

35 Enchanting Traditional African Songs for Tongue Drum and Handpan

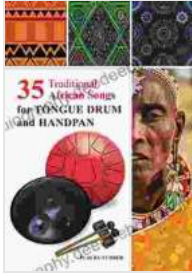


The tongue drum and handpan are two captivating musical instruments originating from Africa. The tongue drum, also known as a mbira or kalimba, is a plucked idiophone with a series of metal tongues that vibrate when played. The handpan, a more recent innovation, is a concave steel drum with a central note and surrounding tones. When struck, it produces a mesmerizing, ethereal sound.

35 Traditional African Songs for Tongue Drum and Handpan: Play by Number

by Helen Winter

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5



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In the rich musical traditions of Africa, these instruments have played a significant role in storytelling, rituals, and communal gatherings. Skilled musicians have crafted a vast repertoire of traditional songs that showcase the unique and enchanting qualities of these instruments.

Historical Origins

The origins of the tongue drum in Africa date back centuries.

Archaeological evidence suggests that similar idiophones were played in West Africa as early as the 13th century. Over time, the instrument evolved into its modern form, with variations found in different regions of the continent.

The handpan emerged in Switzerland in the early 21st century. Inspired by the steel drums of Trinidad and Tobago, the instrument quickly gained popularity, particularly in therapeutic and meditative settings.

Cultural Significance

In many African cultures, the tongue drum and handpan have profound cultural significance. The mbira, for instance, is deeply embedded in the spiritual practices of the Shona people of Zimbabwe. It is believed to

connect the living with the ancestors and is used in rituals, ceremonies, and healing practices.

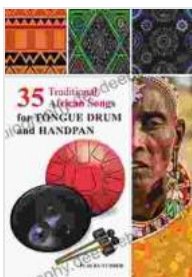
The handpan, though a more recent , has also found its place in various African traditions. Its soothing and resonant sound creates a meditative atmosphere and has been incorporated into musical therapies and spiritual gatherings.

35 Enchanting Traditional African Songs

The tongue drum and handpan have inspired a rich tapestry of traditional songs in Africa. Here are 35 enchanting examples:

1. *mbira nyunga nyunga* (Zimbabwe) - A traditional Shona folk song that evokes the sounds of running water.
2. *mbira dambatsoko* (Zimbabwe) - A celebratory song performed at weddings and other joyous occasions.
3. *mbira yehope* (Zimbabwe) - A soothing lullaby that helps infants drift into sleep.
4. *handpan sanza* (Senegal) - A meditative piece inspired by the traditional West African sanza (thumb piano).
5. *handpan Sahel* (Mali) - A hypnotic song that captures the rhythms and melodies of the Saharan region.
6. *mbira chinyakare* (Zimbabwe) - A historical song that recounts the stories of past generations.
7. *mbira gufu* (Zimbabwe) - A playful song that mimics the sounds of birds and animals.

8. *handpan mbira* (Cameroon) - A fusion song that blends the sounds of the handpan and mbira.
9. *mbira karimba* (Mozambique) - A romantic song that expresses love and longing.
10. *handpan djembe* (Guinea) - A vibrant song that combines the rhythms of the handpan with the infectious beats of the djembe drum.
11. *mbira nhare* (Zimbabwe) - A sorrowful song that laments loss and heartache.
12. *handpan didgeridoo* (Australia) - A cross-cultural song that blends the sounds of the handpan with the haunting drones of the Australian didgeridoo.
13. *mbira dzavadzimu* (Zimbabwe) - A spiritual song that connects with the spirits of ancestors.
14. *handpan hang* (Switzerland) - A contemplative song inspired by the Swiss Alps and the sounds of the Hang drum.
15. *mbira jerusarema* (Zimbabwe) - A devotional song that celebrates the city of Jerusalem.



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