

1999

ISSUES FOR MUSIC AND EDUCATION IN WEST AFRICA

WIGGINS, TREVOR

<http://hdl.handle.net/10026.1/2802>

<http://dx.doi.org/10.24382/3462>

University of Plymouth

All content in PEARL is protected by copyright law. Author manuscripts are made available in accordance with publisher policies. Please cite only the published version using the details provided on the item record or document. In the absence of an open licence (e.g. Creative Commons), permissions for further reuse of content should be sought from the publisher or author.

REFERENCE ONLY

UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH

9004504207



EXPLORING THE MUSIC OF THE WORLD
MUSIC OF WEST AFRICA

LIBRARY STORE

Written by
Trevor Wiggins

Series Editors
Eva Skalla
Mandy Macfarlane

Original design by
Frances C. Green

Designer
Tristan Manco

From an original concept by
Thomas Brooman



HEINEMANN
EDUCATIONAL



Heinemann Educational
a division of Heinemann Educational Books (Oxford) Ltd.
Halley Court, Jordan Hill, Oxford OX2 8EJ

OXFORD LONDON EDINBURGH
MADRID ATHENS BOLOGNA PARIS
MELBOURNE SYDNEY AUCKLAND SINGAPORE
TOKYO IBADAN NAIROBI HARARE
GABORONE PORTSMOUTH NH (USA)

© Trevor Wiggins and The WOMAD Foundation 1993

First published 1993

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 0 453 81010 3

Pupils sheets may be freely photocopied for classroom use in the purchasing institution. However this pack is copyright and under no circumstances may copies be offered for sale.

Designed and produced by The WOMAD Foundation
Printed and bound in Great Britain by Athenaeum Ltd, Newcastle upon Tyne
Cassettes recorded at Real World Studios, Box, Wiltshire, SN14 9PN

Acknowledgements Thanks are due to George Odam and Michael Pennie whose advice, encouragement and support were always available and greatly appreciated. Thanks are also due to Tatiana Spencer and Fiona Parker for their comments on the manuscript, Alex Paver for advice on maps, Thomas Brooman for narrating cassettes, Basil Anderson, Richard Evans, Ben Findlay, Russell Kearney and Real World Studios for assistance with the recordings. We would also like to thank the following for their help collating photographs - Maria Ockenden from Compix at the Commonwealth Institute, Helen Simpson and Ben Baddoo, for translations we would like to thank Jenny Cathcart and Sammba Hawoli Sek. We would also like to thank the following schools and teachers for piloting the material: Alan Harwood and Bishop Wordsworth School, Salisbury; Howard Sayer and Worle Comprehensive School, Weston Super Mare; Ian Henderson and Hartcliffe Secondary School, Bristol; Gillian Holmes and The Castle School, Bristol.

The WOMAD Foundation should also like to thank the following for permission to reproduce copyright material:

Cassette 1: Tracks 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13 & 14: Trevor Wiggins
Cassette 1: Track 10, Cassette 2: Track 5: Rykomusic Ltd
Cassette 1: Track 15, Cassette 2: Track 3: Copyright Control
Cassette 1: Track 16 & 17, Cassette 2: Tracks 4 & 6: Island Music Ltd
Cassette 1: Track 18, Cassette 2: Track 7: Roger All Stars (Nigeria) Ltd
Cassette 1: Tracks 19 & 20, Cassette 2: Tracks 8 & 9: BSDA/EMI Virgin Music Ltd
Cassette 2: Tracks 1 & 11: World Circuit Music Ltd
Cassette 2: Track 2: Warner Chappell Music Ltd
Cassette 2: Track 10: Vinyl Art Publishing
Cassette 2: Track 12: Womad Music Ltd

The WOMAD Foundation would like to thank the following for music and lyrics: *Baayo* © 1990 Island Music Ltd, *Christiana*: Roger All Stars (Nigeria) Ltd *Set* and *Sinebar* Reproduced by permission of EMI Virgin Music, Ltd

Quotes

Oumou Sangare quotes from *Folk Roots*, January/February 1992
Baaba Maal quotes from *The Observer*, 21 July 91
Youssou N'Dour quotes from *Hey You!* (Youssou N'Dour) Jenny Cathcart, Finline Books

The WOMAD Foundation would also like to thank the following for permission to reproduce photographic material:
p. 18 Mick Csaky; p. 19, 21, 22, 25, 28a, b, 32, 36, 38a, b, 49, 50, 51a, b, 52, a, b, c, d, e, f, Trevor Wiggins;
p. 20, 25 Womad Foundation; p. 23, 35, 44 Frank Drake; p. 24 Thomas Brooman; p. 17, 33, 48 Caroline Hart; p. 41 Chris Hawkins;
p. 42 Ian Anderson; p. 58 Samuel Charters; p. 59 Gerard Verschooten; p. 60 (Bottom) John Mided; p. 60 (Top), 63 Adrian Boot;
p. 67 Dave Peabody; p. 71 Rounder Records; p. 74 Jack Kilby.
Front Cover: background front and back, Kente cloth and mud cloth photo from Caroline Hart, Joliba, Baaba Maal and Mansour Seck by Andy Kingsbury; Young Drummers and Dancers by Trevor Wiggins; Youssou N'Dour by Jack Kilby.
Back Cover photographs kora photo by Trond Isaksen, Mud Cloth photo Tristan Manco.
Wallchart photographs: (Numbered from top left hand corner) 1, 7, 8, 13, 16, Trevor Wiggins; 2, Andy Kingsbury; 3, 17, Trond Isaksen; 4, 12, Tristan Manco; 5, 6, Steve Lovell Davis; 9, 10, Michael Pennie; 11, Womad Foundation; 14, Caroline Hart; 18, John Mided

The WOMAD Foundation have made every effort to trace copyright holders. However, if any material has been incorrectly acknowledged, we should be pleased to correct at the earliest opportunity.

To Sylvane who bought me my first African drum and Johnson who taught me to play.

Thanks to:-



Arts Council of Great Britain

Contents

Introduction to <i>Exploring the Music of the World</i>	5
Teacher's Notes	7
Further Reading	11
Further Listening	12
The Cassettes in this Pack	14

1 Introduction to West Africa

Geography	16
History and Languages	17
Family Life	18
Learning to Play Music	19
Community Music	20
Musical Instruments	21
Music and Dance	22

2 Rhythm

Talking Rhythms	24
Finding the Beat	25
Making Rhythms	26
The <i>Hatsiatsia</i>	28

3 Music and Ceremony

Music and Ceremony	34
Funeral Ceremony	35
<i>Atenteben</i> Music	37
The Xylophone (<i>Balafon</i>)	38
'Derkpee'	39

4 Pitched Instruments

The <i>Kora</i> and the Xylophone	42
Tunings and Patterns	43
<i>Kora</i> Music	44
'Alla L'Aa Ke'	45
<i>Kumbengo</i> for 'Alla L'Aa Ke'	46
'Alla L'Aa Ke' and 'Derkpee'	48

Contents

5 Music for Recreation

<i>Gota</i> Music	50
Brass Bands	58

6 Popular Music

Women in Music	60
Oumou Sangare	61
Angelique Kidjo	62
Baaba Maal	63
'Muudo Hormo'	64
<i>Baayo</i>	65
'Alla L'Aa Ke' and 'Baayo'	67
Reggae	68
'Freedom'	69
<i>Highlife</i>	71
'Christiana'	72
Youssou N'Dour	74
Youssou N'Dour and 'Set'	76
'Set' and 'Sinebar'	77
'Sinebar'	78
Glossary	79

Exploring the Music of the World

No-one can be in any doubt about the urgent need for authoritative materials in our schools to support exploration, by both teachers and students, of the music of a variety of world cultures. *Exploring the Music of the World* represents the ongoing commitment WOMAD has for inter-cultural education.

From the beginning, the aim of the WOMAD Foundation has been to make accessible to everyone the music, arts and dance of as many cultures as possible. They have achieved this through live concerts, festivals, workshops, record releases and educational projects. The Foundation's objective is to excite, entertain and inform, and to make a wider audience aware of the worth and potential of a multi-cultural society through direct experience of the arts.

Since 1981, when 6 000 school children attended a 'Schools Day' at the first WOMAD Festival in Somerset, the Foundation has been working, growing and gaining real experience in the field of education. The support materials produced then became a marker of good practice which in 1985 allowed the publication of the *Talking Book* series. This resource has been a great boon to teachers and has already very positively affected the practice in our schools.

Building on this success and in response to the demand from teachers for further resources more specifically tailored to the classroom, this innovative set of materials, *Exploring the Music of the World*, has been initiated. It is designed to support GCSE and Standard Grade Music courses and has a strong emphasis on the appraisal, composing and performing of music in the classroom.

Exploring the Music of the World has been extensively researched by specialists and aims to provide:

1. A resource for teachers themselves to form a useful and relevant body of knowledge in beginning to understand and experience the music of many parts of the world;
2. Information and access to sound recordings that are attractive and relevant to pupils at Key Stage 3 and beyond, and to students of music generally;
3. A practical and approachable teaching resource for GCSE and Standard Grade Music, while not being specific to changing examination syllabuses;
4. Support and amplification of inter-cultural education in the Humanities at many levels, and encouragement of cross-curricular links with the arts;
5. A source of information for anyone wanting to increase their knowledge and understanding of music from other cultures;
6. Background and follow-up material to WOMAD's festival and workshop programmes.



Introduction

Whether teachers already have some knowledge and experience, or are just beginning a great exploration of the world of music, all should find the workpacks both informative and immediately useful. Each pack gives a detailed overview of the country of origin and its music, and selected chapters provide insight into specific aspects of each country's music.

The accompanying cassette tapes are closely linked in with the text, giving both direct samples recorded in the country and specially recorded musical examples which illustrate students using classroom instruments to play the music featured in the packs.

Through these materials the original spirit of WOMAD comes alive in our classrooms. There is plenty of stimulus provided in the text and through the many illustrations and diagrams. Each pack provides for the assimilation of facts and the gaining of knowledge. There are also many challenging questions posed in the practical projects that lead students and teachers to make important comparisons with their own society. Perceptive exploration of similarities and differences, encouraged by good teacher-student interaction, will provide an excellent grounding in cross-cultural understanding. We have never been more in need of this in our schools and their communities than we are now.

George Odam

Principal Lecturer in Music and Subject Leader in Music Education

Bath College of Higher Education



MUSIC OF WEST AFRICA

TEACHER'S NOTES

Most of the projects in this pack relate directly to the National Curriculum objectives for Performing and Composing music and, in addition, encourage the development of listening skills using a variety of approaches. Some of the work is also aimed at students beginning to understand music as a cultural phenomenon; the ways in which it is used in different situations and the ways it relates to society. Thus the first three projects on pages 16, 19 and 20 are concerned with finding out about the countries from which the music comes, how people learn music, about music within the local community and different attitudes to it. The projects will help students to develop research skills, this work will also link with other areas of the curriculum. The wallchart has been designed as an initial starting point for wider research into different aspects of West African culture.

The project on page 22 is designed to be part of the general development of analytic listening skills. You could supplement the list of general questions and ask more specific ones about particular styles of music. Students should begin to understand that they are not just looking for correct answers, but are developing a critical language which will enable them to share ideas about all musics. The project on page 24 is again quite simple but offers scope for further extension. In its basic form it asks students to be aware of the contours of speech and to develop basic aural awareness of pitch. Extensions might involve the use of instruments which will mean more precise contours, and the use of a notation to compare finer details of similar sounding 'names'.

Page 25 introduces TUBS (Time Unit Box System) notation which can be very useful in rhythm work. The pulse generally is that of the fastest sound event in the rhythm you want to write down, although you can occasionally use two equally spaced sounds in one box as on the second bell part on page 29. If a faster pulse speed had been used here, so that there was only one sound in any box, the pattern would have needed 24 boxes and would have become unwieldy and more difficult to read and learn. Some advantages of TUBS notation are that it is a graphic representation of the rhythm, *not* symbolic as in staff notation, and it is therefore possible to work out how it sounds without needing to learn a code for interpreting the symbols. Also, it does not imply a time signature which is inappropriate given that the following music does not have a sense of the accented bar-line as in western music and may have a number of different 'time signatures' operating at once, interlocking with each other. Where staff notation is used, non-standard note groupings have sometimes been adopted in order to show the structure more clearly (e.g p.30).

Pages 26–27 give a longer project developing ideas of interlocking rhythms which are very common in Africa (and some other places such as Indonesia). This could initially be done quite slowly as students (and most teachers?) in this country have little experience with these sorts of rhythms and the skill takes time to acquire. The difficulty then comes at the moment when the task moves from being something which you can count mechanically, clapping on the appropriate number, to something which must be perceived as a musical rhythm. Try using a clear percussive sound (e.g. top note of a xylophone or claves) as a timekeeper playing 1, 3, 5, 7 then just 1, 5 as the music gets faster. Ultimately try giving the timekeeper its own rhythm which all the other parts can relate to e.g. 1234567812345678. In the creative part of this project you may encourage students to work in different ways according to their ability and the skills you want to develop.



Teacher's Notes

Students could begin with the grid, writing down rhythms by filling in squares with little idea how these will sound. You might spend some time listening to the resultant sounds with the whole class and thinking about what makes a 'good' rhythm.

The other approach would be to ask students to make up rhythms aurally, and then think about notating them as an *aide-memoire*. Whilst this approach is more like music in the 'real' world, it does rely on students being able to conceive rhythms which fit in a predetermined time-frame and this is quite difficult unless they have quite a lot of musical experience. Students will need to have some measure of competence in using either TUBS or staff notation if they are to work independently on any of the next section on *Hatsiatsia*.

Hatsiatsia (pages 29–31) is something which will take some time to build up as it needs considerable rhythmic independence. You do need to be aware of the starting point of the time-line rhythm (part 1) in order to know where to start the other parts, even though they do not start at the same time. We often tend to hear the time-line with three or six beats for a start but it is important also to know and be able to hear the four-pulse which is used for the dance. You may find it useful to use either a tape or a sequencer to play the time-line, while you are learning the other parts. Alternatively you can challenge yourself to learn to play one part and sing another! For the composing project based on this (page 32), you will need to have talked through with students the techniques used in *Hatsiatsia*. The project could be broken up into smaller stages so that you can more easily monitor progress and share ideas. The brief is intentionally left quite wide to allow scope for invention but you may wish to set more specific guidelines and instructions for your students.

The project on ceremonial music on page 34 is intended to stimulate thought about the function of music within ritualized occasions. You might want to encourage students to think of, for example, the nightclub/disco and the football match as ritual ceremonies, asking about the function of each ceremony and the place of music within it. This should also highlight the extent to which music is a powerful cultural identifier – students would no more listen to the 'wrong' music than they would wear the 'wrong' clothing. This also links with the project on page 36 in which students begin to look at a specific ceremony, the funeral. The composing part of this is deliberately open-ended to give students a wide scope for their imagination. Again you may need to give more specific help or guidelines to students.

On page 39 is printed a staff notation score for 'Derkpee'. Using this notation is not the easiest way to learn this music, which is much better learnt aurally. You could start by establishing the basic rhythm as a motor pattern played on the knees going:

left, right, left, right, together, right, left, right.

This could then move onto a xylophone which has had the bars removed to make it C pentatonic and the motor pattern repeated on just two notes. The next stage would be to move both hands down one note after the first two notes have been played. This will in fact give the basic pattern without the octave leaps (which are in any case a problem if you have only school xylophones with the usual 1.5 octave range). In the xylophone tradition from which this music is drawn, the basic pattern is a frame within and around which you build your own music. The other patterns in the printed music are examples of typical variations; you can make up more of your own and play them in any order you wish. You can also vary such things as the volume (but not usually the speed as someone may be dancing). The composing project on page 40 again gives some basic guidelines but will need you to have elucidated the principles and to give more specific instructions as with the *Hatsiatsia* project.



The *kora* listening project on page 44 is an extension of the more general listening project on page 22 and also begins to enter the area of more subjective judgements in matters of taste, style etc. It encourages students to speculate about the nature of musical preferences – the extent to which they are innate or learned – and also links back to questions about the cultural status of music raised on page 34. The information about the style of vocal writing is important as it is used as the basis for creative work in the next project on page 47. The printed music for 'Alla L' Aa Ke' again looks more complex than it is, given the way staff notation requires a tie across the bar-line to indicate an anticipation of the next beat. Again the motor patterns are probably simpler learned aurally and this is certainly the traditional way. The project on page 48 again extends the critical listening and analysis by asking for a detailed comparison.

Learning *Gota* (pages 52–57) is probably the most difficult project in the pack as it really is not something that you can play while looking at some printed music – you have to know it from memory. Before you begin learning the lead part, the ensemble of supporting instruments must be steady and solid. All the parts are important: the *gankogui* because of its penetrating sound and role as a timekeeper for the whole ensemble, the *axatse* because its simple rhythm enables the lead drum to check that it is in the right place in the pattern, and the interlock between *kagan* and *kidi* because it provides the continuous fast pulse. The lead part can then be learned sectionally. It is important to make sure that you produce the right sounds on the lead drum as far as possible, so do keep the speed down to start with – it is too easy to go for a fast pace and lose all the subtlety. This is not just loud, fast music.

The listening exercise on *reggae* (page 58) should really be linked with further investigation of *reggae* styles (see *Music of the Caribbean* by Michael Burnett in this series). *Reggae* is tremendously popular in West Africa, where many international stars visit and perform. The brass band manages to get right into the *reggae* feel without a bass guitar or any sort of heavy bass-line. The secret is in the percussion section, which combines a limited drum kit with some West African drums, especially *gboba* which has a low pitch, and the timing of the chords which are very laid back and not exactly equal quavers although that is how you would have to write them in staff notation.


The section on Women in Music on pages 60–62 is intended to stimulate students' awareness of cultural/social issues in music. As well as increasing their understanding of music in a West African context students are also asked to look at their own culture to consider gender differences and bias. This can easily be extended into many other areas of the curriculum.

'Muudo Hormo' on page 61 is not too difficult. You could start with parts 1, 3 and 4 and even have part 1 just playing in minims for a while until the alternation is secure. Parts 3 and 4 must not be allowed to play minims; the sound must be damped or stopped. Then add the rhythm in bars 2 and 4 which gives it a nice bounce. Part 2 can then be added – rhythmically slightly more difficult – introducing the concept of heterophony which can be picked up and identified in many other sorts of music e.g. much Japanese music. Once you have established the basic parts the other more decorative parts can be added and students can be encouraged to explore and invent their own. The final idea asks students to consider one way of creating a longer but cohesive piece of music using the given material as a paradigm.

'Baayo' on pages 65–66 is typical of much West African music in that it could equally well be written in $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{6}{8}$ or $\frac{12}{8}$ time signatures. Any of them is equally appropriate or inappropriate and playing the music with too great an emphasis on what is implied by any of them will distort the music.



Teacher's Notes

You could certainly try to teach this aurally first as the composite rhythm of the two parts  is quite easy to understand, whereas trying to decipher the relationship from the notation requires a good level of competence.

Another interesting point is the way the solo part picks up and alternates different subdivisions of the rhythm. It is worthwhile looking at the nature of these with older students, pointing out the way in which pitch can be used to emphasize rhythmic divisions in the same way that rhythm can emphasize a particular pitch. This could be followed by some improvisation around the basic riff which provides a simple harmonic background against which to explore ideas of rhythm. The listening project comparing 'Alla L' Aa Ke' and 'Baayo', on page 67, builds on the previous ideas of establishing a methodology for listening to music and, in addition, asks students to explore ideas of 'traditional' and 'popular' as applied to music. Is popular music simply music which is liked by the most people? Is it possible for this also to be traditional in some ways? This can be extended into many other styles and musical cultures.

Rhythmically the *reggae* piece 'Freedom' on page 69 is simple, although it must be played accurately to achieve the desired effect. Some other interesting points about it can be made which might be useful to students in their own compositions, e.g. the use of the descending minor bass-line with the dominant chord being in the minor instead of the major, thus giving a modal effect, and the two-bar bass pattern which is clearly established after three repetitions and then is used in a type of diminution, which gives an acceleration in the rate of sound events, clearly marking the end of the sequence and giving a lift back to the start again.

For additional hints on style, for the project on page 70, see *Music of the Caribbean* by Michael Burnett.

'Christiana' on page 73 is sparsely scored, goes at some speed and needs rhythmic accuracy to make it work. The underlying quaver pulse must be thoroughly learnt by the performers, and rock steady. Interestingly, you can still see the characteristic interlocking rhythm patterns of West Africa present in many aspects of this music; look at the interaction of the three upper parts in bar 2.

The printed version of Youssou N'Dour pieces 'Set' and 'Sinebar' on pages 73 and 75 are somewhat simplified and presented in paradigmatic form. Even so, they present a challenge to students because of the speed and rhythmic energy and accuracy required. The method for building up the music is shown on page 73 and the students are asked to consider the logic behind the suggested progression of building up the parts. You might then work with students to decide a possible order for carrying out the same procedure on 'Sinebar'. Students will be doing very well if they can get this music to hang together at a considerably slower tempo than on the recording, but it is one of those occasions when the effort is worthwhile in terms of the learning it promotes about how this music works, even if the end result is not a perfect performance.

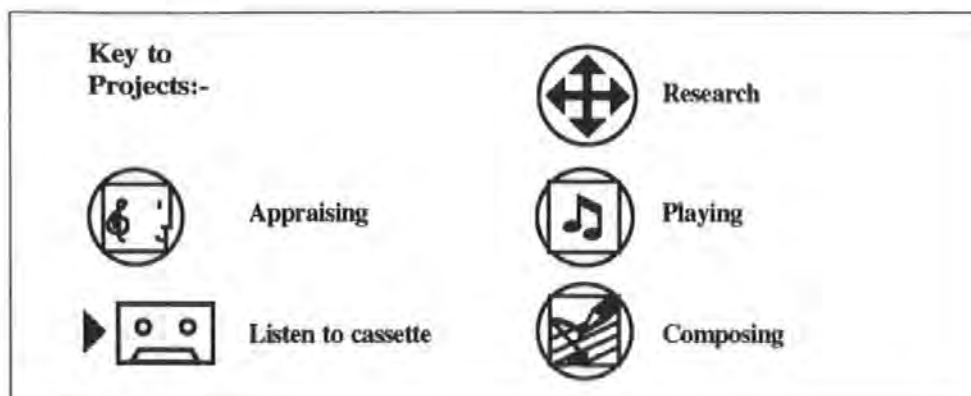
Tracks 10, 11 and 12 on Cassette 2 are not referred to in the text. These tracks have been selected for extended listening as they reflect the diversity of West African music. Farafina are an outstanding drum and dance troupe from Burkina Faso (see wallchart), Ali Farke Toure from Mali, is one of West Africans finest blues guitarists and Fatale represent one of Guinea's most exciting traditional groups.

*Please note: We would like to apologise for the incorrect populations given on the wallchart. Mali and Guinea should read as follows Mali 9 214 000 and Guinea 5 755 000. (Populations correct at time of publication).



Teacher's Notes / Further Reading

The following keys have been devised to help teachers categorize the projects in relation to the National Curriculum..



FURTHER READING

Books on the music of Africa:

- African Pop: Goodtime Kings*, Billy Bergman, Blandford Press
African Pop Roots, John Collins, Foulsham
African Rhythm and African Sensibility, J.M. Chernoff, Chicago
Drum Gahu, David Locke, White Cliffs Media Company
Drum Damba, David Locke, White Cliffs Media Company
Gollancz Xylophone Music from Ghana, Trevor Wiggins, White Cliffs Media Co.
Hey You! (Yousou N'Dour), Jenny Cathcart, Fine Line Books
Jùjú, Christopher Alan Waterman, University of Chicago
Music of Many Cultures, Elizabeth May (Ed.), Chicago
Stern's Guide to Contemporary African Music, Ronnie Graham
Studies in African Music, A.M. Jones, Oxford University Press
The Mandinka Balafon, Lynne Jessup, Xylo Publications
The Music of Africa, J.H. Kwabena Nketia, Gollancz
The Virgin Directory of World Music, Various Artists (CD/Book), Phillip Sweeney, Virgin Books

Related Cultural:

- The Asante*, M.D.McLeod, British Museum Publications
Come to Laugh - African Traditional Theatre in Ghana, Kwabena N. Bame, Lilian Barber Press
The African - A Triple Heritage, Ali A Mazrui
African Assortment, Michael Pennie, Bath College of Higher Education Press

Other packs on world music from WOMAD:

- Music of the Caribbean*, Michael Burnett, Heinemann Educational, 1993
Music of Indonesia, Gordan Jones, Heinemann Educational, 1994
Music of India, Punita Gupta, Heinemann Educational, 1994



Further Listening

The availability of recordings is constantly changing: some are issued only on cassette, some are on vinyl records and are being phased out, an increasing number are issued on CD but these are subject to the judgement of record companies as to what will sell. Here are some suggestions of recordings to look out for.

COMPILATIONS

- Traditional: *African Journey* (Ghana, Togo, Gambia), Sonet
Balafons and African Drums (Cameroon, Guinea, Sahara, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo), Playasound (CD)
- Popular: *African Moves*, v. 1-2, Stern's
Under African Skies, BBC, (CD)
Boiling Point, World Circuit
Sound D'Afrique, v. 1-2, Mango

GHANA

- Traditional: *Ancient Ceremonies – Song and Dance Music*, Various Artists, Nonesuch Explorer
Mustapha Tettey Addy – Master Drummer, Tangent
Kakraba Lobi – Xylophone Player, Tangent
New Juabeng Kete Group, Kabedco
Kpanlogo Party, Lyrichord
- Popular: *Kafo Mpo Dzidzi*, A.B. Crentsil, Dimtex
Giants of Ghanaian Highlife 1950s–70s, Various Original
Osabarima, Koo Nimo

IVORY COAST

- Traditional: *Fodonon funeral music*, Chant du Monde,
 Popular: *Apartheid is Nazism*, Alpha Blondy (reggae)

MALI

- Traditional: *Jali Musa Jawara*, Jali Musa Jawara, Oval
 Ousmane Sacko and Yiarkare Diabate, OCR
- Popular: *Soro*, Salif Keita, Stern's
The River, Ali Farka Toure, Mango
New Dimensions in Rail Culture, Super Rail Band, Globestyle
Mousoulou, Oumou Sangare, World Circuit

NIGERIA

- Popular: *Juju Music*, King Sunny Ade, Island
Original Sufferhead, Fela Anikulapo Kuti, Shanachie



SENEGAL

- Traditional: *Wolof Music: Senegal and Gambia*
 Popular: *Immigres*, Youssou N'Dour, Earthworks
Nelson Mandela, Youssou N'Dour, Polydor
Wango, Baaba Maal, Syllart
Olel, Baaba Maal, Mango

SIERRE LEONE

- Popular: *The Palm Wine Sounds of S.E. Rogie*, S.E. Rogie, Stern's

AFRICAN MUSIC ON REALWORLD & WOMAD RECORDS

- Babete Soukous*, Tabu Ley Seignieur Rochereau and Afrisa International Orchestra (Zaire), RW5
Songs for the Poor Man, Remmy Ongala and Orchestre Super Matimila (Tanzania), RW6
Luxor to Isna, The Musicians of The Nile (Egypt), RW8
Mambo, Remmy Ongala and Orchestre Super Matimila (Tanzania), RW22
Mama Mosambiki, Eyuphuro (Mozambique), RW10
Exile, Geoffrey Oryema (Uganda), RW14
Island of Ghosts, Rossy (Madagascar), RW19
Le Voyager, Papa Wemba (Zaire), RW20
Live at Real World, The Drummers of Burundi (Burundi), RWM1
Sounds of Womad, Various Artists WOMCOM CD001
Worldwide Ten Years of Womad, Book & CD, Various Artists, RWBK1
 Available by Mail Order:- PO Box 35, Bath, Avon, BA1 1YJ

SUPPLIERS

- Recordings: Many larger record shops now have world music selections of some description.
 In case of difficulties try Stern's, 116, Whitfield Street, London W1P 5RW.
 Projection Records, 19, Mount Pleasant, Crewkerne, Somerset TA18 7AH
 (Mail Order available)

- Traditional: Acorn Percussion, Unit 34, Abbey Business Centre, Ingate Place,
 Instruments: London SW8 3NS
 Knock on Wood, Granary Wharf, Canal Basin, Leeds LS1 4BR
 Joliba, 47 Colston Street, Bristol BS1 5AX
 African Music Agency, 120 Kentish Town Road NW1 9PY
 Art of Africa, 20 Magdalene Street, Glastonbury BA6 9ER

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES/ WORKSHOPS

- Womad Foundation, Millside, Mill Lane, Box, Wilts SN14 9PN



The Cassettes in this Pack

CASSETTE 1

SIDE A

- 1 *Hatsiatsia*. Bell 1. (21")
- 2 *Hatsiatsia*. Bell 2. (25")
- 3 *Hatsiatsia*. Bell 3. (26")
- 4 *Hatsiatsia*. Bell 4. (23")
- 5 *Hatsiatsia*. All 4 bells together. (1'37)
- 6 Agbadza (Funeral Dance) recorded in Accra, Ghana. (3'08)
- 7 *Asante* funeral dirge played on *atenteben* (flute). (1'35)
- 8 'Derkpee' funeral music on the xylophone. (1'57)
- 9 Equal Heptatonic tuning of xylophone. (40")
- 10 Sequencer version of 'Alla L' Aa Ke'. (1'55)
- 11 *Gota* music (drums) slow tempo. (1'31)
- 12 *Gota* music (drums) fast tempo. (56")
- 13 *Gota* music (brass band) recorded at Dzodze, Ghana. (3'05)

SIDE B

- 14 *Reggae* played by brass band at Dzodze, Ghana. (4'42)
- 15 Sequencer version of 'Muudo Hormo', Copyright Control. (1'44)
- 16 Sequencer version of 'Baayo'. (1'46)
- 17 Sequencer version of 'Freedom'. (2'30)
- 18 Sequencer version of 'Christiana'. (1'53)
- 19 Sequencer version of 'Set'. (1'58)
- 20 Sequencer version of 'Sinebar'. (2'55)

CASSETTE 2

SIDE C

- 1 **Oumou Sangare**: 'Kaini Wura' from her new album (5'47) courtesy of World Circuit Ltd, written by Oumou Sangare. ©1993 World Circuit.
- 2 **Angelique Kidjo**: Extract of 'Batonga' from *Logozo* (2'40) courtesy of Island Records Ltd, written by A.Kidjo/J.Hebrail. ©1992 Island Records S.A France.
- 3 **Baaba Maal**: 'Muudo Hormo' from *Djam Leelii* (6'13) courtesy of Rogue Records, written by Baaba Maal.
- 4 **Baaba Maal**: Extract of 'Baayo' from *Baayo* (2'30) courtesy of Island Records Ltd, written by Baaba Maal. ©1991 Island Records Ltd.
- 5 **Toumani Diabate**: 'Alla L' Aa Ke' from *Kaira* (7'14) courtesy of Hannibal Records/Rykodisc inc. Traditional arrangement by Toumani Diabate. ©1988 Rykodisc inc.
- 6 **Adiaa**: Extract of 'Freedom for the black people' from *Soweto Man* (2'30) courtesy of Island Records Ltd, written by M. Sidibe. ©1989 Island Records Ltd.

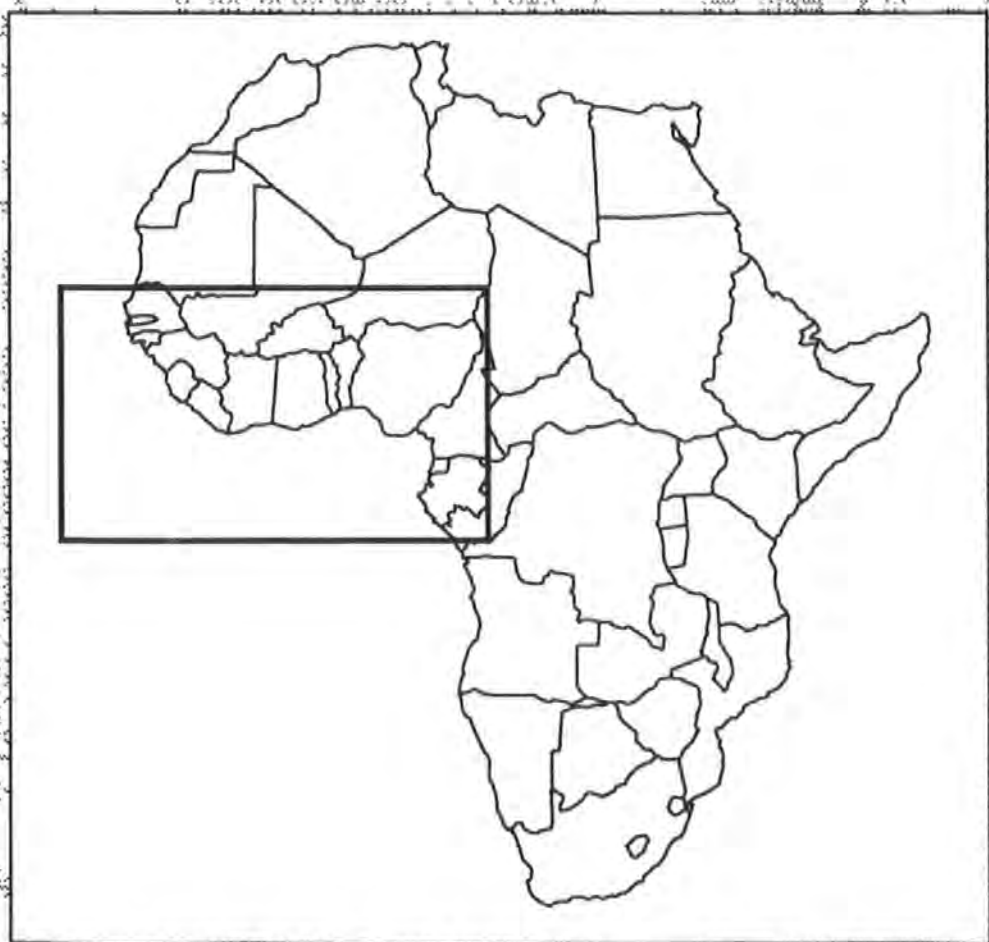
SIDE D

- 7 **Prince Nico Mbarga**: 'Christiana', from *Prince Nico Mbargo and Rocafil Jazz* (9'00) courtesy of Rounder Records, written by Prince Nico Mbargo. ©1976 All Stars.
- 8 **Youssou N'Dour**: 'Set', from *Set* (3'45) courtesy of Virgin Records Ltd, written by Youssou N'Dour/Habib Faye. ©1990 Virgin Records Ltd.
- 9 **Youssou N'Dour**: 'Sinebar' from *Set* (4'45) courtesy of Virgin Records Ltd, written by Youssou N'Dour/Habib Faye. ©1990 Virgin Records Ltd.
- 10 **Farafina**: 'Mama Sara' from *Faso Demo* (7'11) courtesy of Real World Records. ©1993 Real World Records Ltd.
- 11 **Ali Farka Toure**: 'I Go Ka' from *The Source* (3'58) courtesy of World Circuit Ltd, written by Ali Farka Toure. ©1992 World Circuit.
- 12 **Fatala**: Extract of 'Boké' from *Gongoma Times* (2'08) courtesy of Real World Records Ltd. ©1988 WOMAD Records Ltd.

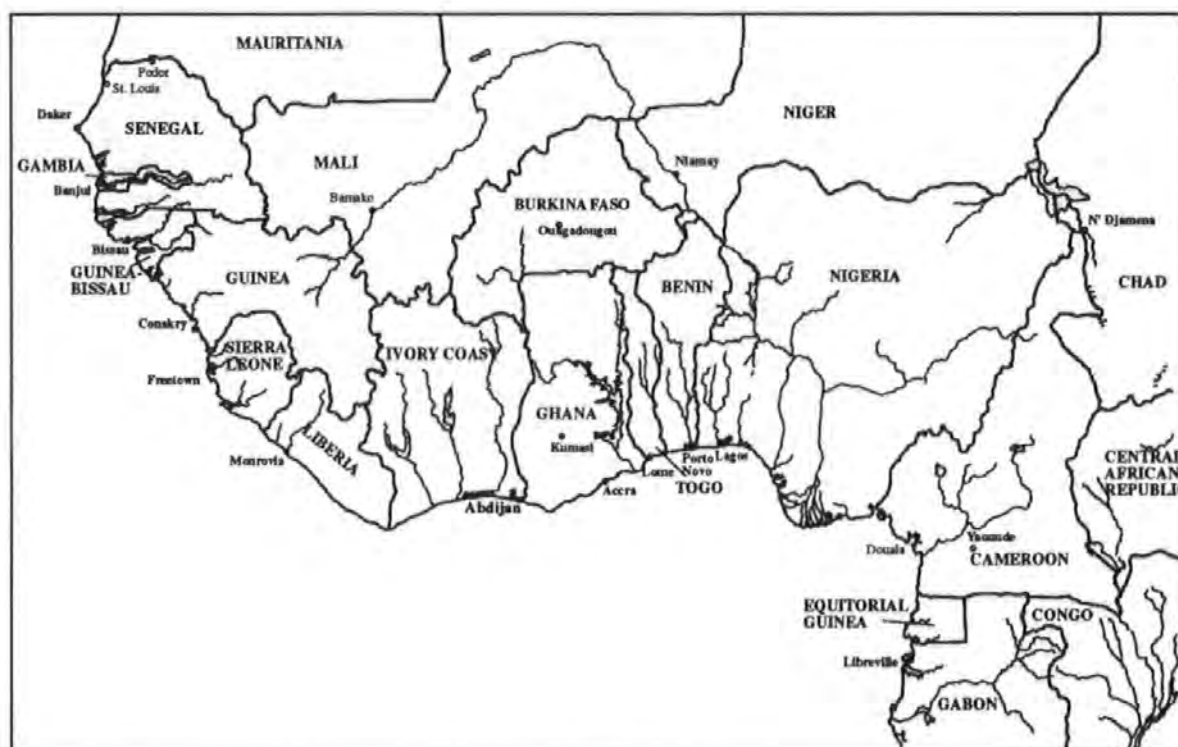


Chapter 1

Introduction to West Africa



The continent of **Africa** is a very large area of land with a considerable variation of climate and many different peoples living there. In West Africa alone you could list these countries: **Benin, Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.** Some are quite small like Togo, others like Ghana are about the same size as the UK. Mali is nearly five times the size of the UK, but the population density is much lower. Mali's population of 9 214 000, is approximately 15 per cent of the size of the population of the UK.



Project Explore a Country



CHOOSE A COUNTRY IN WEST AFRICA AND FIND OUT MORE ABOUT IT. USE THE WALLCHART AS A STARTING POINT.

- How large is it?
- What is the population?
- What is the climate?
- What work do most people do?
- What languages do they speak?
- When did the country become independent from the colonial power?



From analysing crops and from local folk history, it can be deduced that people have lived in West Africa for many thousands of years. The empire of Ghana (not the modern state) dominated Sub-Saharan Africa for many years from around AD1 but, unlike the ancient Egyptians and Romans, its peoples did not construct any monumental edifices or leave written records which have survived. Existing historical descriptions of West Africa were made mainly by white 'explorers' such as **Mungo Park**. The reports brought back excited interest and led to the invasion and colonisation of most of West Africa by European powers who provided 'good government' in return for taxation and, in many cases, the exploitation of mineral and human resources. Present day Ghana was known as 'The Gold Coast' – because it was rich in deposits of gold and minerals. The European powers divided up West Africa, without much consideration for existing boundaries between groups of people, so that the borders, today shown in the map on page 16, are the result of agreements between the Belgian, British, French and German governments. Within each West African country many different languages are spoken – sometimes over 100 – but you may find that government business and official communication is in English or French. Many people would prefer an African language as their national language, but then there would be the problem of agreeing which language should

be chosen. Any choice is unlikely to be agreed by everyone.

Many West African languages are *tonal*, which influences the music. West African people are proud of their languages – they can often speak three or four fluently, and when they hear a person speak they can usually tell where that person comes from, sometimes to an accuracy of about 10 kilometres!

Tonal – the meaning of the word can be changed by altering the pitch used for different syllables



Street scene, Accra, Ghana



Family Life

People in West Africa have very strong attachments to their family and to the place where they were born and grew up. Families are important; they support each other, so that no one person suffers. Families also provide a focus for many other community activities. People even refer to cousins as 'my brother' or 'my sister'. If a young person moves to a city to find work they will often find accommodation with another member of the 'family' and will send money back home whenever possible.

In some regions a man will have more than one wife. Each wife has her own house within a large compound where all the wives share the household tasks. All the children from about the age of five or six are expected to help as well, as are grandparents who may also be living in the same house - so a 'family' can easily consist of 20-30 people of different ages. This is changing as people move into the cities, but the sense of community still remains.

Outside the cities people spend most of their time in farming activities. Most households will keep chickens and perhaps some goats or cattle. They may also have some land on which they grow a staple food - corn, rice or cassava according to the region. Some families are known for a particular occupation, such as blacksmithing or making music.

In some countries, for example Mali, families of traditional musicians - known as *griots* - can trace their history back through many generations and continue to keep their oral tradition alive today. In other places, such as northern Ghana, people believe that children are visited by a 'spirit' which may be the reincarnation of an ancestor. The spirit will give them a particular 'gift' perhaps for seeing into the future, healing sick people or playing music.

If people have a gift for music they will be able to learn quickly and easily and will become skilled players and people want to hear them play. Someone without this gift may learn to play an instrument, but will never be a really good player.

Traditional music, dancing and singing is an important part of family life.



Amadou Bansang Jaobarteh, Kora player - from a *griot* family

'Griot' is a word used outside Africa to describe families of hereditary musicians in different countries e.g. jali, gawlo, (see pages 42 and 71).



People who live in rural communities tend to get up at sunrise, and return home for the evening meal when it gets dark. After they have eaten they may sit and talk, or sometimes they may play instruments and sing. Young children often copy music they have heard others play. Sometimes a parent will sit a child on their knee guiding their hands to play an instrument. Groups of very young drummers practise, on drums made out of old cans or something similar. It would be unusual to find someone who goes to a music teacher for regular formal lessons.



Young drummers from Ghana at the Easter Festival at Dzodze

Project Ways of Learning Music



FIND OUT AS MUCH AS YOU CAN ABOUT HOW PEOPLE IN YOUR CLASS LEARN MUSIC.

- Are their parents musical?
- Do you, or they, think they have a gift for music?
- Do they have regular lessons, or have they just taught themselves to play?
- How do they learn new pieces of music?



Community Music

On important occasions such as religious festivals, funerals or at harvest time there is always plenty of music and dancing which everyone joins in. Music provides a good way for the whole community to meet together to enjoy themselves, talk to friends and celebrate the occasion. People are proud that they have their own version of a piece of music which is quite distinctive – they can be quite offended if you suggest that it sounds just like the way it is played in the next village! Even when living in the cities, people from the same village will meet together to dance and sing. Their music becomes very important in reminding them of where they come from - especially when they are not able to travel back home.

Project Musical Activities



FIND OUT ABOUT COMMUNITY MUSIC ACTIVITIES IN YOUR AREA.

- What sort of people take part?
- How is it organized?
- What music do they play?
- Would you be interested in joining in?
- Why/why not?



Dou Dou N'Diaye Rose from Senegal playing saba drums



Kora –
stringed
instrument made
from large gourd,
with 21 strings.
See Chapter 4

Jùjú –
a Yoruba
(Nigerian popular
music which
evolved in the
1930s. See p. 71

Highlife –
West African style
of Dance Music.
See p. 71

Reggae –
Lively strong
rhythmic music of
the Caribbean

Gourd –
medium to large
vegetable like a
pumpkin which
has been
hollowed out
and dried and
used as an
amplifier

As well as dancing and singing, people play all sorts of musical instruments: drums, xylophones, bells, rattles, *kora*, guitars, fiddles etc. There is no clear distinction between 'pop' and 'folk' music like there is in the west. Pop groups using electric instruments will work with traditional rhythms and melodies in their music, while traditional musicians will sometimes compose music using popular styles such as *highlife* (Ghana), *jùjú* (Nigeria). All sorts of musics are considered 'popular' including traditional drumming, xylophone and *kora* music; as well as reggae and western pop music.

Given that there are so many different groups of people and languages in West Africa you might expect the music to be very different from place to place. This is true but there are several common elements of style, and common instruments across the region. The reason is partly historical: it is thought that hundreds of years ago, many people travelled west from what is known today as Sudan, as a result much of West African culture and language, although quite different now, has similar roots.

Instruments found throughout West Africa include drums of all shapes and sizes ranging from quite small and high-pitched to large powerful drums up to 1.80 metres high and 1 metre in diameter. In places where there are large trees, drums are usually carved from whole tree trunks, but they can also be made from staves, like a barrel, especially where large trees are scarce. Often, drums are accompanied by some sort of metal bell which produces a high sharp note heard above the drums, keeping them in time, and a rattle, usually made from seeds and a *gourd*.

Xylophones are common wherever there is hardwood to make the bars. They have either a five or a seven note scale and gourds are fastened underneath the bars as *resonators*.

Some stringed instruments also use a resonator. This is a gourd which is cut in half, with animal skin tightly stretched across the opening to provide a flat surface for the bridge.

Typical instruments are the *gonje* which is about the size of a violin and is played in the same way, although it only has one string, and the *kora*, which usually has 21 strings and is plucked like a harp.



Joseph Kobom playing a *gylil* (xylophone from Northern Ghana)



Much of the music of West Africa is for dancing, in fact many of the languages use the same word to describe music and dancing – the two cannot be separated. West African music has a strong beat, but this is not as obvious as in western pop music. Sometimes the beat is not played by the musicians – it is the dancers themselves who actually 'play' the beat with their dance steps. Within the beat there may be lots of different rhythms going on at the same time, which can be confusing if you are not used to listening to this music or you do not know where the dance steps are. Nearly all the music in West Africa is rhythmic. Often the music uses repeated patterns, a basic idea which is gradually developed and changed as the music goes on, but is still recognizable. Patterns tend to be repeated for longer than in western pop music. This time is needed to get right into your dancing and to let the rhythm take you over.



Dancer from Alajo Junction, Accra

West African music also has a different sense of 'direction'. In a piece of western music there is often a strong sense of the music aiming towards a 'goal'. For example, the standard pattern for a piece of western pop music might be: *Introduction, Verse, Verse, Chorus, Verse, Instrumental, Chorus, Chorus, Fade* with the high point or goal around the instrumental section moving into the start of the repeated chorus. This is not usually found in West African music, even pop music, as the music is concerned more with finding a really good rhythm pattern that will mean you cannot keep your feet still.

Project Musical Styles



LISTEN TO AS MUCH MUSIC FROM WEST AFRICA AS YOU CAN AND MAKE A LIST OF THE SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES.

- Consider all the elements of the music.
- Is it fast or slow?
- What instruments are used?
- Is there a pattern to the music?
- Are there any common elements used?



Chapter 2

Rhythm



Drums belonging to Fatala from Guinea

If one of the main elements of western music is harmony – chords played by different instruments within which the bass and melody lines move – then a comparable element of West African music is rhythm. Many people think that traditional drumming in West African music has no particular pitch, but this is wrong. Within drum ensembles the instruments have to be tuned to quite accurate pitches in relation to each other, otherwise they cannot 'talk' properly. Most West African languages are *tonal* (see page 16), so that by using a drum that can change its pitch, or two drums, the drummer can imitate well known phrases that people might say. Since the sound of drums can carry a long way, drums are often used for 'talking' between people some distance apart. It is recorded that when Napoleon was defeated at the battle of Waterloo the native people in West Africa knew about it before their English and French governors because the news was drummed down the coast from North Africa. You can find this idea of pitch + rhythm = speech used in many practical and social ways in Ghana. For example, because the sound of a whistle can be heard from further away than shouting can, if people want to attract your attention they will whistle your name, imitating the pitch and rhythm of the words.



Ben Baddoo playing the *donno* (talking drum)

Donno - an hourglass shaped drum found in Northern Ghana and other places. The two playing heads are linked by leather thongs which are squeezed (see picture) to change the pitch.



Donno (talking drum)

Project Whistling



DECIDE ON A WHISTLE EQUIVALENT FOR YOUR NAME. USE YOUR FULL NAME SO THAT IT WILL BE MORE DISTINCTIVE.

- Compare your whistle with other people's.
- Can you tell whose name is being whistled?
- Are there any other situations in this country where people communicate with other people or animals by whistling?



The connection between words and music is also used to remember and describe patterns to be played on drums or other instruments. In many places there is a drum language which uses nonsense syllables (called *mnemonics*) which imitate the sound to be produced and tell you how to produce it. This can make it much easier to remember complex rhythms and music.

Another aspect of much West African music is that, although it has a strong pulse, this may not be played as strongly or obviously as in western music. It certainly does not have the strong 'backbeat' of most western pop or *reggae*. Sometimes you will also find that there are several different parts playing at the same time each with their own pulse, only coming together once in each cycle e.g. 2, 3, 4 and 6.

[illegible]

If you were asked, 'Where's the beat?' probably the only place you could point to would be where all the parts play at once, and you certainly could not say, 'It's got four beats in a bar.'



Ben Baddoo playing Sogo (right) and Kidi (left) see page 51



Project Making Rhythms 1



YOU CAN TRY A NUMBER OF THESE IDEAS TO MAKE UP PIECES OF YOUR OWN, AND PERHAPS THINK OF DIFFERENT WAYS OF REMEMBERING THEM. HERE A GRAPHIC NOTATION IS USED TO SHOW THE BEATS IN A MORE UNDERSTANDABLE WAY THAN WESTERN STAFF NOTATION.

- Try making up one rhythm, then playing it starting at different times:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

- This can also be linked to the 'Ketchak' or Monkey Chant from Ball, the first three parts of which are:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

- Now trying using different percussion instruments for each part, or similar percussion instruments, but different pitches e.g. a *tongue* or *gato* drum. You can also try using the same idea with different rhythms.





Project Making Rhythms 2



MAKE UP YOUR OWN RHYTHMS USING THESE IDEAS AND TRY PUTTING THEM TOGETHER IN DIFFERENT WAYS. WHAT SORT OF THINGS SOUND BEST?

- Patterns which repeat every 3, 4 or 6 pulses.
- The same pattern several times but not starting together.
- Different rhythms or notes.



THE NEXT IDEA TO TRY IS USING ONE RHYTHM TO 'FILL' OR 'TALK' TO ANOTHER. WHAT RHYTHM DO YOU NEED TO FILL IN THE GAPS IN THIS?

	
☆	☆	.	☆	☆	.	☆	.	☆	☆	.	☆	☆	.	☆	.

- Do you recognize this rhythm? What are the words associated with it?
The 'fill' rhythm will do just that – fill in the gaps so you end up with these parts:

	
☆	☆	.	☆	☆	.	☆	.	☆	☆	.	☆	☆	.	☆	.
.	.	☆	.	.	☆	.	☆	.	.	☆	.	.	☆	.	☆



COMPOSE SOME RHYTHMS OF YOUR OWN THAT CAN BE FILLED IN BY ANOTHER RHYTHM.

- Do not try to make up anything too complicated, make sure you leave some spaces to be filled!
- Try working out the rhythms and their 'fill' in different ways by doing it aurally with a friend or on your own using a cassette to record the first part which you can then try to fill.
- Try working some ideas out on paper using the notation as in the examples on page 26 – BUT you must be able to work out how they sound and perform them on your own or with friends.



The *Hatsiatsia*

You can find examples of many of the ideas about rhythm in just one piece of traditional music from Ghana called *Hatsiatsia* (pronounced Hat-cha-cha) which is played by four bells of different shapes and sizes. The music for *Hatsiatsia* is played as part of a ceremony that also involves dancing and singing, but for the moment you are just going to learn the bell parts.

The *Hatsiatsia* ceremony is often part of the meetings which are held in Accra (the capital of Ghana) on the first Sunday of each month. Groups from different villages – some of them hundreds of kilometres from Accra – will meet to dance, play, sing, swap gossip and news, celebrate their traditional culture and collect money which may be used for something their home village needs, like a new well.

Hatsiatsia is performed by the people of the *Ewe* tribe (pronounced Eh-vay). Everyone takes part. Perhaps 100 or more people form a large circle, often around a tree that provides shade from the hot sun. A bucket of water is blessed and placed just inside the circle. A slow, shuffling dance step gradually takes everyone past the bucket and people dip their hands or a handkerchief into it, wiping their faces with the water. Sometimes someone will rush up to the bucket, cup their hands, scoop up some water and throw it over as many people as possible (See Picture p.32). The significance of this ceremony is that you should forgive and forget all the disagreements and arguments you have had with friends and family during the last month – they are all washed away by the water. The music is played on two types of metal bell. The bells are quite heavy and made from iron, usually by the local blacksmith.

There is a double bell called *gankogui* (pronounced gang-cog-we) and a single bell called *atoke* (a-toe-kay). *Gankogui* is played with a stick and *atoke* with a metal beater. The photos below show you how they are held and played. Good alternatives to these instruments are *claves* or *tongue/gato* drums.

The *Ewe* are the main people from south-eastern Ghana. Their music is closer to the traditions of Togo and Benin than to that of other Ghanaian people. They have developed many different kinds of recreational music.



Gankogui



Atoke



The *Hatsiatsia* (continued)

The first part of *Hatsiatsia* is the timekeeper and is played on an *atoke*. *Hatsiatsia* uses a count of 12, rather than the count of eight that you were using on pages 26 and 27, this is useful for producing more rhythms using different pulses because it can be divided by 2, 3, 4 & 6.

Part 1

		
Atoke	☆	.	☆	.	☆	☆	.	☆	.	☆	.	☆	.	☆	.	☆	☆	.	☆	.	☆	.
Dance Step	☆	.	.	☆	.	.	☆	.	.	☆	.	.	☆	.	.	☆	.	.	☆	.	.	.

Here is the same part using music staff notation:

Bell 1



The dance pulse puts in four steps to each count of 12 – which can be difficult so start with !

▶ Listen to Cassette 1 Track 1

You will hear the bell played on its own, then a rattle will start to play the dance pulse. Try playing the rhythm and walking the dance pulse – you will notice that the dance pulse already starts to fill the bell part so that the dancers' steps are part of the music.

The second part is also played on an *atoke* and illustrates several of the ideas you were exploring earlier: it can be divided up into shorter units lasting 3, 3, 2, 2, 2 (so you have 2, 3, and 6 all fitting into 12), and it fills more of the gaps in part 1 (particularly in the second half of the pattern).

Part 2

		
Atoke	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆	☆
Dance Step	☆	.	.	☆	.	.	☆	.	.	☆	.	.	☆	.	.	☆	.	.	☆	.	.	.

Bell 2



▶ Listen to Cassette 1 Track 2

Again, combine playing and walking before you try to fit the two parts together.



The Hatsiatsia (continued)

The third part is played on a *gankogui* and is quite simple to play. If you heard it on its own it might sound like this (L and H stand for Low and High on the double bell):

I	.	.	.	I	.	.	.	I	.	.	.	I	.	.	.	I	.	.	.	I	.	.	.	I	.	.	.	I
L	H	.	.	L	H	.	.	L	H	.	.	L	H	.	.	L	H	.	.	L	H	.	.	L	H	.	.	L

But when it is played with the other parts it not only has its own pulse counting in fours, but the start of the pattern is delayed so that it sounds like this:

► **Listen to Cassette 1 Track 3**

Part 3

	I	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	I	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	I	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	I
Bell	.	.	L	H	.	.	L	H	.	.	L	H	.	.	L	H	.	.	L	H	.	.	L	H	.	.	L
Dance Step	⊗	.	.	⊗	.	.	⊗	.	.	⊗	.	.	⊗	.	.	⊗	.	.	⊗	.	.	⊗	.	.	⊗	.	.

Bell 3



► **Listen to Cassette 1 Track 4**

The fourth part is again played on a *gankogui*, and is probably the most difficult to play in the ensemble, although it is much easier on its own. Try to think of a mnemonic, or use this one:

Ilkley Moor Ilkley Moor t'at
On on bar

(with apologies to the folk song). Played on its own, part 4 then sounds like this:

I	.	.	.	I	.	.	.	I	.	.	.	I	.	.	.	I	.	.	.	I	.	.	.	I	.	.	.	I
	L	.	H	.	H	H	L	H	.	H	H	L	H	.	L	.	H	.	H	H	L	H	.	H	.	H	H	H

Now, when you put it with the other parts not only does it have its own pulse in four, but the start is delayed one pulse after the timekeeper and two of the LH sounds coincide with part 3. Look at page 31 where it is shown with the dance pulse.



The *Hatsiatsia* (continued)



RHYTHM

Part 4	| . . . . . | . . . . . | . . . . . |
Bell	· L · H · H H L H · H H L H · L · H · H H L H · H H · H
Dance Step	⊗ · · ⊗ · · ⊗ · · ⊗ · · ⊗ · · ⊗ · · ⊗ · · ⊗ · ·



▶ Listen to Cassette 1 Track number 5

Bell 1	⊗ · ⊗ · ⊗ ⊗ · ⊗ · ⊗ · ⊗ ⊗ · ⊗ · ⊗ · ⊗ ⊗ · ⊗ · ⊗ · ⊗
Bell 2	⊗ · ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ · ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ · ⊗ ⊗ · ⊗ ⊗ · ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ · ⊗ ⊗ · ⊗ ⊗ ·
Bell 3	· · L H · · L H · · L H · · L H · · L H · · L H
Bell 4	· L · H · H H L H · H H L H · L · H · H H L H · H H · H
Dance	⊗ · · ⊗ · · ⊗ · · ⊗ · · ⊗ · · ⊗ · · ⊗ · · ⊗ · ·



Notice how the parts have different pulses, but come together; how the starts of some parts have been delayed; how some rhythms fill others but at other times they reinforce each other - and that is just the rhythm parts without the songs or the movement of the dance.

WOMAD FOUNDATION / HEINEMANN EDUCATIONAL





The *Hatsiatsia* (continued)

Project *Hatsiatsia*



DEVISE YOUR OWN PIECE OF RHYTHM MUSIC IN AT LEAST THREE PARTS WITH A PULSE OF 12, USING AS MANY OF THE IDEAS FROM HATSIATSIA AS POSSIBLE.

- Do not try to make individual parts too complicated otherwise they will be difficult to put together.
- Find the best way for you of remembering what you have done – mnemonics or some sort of notation.
- Perform the piece with friends or use a multi-track cassette recorder gradually to build up all the parts yourself.
- Explore patterns which last for 2, 3, 4, 6 or even 12 pulses.
- Try making up a rhythm, then starting earlier or later against the other parts.
- Try *not* to have all the parts fitting a regular 'dance step' beat all the time.
- Use patterns which complement or fill each other.
- Explore using different sounds both within a rhythm and for the whole pattern. Enjoy it!



The *Hatsiatsia* Dance - people slowly dance past the bucket, dipping their hands or handkerchief into it and wiping their faces with the water.



Chapter 3

Music and Ceremony



Welcoming ceremony by a group of elders in Mali

Ceremonies are important throughout the world. Some are formal such as state occasions. The ceremony could be a state occasion, social or athletic. It could be religious or a rite of passage (something which marks the transition of a person from one age or status to the next).

Project Ceremonial Music



DRAW UP A LIST OF AS MANY CEREMONIAL OCCASIONS AS POSSIBLE. FOR EACH ONE ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

- What is the purpose of the ceremony?
- Is there music involved?
- What sort of music is it?
- What is it used for?

In West Africa it is difficult to think of any ceremony which does not involve music. In the previous chapter you looked at *Hatsiatsia* and the way that music, dancing and singing are part of the ceremony. A funeral in West Africa is an important occasion where there is dancing, singing and music. It might seem strange to have people dancing at a funeral – after all, in this country, if someone is 'dancing on your grave' it means they are glad that you are dead! But in West Africa a funeral is not only an occasion for sorrow, it is also a celebration of the life of that person, a chance to remember all the good things about that life, and an expression of joy that they have now passed on to a better existence.

Listen to Cassette 1 Track 6

The music of *Agbadza* was a traditional *Ewe* war dance, but it is now often heard at funerals. In contrast, what you might think of as an occasion for a loud, happy ceremony, the birth of a child, is often very quiet. Among the *Sisaala* people a newborn child is 'outdoored' (taken outside for the first time) three or four days after it is born. This is done in great secrecy in the middle of the night, as it is believed that if a person coughs or a dog barks the child will die.

Sisaala - one of the groups of people living in northern Ghana



Funeral Ceremony

Ceremonies surrounding death vary from place to place, according to local customs and the religion of the deceased. Religion is very important in West Africa and takes many different forms, often combining ideas from traditional tribal religions with Christian or Muslim beliefs.

In most places the news of a death is spread quickly to the rest of the community, either by word of mouth or by the playing of a particular piece of music. Messages are sent to all the members of the family, who may be living elsewhere, telling them to come home for the funeral. Where there is a local paper, this will also carry the announcement.

Friends and relatives will come to visit the body, to offer their sympathy to the family, and also to make gifts of money to the dead person to take messages to their relatives who are already 'on the other side'. Meanwhile a coffin will be made. In countries like Ghana, coffins can be very elaborate, carved in a shape that says something about the person who has died. For example, a woman who has been successful in business and raised a large family may have a coffin in the shape of a hen; a fisherman's coffin may be in the shape of the fish he usually caught; and a taxi driver may have a car for his coffin. These coffins are beautifully made and very expensive, costing up to the equivalent of two years' wages. The person's body is quickly embalmed to preserve it from heat and is then laid on the bed where he or she slept.



Ghanaian Coffins carved in the shape of a bird and a fish



Funeral Ceremony (continued)

On the day before the burial all the friends and relatives of the dead person gather at the house during the afternoon. There will probably be some drumming and dancing. People will remember good things about the person who has died. Some may play cards or other games and there will be plenty to drink. This part of the ceremony goes on all night and is called the 'wake-keeping'.

One funeral, of a famous actor, was held in a large hall rather than at his house. After the dancing had been going on for some time the coffin arrived. It was carried slowly into the hall, followed by the close relatives. A funeral tune from the *Asante* people was played on the *atenteben*.

The coffin was placed on a raised platform decorated with a canopy of fairy lights. The platform sloped toward the stage, so that when prayers were said and the lid was taken off the coffin the dead man could 'watch' what was happening. Extracts from some of the plays and events that the actor had performed were presented on the stage so that everyone could remember his talent and admire his skill.

The following morning the coffin was carried to the church for the burial service. The burial service can often be a long procession visiting all the places that the dead person enjoyed. The coffin appears reluctant to go to be buried and tries to go somewhere more pleasant, but it is firmly directed back towards the burial ground. After the religious service the coffin is finally buried and people go home, but this does not mean that the person is forgotten. The anniversary of their death will be remembered and marked for many years to come.



Atenteben – a bamboo flute rather like a recorder

Asante – people who live in central Ghana. Kumasi is the regional capital.

Project Ceremonial Music



LISTEN TO THE *ATENTEBEN* PIECE OF MUSIC ON THE TAPE (CASSETTE 1: TRACK 7).

- The music is printed on page 37. Try playing it on a recorder.
- Does the *atenteben* piece sound like music for a funeral to you? Why/why not?
- Listen to other funeral music from different places – are there any common elements?
- Compose a short piece of funeral music of your own imitating the style of something you have heard.



Atenteben

1

6

9

13

16

19

22

25



The Xylophone (*Balafon*)

In the north of Ghana, Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast, the *balafon* or xylophone is used in music for funerals. The xylophone is used to announce that someone has died – the tune played tells people whether the person is male or female, young or old. Most of the funeral ceremony takes place in a circle around the xylophone, which occupies the centre, together with the body.

The xylophones are quite large instruments having either 14 or 18 keys – special instruments are kept only for funerals. The bars are long (up to 75 cm) and heavy because they are made from hardwood. Each bar also has a resonator made from a *gourd* to enhance the sound. Two or three holes are drilled in each *gourd* and covered with a papery substance made by a particular spider. When the instrument is played these vibrate to give a distinctive buzzing sound.

The xylophone is tuned so that it has five notes to the 'octave' (i.e. it is *pentatonic*). These notes do not correspond exactly to the notes used on western instruments.

The xylophone is played with large, heavy beaters. Traditionally, the heads were made from latex and glue, but the heads of modern beaters are often cut from lorry tyres. The beaters are held between the first and second fingers which is painful to start with but provides a strong grip.



Gyil – the xylophone of the Lobi/Dagaare people of N. Ghana and Burkina Faso



Close up of playing technique

Listen to Cassette 1 Track 8

You can hear a short performance of a piece called 'Derkpee', played on a *gyil*, which announces the death of a man who was a brave warrior. You can hear that all of the music is based around the pattern that is played at the beginning. More notes are gradually added to this to make the pattern more complicated; notes are changed, varying the pitch in some cases. When the piece is performed there is no set order in which to play the variations – each performance will be different, with the musician deciding what to play and for how long. At a funeral this music would also be played for dancing and might have another xylophone playing a simpler accompaniment part, together with a cylindrical two-headed drum called a *gangaa* and a metal hoe called a *kuur* which is played like a bell, as a time-keeper.

Balafon is a word often used to describe all sorts of West African xylophones. *Balafon* is actually a word in the Malinka dialect of Mali meaning 'to make the *bala* (xylophone) speak'.





'Derkpee'

Gyl

The first system of musical notation for 'Derkpee' is written in 3/4 time. It consists of a treble and a bass staff. The treble staff begins with a G-clef and contains a melody of eighth and quarter notes. The bass staff begins with an F-clef and contains a simple accompaniment of dotted half notes. The system concludes with a double bar line and repeat signs.

The second system of musical notation continues the piece. It maintains the same 3/4 time signature and staff arrangement. The melody in the treble staff shows some rhythmic variation, including eighth notes and quarter notes. The bass staff continues with dotted half notes. The system ends with a double bar line and repeat signs.

The third system of musical notation continues the piece. It maintains the same 3/4 time signature and staff arrangement. The melody in the treble staff continues with eighth and quarter notes. The bass staff continues with dotted half notes. The system ends with a double bar line and repeat signs.

The fourth system of musical notation concludes the piece. It maintains the same 3/4 time signature and staff arrangement. The melody in the treble staff continues with eighth and quarter notes. The bass staff continues with dotted half notes. The system ends with a double bar line and repeat signs.



'Derkpee' (continued)

Project 'Derkpee'



TRY TO PLAY 'DERKPEE', THE PIECE OF MUSIC ON PAGE 39.

- Start off with the basic pattern in the first four bars and do not try to go on to the variations until you are really confident.
- You could play it on an orchestral xylophone or, if you only have school xylophones, try using two, one pitched an octave lower than the other and playing one bar of the music on each instrument, either on your own or with a friend.
- Alternatively, you could use a keyboard instrument.

Project Composing with Tuned Percussion



COMPOSE YOUR OWN PIECE OF MUSIC WORKING EITHER BY YOURSELF OR IN A GROUP.

- Decide which instruments you are going to use. Mainly, you want tuned percussion instruments (xylophone, marimba, glockenspiel, metallophone) but you could also use a piano or maybe stringed instruments played only by plucking the strings.
- Start by composing a basic pattern using a pentatonic scale (e.g. G A B D E). This pattern should not be too complicated or difficult otherwise you will find it hard to make variations. Your pattern should be between two and four bars long. If it is four bars in length it might be, like 'Derkpee', a 2-bar pattern repeated using different pitches. Practise this until you can play it fluently.
- Now try making some variations. You could do this by playing continuously and changing some notes, or by adding some extra notes in some places. Try to work on one idea at a time and improve it until you are happy with it the result. You might find it helpful to record what you play and then to listen to it and review what you have done. You could also think about where else in the pattern you could change things, and how – and then try them out.
- Make a selection of between four and eight of the variations you like best and practise them until you can change fluently from one to another.
- Now make the pattern and the variations into a longer piece in the same way as 'Derkpee', by playing them in different orders, louder and softer, sometimes returning to the original patterns, and maybe even making up some new variations as you play if you feel inspired.

By the way - This should be fun! If you play what you think is a 'wrong' note, try playing it again – you may find you have a new variation!



Chapter 4

Pitched Instruments



Toumani Diabate playing the Kora

The *Kora* and the Xylophone

The title of this chapter, 'Pitched Instruments', is slightly misleading. Most instruments in West Africa have a definite pitch to the sound they produce. Instruments like bells and drums are usually carefully tuned so they can 'talk' to other instruments. Some instruments, such as the *kora* and the xylophone, can play many more notes than others.

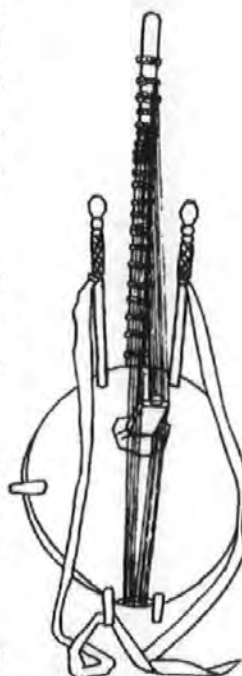
The *kora* is only played by a special group of male musicians (called *jali* in the *Mandinka* language) of the *Manding* people. The *kora* is made from a very large *gourd* which has been cut in half, with an animal skin stretched tightly across it. Projecting from the top of the *gourd* is a heavy stick. The strings (usually 21) are attached to the top and stretched down fitting into slots on either side of a bridge which is supported by the skin. In construction the *kora* has similarities with the lute and harp while its sound is closer to the harp. The strings are plucked with the thumb and first finger of each hand.

Some music has been written especially for the *kora*, but it is also quite common to hear music written for the xylophone played on the *kora*, too. More recently, music written for the guitar is played on the *kora*.

The *kora* is used mainly to accompany praise songs which are usually about great *Manding* heroes or kings, or a patron who rewards the *jali*. There are instrumental solos and duets, but these are usually based on the accompaniments to songs.

The xylophone is also played by the *Manding* people particularly in the inland areas of The Gambia. These xylophones are smaller and flatter than those used in Ghana and Burkina Faso and usually have 19 bars. They are made in much the same way, with *gourds* underneath the bars and with holes covered with spiders' egg-cases (or the modern equivalent – cigarette paper) although they tend to buzz less than the larger instruments.

The *Manding* people today live in Mali, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Gambia and on the North-west Ivory Coast.



Kora



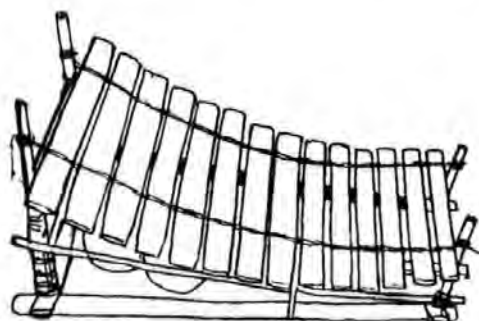
Close-up of *kora* playing technique



Both the *kora* and the xylophone have seven notes to the octave, but the tuning does not fit the western scale. There are at least four tunings with subtle differences between them – a good approximation would be where all the notes are the same distance apart with no tones or semitones like the western scales. (If you like to collect technical information, or if you have a digital tuner, you might be interested to know that the interval between each note is $1200 \div 7 = 171.4$ cents.)

The basic starting point for *kora* and xylophone music is the *kumbengo*. This is a basic pattern which contains all the main ideas of the music and it can be added to and varied according to the ability of the player. This is the same idea as the 'Derkpee' funeral music and has obvious parallels with the idea of an ostinato. Small changes to the *kumbengo*

are made to give the music interest, but more extensive ornamentation and improvisation is called *birimintingo*, and this usually happens when there is no vocal part. When playing a duet, usually one musician will play the *birimintingo* while the less experienced person keeps the *kumbengo* going. The *kumbengo* accompanies a style of singing called *donkilo* which means 'call to dance'. The songs are generally quite short and often have two main phrases.



Xylophone (*Balafon*)

Project Retuning your Xylophone



IF YOU WANT TO BE ABLE TO PLAY SOME OF THE MUSIC WITH THE RIGHT SORT OF TUNING IT IS QUITE EASY TO RETUNE A DIATONIC SCHOOL XYLOPHONE – WITHOUT DOING ANY PERMANENT DAMAGE.

- You will need some 'Blu-tac' or something similar and you need to put an F# bar to replace the F natural.
- To lower the pitch of a bar you need to fix a small amount of Blu-tac to one or both ends of the bar – underneath at either end is usually best.
- You need to lower the pitch of each bar by the following amounts:
C – 0 cents, D – 29 cents, E – 57 cents, F# – 86 cents, G – 16 cents, A – 43 cents, B – 72 cents (100 cents = 1 semitone).
- To help you there is a recording on the tape of each note of a school xylophone which has been re-tuned (Cassette 1: Track 9).



Project **Kora Music**

LISTEN TO CASSETTE 2: TRACK 5 AND AS MANY OTHER RECORDINGS OF KORA MUSIC AS POSSIBLE.

- Describe the vocal style in as much detail as possible.
 - Is the voice generally high or low?
 - Does it use a wide range of pitches?
 - Does it have a tight, nasal quality or is it smooth and relaxed?
 - Does it use vibrato?
 - Does it slide from note to note (*portamento*)?
- Describe the melodic style in similar detail.
 - Is it a simple melody or does it have complicated decorations?
 - How do the words fit the tune? Is it syllabic (one syllable per note) or are there a lot of *melismas* (one syllable to many notes)?
 - What about the melodic contour? Do all the tunes ascend, descend, or do both?
- When you have done this, draw some general conclusions about the style of music and then carry out the same survey with a contrasting style, perhaps from pop music.
- Why do you think such differences in preference began, and still continue?



Toumani Diabate and Amadou Jobateh together, Glastonbury 1987



'Alla L'Aa Ke' (God's work) is one of the standard pieces in the repertoire of both the *kora* and the xylophone. (A recording and a transcription of the xylophone version can be found in *The Mandinka Balafon* by **Lynne Jessup**.) This song is thought to have been composed around 1900 after the settlement of a dispute between two brothers over who should be chief of the region. When their father died the younger brother took his place as chief. When the British colonial government intervened and installed the elder brother as chief, the younger brother expected to be killed for his temerity, but his elder brother asked only for an apology saying:

Alla L'Aa Ke
(Mandinka)

Allah le ye a ke
Jongo manga ke
Be kari bayi le. Allah la baroo
jongo te wo bayi la.

Allah L'Aa Ke (God's work)
(English)

God has done it,
It was not a man.
All things in this world can be delayed
Except for the works of Allah Almighty.

► Listen to Cassette 2 Track 5

The music was composed for the *kora* and the recording on the cassette is played by **Toumani Diabate**.

Toumani Diabate was born in Mali in 1965 into one of the best known musical families (*jali*) of the country. From the age of five he taught himself to play the *kora*, when he was 13 he played in an ensemble in public for the first time. On this recording you hear the sound of one *kora*, Toumani is playing alone – and the recording has not been multi-tracked. When you watch someone playing the *kora* their fingers perform a complex dance which can be understood as movement as well as music. **John Chernoff**, author of *African Rhythm and African Sensibility*, describes a performance by a famous *kora* player:

'He barely glanced at the audience and he looked down at his instrument in deep concentration as he began to play a simple melody . . . As he played this simple music he watched his fingers and he seemed to be meditating on the musical theme which he quietly established. As he elaborated on this theme in greater rhythmic and melodic complexity, he began to demonstrate his incredible technical virtuosity. Finally, at the moment when his improvisations were reaching their most difficult and wonderful point, he raised his head and looked out at the audience, smiling slightly as he turned his head and his eyes to survey the scene.'

If you think how you feel when you finally get a complicated series of movements right, you will know why this is not just music.



Kumbengo for 'Alla L'Aa Ke'

'Alla L'Aa Ke'

Part 1

Part 2

Part 3

Part 1

Part 2

Part 3

Part 1

Part 2

Part 3



Kumbengo for 'Alla L'Aa Ke' (continued)

On page 46 there is a version of the *kumbengo* for 'Alla L'Aa Ke' divided into three parts. The basic phrase lasts for two bars and there are two sections, the second one showing the start of the variations in the top part.

To play this you will need tuned percussion instruments (retuned if possible), guitars or keyboards, or some combination of these.

► Listen to Cassette 1 Track 10

On the cassette is a recording of the music found on page 46, using one of the sounds on a keyboard. Keep listening to it to check that you are learning the music correctly. Try starting with part 2 which is just an 'arpeggio' of G – you may need someone to play a pulse so that you keep in time. When you are sure about keeping this going, add part 3 – again this only uses three notes (four if you count the octave) but you must be careful about the timing to see where it coincides with part 2 and where it is different. Now add the first version of part 1 – notice that it just anticipates the pulse each time, so the other parts must continue to play accurately.

Project Composing with tuned percussion



WHEN YOU CAN PLAY THE *KUMBENGO* FOR 'ALLA L'AA KE', USE THE INFORMATION YOU COLLECTED EARLIER FROM YOUR LISTENING TO HELP YOU COMPOSE:

- Some words.
- A melody copying the style of the traditional musicians, it does not have to be too long, two to four phrases.

RECORD YOUR COMPOSITION AND COMPARE IT WITH OTHER PEOPLE IN YOUR GROUP.

- Have you all used the same ideas?
- Do they all sound the same?



'Alla L'Aa Ke' and 'Derkpee'

Project 'Alla L'Aa Ke' and 'Derkpee'



LISTEN TO 'DERKPEE' (CASSETTE 1: TRACK 8) AND 'ALLA L'AA KE' (CASSETTE 1: TRACK 10) AGAIN. BOTH OF THE PIECES START WITH ONE IDEA WHICH IS THEN DEVELOPED AND VARIED.

- Make a detailed comparison of the two pieces showing their differences and similarities.
- If you were trying to compose a piece of music in the style of one of them rather than the other, how many differences could you find?
- What other music is composed in this way?



A blind *balafon* player playing at a funeral in Mali, (*balafon* players are very often blind).



Chapter 5

Music for Recreation



Drummers from Alajo Junction, Accra

As well as being an important part of many ceremonies, music is one of the main recreational activities in West Africa. People listen to music whenever they can and there is great support for local pop musicians as well as international artists. Many people also continue to perform their traditional music and dance.

A typical, and quite short example, of a traditional piece of drumming is the *Gota* music played by the *Ewe* people of **Ghana**. This is danced by couples who compete to see who can dance the fastest and the best, or it can become something of a competition between the dancers and the musicians. The music is started by the master drummer who sets the speed of the music.

When the dancers begin to dance, they also sing. If the music is not very fast they sing a song which is less than complimentary towards the drummers, saying, 'Is this the best you can do?' The master drummer might then play faster, or he might decide he really cannot be bothered, if it is too hot, and play even more slowly.

At some point the master drummer decides to play really fast, then the dancers change their song to one which says, 'OK, you win! Slow down!' The master drummer also gives signals to the dancers to change their step and to stop. He can control the music, making the music longer or shorter; so the musicians must know the dance and the dancers must know the drum signals.

Gota music was composed during the 1950s and 1960s. Several well known pieces of drum music were composed then. The most popular pieces of the time frequently mocked the dancing of people who came to Africa from the Caribbean, or Africans who had travelled abroad and then returned home. People felt that they had returned home with unnecessary airs and graces. Such people were referred to as *been-tos* because they had 'been to' America or Europe and had now come back home.



Dancers from Alajo performing a traditional Ewe dance



Other dances such as *Gahu*, *Kpanlogo* and *Highlife* were also developing at this time. Most people know that Africans were taken as slaves to the Caribbean, but they do not realize how many Caribbean people subsequently returned to Africa, bringing their customs and music with them.

One typical example is the *gome* or *gombe* drum used in *Kpanlogo* music. This is a large frame drum which the player sits on, pressing their heels into the skin to change the pitch, while playing it with their hands. This drum originated in the Caribbean. Slave owners knew that the slaves talked to each other through their drums and were afraid that they would organize revolts this way, so they banned the making and playing of drums.

The slaves responded by making chairs with leather seats. When they wanted to drum they laid the chair on its back and used their heels to tighten the skin. However hard the slave owners looked they could never find any sign of a drum.

Five instruments are used to play *Gota*: a double bell *gankogui* (which is also used for *Hatsiatsia*), a rattle *axatse* (a-ha-chay) which is made from seeds or beads tied into a net around a *gourd* and is played by hitting it against your hand or knee, and three drums *sogo*, *kidi* (keedee) and *kagan* (kah-gang).



Kidi (left) Kagan (right)



Axatse



The drums are shaped like a barrel and made from wooden staves. The skin of the drumhead is strung round the rim and connected to wooden pegs which control the tension and the pitch. *Kagan* is tall and thin, played with sticks, and has the highest pitch; *kidi* is slightly shorter and wider, played with sticks and pitched slightly lower than *kagan*; *Sogo* is played with sticks and hands and has the lowest pitch. It acts as the master drum.

To play Gota music, your drums must be tuned to each other and should sound a 2nd inversion triad so that if *kagan* sounds B, then *kidi* sounds G and *sogo* D. If you have not got these drums available then alternatives such as *congas* work quite well – but do try to get them in tune. For an alternative to *sogo* you need a drum which does not have a projecting rim above the head as you have to play with your hand.

Six different sounds can be played on the *sogo*. This description assumes you are right-handed. If you are left-handed you will need to reverse the instructions.

1 Left hand
Bounced in centre



2 Either hand
Sticks



3 Left hand
Open (bounced)



4 Left hand
Muted (press)



5 Right hand stick
+ left hand press



6 Right hand
Stick on side



Project Gota Music



▼
LISTEN TO CASSETTE 1: TRACKS 11 AND 12 WHILE FOLLOWING THE MUSIC. SECTIONS WITH REPEAT MARKS CAN BE PLAYED AS OFTEN AS YOU LIKE. THE FOLLOWING SYMBOLS ARE USED TO DENOTE THESE SOUNDS IN THE MUSIC ON PAGES 54-57. (L. H., R.H. STANDS FOR LEFT HAND, RIGHT HAND)

Key for SOGO part in GOTA

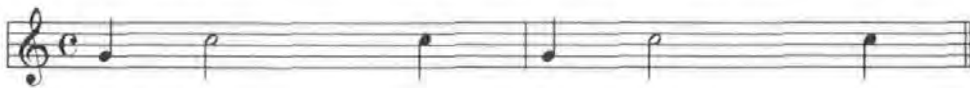


Try to learn this a section at a time and memorize each part before moving on to the next one. There are a couple of alternative parts which are useful to know. When the music is going fast the *gankogui* player leaves some of the notes out so that the part sounds like this:

Fast Gankogui part



But be careful that you do not end up playing this rhythm:



If there are not enough players it is very common for one person to play both *kagan* and *kidi* by putting the drums close together and playing this:

One person playing kagan and kidi



Gota Music (continued)

Gota

Sheet music for the first system of Gota Music, featuring five staves labeled Sogo, Axatse, Gankogui, Kagan, and Kidi. The music is in 2/2 time. The Sogo staff begins with a quarter note G, followed by a quarter rest, then a half note G. The Axatse, Gankogui, and Kagan staves have whole rests in the first two measures. The Kidi staff has a whole rest in the first two measures. In the third measure, all staves have notes: Sogo (half note G), Axatse (half note G), Gankogui (quarter note G, quarter note A), Kagan (quarter note G, quarter note A), and Kidi (quarter note G, quarter note A).

Sheet music for the second system of Gota Music, featuring five staves. The first measure is marked with a '1' in a box. The second measure is marked with a '2' in a box. The music continues with various rhythmic patterns and rests across the staves.

Sheet music for the third system of Gota Music, featuring five staves. The music continues with various rhythmic patterns and rests across the staves.



Gota Music (continued)

MUSIC FOR RECREATION

Sogo

Axatse

Gankogui

Kagan

Kidi

3

WOMAD FOUNDATION / HEINEMANN EDUCATIONAL





Gota Music (continued)

Sogo

Axatse

Gankogui

Kagan

Kidi

4

5



Gota Music (continued)

MUSIC FOR RECREATION

Sogo

Axatse

Gankogui

Kagan

Kidi

About to stop

STOP signal

WOMAD FOUNDATION / HEINEMANN EDUCATIONAL



Brass Bands

The *Gota* rhythm is also used by other ensembles such as pop groups and brass bands. Brass bands have been very popular in West Africa since about 1900 and a number of them can still be heard on special occasions. They have no printed music so they play everything from memory. The instruments have frequently seen better days.

On the recordings on the cassette you will also hear that they have a different way of tuning to that of the west. The band on the cassette, recorded at Dzodze (jo-jay) in Ghana, played for about two hours non-stop with tremendous enthusiasm. Listen to them playing a piece in *Gota* rhythm (Cassette 1: Track 13) and also a piece of Reggae (Cassette 1: Track 14) which is very popular in West Africa.



Nkaw Kaw Brass band, Nkaw Kaw, Ghana

► Listen to Cassette 1 Tracks 13 and 14

Project *Reggae*



LISTEN TO THE RECORDING OF THE BRASS BAND PLAYING *REGGAE* (CASSETTE 1: TRACK 14).

- What gives it a *reggae* feel?
- What do you associate with *reggae*?
- What things are missing that you associate with *reggae*?



Chapter 6

Popular Music



Fatale from Guinea in concert

In West Africa, all sorts of musical styles are popular – many pop musicians draw on traditional music and poetry for their inspiration as we will see in this chapter.

Much of this book is about music made by men, but what about the women in West Africa – do they just listen to the men's music and dance to it? While the simple answer is, 'No', there are wider issues to consider. Women in West Africa are valued by men for their 'traditional' abilities in making a home and raising a family. Many women also contribute to the income of the family, often by trading. They may have a stall in a market selling iced water, vegetables, or prepared food such as fried plantain.

Most of the traditional music and instruments that are played in public, such as drums or xylophones, are played only by men. There are folk stories to explain why this is so: they say that if a woman plays certain instruments she will not be able to have children. Among younger people some of these traditions are changing – the picture of the young drummers at the Easter Festival at Dzodze (page 19) has a young woman playing *atsimevu*, the lead drum.



Angelique Kidjo

There is a whole area of women's music about which very little is known. Many women's groups and societies sing and play music, for recreation or as part of a ceremony. Men are not usually let in to such occasions. Most of the people who have researched and collected music in West Africa have been men, so they have found out very little about it. Women are not concerned that their music is not widely known, it is personal to them, they share it only with close friends. Why should they perform it in public?

In West Africa the role and status of women in 'popular' music is now changing quite rapidly as it has also done throughout Europe and America.

Two women from West Africa who are making a name for themselves in popular music are **Oumou Sangare** from the Wassoulou region of southern Mali, and **Angelique Kidjo** from Ouidah on the coast of Benin. They are each involved in creating and performing their own music and have both made names for themselves in and outside of their own countries. The music of Oumou Sangare is firmly based in the traditional music of the Wassoulou, it is not 'pop' music, but popular meaning many people like it.



Oumou Sangare



Oumou Sangare has said, 'Wassoulou music is for young people but at the same time it is very old. Our ancestors were *Fulas* who settled in Wassoulou and adopted the *Manding* language but kept their music; and the *Fulas* are natural musicians. Then they started using a version of the harp which is played by hunters and healers, which is called *onsongoni*. Our version is smaller and only played by young boys so we called it the 'youth's harp'. In old days it was actually forbidden by the elders because young people used to dance to its music all night and then didn't feel like working in the day. But nowadays, attitudes to our music have changed because we also give moral advice in our songs.'

The instruments used in Oumou Sangare's group are electric guitar and bass, *kamalengoni*, *karinyang*, *calabash* (rattle) and violin (substituting for the local one-string fiddle). Oumou Sangare believes that it is the calabash which is partly responsible for the success of her music. 'The calabash is especially played by women at wedding parties in the Skass region of Wassoulou; they use it to accompany the bride to her new home. It's really an instrument of the *Gana* people who are part *Fula* and part *Senoufo*. When my audience sees the calabash spinning in the air it brings back happy memories. It changes the balance so that it's really women's music, even though there are men in my backing group.'

Oumou Sangare also talks about the way in which her songs relate to traditional music and dance. 'I don't know why it is that mostly women sing in Wassoulou. The truth is, men do sing, but they're just not as popular as women. Maybe it's because a lot of the songs are to do with encouraging men to work, and this comes better from a woman, like in my song "Djamakalsoumou" which reminds people of the hard work their ancestors endured and advises them to follow this tradition, even if the working environment is more modern. Now this particular dance is derived from a traditional masked dance of Wassoulou called "Sogoninku" representing a forest spirit. The essential thing about "Sogoninku" is very fast drumming on the *djembe*...'

Kamalengoni –
5-string youth's
harp

Karinyang – iron
scraper

Calabash – rattle

Djembe – drum
shaped like a
goblet played
with hands

Project Songs and Society



▼
CHOOSE A NUMBER OF POPULAR SONGS FROM DIFFERENT PLACES AROUND THE WORLD.

- What are the words about?
- How important are the words to the popularity of a song?
- How much do the words of a song reflect the society it comes from?
- If you wanted to write a pop song, would the words be about encouraging men to work?



Angelique Kidjo

Angelique Kidjo had two main influences on her musical development; one was the traditional music of Dahomey (now Benin) in particular the long epic songs about African life, unaltered for generations, the other major influence was the new urban African music developing in South Africa with such singers as **Miriam Makeba**. Since 1980, Angelique Kidjo has been working in Europe, based mainly in Paris. She first sang with a jazz band called **Pili Pili**. She has now put together her own group drawn from Europe, Africa and America playing western instruments creating a new electric sound with its roots in Benin music. Listen to the music on the albums *Parakou* and *Logozo* which could be described as world/funk while also including traditional numbers sung with minimum accompaniment.

Project Comparing Musical Styles



FIND OUT ABOUT OTHER MUSIC BY WOMEN, FOR WOMEN.

- Is it different from 'men's' music?
- In mixed groups, what roles do the men and women play?
- Why? Is this changing?



LISTEN TO THE MUSIC OF OUMOU SANGARE AND ANGELIQUE KIDJO (CASSETTE 2: TRACKS 1 AND 2).

- What makes the music sound popular?
- What makes the music sound traditional?
- Describe the sound of the voice – how similar is it to what you expect from a European 'pop' singer.
- Why do you think people sing in different styles – don't we all have the same basic equipment for singing?

The final words about women and music in West Africa should be left to Oumou Sangare.

'Women have a hard time in Africa. We have no voice; our men do all our talking for us. My role is to speak directly to women both through my songs and by setting an example and show them that they can make their own decisions, that they can choose their own loved ones.'



Senegalese musician **Baaba Maal** makes both traditional and pop music. He has an ensemble which features acoustic guitar and concentrates on melody and he also works with an electric group **Dande Lenol** (The Voice of the Race) but he has said:

'even with our electronic work the influences are African'.

Baaba Maal was born in 1953 in the town of Podor in northern Senegal. Both his mother and father were singers – his father used to call devout Muslims to prayer at the mosque. They were not a family of *griots*, traditional musicians, like the Diabates. Remember Toumani Diabate (page 45) who was born into a family whose traditional role is to play formal music at weddings and traditional ceremonies and to preserve their tribal history in their songs. It was not expected that Baaba Maal would have become a professional musician. He says:

'At the beginning of my career I had difficulties with the *griots* as well as my parents, who said, "You are not a *griot* so you cannot sing professionally".'

Baaba Maal is a *Fulani*. His family are traditionally fishermen but, like many other young people, he left his homeland because it could not support all the people and the cattle they need to keep.

He went to school in St Louis, where he learnt English and French

(and became more aware of the outside world). He then moved to Dakar, the capital, to continue his studies and there he joined an acoustic group playing traditional music. At this time he met the blind guitarist **Mansour Seck**. Together, they developed a style of playing which echoes traditional *kora* music, while also having a 'blues' feel from the guitar sound. Mansour Seck is from a *griot* family. Through him and their music, Baaba Maal became accepted by the *griots* who subsequently elected him to represent the *Fulani*.

The *Fulani* people occupy land on both sides of the Senegal river, but are divided because to the north of the river is the country of Mauritania, while to the south is Senegal.



Baaba Maal



'Muudo Hormo'

Baaba Maal writes his songs in his native *Fulani* language which caused him some problems to begin with because most Senegalese people speak Wolof, including those who own the main radio and TV stations in Dakar. He was lucky, though, since people liked his music. In 1984–5 Baaba Maal and **Mansour Seck** recorded a cassette in Senegal – *Djam Leelii* – which has subsequently been released in the UK. The track – 'Muudo Hormo' – will give you a good introduction to the style they developed, and is also quite easy to play.

*Wolof –
language
spoken by
Toucouleur
people who live
in Senegal.*

'Muudo Hormo'

Part 1

Part 2

Part 3

Part 4

Part 5

Part 6

Project 'Muudo Hormo'



▼
TRY PLAYING THE VERSION OF 'MUUDO HORMO' PRINTED ABOVE
(CASSETTE 1: TRACK 15).

- Parts 1 – 4 are the basic pattern which should be kept going the whole time, while 5 and 6 are decorative parts.
- Listen to the recording of what is printed above and the original track (Cassette 2: Track 3) to get the style and to decide which of the instruments you have are most suitable.
- Try adding your own decorative parts, then make it into a longer piece by fading different parts in and out.



Baaba Maal's first international album, *Baayo*, was released in 1991. In writing it he drew on his experiences of life and of making music. The arrangements on the album are *Fulani* in style while the percussion draws on traditions from *Wolof*, *Mandinka* and the *Casamance* regions. As Baaba Maal said, 'I am an ambassador – an African ambassador. All the people of West Africa can see themselves and their history in the album.' The title track of *Baayo* ('The Orphan') has a number of elements which are found in many types of West African music. It begins with a guitar which plays this:



The repeated Ds and the shape of the melody give a definite impression of the music having three beats in a bar. Another interesting feature is the way this would be played on the guitar. **John Collins**, author of *African Pop Roots*, has pointed out how African guitar styles often use the thumb to play one part opposed to two or three fingers playing an upper part – this technique also relates to the *kora*. You can see that in 'Baayo' the thumb will play D, D, C#, B, C# with the last two notes being syncopated – can you hear this as a separate part? When the second guitar comes in it plays:



Again you can see that there are two distinct parts this time with the lower part keeping a three pulse, while the upper part has a two pulse against it. The second guitar is mainly fulfilling the functions of rhythmic accompaniment and drone. When this develops into the main part of the song, the lower part of the second guitar has two notes instead of one but still has the same function. In the score on the next page a typical solo part is also given; notice how bars 2–3 of the solo part support the two pulse, while 1 and 4 have a three pulse, not letting the music become definitely one or the other. This is a common feature of traditional music throughout West Africa.



'Baayo'

'Baayo'

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Solo

'Baayo' (Fulani)

(Yoo) Alla Wadtam foondu Kanne
Mariyamma, mi diwa mi juuroo
e leydi amen saare Duwoyr

(Yoo) Alla rokkam ko njidnoo mi
juutde balde e maleede kame arsukaaji
Mi wuura, mi wuudu eshilaabam
Mi wuura, mi wuurda e banndiraabam
Kono jamaanu wadiino njah - mi haa

Farayse mbede dabba gannal leelii
Telefon nde sonnoo noddaa mi
Senegaal leelii.
Ngartu mi Ndakaaru, taw-mi neene
O yehii- "Baayo, Baayo, Bayoo"

Neene yo, neene yo, neene yo, neenam
Neene yo beey - bis - beey, beey-
Baaba yo, Baaba to, Baaba yo, baabam-
Baaba yo beey

'Baayo' ('The Orphan') (English)

If God could turn me into a pigeon
A golden pigeon or a turtle dove
I could fly to my homeland
At Douwayra

Back home where my folks are
If God could give me everything I wish for
Long life, happiness and prosperity
Then I would always live beside
Those who are dear to me
My parents and my friends

While I was in France
Learning more about art and life
One terrible phone call
Summoned me home
Where I found
My mother was already dead and buried

Orphan orphan orphan
Mama mama mama, my darling mother
Papa papa papa, my dear father



Project 'Alla L'Aa Ke' and 'Baayo'



LISTEN TO 'BAAYO' (CASSETTE 2: TRACK 4) AND COMPARE IT WITH 'ALLA L'AA KE' (CASSETTE 2: TRACK 5).

- What are the similarities, and what are the differences?
- Consider all possible elements of vocal style, melodic contour, instrumental sound, musical construction etc.
- Is one 'popular' and the other 'traditional' in style or idea?
- Do these terms have any meaning?



Baaba Maal and Mansou Seck in concert



Reggae

Reggae is a style of pop music enjoyed throughout Africa, especially West Africa. Outdoor concerts by international *reggae* performers in the major cities, are so popular that they usually sell out, even though tickets might cost as much as a month's wages. The politics of *reggae* unite Afro-Caribbean people throughout the world. Here are the words of a song called 'Freedom' by **Adioa** from Nigeria.

'Freedom'

We are fed up with labouring in the fields
And received as reward Poll Tax on our backs
We don't know why they call us ghost rivals
To put us everywhere and then refuse us
It's because we are black and we are proud of
It that they despise us because of our beautiful skin

People ready to free I and I for you freedom, freedom for ever
People ready to free I and I for you freedom, freedom for ever,
Don't be afraid of big guns a day will come we shall liberate
Ourselves to be free free for ever sometimes they give us drugs
Draining our mind of everything be careful brothers and sisters

'Cause don't you know brother you are killing your soul
you are killing I and I and nobody feel it
'Cause don't you know brother you are killing your soul
Killing I and I

Don't be afraid of big guns...
Don't beeeeeee...
Don't be afraid of big guns... 'cause war is wrong
Don't be afraid of big guns
A day will come we shall liberate ourselves





'Freedom'

Keyboard

Guitar Am G

Lead

Bass

Drums

F Em



'Freedom' (continued)

On page 69, the outline of the music of 'Freedom' is printed for you to play. The drum part is written with the hi-hat at the top, snare in the middle and bass drum at the bottom. Start with the bass and drum parts; you need to get the right bass sound – try turning the treble down on the amplifier. Next add the keyboard part; try some sort of electric organ sound and do not hold the notes down. Next add the guitar (if you do not have a guitar use a keyboard), keeping the notes very short, then add the lead part to complete it.

► Listen to Cassette 1 Track 17

On the cassette you will find a recording of the printed music on page 69 which uses just one keyboard to give you some idea of how your version might sound.

Project Comparing *Reggae* Styles



▼
LISTEN TO ADIOA'S RECORDING OF 'FREEDOM' (CASSETTE 2: TRACK 6) AND COMPARE IT WITH THE STYLE OF REGGAE FROM THE CARIBBEAN (SEE *MUSIC OF THE CARIBBEAN*).

- Are there any differences between the two styles or is it truly an international music?



Highlife is a West African style of dance music. In the early part of this century four main styles of music were popular: brass bands, traditional dance rhythms, palm-wine guitar music and bands playing western dance music. *Highlife* developed from these styles. Obviously there were many other influences and styles which appeared along the way. These same roots can also claim to be the basis for Nigerian *jùjú* and *Afro-beat*.

Afro-beat – style of popular music particularly associated with Fela Kuti, developed during the 1960s. Lyrics are often in a form of English and emphasize political and social issues.

Highlife started in Ghana in the 1950s when dance bands, such as the **Tempos** led by the famous **E.T. Mensah**, played traditional tunes 'jazzed up' in a western style. As the dance bands lost popularity because of their 'colonial' image, the *highlife* style was taken up by the newer electric bands who used western instruments and wanted their own sound related to western pop music. You can now find people performing many different styles of *highlife* even within Ghana, such as **Koo Nimo** who uses traditional acoustic instruments, and **A.B. Crentsil** who is an international star, using electric guitars, keyboards, brass and saxophones. You will also find different styles of *highlife* in **Sierra Leone** (where it is sometimes called *maringa*), **Cameroon** (where it is known as *makossa*) and in **Nigeria**.

A good example of the way in which these styles are combined is the music of **Prince Nico Mbarga** which has the *highlife* style of eastern Nigeria, together with the fast *makossa* music of Cameroon, perhaps a bit of guitar style from **Zaire** and the **Congo**, and bass lines which owe something to *reggae* influence.



Prince Nico in concert.



'Christiana'

Nicholas Mbarga was born in Nigeria in 1950. His mother was Nigerian and his father was from Cameroon. He learnt to play the traditional xylophone when he was quite young and played in several school bands, one of which he lead for over six years. Escaping from the Nigerian civil war in 1969, he and his family fled to Cameroon where Nico joined a hotel band, the **Melody Orchestra**. As well as singing Nico played *congas*, then drum kit, bass guitar and rhythm guitar before finally staying with lead guitar. This experience gave him a very good knowledge of how a band worked. After playing with several more groups he formed **Rocafil Jazz** and recorded his most famous album, *Sweet Mother*, in 1976 (issued in the UK in 1984). One of the tracks from *Sweet Mother* is 'Christiana' which is about the troubled relationship between a boy and his girlfriend who wants to go to college. It is written in the Nigerian *Egbo* language:

▶ Listen to Cassette 2 Track 7

Christiana (Egbo)

*Oh! Christiana
Christiana bu eyinwayi e-e-e-e
Christiana kwelu na ya ga
anummu
Eh-e-e-e Christiana oh-o-o-o*

*Olue ofu mbosi Christiana kpomu
'darling'
Tiyemu na college kamuta
akwukwo
Makana nna'm ewero ego e-e-e-e
My girl e-e-e*

*Nwe kpoya Christiana my heart-o-o
Oburu obodo oyibo ka iga eje
I de kamkpe, Oh! Christiana*

Christiana ejesia college nata

*Nkpo ya Christiana kwadobe ka
mgba akwukwo
Na court Christiana simu
sorry O-O-O-
'Agamu eye gi ego ka enuta
nwayi ozo' My Girl e-e-e-e*

Christiana (English)

*Oh! Christiana
Christiana is my girlfriend
Christiana promised to marry me
Eh-e-e-e Christiana oh-o-o-o*

*One day, Christiana called me 'darling'
Send me to college to learn to read
Because my father has no money to
do so,
My girl e-e-e*

*I called her Christiana my heart
If it is University you want to go
I am equal to the task . . .*

*After Christiana had completed her
studies
I called her Christiana get
prepared for wedding
In the court Christiana said she
is sorry
'I will give you money to marry
another wife' My Girl e-e-e-e*



'Christiana' (continued)

Here is the music for the basic pattern of 'Christiana'. It needs to be played with accurate rhythm.

► Listen to Cassette 1 Track 18

'Christiana'

Guitar 1

Guitar 2

Bass

Drums

Tambourine





Youssou N'Dour

A question – which African pop star, as well as releasing his own albums, has appeared with **Paul Simon** and **Peter Gabriel**? The answer is **Youssou N'Dour** who, with **Salif Keita**, epitomizes the new generation of West African pop performers.

Like **Baaba Maal**, Youssou N'Dour comes from Senegal, and is a member of the *Toucouleur*. Youssou's mother came from a *gawlo* (*griot*) family, but his father did not. He was horrified when Youssou said that he wanted to become a musician. He wanted Youssou to become a respectable civil servant, not to associate with musicians who – he considered – were invariably drunk, lazy, good-for-nothings . . .

Youssou did most of his growing up in his grandfather's house which was well known as a centre of traditional music. He had plenty of opportunity to absorb all the different types of traditional music and to meet the performers and learn from them. By the time he was 13, Youssou was singing in public and also had his own group which consisted of himself as drummer (playing on tin cans), sister **Ngone** as singer and brother **Boubacar** as guitarist (with an instrument made from wood and string).



For a time Youssou attended the **Ecole des Arts** in Dakar to learn about music theory, but he felt that this was not for him, so he left – he wanted to learn through playing.

In 1975, aged 16, he managed to get a job with the **Star Band** at the **Miami** nightclub in Dakar, the most popular in the country. Senegal was relatively late in developing its own style of pop music, but Youssou wanted to sing in *Wolof* and to use local traditional songs and rhythms. With the **Star Band** he developed a new style of dance music which he called *mbalax* (rhythm). In 1977 he formed his own group with some of the musicians from the **Star Band** and six new ones, which he called **Etoile de Dakar** and later **Super Etoile de Dakar**, in 1979. This new band toured widely both in Africa, Europe and the USA, bringing Youssou into contact with many different musicians and various styles of music.

Tama – small drum like a donno played held under the arm.

The traditional elements in his music are still very strong; the basis of much of the percussion is the *tama* drum played by **Assane Thiam**. This drum is played at *Wolof* weddings, baptisms and all sorts of ceremonies and is the drum which calls everyone to dance. Youssou has a very wide definition of what is *mbalax* music:

'*Mbalax* contains reggae and jazz and every kind of music, or perhaps they all contain *mbalax*!'

Project Traditional and Popular Music



FIND AS MANY DIFFERENT STYLES OF MUSIC AS YOU CAN THAT ARE A MIX OF TRADITIONAL AND POPULAR ELEMENTS.

- How are the two elements combined?
- Can you think of any UK groups or performers who do this?





Youssou N'Dour and 'Set'

Youssou N'Dour's attitude to the role of all types of music is reflected in the words of 'Set', one of his songs:

'Set'

(Wolof)

Set si sa xel

Se si sa xol

Set si sa dieuf

'Set' (Clean)

(English)

Have a clear mind

Be pure in our heart

Be sure in your actions

'Set'

► Listen to Cassette 1 Track 19

Youssou N'Dour's music is performed with great energy and rhythmic accuracy so you need to work at building it up slowly.

Try starting with the piano, snare and hi-hat parts of 'Set'.

Then add guitar and bass drum (can you see why?). The click rhythm looks difficult but it is OK when you have learnt it. Next add the bass and finally the brass lead part – now get dancing!



'Set' and 'Sinebar'

The music of **Baaba Maal**, **Prince Nico** and **Youssou N'Dour** have a different rhythm to Afro-American pop music, in that there is not the strong backbeat (emphasizing 1 2 3 4) found in most western pop music.

African rhythms 'talk' to each other much more, a characteristic you will hear in Latin American music like the *samba* (which has African roots from the slave trade of Africans to Latin America). On page 78 is printed the music for 'Sinebar', another Youssou N'Dour track.

▶ Listen to Cassette 1 Track 20

Listen to the cassette to get the idea of how to build it up. Leave out the click part if it is too fast as it is played by two musicians on the original track.

The words of 'Sinebar' are also important as they show Youssou's concern that people should not take drugs, as well as telling you something positive about the band!

'Sinebar' (Wolof)

*Di na yaakh sokh la woo ko
Ni koye diaye sokh la
wunu lu dul xalis
Te seen weer gou yaraam nekh
Yow wakh ma deugui*

*Wa super etoile
Sen music Guenal le no
Te sen weer guo yaram
Te ngou nek fi di leene di
beegueuie*

'Sinebar' (English)

Sinebar will bring you nothing but
misery Mature people care about
their livelihood
They care about their health
You too should make a choice

For the Super Etoile
Making music is their priority
If anyone can offer you something
strange you may be sure that even
they themselves would not be taking it

Project Vocal lines of 'Set' and 'Sinebar'



LISTEN TO THE VOCAL LINES OF 'SET' AND 'SINEBAR' (CASSETTE 2: TRACKS 8 AND 9).

- Choose one of them and try to make up your own vocal part to fit over the supporting parts that you have learnt.
- Do not try to make it too complicated. Identify the main features of the style but do not try to copy them; it is not easy, but worth it – you may even be another Youssou N'Dour!





'Sinebar'

'Sinebar'

POPULAR MUSIC

Guitar

Kora

Brass

Bass

Click

Drum Kit



- Afro-beat** term coined by Nigerian Fela Anikulapo-Kuti to describe his synthesis of West African and Black American music
- Agbadza** Ewe war dance, now performed at funerals
- Asante** people who live in central Ghana
- Atenteben** bamboo flute, rather like a recorder
- Atoke** single pod-shaped bell from Ghana
- Atsimevu** the lead drum of the Ewe ensemble
- Axatse** gourd rattle (Ewe)
- Bala** xylophone
- Balafon** often used to describe West African xylophones, it means 'to make the xylophone speak'
- Birimintingo** extensive improvisation and ornamentation of instrumental music
- Calabash** a large gourd, hollowed out, dried and used as a rattle
- Casamance** group of people living in Senegal
- Cent** one-hundredth (0.01) of a semitone
- Claves** South American hardwood rhythm sticks
- Conga** Latin American drum
- Djembe** goblet-shaped solo drum used throughout West Africa
- Donkilo** singing which the *kora* accompanies, literally 'call to dance'
- Donno** 'talking' drum from northern Ghana
- Egbo** language from Nigeria
- Ewe** the main people from south-eastern Ghana
- Fulani** the people occupying lands to both sides of the Senegal River
- Gahu** a dance / music of the Ewe people
- Gangaa** two-headed drum
- Gankogui** kind of double bell
- Gato** or tongue drum. Box with wooden 'tongues' cut out which are hit
- Gawlo** Toucouleur word for 'griot'
- Gome (gombe)** frame drum originally from the Caribbean used in *Kpanlogo*
- Gonje** musical instrument like a one-stringed violin
- Gota** a dance / music of the Ewe people
- Gourd** medium to large vegetable like a pumpkin which has been hollowed out and dried and used as an amplifier
- Griot** a word used outside Africa to describe families of hereditary musicians
- Gyil** xylophone from northern Ghana
- Hatsiatsia** a dance / music / ceremony of the Ewe people
- Highlife** West African popular music style
- Jali** Mandinka word for a griot
- Jùjú** a Yoruba (Nigerian) popular music which evolved in the 1930s



Glossary (continued)

- Kagan** lightest-pitched drum of the Ewe set
- Kamalengoni** five-stringed 'youth's harp' from southern Mali
- Karinyang** iron scraper from Mali
- Kidi** middle drum of the Ewe set
- Kora** stringed instrument made from a large gourd, with 21 strings
- Kpanlogo** popular percussion rhythm developed in Ghana in the 1960s
- Kumbengo** basic pattern which contains all the main themes of a piece of music
- Kuur** metal hoe used to accompany xylophone music in northern Ghana
- Maringa** a name for *highlife* music, used in Sierra Leone
- Makossa** a name for *highlife* music, used in Cameroon
- Manding** people who, today, live in Mali, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Senegal, Gambia and north-west Ivory Coast
- Mandinka** language spoken by the Manding peoples
- Mbalax** style of music developed by Youssou N'Dour
- Melismas** one syllable to many notes
- Mnemonic** 'nonsense' phrase or saying, used as a reminder
- Onsongoni** harp played by hunters and healers
- Pentatonic** having five notes to the octave
- Portamento** sliding from note to note
- Reggae** lively, strongly rhythmic rock music of the Caribbean
- Resonator** part of a musical instrument which vibrates to particular tones
- Samba** dance rhythm common in South America
- Sisaala** group of people from northern Ghana
- Sogo** lower pitched drum of the Ewe set, sometimes used as a lead drum
- Tama** small drum like a donno, played held under the arm
- Tonal** the meaning of the word can be changed by altering the pitch used for different syllables
- Tongue** drum - see Gato
- Toucouleur** a people living in Senegal
- Wolof** language spoken by Toucouleur people, who live in Senegal
- Yorubu** group of people living in Nigeria



Ewe drummer, playing Aklamevu, the master drum of the Ewe set.



A. Raffane playing

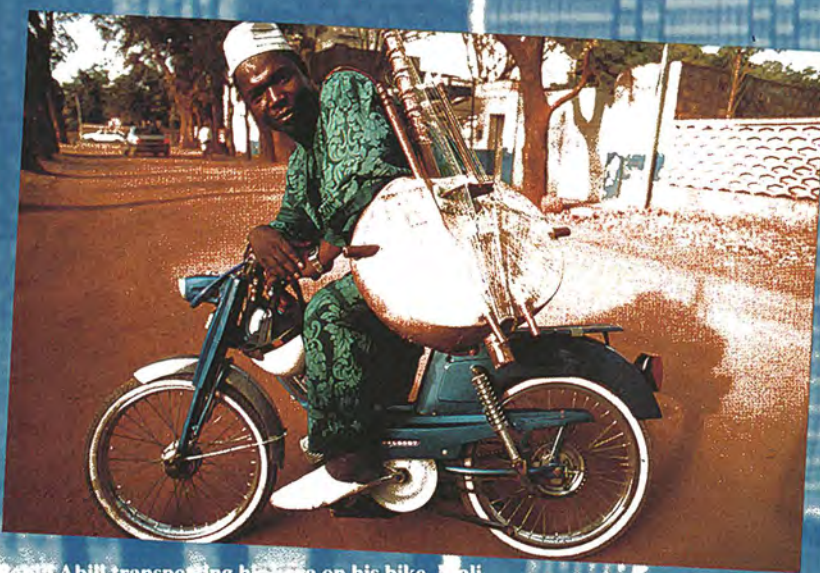


Anting, Mali.



Flam tree, Ghana

Oumou Sangare, Mali

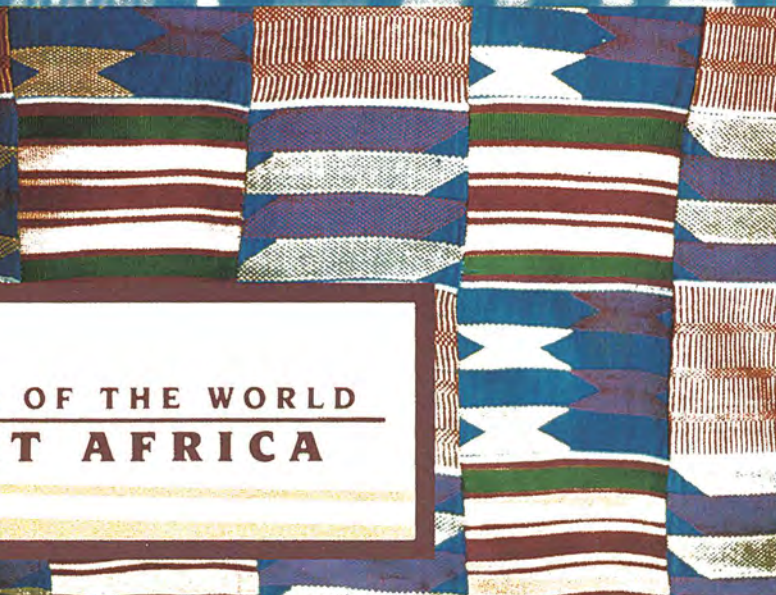


Abili transporting his son on his bike, Mali

Women performing the dance Gbedemba, South East Ghana



Kente cloth, Mali



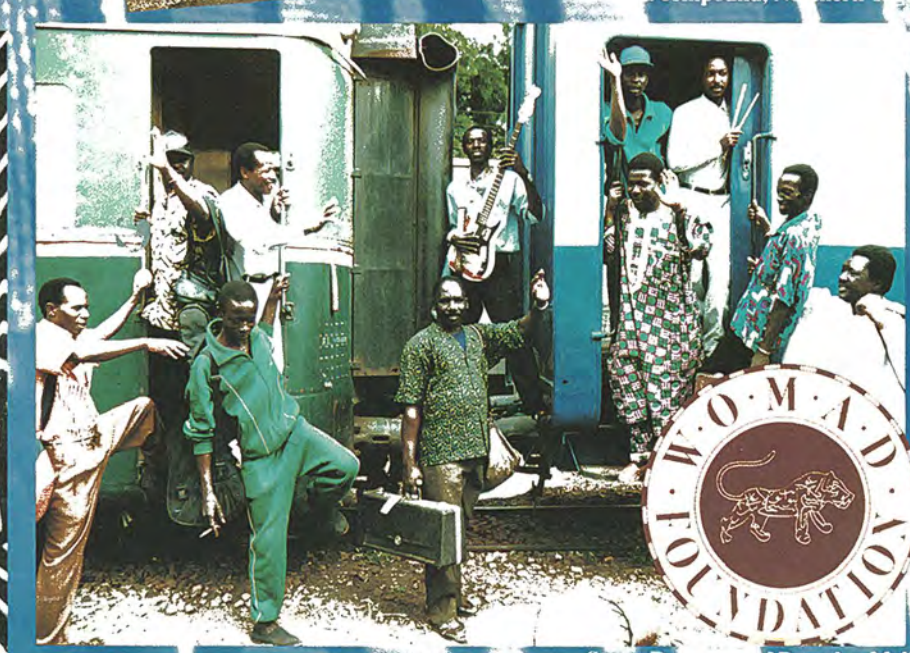
Welcoming ceremony by the elders of a village in Mali.



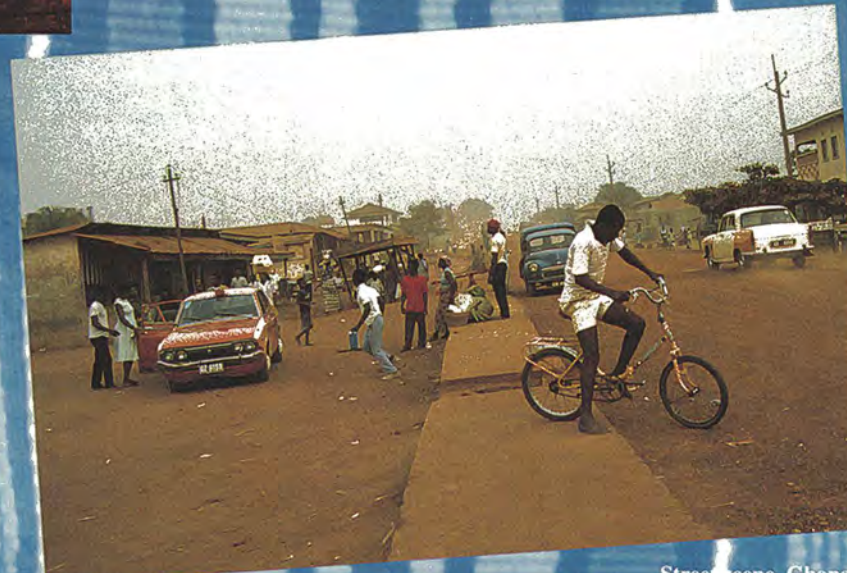
Young drummers playing at the Faso Faso festival.



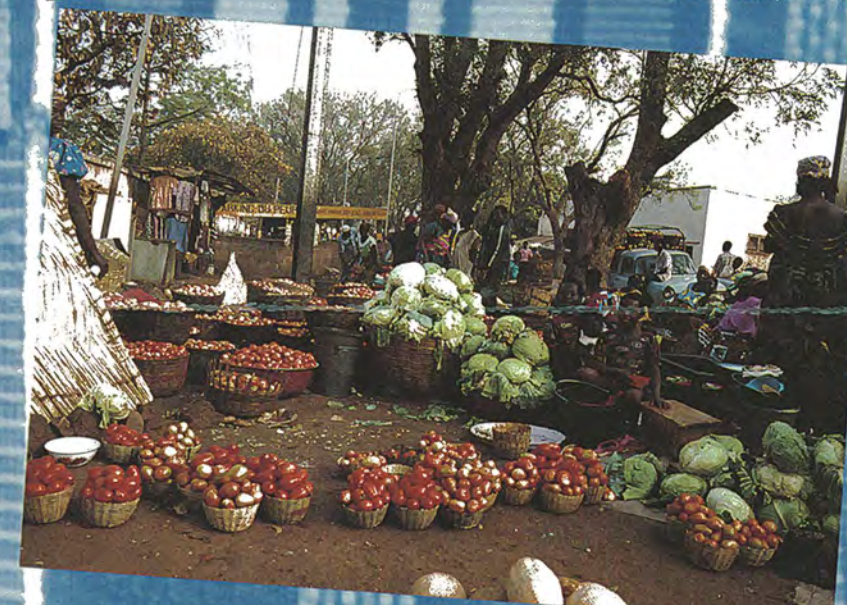
Mud cloth painting, Mali



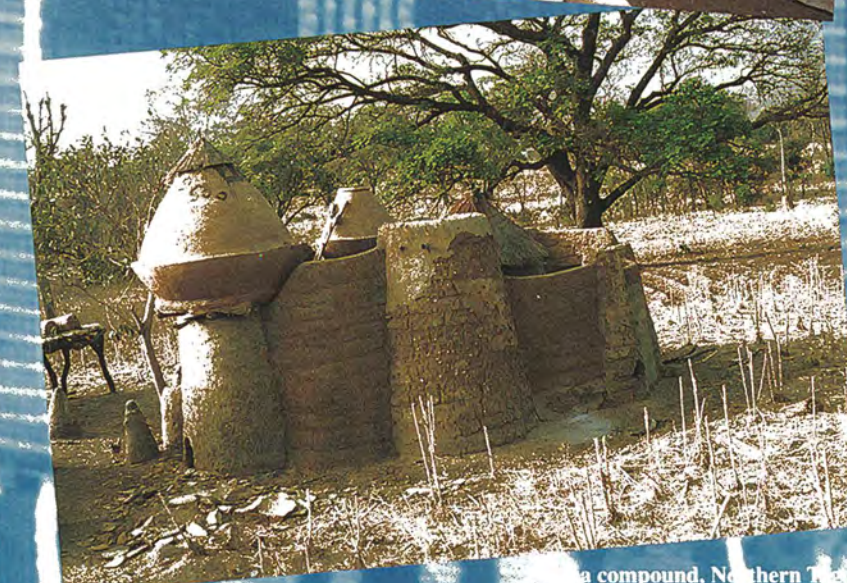
School in Bamako, Mali



Street scene, Ghana



Market scene, Burkina Faso



A compound, Northern Togo



EXPLORING THE MUSIC OF THE WORLD
MUSIC OF WEST AFRICA