou Yue Opera, and the Teatro dell’Opera de

Roma and others at the Opening Event of the Ibsen Year 2006. They were met by the King and Queen of Norway at a reception afterwards and generally treated in a royal way. As the TV announcer in the event put it – “ladies and gentlemen, for the first time in the history of the world from the Dhow Countries Musical Academy – Margarethes Lullaby, sung in Swahili!”

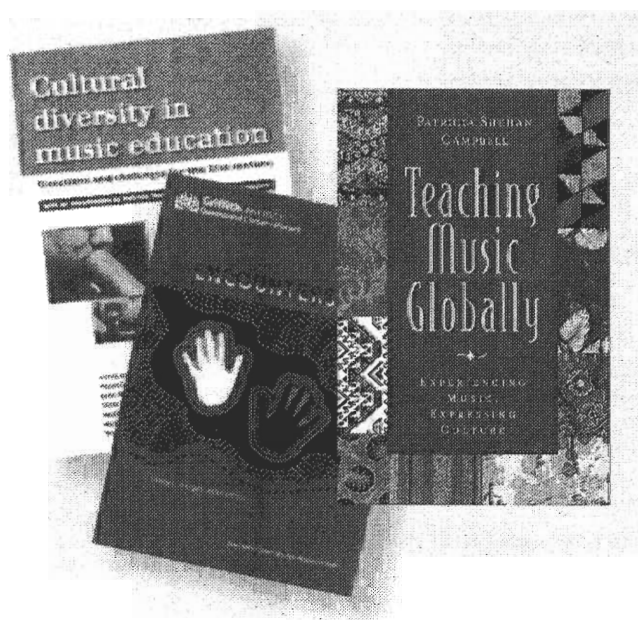
This visit coincided luckily with the release of our first CD

production “Dhow Crossing” which is the result of a three-year collaboration between students at DCMA and Agder University. “Dhow Crossing” has evolved over a series of visits back and forth between Norway and Zanzibar, and it presents a thoughtful and, at times, electrifying mixture of traditional and modern, Norwegian and Zanzibar music styles. Think “Bjork meets Taarab”. Favourite so far among local and international audiences is track 3 – *Arababa Pakistani!*. To find out more visit the website:

<http://www.mic.musiconline.no/shop/displayAlbum.asp?id=30648>

#### Educational Concerts continue

DCMA continues their series of educational concerts in public schools where the musicians are always received with huge enthusiasm. The hour-long lecture includes songs and instrumental pieces with explanations about the origin of the music, the instruments and rhythmic activities in which the children can join. They can also put their hands on the instruments and try their luck as budding musicians, a source of great entertainment to their friends.



## CONFERENCES



### 27th INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR MUSIC EDUCATION — WORLD CONFERENCE

**Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia • 16th – 21st July, 2006**

ISME 2006's theme "Sentuhan" transcends cultural and racial barriers as it reaches out to "touch" and be "felt" by all. Sentuhan explains the crucial role that music plays in human life, the importance of music education and Malaysia reaching out to "touch" the world in our uniquely Malaysian way.

E-mail: [isme@isme.org](mailto:isme@isme.org) – ISME International Office



### REINFORCING EDUCATION FOR ALL

**Learner-Centered Education through Creative Processes**

**Namibia • 7th – 9th August, 2006**

National Institute for Educational Development, Okahandja, Namibia

E-mail: [cpg@iafrica.com.na](mailto:cpg@iafrica.com.na)



### NEW DIRECTIONS, NEW VOICES

**School of Music & Conservatory, North-West University, Potchefstroom campus**

**Potchefstroom • 14th – 16th September, 2006**

At the joint meeting of the Ethnomusicology Symposium and the Musicological Society of South Africa in 2005, these bodies unanimously voted to jointly found an inclusive association to promote the study of music in Southern Africa in all media and contexts. This is the founding meeting.

Presenters with an interest in music who have not previously participated in musicology or ethnomusicology are strongly encouraged to attend.

E-mail: [ig@maties.sun.ac.za](mailto:ig@maties.sun.ac.za) • Fax: 021 808-2340



### INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MUSIC EDUCATION, EQUITY and SOCIAL JUSTICE

**New York • 6th – 8th October 2006**

Teachers College Columbia University, New York

E-mail: [Allsup@tc.edu](mailto:Allsup@tc.edu)



### PASMAE

**PAN-AFRICAN SOCIETY FOR MUSICAL ARTS EDUCATION**

**July/August 2007 in Malawi**

E-mail: [Irene@botsnet.bw](mailto:Irene@botsnet.bw)

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